

Three books on teaching for the next millennium? My choices? As a faculty member of a religious studies department at a Midwestern Catholic college for women, undergraduate classrooms are the primary locus at MY teaching. I labor to make a difference not only in how students think about things Catholic and religious, but also in how they think about themselves as women, as subjects, as agents in a complex, rapidly changing world. My three choices reflect these commitments and my assumption that the classroom is a site of transformation. The first book is *Discovering Reality: Feminist Perspectives on Epistemology, Metaphysics Methodology, and Philosophy of Science* (Sandra Harding and Merrill B. Hintikka, eds., Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1983). While not strictly speaking a book on pedagogy, *Discovering Reality*

began my move away from traditional paradigms about teaching and learning into a feminist paradigm that was self-consciously interdisciplinary and sophisticated in its thinking. My second choice is a text only in the broad sense in which the meaning of an event or action can be read analogously as text. I participated in the first Lilly Workshop on Teaching Religion, 1991-1992, sponsored by Wabash College, the Lilly Endowment, and the Midwest American Academy of Religion. We engaged in a year long process of working on a personal project (mine involved interdisciplinary method in required courses) and of reflecting on substantive philosophical questions about our individual and collective aims in teaching theology and/or religion. The conversations engaged in that year radically transformed my self-understanding. Grateful for the connections we made that year, I still draw on the article "Rhetoric, Pedagogy, and the Study of Religions" by Richard B. Miller, Laurie L. Patton, and Stephen H. Webb, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*

62/3:819-850. Besides providing me with reflections on the wide-ranging viability of a rhetorical paradigm for teaching, that text reminds me of the ongoing creative responsibility that is mine as a teaching scholar. My final selection, a slim volume of 97 pages, reflects the practical results of the Lilly Workshop.

*The Course Syllabus: A Learning-Centered Approach*

by Judith Grunert, (Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing Company, Inc., 1997), has helped me put into practice strategies from the first and second sources. Now in designing and revising courses, I ask not only "How will I organize what I want to teach," but more importantly "Whom will I teach? What do I want students to learn? What do they need to know? How can I make room for their questions? How have our local circumstances changed?"

My context keeps me accountable to academic colleagues, to the church, and also to the theoretical frameworks and political controversies of the broader feminist community. These texts on teaching, theoretical and practical, will take me well into the twenty-first century.