

Don Quixote 1605-2005: Teaching Don Quixote on WebCT in the 21st Century

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This paper presents some basic ideas about different ways of teaching literature at the university level in the computer age. It outlines the structural organization of Don Quixote 1605-2005, a hybrid or blended course recently taught using computer technology, in this case, WebCT. This course turned out to be an interesting experiment in web based teaching and this paper presents and analyzes some of the results of that experiment. Finally, this paper presents some of the more important teaching (professor) and learning (students) reactions to the course.

Povzetek: Opisane so izkušnje učenja spleta na inovativen način.

1 Introduction

Classic literature gives the examples of intrinsic beauty, spiritual maturation, and knowledge of human nature. It is an essential part of world inheritance and the world experience of presenting and solving ethical problems. Modern information society claims well-educated people in the field of computer science. But an underdeveloped emotional sphere, a strongly rational approach to making a choice and taking a decision may make a human being rather lop-sided.

So 400 years later Don Quixote sets out again to perform another miraculous deed: to evoke strong curiosity in his way of perceiving the world, in his awareness of human relationships, and in his kindness and generosity.

It is important to study great works of literature like Don Quixote, especially in the age of computers and online learning, precisely because reading a substantial classic like Don Quixote and presenting ideas online enables students to organize their reading, teaches them time management, involves them in online writing and debate, and opens to students of humanities, even at the humblest levels, an insight into the uses and functions of information technology.

The structure of this paper is relatively straightforward: beginnings and organization of the course, the establishment of a marking scheme, the development of an online protocol for discussions, examples of discussions and themes, an analysis of student postings broken down by frequency, and some conclusions on the nature of workload and the success of the course.

2 Beginnings

This paper begins by stating that the Don Quixote course was not initially scheduled to be taught on the WebCT platform. That came about by accident. There were 17 students enrolled in the course, all from different levels and different backgrounds. These included students completing a minors, majors, or honors, as well as students from the science program of a neighboring university. Because of these varied academic backgrounds, there was no single time at which the class could meet. The students with a scientific program had course schedules that conflicted with those in a humanities program on account of their labs and practical work; these were unable to attend a traditional course at standard times. However, when the class met for the first time, it was possible to establish two separate hours per week when two groups of 9 and 8 students could meet. One group meeting for an hour late on Tuesday night and the second group met for an hour early on Wednesday morning. The instructor's challenge was to experiment with WebCT and gain experience as a course designer while reviewing WebCT as a teaching and learning experience. From these beginnings this hybrid or blended course was born.

3 Organization

At the initial meeting, seeing the tremendous discrepancies in language levels and cultural backgrounds, it was agreed that the text of Don Quixote could be read in Spanish (Don Quijote), English (Don Quixote), or French (Don Quichotte), according to the language abilities and preference of the students. A specific translation was not recommended. Students were allowed to choose a translation. The online annotated text

of Don Quixote, as it on the website of Cervantes Visual was the virtual text for the course. This was an interesting experiment in itself, for, as students became aware of the discrepancies in their translations, so the referral back to the original text, in Spanish, became more and more necessary.

Videos of Part I of Don Quixote (1605) were shown and the text was commentated two days a week. Students were to attend at least one of these sessions. One student in fact attended both sessions all term and was amused to find that, since this was not a lecture course but a discussion group, the information offered by the instructor varied in each session according to student questions. As a result, different information was available to both groups. This showed up in the essays and online discussions.

Students are empowered by being asked to discuss the course structure and marking scheme. Multiple possibilities for course outlines are presented, and students agree upon the one that will be used. This act of empowerment enables the students to take part ownership in a course. It also encourages them to commit to something they themselves have helped design.

In the Don Quixote course, then, all students had an opportunity to do three important things: (1) to design the course; (2) to achieve face to face contact with the instructor; and (3) to view the video. The visual aspects of narrative have become extremely important when encouraging students to engage with literature as this generation of students is visually, more than textually, engaged. The experience of literature must be lived and not taught. The face to face contact with the instructor is also extremely important, especially in the Humanities and must be treasured. A hybrid, or blended course, is therefore preferable, in the Humanities, to one that is strictly taught on line, with no human contact other than by discussion and e-mail.

4 Structure

The structure of the course responded, to a certain degree, to the basic problem which any course on Don Quixote sets: how does one persuade students, who are hooked on visual presentations and multi-media, to sit down and read a 1,000 page novel in 13 weeks, be it in English, French, or Spanish? One answer is to invite them to discuss and agree on a plan and then to stick to a reading program. In this fashion, the students agreed to read 2 chapters a day, five days a week for thirteen weeks. This achieved the prime task of reading the 126 chapters which combine to form the novel. It also developed time management skills and stressed the individual responsibility of each student to keep up with the work.

The class now consisted of one hour video and human contact and two hours devoted to posting and reading the postings of others. This was clearly an ambitious and demanding schedule, but since these were committed students, they agreed that it could be done. Assessment was also agreed upon mutually: three essays, posted online, 1 a month at 20% each, and 40% for

individual online postings. Postings were to be on the topics outlined in the discussions tool; they would be scored at a maximum of 4 points a week for 10 weeks, as governed by a published protocol, and they would be marked accordingly.

5 Class Languages

As for class languages, New Brunswick is Canada's only official bilingual province. Three languages, English, French, and Spanish, were therefore available for students and professor. All three of them were used during the course, but there were bonus points for reading, writing, quoting, and posting in Spanish.

6 Departmental Strategy

All four upper level courses in Spanish in the second term (January to April, 2005) were taught by the same instructor. Although this was a great deal of work, it was also an incredibly rewarding experience; for instead of four different points of view in four separate courses, the instructor was able to link Spanish literature and culture together in a way that has often been talked about but seldom demonstrated. The translation course linked directly to the course on Don Quixote, for those who were reading it in translation. Don Quixote was linked directly into the Generation of 1898 with its exploration of the roots of modern Spanish culture and its emphasis on the rediscovery of Spain and Spanish literature. The Generation of 1898 led directly into the Generation of 1927 with its rediscovery of the use of metaphor in the poetry of Góngora (died 1627; tercentenary 1927; and hence the foundation of the generation). The Generation of 1927 also tied directly into the use of surrealism for the creation of metaphor in the Advanced Reading course where surrealism and the creation of metaphor in the poetry of Octavio Paz and Federico García Lorca were studied. Surrealism itself via, automatic writing, metaphor, meditation, and the use of dream symbolism, led back to Don Quixote – Mambrino's Helmet, the Cave of Montesinos, and the question of reality / illusion, and the nature of metatheatre. This led directly to the meaning of meaning, the effectiveness of translation, and one of the central cultural issues of both Don Quixote and the Generation of 1898: "What is the cultural reality of Spain?"

7 Workload

As a result of this, the teaching term was very difficult in terms of preparation and background reading; however, it was also extremely enriching and rewarding, especially for those students who were able to take all their fourth year courses with just one instructor.

Of the four course preparations, the one that created most work was the course on Don Quixote as WebCT was new to the instructor. The structure of earlier Don Quixote courses had to be adapted to this new format and became the main teaching vehicle and communication forum for students and instructor.

Each week, from 4 and 6 topics, with commentaries, were prepared, and students were invited to discuss them online. Some topics sprang from student questions or comments, some were related directly to the text itself, and some grew out of the critical readings which accompanied the text. These discussions were worth up to four marks per week and students were asked to complete ten weeks of discussions for forty marks which counted as 40% of the course grade.

A protocol was established to rank the type of discussions in which the students participated. Discussion marks also served as a participation and attendance grade.

8 Protocol and Grading

The protocol for using the discussion and e-mail tools was established during the initial class discussions. The discussion tool can be thought provoking and can help students to organize their ideas and present them to a wider audience. Students were expected to use it regularly, and participation was demanded on a weekly basis. Participation consisted of regular readings of the postings and as many postings a week as were necessary to accumulate the 4 marks on offer.

Each of the thirteen weeks was numbered in the discussion group, and a series of topics was posted for each week. Students were required to be brief in their comments and were awarded marks from 1-4 for each posting. Students were also required to use their discussion groups frequently, but above all to use them sensibly. Ideas and research were presented at four very different levels, which correspond to the marks designated above:

1 mark: A relevant but colloquial commentary on the words of other students (1 point).

2 marks: General information of use to the other members of the class— “I have found a useful website which offers an annotated text of Don Quixote and allows you to listen to and read Spanish online. This is what I read and here is the URL.”

3 marks: Intellectual contributions to the class discussion, backed up by direct quotes from the text — “I don’t agree with Dr. Moore’s interpretation of the episode of the Cave of Montesinos. Individuals are confronted by their own version of reality and should not be bound by a social hierarchy which dismisses the personal and individual in its interpretation of interior events. For example ...”

4 marks: Presentation of critical ideas from a reliable academic source (with correctly annotated quotation) — “I have just read Salvador de Madariaga’s book on Don Quixote. In it he presents the idea that Don Quixote and Sancho Panza interchange ideas to such an extent that they draw nearer to each other. Thus, in the words of Madariaga, we can speak of the Sanchification of Don

Quixote and the Quixotification of Sancho Panza. Some of the examples he uses for this process are

E-mail was recommended for private correspondence between individual members of the group. Comments such as “I agree with you” or “That’s what I think” were relayed in email form to the individual student concerned. Personal comments (and replies) that are specific to one or two people were also privately communicated by email.

Contributions to the discussion group were graded regularly. The grading system was 40% for these weekly discussions and this was joined to 60% for three formal essays delivered monthly, each essay being due on the last day of the month. Essay topics were circulated well in advance of the due date, and students were given a variety of topics and were encouraged to draw from (a) critical articles and (b) quotes from the online discussions. In addition, students had the choice of writing three separate essays or of developing their essay topics, with critical readings, over the course to present a fully researched academic paper, written and developed over three installments. Several students chose this option.

9 Examples of Topics

Examples of discussion topics, drawn from the first three weeks of the course, follow.

Week 1 – Don Quixote, Part I, Chapters 1-10:

Topics: (1) The first sortie; (2) Gotta luv him; (3) Chivalry; (4) The scrutiny of the library; (5) Cide Hamete Benegeli.

Week 2 – Don Quixote, Part I, Chapters 11-20:

Topics: (1) The second sortie; (2) “Ni sé leer ...” / “I don’t know how to read ...”; (3) Pastoral with goat herds; (4) Marcela.

Week 3 – Don Quixote, Part I, Chapters 21-30:

Topics: (1) A double act: Sancho Panza and Don Quixote; (2) El yelmo de Mambrino / Mambino’s helmet; (3) Los galeotes / the galley slaves; (4) Slang, double meanings, and the picaresque.

Most of these topics sprang naturally from the reading sequence; some, however, came from students and merit further discussion. The topic entitled Gotta luv him, for example, came from an in class revelation that Don Quixote, the character, seemed to be just like one class member’s old, bumbling, loveable grandfather, and that “we gotta luv him” in spite of all his difficulties and ambiguities. This turned out to be a prolific topic and an extremely personal link between novel and individual reader was established very early on. This personal and subjective interpretation of the text was not discouraged, since one of the goals of the course was to enable students to commit to, and read, a long novel.

A side effect of one topic, the scrutiny of the library, with its presentation, for the first time, of el sabio

Frestón, the evil magician who spirits away Don Quixote's library, was to open up the theme of magic and magicians. This led directly to a series of comparisons with some of the novel series that the students had encountered. These included *The Lord of the Rings* and the Harry Potter sequence, both of which had been seen first, and then read, thus reinforcing, once more, the symbiotic relationship between vision and reading.

Topics were chosen with great care. They were designed to point out the vital signposts along the reading route of Don Quixote. When presenting a topic, various questions were asked and specific problems were posed in such a way that each topic could be examined from several points of view; these embraced both the subjective and personal readings of *gotta luv him* and the more objective critically researched, in depth readings which were developed by the most committed students as the course advanced.

10 An In Depth Look at Selected Topics

Here is a brief examination of the first topic which corresponds to the first sortie. Here are the initial questions posed for introducing the first discussion:

The First Sortie is very brief and lasts only 4 chapters (DQ, I, 2-5). Several questions as to the sortie's structure arise:

- (1) On the evidence of this first sortie, did Cervantes start out with the intention of writing a long novel?
- (2) Cervantes also wrote short stories: what evidence is there that this first sortie might actually have started out as a short story? Look, for example, at chapter headings and text divisions.
- (3) What is the relationship between this first sortie and the anonymous *entremés de los romances* which it seems to copy?
- (4) What is the role of the narrator at this stage of the novel and, by extension, can the narrative voice be easily identified?

Some students showed great powers of observation, even in these early moments of the course; however, others experienced a great deal of difficulty with this topic. Quite simply, they didn't yet have -- nor were they expected to have -- either the analytical skills or the background knowledge to go beyond a relatively simple reading of the text. The questions outlined above attempt to illustrate both the text's complexities and the efforts made, through topics, questions and commentaries, to develop from an initial subjective reading, through in-depth reading, to the basic skills of critical analysis. In fact, the text's difficulties will readily come through to any mixed audience; clearly, a mixed audience, containing people who are unfamiliar with Don Quixote, people who have read it, but have neither taught nor studied it, and people who are specialist Cervantistas and have read the original text in Spanish on more than one occasion, will all draw on different knowledge bases. In order to present the complexities that are inherent within the text, the early topics began with an open-ended

question and terminated, at the end of the week, with a brief summary of what might be termed the "current state of the problem." In this fashion, after open and flowing discussion, both the text's complexities and the necessity for further critical reading were illustrated.

11 Thematic Linking of Topics

The topics were also thematically linked. The tectonic, or structural approach, began with the conversion of a short story to a novel. It continued with the invention of Cide Hamete Benengeli, reintroduced when the first sortie (one protagonist – Don Quixote) was compared with the beginning of the second sortie (two protagonists and hence the introduction of a continuous dialogue – Don Quixote and Sancho Panza), and was presented again with the story of Marcela (the first of the intercalated tales which break – or do they?) the narrative structure of the novel.

Structure, of course, emerges again from the peripatetic nature of the picaresque tales included within the chapter on the galley slaves / *los galeotes*. The picaresque itself, with its different definitions in Spanish and English, also made for a topic of debate: "In what ways does the English picaresque novel differ from the Spanish picaresque novel?" Structural themes continue with the presence of the relatively clumsy, yet decidedly effective, *metatheatre* which is present throughout the whole episode of Dorotea and her role as the Princess Micomicona. Here, in fact, the nature of structure ties directly into the theme of illusion and reality as it is initiated in Part I of the book.

12 Flexibility

These discussion topics gave enormous flexibility to the teaching and this enabled the instructor to work individually with students. This course and this way of teaching generated more individual, one on one discussions than any other, and the instructor was able to reach out to students at very flexible levels according to their preparation, their reading and their intellectual and academic development and interest.

For example, the topic "Ni sé leer ..." permitted the introduction of the theories of Walter Ong, as represented in *Orality and Literacy*, to a group of students who were working with human rights and developmental themes in Latin American countries. Don Quixote became, for these students, at one level, a representation of that strange literary meeting place in which half the characters are literate and can read and write, while the other half can neither read a scrap of paper nor sign their names. The placing together, in this novel, of selected moments at which literate and oral world views approach each other in ever greater proximity, is a master-piece of artistic achievement that has been little studied and which moves directly into the empowerment theories (knowledge as power) of Paolo Freire and Michel Foucault.

13 Thematic Links with Other Courses

Thematic linkage occurred at several levels within the Don Quixote course. At the most basic level, instead of beginning with themes and tracing their development throughout the novel, the reading system employed allowed the discussion of themes as they arose. These were then repeated and elaborated as they reoccurred. Thus, the reiterated theme of Don Quixote's madness – is he, isn't he, in what way is he? – became closely linked to the Sanchification / Quixotification process which in turn was linked into the development of metatheatre, which again became linked to the development of inter-textual commentary, relativism and perspectivism, and the shared views of characters, historian, translator, narrator, and commentator, all of whom discuss and dispute along with the students in the discussions, the textual facts of the presentation of madness.

At the second level, this linkage was enhanced by the texts selected by those students who were also following the course on twentieth century literature. Texts chosen for study, for example, in the twentieth century literature course included Azorín: *La ruta de don Quixote*, two texts from Miguel de Unamuno: *Vida de Don Quixote y Sancho Panza*, and "Don Quixote in the Contemporary European Tragi-comedy," the last chapter from Unamuno's *The Tragic Sense of Life*; Ramiro de Maeztu's study entitled *Don Quijote o el amor*, and José Ortega y Gasset's classic: *Meditaciones del Quijote*.

The readings from one course injected life and meaning into the second course, thus enhancing the process of linkage whilst underlining the constant presence of Quixotic themes in the life and literature of the early twentieth century.

At the third level, the relevance of Don Quixote to the early twenty-first century was clearly seen in the number of public references to Don Quixote which appeared in Canada, especially around January 16, 2005, the date of the fourth centenary of the publication of Don Quixote, as the event was celebrated on CBC radio, CBC television, and in the pages of various newspapers. When these events were linked to items from online discussion groups (H-Cervantes, for example) selections of which were regularly posted on WebCT, then the contemporary value of the literary text was underlined as well.

14 Bridging the Intellectual Gaps

There is a clear and enormous gap between the subjective and limited gotta luv him and the instructor's approach which, beginning with hermeneutics and phenomenology, leads to the tectonic theory of structuralism and the establishment, via metatheatre, of a dual reality. Were students able to bridge that gap and how were they able to do so?

The process used to assist them was a basic step by step build up: first read the text; then recognize the structures and themes of what is being read; then apply the correct critical names to those structures and themes; then go out and read what other people have written

about those themes and structures. Thus, reading is the bait and continued interest is the hook and the other skills hopefully – and in theory – develop from there. But do they?

The answer is an emphatic yes. The hard evidence of skills development was, and still is, available in terms of the chronological postings and their growing sophistication. Writing became clearer; criticism and analysis became sharper; and questions became markedly more pointed and acute.

15 Tracking Students

The figures offered by the WebCT student tracking tool give food for thought. The total number of discussions posted by students was 580. The track record of what the students read is also very informative, with 3 out of 17 students reading all 580 postings and 5 reading more than 500 of them. 13 students read more than half the postings, and when questioned about this pattern, several students replied that they had little time to read and had been selective in their readings, choosing only those postings from friends whom they respected or good students whom they appreciated and neglecting the "online ramblings" (their words) from others.

16 Postings Read by Number

Here are the relevant figures.

All 580 postings were actually read by only 3 students!

Over 500 postings were read by 2 students
[553 - 1; 539 - 1].

2 students read over 400 postings
[480 - 1; 408 - 1].

5 students read more than 50% of the postings
[367 - 1; 359 - 1; 357 - 1; 341 - 1; 292 - 1]

5 students read less than half the postings
[272 - 1; 250 - 1; 218 - 1; 201 - 1; with a low of 136 postings read by 1 student].

The number of articles and discussions posted follows a slightly different pattern, but it should be noted that quality took precedence over quantity, and that those who posted well and researched their postings (at 4 marks a posting) did not need to post as often as those who posted on a less academic scale or who established a dialogic discussion with one or more interlocutors. The instructor read every posting; some were well researched, with four and five articles quoted accurately and sharp critical arguments summarized and discussed. Others were subjective in their nature; some readers did not -- for a variety of reasons -- break from the subjective mode of reading, and this was, to some extent, a lesson in how students developed and which students needed the most individual help.

17 Intellectual Competition

In this type of course, weaker students will hopefully learn from stronger ones. However, some students realized that either they could not compete intellectually or that they did not have the time to do the reading and research that was necessary to do so. As a result, they declared their unwillingness to write online as they became embarrassed and frustrated by their lack of time and skills. The instructor tried to work one on one with these students. Goals were made more manageable and their written work was accepted privately by email. Clearly, these factors change the balance and objectivity of any numerical analysis of postings.

18 Postings by Number

Here are the numbers for the postings.

66
51
47 45 42
37 36
25 23 23
17 16 15 14
09 07 05

19 Hits by Number

The number of hits follows the same type of pattern.

Over 1000 / 3 [1274, 1026, 1003]
Over 900 / 2 [991, 949]
Over 700 / 1 [790]
Over 600 / 1 [606]
Over 500 / 5 [593, 579, 570, 565, 545]
Over 400 / 1 [410]
Over 300 / 2 [387, 364]
Over 200 / 2 [293, 203]

20 Analysis of Hits

Some of these figures bear examining. 2-3 postings a week, as required by the course, would have seen an average of 20 - 30 postings over the ten weeks necessary to accumulate the 40 points offered for this part of the course.

Technically, 10 good postings at 4 marks each – and the postings were graded weekly, as a minimum, so that students almost always knew exactly where they stood – could have accounted for the grade.

The student who posted 66 times was assiduous in the computer work and logged on 1274 times, reading all 580 postings. A model student in many ways -- and yet, 1247 hits means that this student logged on approximately 100 times a week at an average of 14 times a day over a 13 week period.

Five students logged on over 900 times and that means 70 times a week or 10 times daily. At this stage, it is vital to ask the question: what is happening to the students?

21 Teaching Workload

The instructor spent every Saturday and Sunday morning, for about 4-6 hours each day, for 13 weeks, monitoring this course, grading these discussions, and working electronically one on one with these students. Quite simply, to complete the course effectively and to gain full benefit from it, the time and effort needed was exemplary, possibly way beyond the call of duty. Yet, such is the power and influence of Don Quixote, that instructor and students made just that commitment, and more.

11 of the 17 students who actually started the course, finished the book on, or ahead of, time. Of these 11, 3 finished on the final day and one student “fudged” the issue by assuming that the instructor wouldn’t recognize input from various summarized versions of the text.

22 Reasons for not Reading

Of the 6 who didn’t finish the reading exercise, the reasons were all similar: students fell behind in their reading, took one look at the large back up of postings as it was building up, and panicked.

2 students who panicked, came to see the instructor early, broke down, and were put back together by the simple expedient of either increasing the chapters that they read daily, or by increasing the number of days they read per week. The instructor also selected passages of the text that could be omitted. As a result, certain of the intercalated novels, for example, *The Curious Impertinent*, were avoided. Using a judicious blend of these strategies and short cuts, both students caught up albeit with some difficulty, and were soon back to speed.

While not everybody managed to finish the whole book (Parts I and II), all students completed Don Quixote Part I (the 1605 edition, hence the fourth centenary celebrations). In various communications, it became clear that students who did not complete the readings on their own needed the group encouragement and the class presence more than the others.

Students who completed Don Quixote Part I had read what they had seen on the videos and hence had read what they already understood. The videos and in class discussions were absolutely essential to this group, but they found it extremely difficult to progress beyond the point at which the videos and the in class discussions ended. This was one of the more interesting discoveries of the course, that a large group of 11 students could self-pace and self-manage, but that a tidy minority of 6 (33% of the class) had found it most difficult to do so.

23 Skills improvement

Those who were totally committed to the reading and writing process outlined above expanded their reading and writing abilities enormously. There were clear and objective improvements in thought process, reading skills, analytical skill, research skills, and writing skills.

24 Self-assessment

Students finished the term with an assessment of their own development within the course. They recognized the patterns and skills that they had evolved. Even the students who only finished *Don Quixote*, Part I, gained substantial and important knowledge of themselves, and of their reading and planning processes. *Don Quixote* became a topic of conversation throughout the Spanish section and was repeated in the summer of 2005 as an Independent Studies course for some students who were unable to take it during the term. In addition, a surprising number of students not enrolled in the course purchased copies of *Don Quixote* and are asking for the course to be re-offered again.

25 Course evaluations

Course evaluations were excellent and outlined the commitment of students and instructors to the course.

26 Student Comments

Here are selected comments from one specific student essay. In this essay, the student challenges the traditional approach to education. The *Don Quixote* course offered an epiphany and the opportunity to self-assess was taken in unique fashion. Here are the selected comments.

1. One must question everything, one must question authority.
2. Interestingly, my own perceptions of realities have changed drastically in the past few months. The "truth" that I no longer accept as real is the absolute validity of formal education.
3. The schooling system in place teaches children to conform and obey authorities, and deters original thought. Anyone who doesn't shape themselves to fit into the mold is seen as a problem -- people who think critically are dangerous to the maintenance of the system.
4. I realized only recently that I myself have not been equipped with critical thinking skills.
5. I feel that my whole experience in the schooling system can be compared to a meta- theatre of sorts.
6. After the seventeen years that I have been schooled, I only realized recently that there were negative aspects to being schooled. From kindergarten on, I received positive reinforcement for being a "good student", which really meant that I accepted the authority of my teachers, and did not question what they told me. I was unaware (as almost all students are) of the hidden curriculum of conformity and the perpetuation of class differences within our society.
7. University is a continuation of this formal education, packaging schooling with certification (as Ivan Illich would say). I am glad that I went to university, yet at the same time I am glad that I have come to the realization that it is not reflective of my actual intelligence or skill level. It is, however, a reflection of my relative privilege within our society, and my ability to conform to the ideas of my educators (consciously or unconsciously). It was in university

that I was exposed to this very idea, so it's not all bad. At the same time, it is a shame that it took me so long to realize the truth about the formal education which has been my life up until this point.

27 Critical Analysis

Occasionally, as a teacher, one reaches out and realizes that teaching is more than the transference of facts; the analytical and critical thought patterns of some students can be transformed. It is in the light of this transformation and realization that the above student comments were selected. Such moments of enlightenment are rare and must be celebrated. The course on *Don Quixote*, more than any other, makes demands upon students that awaken them to the falsities inherent in the world around them. While the instructor would love to claim part, or all, of the credit, it is in fact the opening of the world classics to young minds that brings this about. The ensuing discussion, if organized and stressed in optimum fashion, causes a transformational change in the mind's of both educators and educated. The future of the humanities depends upon educators providing as many opportunities as possible for such awakenings.

28 Conclusions

Teaching this hybrid course on WebCT allowed students and instructor to communicate in meaningful ways. These included in class discussions, online discussions, personal interviews, emails, and the constant exchange of ideas via regular postings. Students learned valuable lessons in organization, time management, writing and thinking skills, critical and analytical skills, and also in the need for an established protocol, first in their postings and then in their research. Subjective and objective points of view were established and discussed. Finally, the door to the larger world of scientific research and criticism was opened. Visual and textual experiences were combined, and the majority of the students learned to proceed beyond the visual (video) into the purely textual world of words.

29 Appendix: Some Relevant Web-sites

- [1] Course outline – <http://www.stu.ca/~rgmoore/courses/DonQuix.htm>
- [2] Hybrid courses http://courses.durhamtech.edu/tlc/www/html/Special_Feature/hybridclasses.htm
- [3] Hybrid courses discussion group <http://www.mcli.dist.maricopa.edu/ocotillo/retreat02/cafe.php?id=4>
- [4] Hybrid courses bibliography and examples <http://www.merlot.org/merlot/materials.htm?keywords=hybrid+courses&category=>
- [5] Society of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education presentation <http://www.stu.ca/~rgmoore/DQSTLHE.htm>

- [6] Student self-assessment essay <http://www.stu.ca/~rgmoore/Scholteach/FeverDQ.htm>
- [7] Tectonic theory <http://www.stu.ca/~rgmoore/Scholteach/GLSHahn.htm>