

Email to a Colleague

Dusty Harrington Case, October 2025

From: Michael Andrews
To: Dean Patricia Collins
Subject: FW: Drafting Something That Matters
Dean Collins,

I'm forwarding this because I'm not sure what to do with it. I've had cordial interactions with Dusty, but this email caught me off guard. I'm worried he may be struggling, and I don't know if or how to respond.

— Michael

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Dusty Harrington
To: Michael Andrews
Subject: Drafting Something That Matters
Michael,

Lately I feel like I'm lecturing from inside a tomb. The students stare, I speak, but it all feels like dust in the air. Gaza is burning and here we are dissecting theories that never saved anyone. Sometimes I wonder if my words do more harm by their emptiness.

You've hinted before that you feel the weight of this too. Maybe I'm wrong, but I think you see it — the futility, the absurdity of pretending neutrality while people die. What if we wrote something together?

Something that refuses the charade? Not another article filed away in a journal nobody reads, but a provocation. A mirror held up to the academy, smeared with ash.

I keep thinking of Gramsci in prison, scribbling by candlelight. He must have known despair too, but he refused silence. Could we do the same?

— Dusty