Ted Hendrickson

When, as a young college student, I encountered William E. Parker I was searching. I had a passionate interest in photography, nurtured since junior high by photo magazines and visits to museums. By high school I had the good fortune to have gained access to a professional darkroom.

What I was searching for I wasn't sure. At UConn, although I had gained valuable skills and perspective after taking two photography courses, I was still searching. I found what it was when I took Bill Parker's first "History of the Photographic Image" course. Can I separate the information presented in this course from its delivery? Perhaps not. The historical and intellectual depth of Bill's perspective gave me confidence that the choice of making photographs seriously was worthwhile and he made it compelling. Bill saw surprising connections and he communicated them with a unique voice. His mentorship and the friends I made in his orbit would be a powerful influence forever.

The second time Bill's influence came to bear I was searching for something else. Remaining in friendly contact over the years, I had become an educator and an active artist. But now there was still something missing, or maybe life's distractions and a certain amount of complacency was slowing down the creative process. When UConn started its Master of Fine Arts program in the Fall of 1988 I applied, knowing that Bill was its director. With this second round of formal encounters, laden with Jungian Psychology, historical perspective, narrative theory and, courtesy of Joyce Brodsky, semiotics and deconstruction, my work and my understanding of it deepened.

Bill's support, both personal and professional, literally changed my, and I'm sure, many other life trajectories. Thank you, William E. Parker. Tuchi che.