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### My Reflection of the Spring of 2020

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My reflection of the Spring of 2020.

My semester began similar to all other semesters before. I walked into class and I saw a few familiar faces and also, students I haven't yet gotten to know. I could tell immediately there were a lot of students who had a lot to offer. But I was battling the time of the class. The 3:10-4:30 time slot is a particularly challenging time slot. And that meant I had to bring my most enthusiastic self. I tried one of my tried and true methods of bringing food to class but that didn't seem to work. Keeping my promise to myself, I worked hard at bringing my best self to class.

The journey begins:

September:

For class, I start with Emerson because he aptly points out how we need the tools to learn. And since I am always advocating for students to find their own motivation, I do realize the so called "tools" of learning sometimes aren't always "fun" to learn (like our philosophers).

Next comes Socrates as, truly, he is one of the wisest. And he comes in handy when it times for us to self-reflect. We can this through his quote: "An unexamined life isn't worth living". Further, the Allegory of the Cave. I find myself stuck in the cave in many ways but it feels good when I pull myself out of the cave. I remember one instance in class this semester. It was a day where I could tell no one had read the assignment for class. I was at a crossroads – should I give weekly quizzes, just let it go or talk to the class about it. I chose the latter and we talked about it in class. And while it was uncomfortable to me, I felt better afterwards. And it seemed we came to some kind of agreement.

Moving right along... I am (as you all can probably tell) in favor of giving back to society. And why I think Ben Franklin is such an important philosopher. As Benjamin Franklin to Samuel Johnson, August 23, 1750: "The noblest question in the world is, 'What good may I do in it?'" \*Remember this when watching the Ken Burns video below.

Before Covid-19, class was really getting into a groove and a good groove it was. Working in groups was like watching an orchestra for me. You all worked so beautifully together. When watching your groups, I felt as though I was doing something right. Not always easy for me because I tend to be a perfectionist and want everything to be perfect. However, I could hear and see a lot of enthusiasm for discussions. I could hear a lot your diverse thoughts. I could see people listening. I could see the harmony I long for in my classes.

March 12<sup>th</sup> at 12:00:

I am sitting in a meeting and not yet informed of the physical space of the school closing. But I was pretty sure it would after hearing about U of R and RIT sending students home. I felt very unsettled. One of my faculty members who is a Buddhist said to me: we will have to take it as it comes (those were not his exact words). And I said to him: I actually prefer to have a good bitch and moan session and then move on.

By 12:30 that day, the email was out. We would be holding classes online.

Whoa! Now, I had to get into action turning my classes to online format. As I was designing my classes online, I considered if I would use Zoom. For my freshmen writing class, I knew I had to. But for my other classes, I tried to think what would be easiest for my students. Also, I considered how many other classes they were taking and what the workload would be. So I decided not to hold class by Zoom. In

retrospect, I wish I hadn't made that decision. I think Zoom would have kept a more constant connection. For that, I am sorry.

I will say, though, you all did a great job pulling it together. Your assignments were thoughtful and insightful. The best – though, hands down, were the schools and the reflections. Your schools showed me what you did learn from class and also what you think is important for our education system. And I am not sure if you knew this, but you actually used many of the philosophers we talked about in class.

The reflections were incredible. Some I cried through and some I laughed through. Our lives have changed and while some things will go back to normal, I think many of us will have a new normal. Uncertainly is the buzz word of this pandemic. And this is hard for many of us to live with.

This morning I was watching the CBS morning show and they interviewed Ken Burns (famous documentarist). He has made a ton of documentaries about different parts of our history. Here is the site: <https://www.today.com/video/ken-burns-coronavirus-will-be-comparable-to-great-depression-in-american-history-82743365948> (cut and paste)

I hope you'll watch as he talks about, most obviously, history. He doesn't agree at all with Emma Goldman. He believes we learn a lot from history. And here is why I want you to watch because he aptly talks about your part in history. Will you be one who can learn from the pandemic in a way to help others?

I kept my promise. I didn't go through every philosopher, but I do have one left. Nel (who is a she) who believes "love" belongs in the classroom. Well, I agree with her. No, not romantic love but being loving and caring for your students.

I will end my reflection and say:  
Love you all,  
Jane