

Resistance, Struggle, and the Adolescent Reader

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Resistant readers risk becoming struggling readers. To engage resistant readers, teachers should allow students more choice and respect their out-of-school literacies.

As a teacher who had been involved with early literacy for several years, I entered my graduate studies program planning to continue an investigation of literacy with this age group. An exploration of the difficulties children experience in literacy acquisition soon led to the realization that a tremendous amount of research and public funding was being allocated to early literacy intervention, whereas it appeared that the literacy needs of older students were receiving little attention. It was not long before I discovered that although this may be true in terms of public funding, the literacy difficulties of older students have indeed received increased attention in the research agenda of the past decade (McCormack & Paratore, 2003; Moje, Young, Readence, & Moore, 2000; Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999; Vacca, 2002). My own research with two young adolescents experiencing reading difficulty further educated me in the area of adolescent literacy as the complexities of engaging in literacy interventions with older students were demonstrated to me (Lenters, 2004). While the intervention I undertook balanced skill and strategy instruction with affective considerations and had a positive effect on the reading level and reading self-concept of both participants, the fact that one participant, Craig, continued to resist parental attempts at encouraging out-of-school reading troubled me. My disquiet led to the present consideration of the concept of resistance to reading and the following question: What does the literature on adolescent resistance to reading contribute to our understanding of struggling adolescent readers?

Interest in adolescent literacy has in large part been predicated on statistics that show improvement in reading skills for young children, little improvement for intermediate students, and declining scores for secondary school students in recent years (National

Center for Educational Statistics, 2003), in addition to concerns of social justice (see Gee, 1990). While some have interpreted adolescent reading difficulties as stemming from inadequately developed early literacy skills or simple disinterest in reading (see Elkins & Luke, 1999; Moore et al., 1999), Bintz (1993) described such conjectures as “reductionistic, overly simplistic, and largely inaccurate” (p. 613). Bintz thus proposed the term *resistant reader* to assist in the understanding of literacy difficulties experienced by adolescents. His proposal that the construct of resistance has the potential to explain why some readers seem to lose interest in reading is one that has been taken up in other research.

An important and ongoing research paradigm applied to the study of adolescent resistance to reading has been that of listening to student voice. Nieto (1994) proposed that if true reform is desired in schools, student voices must be included: “For the most part, discussions about developing strategies to solve educational problems lack the perspectives of the very groups they most affect—students, especially those students who are categorized as ‘problems’” (p. 392). A significant amount of the research cited in this article draws on this important paradigm. It was through listening to less-than-avid readers that Bintz (1993) realized there was more to these readers than the earlier constructs of passive reader and reluctant reader implied, leading to his proposal of the term *resistant reader*. This research paradigm has since yielded rich information regarding adolescent literacy practices, adolescent agency, and adolescent identity as components of resistance to reading. Instructional perspectives of teachers and researchers also serve to shed light on the investigation and may provide insight on better understanding the interplay between adolescent resistance to reading and struggle with literacy acquisition. This exploration begins with a consideration of the factors associated with adolescent resistance to reading.

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Who Is the Resistant Adolescent Reader?

Several terms have been used in the literature to describe the phenomenon of resistance to reading, most of which draw on sociocognitive perspectives. McKenna, Kear, and Ellsworth (1995) described the student who can read but chooses not to as *alliterate*; Oldfather (1994) described this student as *alienated*; and Reeves (2004) used the term *resistant*. McCarthy and Moje (2002) used the term *marginalized*, as did Schofield and Rogers (2004). Hamston and Love (2003) classified readers who are able yet choose not to read as *reluctant*. Strommen and Mates (2004) described these youths as *not readers*. Guthrie and Davis (2003) equated struggling readers with disengaged readers and thus their work on engagement is pertinent to the consideration of resistance to reading. Perhaps as a reflection of his more cognitive stance, Johannessen (2004) grouped struggling, reluctant, at-risk, disadvantaged, alienated, resistant, and educationally deprived adolescent readers together under the term *reluctant readers*. Although this latter grouping blurs important distinctions and thus is a position that will not be included in this article, an examination of the literature connected to the former descriptions indicates that the terms *alliterate*, *alienated*, *marginalized*, *reluctant*, and *not readers*, when used in reference to adolescent readers, are in fact referring to the *resistant reader* as proposed by Bintz (1993). Listening to the voices of students, teachers, and researchers responding to this question in the literature may help to guide our understanding of resistance to reading.

What Do Adolescents Say About Resistance to Reading?

When adolescent resistant readers were asked why they do not read, many insisted that they can read and do read in given circumstances (Baker, 2002; Bintz, 1993; Christian-Smith, 1993, cited in Guzzetti, Young, Gritsavage, Fyfe, & Hardenbrook, 2002; Hamston & Love, 2003; Reeves, 2004). For many student respondents, reading itself was not the reason for their resistance. Strommen and Mates (2004) made similar observations but noted that only one of the *not readers*

in their study cited poor reading ability as contributing to his dislike of reading. Moreover, resistant readers frequently stated they had been strong readers in elementary school (Bintz; Reeves; Sullivan, 1991).

Interest Although text difficulty was cited by some student respondents as a barrier to reading (Guthrie & Davis, 2003; Reeves, 2004), lack of interest in the reading materials they are provided with was universally mentioned as a component of their resistance. Resistant readers in Ivey's (1999) study said they were motivated to read when they had authentic purposes for doing so. Students in some studies said that they rarely read assigned materials. Readers and not readers alike stated they scan required reading, looking for answers to assigned questions, rather than read the material; even for avid readers, textbook reading had the tendency to diminish reading pleasure (Strommen & Mates, 2004, p. 197). Reeves (2004) noted that all of the resistant readers in her study went to elaborate lengths to avoid assigned reading, and many stated that they could pass tests related to those texts without ever having read the book. Use of study aids (Reeves; Sullivan, 1991) and film versions of school-assigned literature (Reeves) enabled some resistant readers to skip assigned reading and find the time to pursue out-of-school reading interests or get by without having to read assigned literature.

Over and over again we see the phenomenon of students resistant to reading in school or dismissive of school reading who are, nonetheless, readers outside of school (Baker, 2002; Bintz, 1993; Christian-Smith, 1993, cited in Guzzetti et al., 2002; Reeves, 2004; Strommen & Mates, 2004). Many students stated that they value the reading done outside of school more highly than reading connected to school (Strommen & Mates; Vogel & Zancanella, 1991). Schools directly contribute to this phenomenon, through devaluing adolescents' out-of-school reading and by not stocking the kinds of texts students want to read. Students in Worthy, Moorman, and Turner's (1999) study bought the texts that appealed to their interests or brought them from home more often than getting them from their classrooms or school libraries. Worthy et al. made the following observations:

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Limited availability leaves students with three choices: reading something outside of their interests, obtaining their preferred materials themselves, or not reading at all. Students who cannot afford to buy their preferred materials are more dependent on school sources and thus, their choices are even more limited. (p. 23)

Resistant readers know what it is they like to read. Their first advice to teachers is, “Choose interesting stuff. Don’t try to make us read boring stuff” (Reeves, 2004, p. 243). Students want time to read in school and are clear that they would like to read personally interesting materials and have some control over what they read in school (Ivey & Broaddus, 2001). As students move through the school system, the gap between their reading preferences and those of the school grows (Oldfather & McLaughlin, 1993; Worthy et al., 1999). For some students, light reading in the form of graphic novels, magazines, and horror or romance novels is of interest (Norton, 2003; Reeves; Worthy et al.); for others, it is different types of media, such as hypermedia (Alvermann, 2004). Texts of popular culture genres figure largely in students’ expressed preferences, but other materials such as expository texts are also mentioned by students as motivating (Ivey & Broaddus).

Identity A central theme in the out-of-school reading of resistant and nonresistant readers revolves around purposes for reading. Hamston and Love (2003) pointed out that as boys move into adolescence their reading choices reflect their pragmatic interests. This notion of purposeful reading also extends to girls who are resistant readers. Feminine resistance to reading is noted in the exclusive reading of romance novels of some adolescent girls (Christian-Smith, 1993, cited in Guzzetti et al., 2002; Reeves, 2004). Many of the pragmatic reading choices of resistant adolescent readers relate to personal identity construction, such as gender (Hamston & Love; Martino, 2003), whereas for others, choices relate to the purposes of interest and enjoyment (Ivey, 1999; Reeves). As these students explore identity themes, they don’t look to school-assigned literature for help but instead use out-of-school literacies to accomplish this purpose. Thus,

when schools fail to validate these literacies, students often perceive this lack of acceptance as personal rejection (Reeves; Vogel & Zancanella, 1991).

Agency As these statements have demonstrated, a critical thread that emerges from the collective student voice is the desire for agency. Students not only lament the loss of choice of reading material and the loss of control over reading pace (Guthrie & Davis, 2003; Ivey, 1999; Sullivan, 1991) but also want to be seen as capable learners (Hinchman, Alvermann, Boyd, Brozo, & Vacca, 2004). Reeves (2004) made an interesting observation regarding the connection between agency and resistant readers: “Younger people and older people get to choose what to read, only in middle and high school are people’s reading choices so controlled” (p. 242). When Oldfather (1994) investigated motivation to read with older students she found that anger and rebellion were not uncommon when students felt unmotivated to read and that these feelings of anger leading to resistance seemed to be associated with students’ sense that they were not given the opportunity for self-determination. Even as resistance may stem from the mismatch between adolescent social needs and school reading practices, resistance may also be born out of the friction between the educational system and the developmental aspects of adolescence. Just as students are entering a time of life when increased autonomy is their desire, they simultaneously enter an instructional space where they have little or no choice in their school-based reading. When the twin adolescent desires for agency (tied to identity) and social interaction come up against secondary school pedagogy, the burgeoning of resistance to in-school reading may not be coincidental.

What Do Teachers Say About Resistance to Reading?

Summing up the responses of 131 middle and high school teachers, Bintz (1997) said that “Increasing numbers of middle and secondary school students do not perceive reading as meaningful, and thus do not value the act or the process. These students feel apathetic, almost disdainful, about reading” (p. 17). When asked why they thought this to be the case, teachers said that an early lack of success and enjoyment with literacy means that students come to middle and high school feeling that school-based reading is not personally meaningful. Teachers in Bintz’s study

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believed the expectation that “every teacher is a teacher of reading” is unworkable: middle and high school teachers stated they neither have the time nor the knowledge base to teach reading in their content area courses. Teachers interviewed in conjunction with Reeves’s (2004) study on resistant readers echoed this thought and added that they were even less equipped to help struggling readers. Teachers in these studies thought that it was problematic to expect one textbook to fit the needs of all students and that their content-driven nature made them boring to students. Reeves’s teachers stated that textbooks are simply too difficult for most of their students. Finally, Bintz’s teachers believed that parents and elementary school teachers are to blame for students’ difficulties, either through inadequately teaching students to read or failing to provide early remediation.

Discussing issues related to the expectation that in order to be well-educated students must read from the literary canon, Reeves (2004) stated that as a former teacher she had been taught to respond to students whose interests lie outside of the realm of “respectable literature” by moving them away from the genres they gravitated toward and “into the fold of ‘something better’ as quickly as possible” (p. 155). Hamston and Love (2003) pointed out that teachers involved with the adolescent boys in their study were quick to categorize them as reluctant readers due to their resistance toward print-based leisure reading, even though they were capable readers, engaged in out-of-school reading and, in general, were academically successful. For many of the teachers connected to these studies, the “problem” with adolescent readers and resistance to reading appears to lie outside their sphere of responsibility or influence. Researcher voices, however, provide a somewhat different perspective.

How Do Literacy Researchers Contribute to the Discussion?

The researcher’s voice may help to ease the tension between school and student that appears to be at the heart of student resistance to school based reading. Literacy researchers of the past decade or more are unanimous in their call for the secondary educational system to recognize and value the types of literacy valued by students (see Hinchman et al., 2004; Moje et al., 2000; Moore et al., 1999) as literacy comes to be

seen as situated practice (Barton, Hamilton, & Ivanič, 2000) that “draws on the experience of meaning-making in lifeworlds” (New London Group, 1996, p. 65). This is not a call to abandon the literary canon (Reeves, 2004; Sanacore, 1992) but it is a call for an expanded vision of literacy. This concept of multiliteracies is one not only embraced by students but also cited by many as fundamental for students’ social futures (New London Group). Street (1995) made the observation that equating literacy with academic performance and other accepted forms of formal education has had the effect of privileging print-based literacy and marginalizing all other models so that “the uses and meanings of literacy entail struggles over particular identities up against other identities, often imposed ones” (p. 101). These struggles echo the frictions between adolescent social needs and literacy instruction in many secondary schools. These explanations help us see why students are frequently unable to connect their marginalized literacies with school-based literacy and provide an important lens for understanding adolescent resistance to reading. Although these calls for responsiveness to adolescent needs and interests are not meant to dilute the education system, they do present a summons we cannot fail to heed when examining the issue of adolescent resistance to reading.

Adolescent Resistance to Reading Has Consequences

This leads us to the consideration of consequences arising from adolescent resistance to reading. When this resistance leads students to widespread rejection of “school texts,” these students may miss out on the valuable role literature can play in identity formation. Elkins and Luke (1999) reminded us of the importance of adolescent engagement with literacy: “Adolescent literacy is the very forum where we shape identities and citizens, cultures, and communities” (p. 215). Whereas students may resist what educators consider important works in the literary canon, finding ways to help adolescents access some of these texts may help those in search of identity (Reeves, 2004; Sanacore, 1992). This is not without difficulty for, as Reeves stated, “the secondary school reading curriculum is

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saturated with literature written by adults for adults, and leaves little space for adolescents' interests that are often connected to the psychological work of becoming an adult" (p. 61). Given the understanding that "students develop as engaged, independent knowledge seekers when they perceive what they are learning to be personally meaningful and relevant to who they are and who they want to be" (Hinchman et al., 2004, p. 306), a large-scale pruning of the literary canon may well be indicated. The reminder that "vicariously stepping into text worlds can nourish teens' emotions and psyches as well as their intellects" (Moore et al., 1999, p. 102) seems an important impetus to undertake such a restructuring. It is important to remember, as Reeves (2004) pointed out, that secondary school English teachers naturally tend to be those who love reading and who have experienced success with it most of their lives. They are therefore predisposed to view reading, particularly of the literary canon, as something that all students will love, and may easily overlook the irrelevance their students may perceive and the struggle they may experience.

The consensus appears to be that for students and researchers alike, the act of meaningfully bridging students' out-of-school literacies with in-school literacies is an important undertaking to lessen adolescent resistance to reading. This stance, however, does not easily align with current secondary school instructional practices. The preceding sections highlight the importance of listening to student voice with regard to the desire for agency and meaning in adolescent literacy instruction; however, researchers also remind us that development of literacy must be viewed as a process that takes place over a lifetime and not as an isolated skill learned only in the elementary school years (Gee, 2000; Moje et al., 2000; Moore et al., 1999). This means that there may well be instructional areas not necessarily mentioned by adolescents as germane that do, however, pertain to resistance to reading and the struggling adolescent reader.

Resistance to Reading and the Struggling Adolescent Reader

It is important to reiterate at this juncture that not all resistant readers struggle with literacy skills. Resistance also crosses ability levels: Strommen and Mates's (2004) study found that reading skill and academic

achievement were not definitive in distinguishing between readers and not readers. Other studies concur (see Ivey, 1999; Reeves, 2004). Table 1 presents a general overview of these distinctions. In a similar manner, reading difficulties are often context dependent: Some readers read well in some contexts and poorly in others, and very often this reading ability is tied to students' preferred genres or purposes for reading (Alvermann, 2001; Guthrie & Davis, 2003; Ivey, 1999; Reeves, 2004).

Although development of reading skills and strategies was not highlighted by most students as something that has a bearing on their resistance to reading, it does appear that this may be helpful for resistant struggling readers. When the imperative to view literacy acquisition as a lifelong process is coupled with the understanding that gaining proficiency with reading requires ongoing interaction with text (Allington, 2004; Anderson, Wilson, & Fielding, 1988; Guthrie, 2004), the need for ongoing literacy instruction in the adolescent years, particularly for struggling readers, becomes apparent.

The importance of strategic reading ability in content area reading for all adolescents has been noted for almost a century (see Vacca, 2002) and continues to be seen as one of the areas in which we may affect the progress of struggling readers (Gaskins, Gensemer, & Six, 2003). How does this relate to resistant adolescent readers? Patricia Alexander (cited in Snow, 2002) reminded us that our rapidly changing, information-laden society is shaping children in a manner unrecognized by educators:

In order to reach today's youth, literacy educators have to demonstrate the usefulness and relevancy of reading and school-gained information, otherwise children will revert to their adaptive stance of apathy in order to cope with the flood of dispensable information. (p. 5)

Apathy is noted here as a reactive posture, in part a response to perceived irrelevance, and thus relates to resistance. Alexander went on to say that through making instruction meaningful to students, we help them "to make the switch from situational motivation to individual motivation to learn and thus from the surface processing

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| Table 1 Resistance to Reading, Reading Ability, and Attitude Toward Reading | | | | |
|---|--------|------------------|------|-------------------|
| | Reader | Resistant reader | | |
| | | Nonreader | | Struggling reader |
| Reading ability | Good | Good | Poor | Poor |
| Attitude toward reading | Good | Good | Poor | Poor |

strategies to the deep-processing strategies educators and researchers know are the key to good reading comprehension” (p. 5). Thus, resistance may be seen as preventing students from deep engagement with text, having a negative effect on learning. The importance of knowing how to read text both strategically (Gaskins et al.; Snow, 2002) and critically (Elkins & Luke, 1999) is seen by researchers as tremendously important in adolescent literacy. It is arguably even more critical for resistant struggling readers for, as Young (Young & Brozo, 2001) stated, being given the chance to engage critically with text may help struggling readers become more engaged in literate practices (p. 323).

Struggling Readers May Become Resistant Readers

Struggling readers may become resistant readers; thus, resistance to reading for those who most need the practice is of particular concern. Brozo (2000) spoke of unsuccessful readers who hide out in secondary school classrooms and have developed a lengthy repertoire of coping strategies, none of which involves engaging in the kind of literate activity that will develop their facility with literacy. In addition, struggling readers, through the marginalizing labels we place upon them, are often set up to become resistant to reading (Alvermann, 2001). Alvermann’s suggestions for enabling a struggling adolescent reader to move into the mainstream include showing the student that there are many forms of and reasons for reading. By acknowledging the multiple literacies of youth and showing them the way into school-based practices, we may contribute to reversing the debilitating trend in which middle school becomes “a point at which learning how to get by without reading can take precedence over learning to be a better reader” (Reeves, 2004, p. 239). For struggling

readers this connection may be vital as protection from the debilitating effects of giving up on reading altogether.

Resistant Readers May Become Struggling Readers

Whereas struggle with reading in the early adolescent years may cause some to subsequently become resistant to reading, the converse may also occur: An equally serious consequence of resistance to reading may be the marginalizing effect of resistance itself. Alvermann (2001) stated, “as a culture we may be making struggling readers out of some adolescents who for any number of reasons have turned their backs on a version of literacy called school literacy” (p. 679). Some students struggle due to their failure to develop facility with a range of genres in their adolescent years. Linda Christian-Smith’s (1997, cited in Guzzetti et al., 2002) resistant adolescents and Reeves’s (2004) Rosa, who were all avid readers of romance fiction yet only just making passing grades, illustrate this difficulty. Although for some adolescents, resistance takes the form of out-of-school reading of unsanctioned texts, for others the effect becomes severely restricted exposure to textual forms of literacy. Adolescent readers who resist school-assigned texts but engage in a range of literate practices in their leisure time may be receiving the critical out-of-school practice time understood to be a characteristic of good readers (Anderson et al., 1988). But what of the struggling reader who resists school-assigned texts, receives insufficient time in school for independent reading, and engages in significantly less out-of-school reading than good readers? Loss of the practice time crucial to reading development (Applebee, Langer, & Mullis, 1988) may lead these resistant readers to struggle with reading. Consider Sting, one of the adolescents in Reeves’s (2004) multicase study:

Some people’s commitment to reading is robust enough to withstand years of boredom with institutionally required texts, but others, such as Sting, who seem to derive almost no nourishment whatsoever from English class, need access to what they can absorb.... The school risks suppressing Sting’s reading and writing energies completely

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when it tries to redirect them toward academic goals that make no sense to him. (p. 68)

We need to understand that for a student such as Sting, one of our goals should be to keep the reader in him alive through adolescence, even when that goal requires compromises in our commitment to teaching school texts. The contribution we can make to Sting's future lies not in the particular texts we admire and promote but in protecting the reader within him. (p. 69)

A disjuncture between Sting's interests and life purposes and those of the school resulted not only in his aversion to reading but also in the prospect that he might not meet graduation requirements. It is clear with students such as Sting that by limiting the types of texts available to them in secondary level schools we may be unwittingly, yet directly, contributing to turning resistant readers into struggling readers. With students such as Rosa, we must also seek ways to meaningfully broaden reading interests in order to enable them to gain access to a wider variety of texts, particularly those that will support them in their academic studies.

Instructional Implications

It is clear that schools must respond to student resistance to reading, for as Ivey and Broaddus (2001) reminded us, "Institutionalized structures and curricula in schools that are not responsive to students may foster both negative attitudes and school failure" (p. 367; see also Allington, 1994). Listening to student voice, once again, can help schools to work toward minimizing the consequences resistance to reading may have for adolescent readers, particularly struggling readers.

Changes in instructional practices as students move from elementary school into the secondary school system play a role in the development of adolescent resistance to reading. Generally agreed upon as the time when children's social interests widen, the onset of adolescence is accompanied by the onset of the instructional practice of heavily individualized reading. Many young people "become more interested in actual experience than in vicarious, fictional experience and want to spend their time in [social and active pursuits]" (Reeves, 2004, p. 61). And yet peers and social learning do not appear to be integral components of secondary school reading

and language arts classes, and effective strategies for social literacy learning may rarely be used in these classrooms (Ivey & Broaddus, 2000, p. 71). Failure to recognize this disjuncture may contribute significantly toward adolescent resistance to in-school reading.

Furthermore, students are cognizant of the instructional changes that take place once they leave elementary school and ask for the teacher read-alouds and independent reading they once enjoyed (Ivey & Broaddus, 2001; Pflaum & Bishop, 2004). Creating space for independent reading across genres and media in the school curriculum may provide an important vehicle to connect students' marginalized literacies with school literacy (e.g., Sanacore, 1992; Strommen & Mates, 2004), as the practice recognizes that which students value and provides the all-important reading practice required by students of all ages (Guthrie, 2004; Reeves, 2004).

Students are also sensitive to the fact that reading becomes something students are graded on at this stage in the educational system. This new academic spin on reading has the effect of taking the pleasure out of reading, and, as Guthrie and Davis (2003) observed in their student survey, the greater the emphasis that is placed on performance and grades the less students are motivated to read. An excerpt from my personal field notes demonstrates the correlation Craig has made between reading and being graded: "I hate writing book reports. Sometimes I forget to put stuff in and I lose marks really badly" (Lenters, 2004). Giving space to ungraded, independent reading in secondary schools may help widen some adolescents' conception of literacy and enable reading to regain a place of importance in their lives. This practice may be particularly important for resistant adolescent readers who have lost, or not yet discovered, the practice of reading as a leisure activity.

In addition, the following measures may help to make in-school reading more meaningful to resistant readers: responding to students' personal and social literacies (Hinchman et al., 2004; Reeves, 2004); allowing time in class for students' personal responses (Reeves, 2004); addressing student needs and desires to learn how to interpret messages from popular media (Elkins & Luke, 1999; Moje et al., 2000); showing students how some school-based texts connect to their lives (Reeves, 2004); making the literary canon accessible through bridging with young adult fiction (LaBlanc, 1980, cited in Sanacore,

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1992; Stover, 2003); and integrating verbal and visual imagination and the material contexts and biographies of students' lives with traditional print-based literacies (Schofield & Rogers, 2004, p. 246).

Providing gender-specific literature choices has been suggested by some as helpful (Brozo & Schmelzer, 1997, cited in Young & Brozo, 2001); however, this view is contested on several counts, most important of which is the serious question of whether there actually exists a "crisis" at present in boys' literacy (see Martino, 2003), and also the possibility that such approaches merely fuel the very gender regulatory functions in classroom practice that progressive education seeks to eradicate (see Young & Brozo).

The Future for Craig and Others Like Him

This article has not considered the important role family literacy may play in adolescent resistance to reading, a factor that was no doubt at work in the resistance to reading displayed by Craig (Lenters, 2004). Nonetheless, the mismatch between the kinds of texts Craig enjoyed reading from his earliest memory (expository text) and the kinds of texts his teachers wanted him to enjoy (narrative texts) contributed to an early onset of resistance to reading in Craig's life, a resistance that grew as he entered adolescence. Although his reading skills and strategies and his concept of himself as a reader, along with his sense of self-efficacy, were positively altered through the work we did together, I found myself worrying. Would this be enough to sustain him through the secondary school years when his resistance to narrative text would no doubt be challenged repeatedly by the pedagogical expectations of secondary school? Attention to relevance along with ongoing literacy instruction in his secondary school years will enable Craig to continue to strengthen the strategic reading practices he developed when working with me. Whether this is being implemented in his secondary school remains an uncertainty. For resistant readers like Craig who also have struggled with literacy acquisition, the imperative to provide ongoing literacy instruction that bridges out-of-school literacy interests with in-school requirements

will be a crucial factor in their literate futures. I also find myself wondering what effects we will see in the future from the practice of assigning grades to reading achievement, now frequently seen in elementary schools. Will this practice lead to even earlier onset of resistance to reading, or increased loss of motivation, than that which we are currently witnessing? For these reasons and, for all adolescents, struggling or not, the need to address that which creates resistance to reading is of paramount importance and cannot be ignored.

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