

Contributors

Daniel Loughran earned his doctorate from Rutgers University, with a concentration in Education, Culture, and Society. His thesis, *Equity Work Takes Courage: A Case Study of an Elementary Principal's Praxis*, was grounded in textual concepts and political themes he had explored for nearly two decades in American high school English classrooms as well as in several presentations made at Bruce Springsteen and Syracuse University academic conferences. A lifelong educator, Dan has served as the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction in the Franklin Township Public Schools in Somerset, New Jersey, since 2016.

Timothy Penner is an adjunct professor in the department of English, Theatre, Film & Media at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada where teaches courses on English literature, as well as film history and theory. His research focusses on celebrity persona construction and he has published articles on figures like Ernest Hemingway, Alfred Hitchcock, and Robert Redford

Marian Jago holds a BA from Dalhousie University and both an MA in Musicology and a PhD in Ethnomusicology from York University, where she studied under Prof. Rob Bowman. Her research focuses on Lee Konitz's pedagogical practices, Canadian jazz co-operatives, and the development of the Canadian jazz scene. She has published on these topics in journals like *The Journal of Jazz Studies* and *Jazz Research Journal*, and her book, *Live at the Cellar* (2018), was published by UBC Press. Marian also lectures on Popular Music, with an emphasis on race, gender, and music performance,

and has a special interest in American Blues, Soul, and hip-hop as a form of resistance. As an editor of *Jazz Perspectives*, a board member of the Scottish Jazz Archive, and a member of the steering committee for Documenting Jazz, she actively contributes to the jazz and popular music communities.

Nick Sansone is a Ph.D. student in Film Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He previously received his M.A. in Humanities from the University of Chicago and his B.A. in Film & Television from DePaul University. His main research interests include Bruce Springsteen and film, autism in film and television, cognitive film theory, adolescence in film and television, and the ways in which violence intersects with both adolescence and gender in American film and television. He is also a co-editor for the *Velvet Light Trap* academic journal and has taught courses on Media Production, Screenwriting, and the study of Film Comedy.

Melissa Ziobro began her career as a historian, archivist, and curator for the US Army in 2004 prior to returning to her alma mater, Monmouth University, to teach full time. She teaches over a dozen different courses, including Intro to Public History; Museums and Archives Management Basics; and Historic Site Preservation, Interpretation, and Management. In August of 2023, she became curator of the University's Bruce Springsteen Archives & Center for American Music, after having worked with the Center for many years in her faculty role.

Carrie Pitzulo is a historian of American women, gender, and sexuality. She's the author of *Bachelors and Bunnies: The Sexual Politics of Playboy* (Univ Chicago Press, 2011), and a forthcoming book on grief, spirituality, and women's work in death care. She lives in northern Colorado, but wishes she lived closer to Asbury Park.

James Tackach is a Professor Emeritus of English Literary Studies at Roger Williams University, Bristol, RI. Like Bruce Springsteen, he is a New Jersey boy.

Lucas Crawford is Canada Research Chair in Transgender Creativity and Mental Health at the University of Alberta's Augustana Faculty, where he also runs "Rewriting Ourselves," a collaborative pilot project of poetry workshops offered in psychiatric wards. Lucas is the author of the monograph *Transgender Architectonics* (Routledge 2016), as well as four poetry books, the latest of which, *Muster Points* (U of Calgary Press 2023) was honored by the Alberta Book Publishers Association with the Robert Kroetsch Award for Poetry. Music has been a through-line of Lucas's writing, and, in early 2025, he will be a musician-in-residence at the Banff Centre for the Arts. Lucas is from rural Nova Scotia.

Dialogic Praxis: Radical Pedagogy for a Runaway American Dream

Daniel Loughran
Rutgers University

Abstract

In his 1968 classic *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Brazil's heroic social reformer and educational theorist Paulo Freire argues that man's ontological vocation is to create a world that is just for all. Such transformation begins with the individual, who must first create an awakening within himself – *conscientização* – and then, upon careful reflection, take action. This thinking and action, which Freire calls *praxis*, can only occur through *dialogics*, an authentic dialogue between teacher and learners. Bruce Springsteen has conceptualized his career as an ongoing conversation with his audience (*Rolling Stone*, November 1, 2007), and I argue that Springsteen's dialogue with his fans fosters a pedagogy similar to Freire's. Both thinkers provide unique models of dialogic praxis designed for different purposes. Freire offers a direct, boots-on-the-ground, mission-oriented approach he established via "cultural circles" to help Brazilians self-actualize and become *empowered citizens*. Springsteen offers an indirect, visionary approach mediated through songwriting, concert performances, and public statements to help Americans transform themselves into *empathetic citizens*. I argue here that both models of dialogic praxis, visionary and missionary, are necessary to help citizens in the American democratic republic reclaim a shared sense of values that enable them to see each other not as enemies but as neighbors. Freire called dialogic praxis a "radical pedagogy" that I contend is needed to address the root causes of American political violence.

Introduction

Fifty years ago, when Bruce Springsteen famously wrote about a "runaway American dream," he spoke not only to the obvious economic