



The East Nebraska Secret
Commune Social Quarterly

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with kindness, willingness,
and
hope for the future

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Hello,

Hope is not an innate resource of youth. It is something more often taught to children than adults. It is a pet dog more easily fed when you are not paying rent. And it is a natural direction to turn your head when most of your life is in front of you. But hope is not a natural spring. It is a skill to be learned and a gift to be given.

The children in your classrooms do not need a reality check. Their phones are already shouting hard truths at them every day. Cynicism and doom hangs wet in the air. Sadness sells. Information is everywhere. No one has ever had such a clear understanding of the structural, cyclical, and geological ways in which they are thoroughly fucked.

Please find them some kindness. Find them some hope. Show them that things change. Show them how.

I am not asking that you tell your students that things will get better, just as I am not asking you to smile or tolerate idiocy. I am asking that you use the critical tools at your disposal as freely in the face of hopeless cynicism as you do with childish optimism. Criticism without hope sours the mind, turning one's blood to vinegar. What good is deconstruction if you have no plans for what to do with the bricks?

Ideally, though, there is hope in criticism. A thoroughly marked up paper is an act of love. Locating and understanding the problem is part of its solution. So I will ask, quite broadly, that you teach critique in the context of social improvement. Learning something like feminist theory should be a step in the direction of a better life and a better world. Please present it that way. Because without hope, learning is only better understanding a meaningless and doomed life. What a miserable way to get nothing done.

Life is hard. But couldn't knowledge help?

Sincerely,

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