

ABSTRACT

COMING TO PRAXIS: CRITICAL PEDAGOGY IN A CALIFORNIA PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL

This thesis seeks to address the problem of teaching public secondary high school under the pressures of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and its increasing standardization. I argue for a critical pedagogy that works within the standards to develop a critical perspective, highlighting moments in the everyday life a high school teacher that enable me to read standards-based practices through the lens critical pedagogy. I find that problem-posing pedagogy and flexible language practices in the space of my classroom transform students' understandings of their place and relationship to the academy. I discuss the professional implications of critical pedagogy under the pressures of NCLB, exploring the shortfalls of well-intentioned legislation. This argument is attached to the broader context of the growing conversations by critical teachers who recognize that public education is crucial to the health of our communities.

Kristine Yvonne Oliveira
May 2005