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Editors

International Handbook of Student Experience in Elementary and Secondary School

Springer

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in Elementary and Secondary School

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Edited by

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ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Donna E. Alvermann is Distinguished Research Professor of Language and Literacy Education at the University of Georgia. Formerly a classroom teacher in Texas and New York, her research focuses on youth's multiple literacies in and out of school. From 1992 to1997 she co-directed the National Reading Research Center, funded by the U.S. Department of Education. With over 100 articles and chapters in print, her books include *Content Reading and Literacy: Succeeding in Today's Diverse Classrooms* (4th ed.), *Popular Culture in the Classroom: Teaching and Researching Critical Media Literacy, Bridging the Literacy Achievement Gap, Grades 4–12*, and *Adolescents and Literacies in a Digital World*. A past president of the National Reading Conference (NRC), co-chair of the International Reading Association's Commission on Adolescent Literacy, and member of the 2009 NAEP Reading Framework, she currently edits *Reading Research Quarterly* and serves on the Adolescent Literacy Advisory Group of the Alliance for Excellent Education. She was elected to the Reading Hall of Fame in 1999, and is the recipient of NRC's Oscar Causey Award for Outstanding Contributions to Reading Research, the Albert Kingston Award for Distinguished Service, College Reading Association's Laureate Award, and the H.B. Herr Award for Contributions to Research in Reading Education.

Cynthia Ballenger is a literacy specialist for children from 3rd through 5th grades in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She is interested in exploring, as a practitioner and as a researcher, the intellectual strengths that children from various cultures and backgrounds bring to the academic content of schooling. She is involved in teacher research with the Cheche Konnen Center and the Brookline Teacher Researcher Seminar. Her publications include *Teaching Other People's Children* and *Regarding Children's Words: Research on Language and Literacy from the Brookline Teacher Researcher Seminar*, various articles in *Language Arts*, and most recently a chapter entitled, "I Would Sing Everyday": Skepticism and the Imagination, in *Learning, Teaching and Community* (edited by Lucinda Pease-Alvarez and Sandra R. Schecter).

Sara Bragg is a currently a Lecturer in Cultural and Media Studies at the Centre for Continuing Education, University of Sussex, UK. She is a former Media Studies teacher and completed her PhD at the Institute of Education in London. She worked with Michael Fielding on the research projects *Consulting Pupils About Teaching and Learning* (2001–3) and *Factors Influencing the Transfer of Good Practice Between Schools* (2003–4). She is the co-author with Michael Fielding of *Students as Researchers: Making a Difference* (Pearson's Publishing, 2003). She has also published on aspects of youth, media, and education in the *Journal of Popular Film and Television* and *Velvet Light Trap*; and in books including *Ill Effect: The Media/Violence Debate* (edited by Barker and Petley, 2001), *The Power of Media Education* (edited by Nowak, Abel and Ross, forthcoming), and *Young People, Sex and the Media: The Facts of Life*?, with David Buckingham (Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

Robert V. Bullough, Jr. is an Associate Director for Research in the Center for the Improvement of Teacher Education and Schooling (CITES) and Professor of Teacher Education, Brigham Young University as well as Emeritus Professor of Educational Studies, University of Utah. Interested in a wide range of topics, he is author or editor of a dozen books, including most recently (with Craig Kridel) *With Adventurous Company: Stories of the Eight Year Study*, and *Uncertain Lives: Children of Promise, Teachers of Hope*.

April Burns is a doctoral student in Social Personality Psychology at the Graduate Center of City University of New York. Her research focuses broadly on issues of privilege and subjectivity, specifically the ways in which individuals in positions of privilege come to make a commitment to social responsibility and justice. She is co-editor of *Off White: Shades of Contestation*, with Fine, Weis, Pruitt and Burns (Routledge, 2004) and author of the chapter, "The Racing of Capability and Culpability in Desegregated Schools: Discourses of Merit and Responsibility" in that volume. A contributing author to *Echoes of Brown: Youth Documenting and Performing and Legacy of Brown v. Board of Education* (Teachers College Press, 2004), she has also published in the *Journal of Social Issues, Teachers College Record* and *Feminism & Psychology*.

Elizabeth Campbell is an Associate Professor in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE/UT). She is a member of the Centre for Teacher Development at OISE/UT and the cross-disciplinary Centre for Ethics at the University of Toronto. Dr. Campbell's qualitative research work is in the areas of professional ethics and moral agency in teaching, the moral and ethical

dimensions of teaching and schooling, and teacher education. Currently, Dr. Campbell is engaged in a research project, funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, entitled, The Cultivation of Ethical Knowledge in Teaching. Her book, *The Ethical Teacher*, was published by the Open University Press in 2003. Other publications include book chapters and the following recent articles: Challenges in Fostering Ethical Knowledge as Professionalism Within Teaching Communities, *International Journal of Educational Change*, 6 (3): 207–226 (2005); Ethical Bases of Moral Agency in Teaching, *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 10(4): 409–428 (2004); Moral Lessons: The Ethical Role of Teachers, *Educational Research and Evaluation: An International Journal on Theory and Practice*, 9(1): 25–50 (2004); and Let Right Be Done: Trying to Put Ethical Standards into Practice, *Journal of Educational Policy*, 16(5): 395–411 (2001).

Paul Connolly is Professor of Education at Queen's University Belfast. He has researched and published widely in the area of social inclusion, diversity, and the early years. His previous books include: *Racism, Gender Identities and Young Children* (Routledge, 1998); *Too Young to Notice? The Cultural and Political Awareness of 3–6 Year Olds in Northern Ireland* (Community Relations Council, 2002); and *Boys and Schooling in the Early Years* (Routledge, 2004).

Alison Cook-Sather is a former high school English teacher and instructor of college composition, and she is currently Associate Professor of Education at Bryn Mawr College and Director of the Bryn Mawr/Haverford Education Program. She teaches introductory education classes, courses in pedagogical methods to undergraduates seeking state certification to teach at the secondary level. For her teaching she has been recognized with Bryn Mawr College's Rosyln R. Schwartz Teaching Award. Her main areas of research include collaborations across educational contexts and constituencies and, specifically, efforts to integrate students' perspectives into undergraduate teacher preparation. She also has also written about metaphors for learning and teaching. Selected publications include: *In Our Own Words: Students' Perspectives on School*, co-edited with Jeffrey Shultz (Rowman & Littlefield, 2001); Re(in)forming the Conversations: Student Position, Power, and Voice in Teacher Education, *Radical Teacher* 64 (2002), 21–28; Authorizing Students' Perspectives: Toward Trust, Dialogue, and Change in Education, *Educational Researcher* 31, 4 (May 2002), 3–14; Movements of Mind: *The Matrix*, Metaphors, and Re-Imagining Education, *Teachers College Record*, 105, 6 (August 2003), 946–977; and *Education Is Translation: A Metaphor for Change in Learning and Teaching* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

José (Joe) L. da Costa, Ed.D., is a Professor and Chair of the Department of Educational Policy Studies in the Faculty of Education, University of Alberta. Joe's research focuses on how educational programming and administrative structures impact student success in school. His research program has included work on pre-kindergarten, full-day kindergarten, small class-size at the grade one level, in-school mentoring, and teacher and administrator professional development. Some examples of his recent scholarly work include: *City Centre Education Project Junior High School Success Coach: Final Report*, prepared for Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton, Alberta, and the Family Centre of Northern Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta (2005); Keeping Youths in School: Policy and Program Implications, in H. Armstrong (Ed.) *Informing the Practice of School Administration in Canada*, with Smale and Burger (Detselig Enterprises Ltd., 2005); and *Survey of School Administrator Professional Development in Alberta*, a research report prepared for the Alberta Teachers' Association, Edmonton, Alberta, with Wanzare (2005).

Xiao Lan Curdt-Christiansen is a former research associate at McGill University in Montreal. Since 2005 she has been Assistant Professor at the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, where she teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in language and literacy education in socio-cultural contexts. Currently, she is involved in research into multilingual children's attitudes towards reading. Her research focuses on primary school children's literacy development in different languages from a socio-cultural perspective. Her publications have appeared in *Language Magazine: The Journal of Communication & Education, English Quarterly*, and the *Journal of Language, Culture and Curriculum*.

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Asgharzadeh, Sharon Eblaghie-Bahador, and Riyad Shahjahan (University of Toronto Press, 2006). Professor Dei is the recipient of the Race, Gender, and Class Project Academic Award, 2002. He also received the African-Canadian Outstanding Achievement in Education from the Pride Magazine in Toronto in 2003 and the City of Toronto's William P. Hubbard Award for Race Relations 2003. In October 2005 he received the ANKH Ann Ramsey Award for Intellectual Initiative and Academic Action at the Annual International Conference of the Association of Nubian Kemetic Heritage, Philadelphia, US.

Helen Demetriou obtained her PhD in developmental psychology from the Institute of Psychiatry, University of London in 1998. She is currently a Research Associate at the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge and has also lectured in developmental psychology in the Social and Political Sciences Department of the University of Cambridge. Recent research has included: *Sustaining Pupils' Progress at Year 3; Boys' Performance in Modern Foreign Languages; Friendships and Performance at Transfer and Transition*; and *Consulting Pupils about Teaching and Learning*.

Anne Haas Dyson is a former teacher of young children and, currently, a Professor of Education at Michigan State University. She teaches courses related to qualitative research methods, childhood cultures, and sociocultural issues in language and literacy education. Previously, she was on the faculty of the University of Georgia and the University of California, Berkeley, where she was a recipient of the University of California, Berkeley's Distinguished Teaching Award. She studies the childhood cultures and literacy learning of young schoolchildren. Among her publications are *Multiple Worlds of Child Writers: Friends Learning to Write; Social Worlds of Children Learning to Write in an Urban Primary School*, which was awarded the National Council of the Teaching of English's David Russell Award for Distinguished Research; *Writing Superheroes: Contemporary Childhood, Popular Culture, and Classroom Literacy*; and *The Brothers and Sisters Learn to Write: Popular Literacies in Childhood and School Cultures*. With Celia Genishi, she recently finished a book on interpretive case study methods, *On the Case: Approaches to Language and Literacy Research*.

A. Jonathan Eakle is an Assistant Professor and Reading Program Director at Johns Hopkins University. His research focuses on how young people use multiple forms of literacy for learning in classrooms and out-of-school settings. His dissertation investigation involved literacy in art museums and was directed by Donna Alvermann at the University of Georgia. For three years, Eakle served

on *Reading Research Quarterly*, where he compiled reports for the *International Research Section*. For two years, he served as research assistant on Case Technologies to Enhance Literacy Learning, a multi-site National Science Foundation funded grant. Eakle has taught in elementary and middle school classrooms and university courses in literacy education. In addition to his education experiences, Eakle is an accomplished artist with work in museum collections, and he is trained in the sciences. He has presented his work to professional conferences, including The International Reading Association, The American Education Research Association, and The National Reading Conference. He is published in *The Reading Teacher, The American Reading Forum Yearbook*, and *Reading Online*. Eakle has received honors for his scholarship, including a University of Georgia dissertation completion award.

Julia Ellis is a Professor in the Department of Elementary Education at the University of Alberta. Her research interests include: children and place; creative assignments and creative problem solving in the classroom; narrative inquiry with children and youth; mentorship, peer support and student leadership programs; and the perspectives of "difficult" students. Examples of her scholarly work include: Place and Identity for Children in Classrooms and Schools, *Journal of Canadian Association of Curriculum Studies* (in press); Creative Classroom Teaching, in J. L. Kincheloe (Ed.), *Classroom Teaching; An Introduction* (Peter Lang, 2005); and Researching Children's Place and Space, *The Journal of Curriculum Theorizing, 19(4), 118–133* (2003).

Fred Erickson is a Professor in social research methodology and the Director of Connect: A Center for Research and Innovation in Elementary Education at UCLA and Seeds University Elementary School. His research interests are in the areas of organization and conduct of face-to-face interaction, sociolinguistic discourse analysis, ethnographic research methods, study of social interaction as a learning environment, and anthropology of education. His book, *Talk and Social Theory* (Polity Press, 2004), was awarded the Outstanding Book Award for 2005 by the American Educational Research Association. Other recent publications include a number of chapters on research methodology: Definition and Analysis of Data from Videotape: Some Research Procedures and Their Rationales, in J. Green, J. Camilli, and P. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of Complementary Methods in Educational Research (3rd ed.)* (American Educational Research Association, 2004); Ethnography in Collaborative Action Research: Working with Teachers, in G. Spindler (Ed.), *New Horizons for Ethnography in Education* (Lawrence Erlbaum, 2004); and Ethnographic Description, in N. Dittmar (Ed.), *Sociolinguistics: An International Handbook of the Science of Language and Society (2nd ed.)* (de Gruyter, 2004).

Grace Feuerverger is an Associate Professor in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. A child of Holocaust survivors, Feuerverger grew up in a multicultural and multilingual home in Montreal and brings her personal and professional experiences to bear on her teaching and research work. Feuerverger's research interests focus on theoretical and practical issues of cultural and linguistic diversity, ethnic identity maintenance, and minority language learning within multicultural educational contexts, as well as on conflict resolution and peacemaking in international settings. She is the Principal Investigator of a large-scale SSHRC (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada) research study, which focuses on the school experiences of immigrant and refugee students in Toronto and Montreal. Her recent award-winning book *Oasis of Dreams: Teaching and Learning Peace in a Jewish-Palestinian Village in Israel* (Routledge/Falmer, 2001) is based on a nine-year study that she carried out as researcher in this extraordinary cooperative village, and it is about hope in the midst of deadly conflict. It is a reflexive ethnography focusing on the two bilingual, bicultural educational institutions in this place of peaceful coexistence—an elementary school where Jewish and Arab children study together, and the "School for Peace," which is a conflict resolution outreach program for Israeli and Palestinian adolescents and their teachers.

Michelle Fine is a Distinguished Professor of Psychology, Women's Studies and Urban Education at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Committed to participatory action research in schools, prisons, and communities, her writings focus on theoretical questions of social injustice: how people think about unjust distributions of resources and social practices; when they resist, and how such inequities are legitimated. Interested in the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, as well as participatory action designs, her writings also focus on questions of epistemology, methodology, and social change. Recent publications include: *Echoes: Youth Documenting and Performing the legacy of Brown v. Board of Education*, with Roberts, Torre and Bloom, Burns, Chajet, Guishard, Payne and Perkins-Munn (Teachers College Press, 2004); *Working Method: Social Injustice and Social Research*, with Weis (Routledge, 2004); *Off White: Essays on Race, Power and Resistance*, with Weis, Powell Pruitt, and Burns (Routledge, 2004); *Silenced Voices and Extraordinary Conversations*, with Weis (Teachers College Press, 2003); *Construction Sites: Excavating Race, Class and Gender with Urban Youth*, with Weis (Teachers College Press, 2001); *Speedbumps: A Student Friendly Guide to Qualitative Research*, edited with Lois Weis (Teachers College Press, 2000), and *Changing Minds: A Participatory Action Research Analysis of College in Prison, 2001, www.changingminds.ws*, with

María Elena Torre, Kathy Boudin, Iris Bowen, Judith Clark, Donna Hylton, Migdalia Martinez (Missy), Rosemarie A. Roberts, Pamela Smart, and Deborah Upegui. Interested in research with policy and advocacy implications, she has offered expert testimony in a number of cases involving race, gender and/or class discrimination, such as: Williams v. California (class action suit brought on behalf of poor and working class youth of color attending schools with structural decay; substantial teacher turnover; high levels of uncertified faculty, and inadequate instructional materials); Shannon Richie Faulkner v. the Citadel (sex discrimination at a public college); the school district in Wedowee, Alabama in which the principal canceled the prom because of "inter-racial" dating; Newberg v. School District of Philadelphia (young women suing for admission to Central High School in Philadelphia).

Michael Fullan is Professor of Policy Studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. An innovator and leader in education reform, he has helped direct a number of projects across the world designed to bring about major school improvement. In April 2004, he was appointed Special Adviser in Education to the Premier and Minister of Education of Ontario. He has published widely on the topic of educational change. His most recent books include: *Leading in a Culture of Change; Leadership and Sustainability; Breakthrough* (with Peter Hill and Carmel Crevola); and *Beyond Turnaround Leadership*.

Kathleen Gallagher is an Associate Professor and a Canada Research Chair in Urban School Research in Pedagogy and Policy in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE/UT). Dr. Gallagher's book *Drama Education in the Lives of Girls: Imagining Possibilities* (University of Toronto Press, 2000) received the American Education Research Association's book award for significant contribution to Curriculum Studies in 2001. Her recent edited collection with David Booth is entitled *How Theatre Educates: Convergences and Counterpoints with Artists, Scholars, and Advocates* (University of Toronto Press, 2003). Other recent publications include: "How Does Knowin' My Business Make You Any Safer": Critical Pedagogy in Dangerous Times, *The Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, Volume 27(2): 141–158, with Philip Lortie (2005); The Aesthetics of Representation: Dramatic Texts and Dramatic Engagement, *Journal of Aesthetic Education*. Volume 39(4) (2005); Pink . . . with Shades of Grey: Mediating Moments of Diversity in Urban Secondary Classrooms, *Westminster Studies in Education* Special Issue: Interactive and Inclusive Pedagogy, Volume 27 (2): 127–141, with Riviere (2004); The Art and Politics of Qualitative

Research in Drama Education: Creating Culture, Representing 'Reality,' *Drama Research*, Volume 4 (1): 3–18(2004); Sexual Fundamentalism and Performances of Masculinity: An Ethnographic Scene Study, *International Journal of Gay and Lesbian Issues in Education*(in press). Dr. Gallagher's research in drama continues to focus on questions of inclusion and democratic practice as well as the pedagogical possibilities of learning through the arts.

Mollie Galloway is a Research Associate at the John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities at Stanford University. Her research focuses on how school and out-of-school learning contexts can foster motivation to learn and psychosocial well-being as well as develop academic and life skills during adolescence. Mollie is also co-director of SOS-Stressed Out Students, an intervention and research study designed to help middle schools and high schools devise strategies to counter academic stress. She has been a consultant for Parks and Recreation Departments in California, and for the non-profit organization, Positive Coaching Alliance, as a youth sport trainer.

Bev Hopper began her career as a primary teacher working with children aged 5–11 years, then moved into initial teacher training, and is currently working as a Lecturer in the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge teaching Early Years and Primary Post-Graduate Certificate of Education courses. She teaches across the broad area of Professional Studies and is extensively involved in the professional preparation of trainee teachers both within the Faculty and in schools. Bev also teaches primary Physical Education. Her research interests are in the areas of pupil and teacher voice. She is currently working on projects related to the importance of physical activity for children in school, the recruitment of teachers, teacher status, and the impact of the widening of routes into gaining a teaching qualification.

Carol Anne Janzen is a Ph.D. candidate in education, University of Alberta. She teaches Religious and Moral Education at Acadia Divinity College, Acadia University in Nova Scotia. Her areas of interest are children's spiritual formation, peace and justice education, and cultural responsiveness in religious education. She is presently researching the role of sacred space and place in the spiritual lives of children. With degrees in colonial and Canadian history, Carol Anne has contributed biographies to the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (University of Toronto Press) and has conducted research in Canadian educational history. She has also participated in studies of mentorship programs for at-risk elementary pupils and the role of mentoring in clergy health and wellness.

Bob Jeffrey has carried out research in primary/elementary schools since 1992 at The Open University, England, in conjunction with Professor Peter Woods and Dr. Geoff Troman. Their main focus has been teachers' work and lives and in particular creative teaching and learning. In recent years, Bob has focused on students' creative learning, including the co-ordination of a ten-nation research project across Europe. His current research (2006–2008) involves the examination of primary teachers' careers, commitment, and identity, and the effects of creativity and performativity (target led) policies on primary teachers, students, and parents. Among his publications are *Testing Teachers: The Effects of School Inspections on Primary Teachers* (with Peter Woods, Falmer, 1998), *The Creative School*, with Peter Woods (Routledge, 2003), and two edited books, one entitled, *Creative Learning Practices: European Experiences* (Tufnell Press, 2006) and the other entitled, *Methodological issues and Practices in Ethnography*, co-edited with G. Jeffrey Troman and G. Walford (JAI Press, 2005).

Makeba Jones works at the University of California, San Diego as an education researcher for the Center for Research on Educational Equity, Assessment and Teaching Excellence (CREATE) and as one of the directors of the San Diego Area Writing Project, an affiliate of the National Writing Project. Her research interests include education reform, educational equity and access, and student voice and identity. A few of her recent publications include: Classroom Spaces for Student Inquiry: Understanding Teaching and Learning from the Student Perspective, in M. Pollock (Ed.), *Everyday Antiracism: Concrete Ways to Successfully Navigate the Relevance of Race in School* (The New Press, forthcoming, 2007); Students' Perspectives on Tracking and Detracking, *Theory into Practice*, with Yonezawa (in press); and Student Voice, Cultural Change: Using Inquiry in School Reform, *Journal of Equity and Excellence in Education*, with Yonezawa (2002).

Joe L. Kincheloe is Professor of Education at the City University of New York Graduate Center. He is the author of numerous books and articles about pedagogy, research, education and social justice, racism, class bias, and sexism, issues of cognition and cultural context, and educational reform. His books include: *Teachers as Researchers; Toil and Trouble; Getting Beyond the Facts: Teaching Social Studies/Social Sciences in the Twenty-first Century; The Sign of the Burger: McDonald's and the Culture of Power; and Changing Multiculturalism* (with Shirley Steinberg). His co-edited works include: *White Reign: Deploying Whiteness in America* and *Students as Researchers* (both with Shirley Steinberg) and the Gustavus Myers Human Rights award winner: *Measured Lies: The Bell Curve Examined* (with Shirley Steinberg). His next

three books—*Urban Education: An Encyclopedia, Metropedagogy*, and *City Kids: Understanding Them, Appreciating Them, and Teaching Them* (all co-edited with doctoral student Kecia Hayes)—make use of student research and scholarship.

Carol Leroy is an Associate Professor in the Department of Elementary Education and the Director of the Reading and Language Centre at the University of Alberta. As a teacher, she worked with children in cross-cultural settings in Kenya and Canadian aboriginal communities. Her research focuses on the literacy needs of children at-risk because of difficulties arising from their social circumstances. She has carried out research in several urban and rural schools serving children in both Alberta and Saskatchewan, and she has recently completed a project on a group mentorship program for youth in an urban area. Examples of her scholarly work include: School Culture and Program Support for Literacy-based Mentorship: A Study of a Volunteer Program in an Urban Elementary School, *International Journal of Learning, 9*, 265–275, with Ellis, and da Costa (2004); Teachers' Perspectives on the Family Backgrounds of Children "At Risk," *McGill Journal of Education*, 36(1), 45–60, with Symes (2001); and Revisiting Resistance: Girls' Interaction and Literacy in an Inner-city Classroom, *Journal of Thought*, 34(1), 51–64 (1999).

Ben Levin is Deputy Minister of Education for the Province of Ontario, a position he holds on leave as a Canada Research Chair at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. His career includes extensive experience in government and in academia. He is author or co-author of four books—most recently, *Governing Education* (University of Toronto Press, 2005) and more than 100 articles. He was the advisor for Sharon Pekrul's Masters degree.

Philip Lortie completed his M.A. in 2005 at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. His thesis was an autoethnography titled, "Keeping it 'Real': Masculinity, Performance, and Drama." Concurrent to his graduate work, Mr. Lortie taught Drama at OISE/UT in the Pre-Service Teacher Education program and assisted Dr. Gallagher in her research of drama within urban school settings. His previous publication is "How Does Knowin' My Business Make You Any Safer": Critical Pedagogy in Dangerous Times, *The Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, 27(2): 141–158, with K. Gallagher (2005). Prior to his work in education, Mr. Lortie co-created, directed, and acted in several professional and semi-professional theatrical productions, primarily in the U.S. He plans on returning to high school to teach full-time and to realize other creative, educational projects.

Mary H. Maguire is a former secondary school English teacher, and currently, she is a Professor in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education at McGill University. She teaches courses in Qualitative and Ethnographic Methods, Multilingual Literacies in Multicultural contexts and Foundations of Second Language Education. For the past two decades, she has been researching the application of sociocultural theory and integration of Vygotskian and Bakhtinian approaches in ethnographic studies of bilingual/multilingual children's cultural positioning and identity construction in home and school and heritage language contexts. Among her recent publications are: What If You Talked to Me? I Could Be Interesting! Ethical Considerations in Engaging with Bilingual/Multilingual Child Participants in Human Inquiry, *Forum Qualitative Social Research/Sozialforschung*, Vol. 6. No. 4. Art.4 http:://www. qualitative-research.net/fqqs-texte/1–05/05–1–4e.htm pp 1–17 (2005); The Chameleon Character of Multilingual Literacy Portraits: Re-Searching in "Heritage" Language Places and Spaces, in Anderson, Kendrick, Rogers, and Smythe (Eds.), *Portraits of Literacy Across Families, Communities and Schools*, with Beer, Attarian, Baygin, Curdt-Christiansen, and Yoshida (Erlbaum, 2005); and Identity and Agency in Primary Children's Cultural Worlds: Third Space, in Cohen, McAlister, Ralstad, and MacSwan (Eds.), *Proceedings of The 4th International Symposium on Bilingualism* (Cascadilla Press, 2004).

Wayne Martino is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Western Ontario. Previously, he taught in the School of Education at Murdoch University, Perth, Western Australia. His research has involved interviewing and surveying adolescent boys and girls in Australian schools. He co-directed a major research project for the Australian government entitled, "Addressing the Educational Needs of Boys" (2000–2001) and was one of the chief investigators for a study funded by the Australia Research Council entitled, "Productive Pedagogies, Productive Schools and Gender Reform" (2003–2004). His research has been published in the following books with Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli: *So What's a Boy: Addressing Issues of Masculinity and Schooling* (Open University Press) and *Being Normal is the Only Way to Be: Adolescent Girls' and Boys' Perspectives on Gender and School* (Allen & Unwin). His latest book with Chris Kendall is entitled, *Gendered Outcasts and Sexual Outlaws* (Haworth Press).

Jerry McClelland is an Associate Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Minnesota in the United States. She teaches courses in research methodologies; parent education; and family, youth, and community education. Her research is guided by questions about

the meaning of lived experience. She has researched parents' experiences with schools, which resulted in the following journal publications: Knowing and Being Known: Parents' Experiences with Rural Schools; Standing Up for a Son at School: Experiences of a Mexican Immigrant Mother (with Chen Chen); and Sending Children to Kindergarten: A Phenomenological Study of Mothers' Experience. A second area of research focuses on coercion in learning. Manuscripts are in progress on students' experience of coercion in relationships with their teachers (with Jane Plihal and Karin Dahlberg) and divorcing parents' experience being mandated by the courts to attend parent education (with Jane Plihal). A related project is in progress on middle school students' experience with school rules.

Milbrey McLaughlin is the David Jacks Professor of Education and Public Policy at Stanford University. Professor McLaughlin is Co-Director of the Center for Research on the Context of Teaching, an interdisciplinary research center engaged in analyses of how teaching and learning are shaped by teachers' organizational, institutional, and social-cultural contexts. McLaughlin also is Executive Director of the John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities, a partnership between Stanford University and Bay Area communities to build new practices, knowledge, and capacity for youth development and learning both in communities and at Stanford. She is the author or co-author of books, articles, and chapters on education policy issues, contexts for teaching and learning, productive environments for youth, and community-based organizations. Her books include: *School Districts and Instructional Renewal*, with Amy Hightower, Michael Knapp, and Julie Marsh (Teachers College Press, 2002); *Communities of Practice and the Work of High School Teaching*, with Joan Talbert (University of Chicago Press, 2001); *Community Counts: How Youth Organizations Matter for Youth Development* (Public Education Fund Network, 2000); *Teacher Learning: New Policies, New Practices*, with Ida Oberman (Teachers College Press, 1996); *Urban Sanctuaries: Neighborhood Organizations in the Lives and Futures of Inner-City Youth*, with Merita A. Irby and Juliet Langman (Jossey-Bass, 1994; 2001); *Identity and Inner-City Youth: Beyond Ethnicity and Gender*, with Shirley Brice Heath (Teachers College Press, 1993); *Teaching For Understanding: Challenges for Policy and Practice*, with David K. Cohen and Joan E. Talbert (Jossey-Bass, 1993); and *Teachers' Work*, with Judith Warren Little (Teachers College Press, 1993).

Dana L. Mitra is an Assistant Professor in the department of Education Policy Studies at the Pennsylvania State University. Her research interests include youth-adult partnerships, student voice, school-community collaboration,

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Bill Nicholl is a Lecturer at The Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge. His subject specialization is Design and Technology at the secondary level (11–19). He is currently Principal Investigator of a three-year research project on aspects of creativity in Design and Technology. One line of enquiry focuses on pupils' perspectives on creativity and motivation to learn and considers how the research data can inform classroom practice. Before lecturing at Cambridge, Bill taught for nine years in two inner London state comprehensive schools. He has recently co-authored a book, *Re-building Engagement through the Arts: Responding to Disaffected Students*, (Pearson Publishing, 2005). Earlier this year Bill presented at a Department for Education and Skills Conference in a session entitled, *Personalised Learning, Student Voice, Student Engagement*.

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In 2004/2005, she was a teaching assistant at the Institute for Women's Studies and Gender Studies (New College University of Toronto) and was nominated for the University of Toronto Teaching Assistants' Excellence Award. She has also worked as a teacher education program assistant in the Teacher Education Program at OISE/UT. Her forthcoming publications include: Rethinking Gender-neutral Approaches in Post-secondary Institution Accessibility Plans, *International Journal of Inclusive Education* (2006) and *The Transformative and Uncolonizing Journey: An Inward/Outward Connection*, co-edited with Edmund O'Sullivan and Njoki Wane (Palgrave Macmillan, in press).

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Echoes of Brown: Youth Documenting and Performing the Legacy of Brown V. Board of Education (Teacher College Press, 2004); 'Dear Zora:' A Letter to Zora Neale Hurston 50 Years After Brown, *Teachers College Record*; as well as a dissertation grounded in participatory action research model entitled, *The Street Life Project–How Street Life Oriented U. S. Born African Men Demonstrate Notions of Resiliency in the Face of Inadequate Economic and Educational Opportunity.*

Janette Pelletier is an Associate Professor in the Department of Human Development and Applied Psychology and the Institute of Child Study at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. Her research projects include longitudinal studies of parent involvement in early education, family literacy, and the cognitive aspects of young children's early writing development among L1 and L2 learners. Selected recent publications include: Design, Implementation and Outcomes of a School Readiness Program for Diverse Families, *The School Community Journal*, 15 (1), 89–116, with Carl Corter (2005); Action, Consciousness and Theory of Mind: Children's Ability to Coordinate Story Characters' Actions and Thoughts, *Early Education and Development*, 15 (1), 5–22, with Janet Astington (2004); and Understanding Young Children's Theories about Print to Enhance Writing in the Early School Years, in S. Peterson (Ed.), *Untangling Some Knots in Teaching Writing*, with Lasenby (International Reading Association, 2003).

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Denise Clark Pope is a Lecturer at Stanford University School of Education. She specializes in curriculum studies, qualitative research methods, and pedagogy that promotes student engagement and understanding. Currently, she

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Elisabeth Richards has taught courses in the areas of school policy, the sociology of education, teachers' work, and English as a second language at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, the University of Waterloo, The University of Western Ontario and Seoul National University. Her areas of research interest include multicultural literacy, first and second language acquisition, marginality, inclusive education, and biculturalism. In 2001, she along with her co-writers Johanna Wyn and Sandra Acker won the Canadian Association of Foundations in Education (CAFE) Award for their article entitled, Making a Difference: Women in Management in Australian and Canadian Faculties of Education, *Gender and Education*, Volume 12 (4): 435–447. Other recent publications include an in-press chapter (with Sandra Acker) entitled, Collegiality and Gender in Elementary School Teachers' Workplace Cultures: A Tale of Two Projects, in *Women and Teaching: Global Perspectives on the Feminization of a Profession* (edited by R. Cortina and S. Roman Gago) and a paper with Sze entitled, Inclusive Education: A Marginal Teaching Situation?, in the Conference Proceedings for the Session for Special Needs and Studies in Inclusive Education, Hong Kong Institute for Studies in Education, Hong Kong, Dec 8–10, 2005.

Carol Rodgers is an Assistant Professor of education at the University at Albany, State University of New York. Her research interests include the history of progressive teacher education, the roles of observation and description in a teacher's learning to be present, and John Dewey. Her publications include: Attending to Student voice: The Impact of Descriptive Feedback on Learning and Teaching, *Curriculum Inquiry* (in press); Presence in Teaching. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, (in press); and Seeing Student Learning: Teacher Change and the Role of Reflection, *Harvard Educational Review* (2002).

Beth C. Rubin is Assistant Professor of Education at the Graduate School of Education at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. A former high school teacher, her research focuses on understanding the intersection of classroom

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Carolyn M. Shields is Professor and Head of the Department of Educational Organization and Leadership at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. She holds a PhD in Educational Administration from the University of Saskatchewan, Canada. Prior to taking a university position, Dr. Shields worked in numerous cultural settings in the K-12 school system, across Canada. She has recently served on several ministerial advisory boards and completed terms as president of the Canadian Association for Studies in Educational Administration and as a board member for the Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration and Management. Her research and teaching interests relate to leadership for academic excellence and social justice in diverse settings. She has published five books and over 90 articles in addition to having made hundreds of presentations to academic and practitioner groups.

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co-edited with Alison Cook-Sather (Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), and *Challenges of Multicultural Education: Teaching and Taking Diversity Courses*, co-edited with Norah Peters-Davis (Paradigm Publishers, 2005), include writing by middle school, high school, and college students. His current work focuses on undergraduate general education curriculum.

John Smyth has recently been appointed as Research Professor of Education, School of Education, University of Ballarat, Australia. At the time of writing this chapter he held the Roy F. & Joann Cole Mitte Endowed Chair in School Improvement, Texas State University-San Marcos. He also is also Emeritus Professor, Flinders University of South Australia and holds positions as Senior Research Scholar, Wilf Malcolm Institute of Educational Research, University of Waikato, New Zealand, and Adjunct Professor, School of Education, Charles Darwin University, Australia. He previously held the Foundation Chair of Teacher Education and was Associate Dean of Research, School of Education, Flinders University, and was Director of the Flinders Institute for the Study of Teaching for 13 years. He is author/editor of 15 books the latest (with McInerney) is entitled *Teachers in the Middle: Reclaiming the Wasteland of the Adolescent Years of Schooling* (2007, Peter Lang Publishing) —a report of how some schools keep young people engaged in schooling. He recently completed the largest study of its kind undertaken in Australia that accessed the voices of students around early school leaving in a reported entitled *'Dropping Out' Drifting Off, Being Excluded: Becoming Somebody Without School.* (2004, Peter Lang Publishing) (with Hattam and others). He is currently involved in two major research projects funded by the Australian Research Council: one is investigating the conditions that support and sustain students in disadvantaged high schools towards completing their schooling, and the second is exploring school and community forms of capacity building that assists school reform in schools working in challenging circumstances. His research interests include: policy ethnographies of schooling, issues of social justice, and policy sociology of students' lives and teachers' work.

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Provocateurs: Reform-minded Leaders for Schools of Education, co-edited with Howey and Zimpher (American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, 1998); *Children and their Curriculum: The Perspectives of Primary and Elementary School Children*, co-edited with Pollard and Filer (Falmer; 1997); and *Making a Difference about Difference: The Lives and Careers of Racial Minority Immigrant Teachers* co-edited with Bascia and Goodson (Garamond Press, 1996).

Pat Thomson is Professor of Education and Director of Research at The University of Nottingham and an Adjunct Professor at the University of South Australia. Her research interests are broad, but they are held together by a commitment to social justice and curiosity about questions of power, place, identity, voice, and agency. A former school principal and system policymaker in South Australia, she retains a research interest in the work of school principals and in policies that make a positive difference for children and young people who have historically missed out on the benefits of education. Her current research includes a primary school ethnography examining inclusive pedagogies and the creative arts; critical interrogations of 'pupil voice'; ongoing work with a high school student research team; and a study of the provisions made for students permanently excluded from school. Recent publications include *Schooling the Rustbelt Kids: Making the Difference in Changing Times* (Allen and Unwin, 2002); *Towards a Public Curriculum*, edited with Alan Reid (Postpressed, 2003), 'My Special Little House': Reforming the Risky Geographies of Middle School Girls at Clifftop College, in Gwynedd Lloyd (Ed.), *Problem Girls: Understanding and Supporting Troubled and Troublesome Young Women*, with Virgina McQuade and Kerry Rochford (RoutledgeFalmer, 2005) and *Helping Doctoral Students Write: Pedagogies for Supervision* with Barbara Kamler (Routledge, 2006).

Theresa A. Thorkildsen is Professor of Education and Psychology at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). She studies students' motivation and social development by paying particular attention to moral engagement in school. To do this well, Terri has also become an expert in methods of measurement and research design. She is the co-author of *Motivation and the Struggle to Learn: Responding to Fractured Experience* (Allyn & Bacon, 2002) and author of *Fundamentals of Measurement in Applied Research* (Allyn & Bacon, 2005). She is also co-editor of *Reasons for Learning: Expanding the Conversation on Student-Teacher Collaboration* (Teachers College Press, 1995) and *Nurturing Morality* (Kluwer Academic, 2004). Terri's skill at interdisciplinary research led to her to become associate editor for *Child Development* and an editorial board

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Max van Manen is a Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta, Canada. His research interests include the phenomenology of writing online, the epistemology of professional practice, qualitative human science methods, the pedagogical task of teaching, the importance of recognition in teaching and learning, the primacy of the pedagogical relation, the phenomenology of the body in illness and health, and various aspects of hermeneutic phenomenological inquiry and writing. Max van Manen teaches graduate courses in qualitative research methods, pedagogy, and curriculum studies. Books include: *Researching Lived Experience: Human Science for an Action Sensitive Pedagogy; The Tact of Teaching: The Meaning of Pedagogical Thoughtfulness; The Tone of Teaching: The Language of Pedagogy; Writing in the Dark: Phenomenological Studies in Interpretive Inquiry*; and co-authored with Bas Levering *Childhood's Secrets: Intimacy, Privacy, and the Self Reconsidered*. The childhood's secrets project involved collecting, from 14–16 year old Canadian students, several hundred written accounts of memories of an early secrecy experience. The study shows how ordinary (rather than pathological) childhood secrets play a critical role in the development of self-identity,

inner life, personal autonomy, and relational competence. The book has been translated into six languages, including Chinese.

Nilofar Aziz Vazir is an Assistant Professor and Coordinator of the Master of Education Programmes, and Chair of the Academic Review Committee at The Aga Khan University – Institute for Educational Development (IED), Karachi, Pakistan. Her areas of interest and expertise in teaching are early childhood education and development, curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment, and biographical and childhood research. Currently, she is involved in three research projects: Impact of Donor—Funded In-Service Teacher Education Programmes (1990–2002) in Sindh, Pakistan; Effects of Natural Disasters "Earthquake" on children's lives in the Northern Areas of Pakistan; and Being and Becoming Teacher. Prior to joining the IED, she served as a teacher, principal, and academic consultant in a large network of private schools. She has published articles entitled: "Increasing the Angle of Education Reform in Pakistan through Professional Development"; "Curriculum as Practiced in Pakistan"; "Research Ethics: Significance, Application and Obligation to the Practice of Research"; and "Researching Students' Lived Experiences: Challenges and Dilemmas" (in press). She was honored by the Al-Murtaza School System in recognition of her continuous guidance, support, and inspirational role in promoting professional development in the Al-Murtaza School Network.

Sandra Weber is Professor of Education at Concordia University in Montreal where she teaches courses on school curriculum, image-based research methods, children's toys and popular culture, media literacy, gender, and how children use new technologies in their everyday lives. Co-director of the *Image and Identity Research Collective* (see www.iirc.mcgill.ca), she is also Principal Investigator of the *Digital Girls Research Project* (www.digitalgirls.org). Her passions include the popular culture of childhood, arts-based visual methods, the roles of clothes and the bodies in schooling, and searching for ways to involve children more actively in research. One of her goals is to make research less hierarchical and more accessible to the public through film, performance, and collaborations with others. Dr. Weber is author or co-editor of four books, including *That's Funny, You Don't Look Like A Teacher; Reinventing Ourselves as Teachers*; and *Just Who Do We Think We Are*, and she is author or co-author of nearly a hundred articles and book chapters, including one co-authored with her 10-year-old niece. Sandra has fond memories of her career as an elementary school teacher in a variety of settings, including a tiny country schoolhouse in Quebec's Gaspé Peninsula.

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hensive School Reform models (Middle Start, Onward to Excellence II, Talent Development, Different Ways of Knowing, and the Whole Schools Initiative). Clients include the federal government, private foundations (e.g., Public Education Foundation, PEW Charitable Trusts, Kellogg, Ford, and Kenan Institute for the Arts), and universities (e.g., Johns Hopkins, Harvard University, University of Pennsylvania, University of North Carolina). The primary goal of their work is to produce information that will be helpful to schools and assistance agencies as they refine their approaches to improving learning for all students. Recent publications include: *Effort and Excellence in Urban Classrooms: Expecting— and Getting—Success with All Students*, co-authored with Belinda Williams (Teachers College Press, 2002), and *Listening to Urban Kids: School Reform and The Teachers They Want* (SUNY Press, 2001).

Susan Yonezawa is an Assistant Project Research Scientist at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) Center for Research in Educational Equity, Assessment and Teaching Excellence (CREATE). Her past work has involved studying equity-minded policies such as tracking and detracking, post affirmative action efforts by universities, and student voice. Dr. Yonezawa's work on student voice has focused on using students' voices as a wedge to drive forward structural and cultural changes within educational equity reforms in secondary schools. She has authored several journal articles and book chapters on the importance and impact students' voices can have on efforts of educational change. Dr. Yonezawa's present work focuses on the implementation of conversion models on comprehensive high schools; that is, the break-up of large, urban high schools into autonomous, small secondary schools. While she is focused in part on the kinds of system-wide changes districts and schools must adopt to facilitate such a change, as part of this work, she remains heavily interested in students' involvement in the reform as leaders and recipients of it.

DENNIS THIESSEN

RESEARCHING STUDENT EXPERIENCES IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL: AN EVOLVING FIELD OF STUDY

INTRODUCTION TO THE HANDBOOK

The study of student experiences in elementary and secondary school has evolved considerably, especially over the last forty-five years. Since 1990, the number of studies in this field of study has significantly increased, the nature and scope of the research has expanded, and the methodology used to frame the study of student experience has become quite diverse. Furthermore, there is a wider range of published reviews of the literature, edited volumes of recent research, and special issues of journals on key themes or issues, providing still further evidence of the burgeoning research on student experience. The recent studies document what students do in school, how schools influence the development of students, how students address the challenges and circumstances of successive waves of school reform, and how students make sense of, adapt to, and even improve the unique and complex world of school. Despite this robust literature, the field of study focused on student experience in schools does not yet have a handbook that defines the current state of research in the field, until now.

A handbook, especially a first handbook, needs to define and take stock of the research in the field, to identify and respond to whatever problems or limitations exit, and, where warranted, to lay the foundation for future research on student experience in schools. An assessment of the state of research in the field reveals the following problems or limitations:

- *Unclear or Isolated Statements of Purpose*. A number of researchers either leave their purpose unstated or express a statement of purpose that does not readily link to other studies with the same or similar intent. This lack of clarity or disconnect with the wider literature makes it difficult to compare the research with or to build on previous studies (for a discussion on purposes of research on student experience, see the section below called "Why Study Student Experience").
- *Unevenness in the Quality, Focus, and Program of Research*. The quality of the published research is inconsistent. The focus of the studies

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varies, with some topics examined with greater frequency and depth than others. Not all researchers maintain a program of research in this area; a significant number have published only one study on the experiences of students in schools. The unevenness in the quality and the focus of research creates some instability in the field, while the varied levels of commitment to the field limit the development of a community of researchers.

- *Variation in the Extent to Which the Research Addresses Student Experiences in Relation to School*. As outlined in the section below (see "Studies of Children and Studies of Student Experiences in Elementary and Secondary School"), not all studies of students are situated within the life of a school. For example, some studies in student thinking examine the ideas and constructs of children independent of the contextual complexities of classrooms and schools. While such studies may be valuable for other purposes (or may have some connection to how students engage in school), they are not directly or explicitly informative about the ways in which student experience school.

- *Limited Efforts to Synthesize or Build on Previous Studies*. As noted above, there is a noticeable increase in the number of literature reviews, special issues of journals, and edited volumes focused on students' experiences in school. Chapters in encyclopedias or other handbooks are relatively infrequent. In addition, researchers do not always provide an extensive review of the relevant literature in their articles or chapters, preferring instead to point out that not much research has been done in their area. The infrequent analysis of previous research limits the development of a knowledge base in the field.

- *Regional Emphasis*. To date, few studies cite or build on student experience research conducted in other contexts or parts of the world. Though some studies have crossed national boundaries (e.g., Willis, 1977), most researchers rely on studies within their own borders or contexts to frame their work (e.g., British researchers tend to cite mainly British studies, American researchers tend to cite mainly American studies).

In response to the above problems or limitations, this Handbook strives to accomplish the following: highlight the work of both new and experienced scholars in the field, most of whom have conducted more than one study in this field; provide a comprehensive framework for understanding (and in this volume organizing) the research into student experience; cover a broader range of themes and issues than has been covered in other edited volumes; include studies conducted in seven countries and on five continents; and focus squarely on research into student experiences in elementary and secondary school.

In the remaining sections of the chapter, I further define the key features of the field of study by discussing the differences (and general relationships) between studies of children and studies of student experiences in elementary and secondary school, review the purposes of studies of student experience, examine three different orientations to the study of student experience and some of the specific research associated with each orientation, and end with a description of the organization and format of the Handbook.

STUDIES OF CHILDREN AND STUDIES OF STUDENT EXPERIENCES IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL

There have been many important studies of children within such disciplines as psychology or in the emerging, interdisciplinary field of childhood studies. These studies have provided valuable insights into the nature and development of children and into the changing ways of understanding children, their social and cultural worlds, and their thoughts and actions. To varying degrees, the evolution of the study of children in these other disciplines has either laid the foundation for or developed in tandem with the study of student experience in education. For example, Paris and Cunningham (1996), in their review of the historical connections between developmental and educational psychology, note the early influence of the child study movement and intelligence testing in the first half of the twentieth century and the successive influences of behaviourism, information processing theories, and the distinct yet interrelated generation and application of cognitive, constructivist, and cultural theories in the second half of the twentieth century. The developments in the latter part of the last century increasingly focus on children as theorists and knowledge builders and on the situated and embedded nature of their learning—views of children and their learning that are consistent with much of the research into student experience in schools.

Coinciding with the rapid rise in research into student experiences in schools over the last decade is the development of childhood studies as a field of inquiry (Kehily, 2004; Montgomery, 2003; Stainton Rogers, 1992). Broadly defined by a perspective of childhood as a social and cultural category and an image of children as active social agents, the field of childhood studies has brought together scholars from such disciplines and areas of study as sociology (James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998; James & Prout, 1997; Jenks, 1992; Mayall, 2002), history (Cunningham, 1991; Hawes & Hiner, 1990; Sutherland, 1997), and policy studies, especially related to children's rights (Alderson, 2000; Howe & Covell, 2005; Lansdown, 2001). Some of these disciplines or areas of study have been involved in research on children for some time. For example, in

the historical studies of children and youth in Canada, research has shifted from an interest among researchers in the 1950s in the impact of institutions such as mass schooling on the lives of children, to studies in the 1960-to-1980 period on the influence of class, culture, or gender on the social location and power relationships of children in school, the family, and community, to inquiries in the 1980-to-2000 period into the intersection of gender, class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and religion with young people's lives at home, school, or in the workplace (Parr, 2003). These themes, and the changing emphases in these themes over the last fifty years, correspond to some of the major themes in the research into student experience in schools (see below, "Three Orientations to the Study of Student Experience").

The findings from the above studies of children are often relevant to how students learn and develop in school. The results from some of these studies situate the careers of students in school within the broader circumstances of their lives; provide comparative insights into how the worlds of children inside and outside school vary across time, situation, and location; illuminate how children think about various aspects of the world around them, sometimes on topics, issues, or themes studied in school; describe how children grow or change physically, emotionally, socially, and mentally over the course of their childhood and youth; or analyze the legal, moral, or political rights of children in the various realms of their lives. For the most part, however, the findings from this research are not derived from a close examination of the daily experiences of children in elementary and secondary schools. The unique conditions of life in classrooms are not taken into account. The views of children as they are formed within the changing complexities of their everyday world at school are not always or fully explored. Rather, the insights from the above studies about the experiences of children as students in school are based on inferences or applications argued as implications of the findings of the study. While the wider literature on studies of children has clearly made important contributions to our knowledge of children, this research has not consistently offered constructs that enhance our understanding of how children make sense of and engage in their lives as students.

In their review of the research on "Students' Experiences of Curriculum," Erickson and Shultz (1992) make a similar observation about education studies in the 1980s and early 1990s. In this research, students "are shown as *doing* in the classroom rather than as *thinking, intending*, and *caring*" (p. 480). Erickson and Shultz conclude:

In sum, virtually no research has been done that places student experience at the center of attention. We do not see student interests and their known and unknown fears. We do not see

the mutual interest of students and teachers or see what the student or the teacher thinks or cares about during the course of that mutual interest. If the student is visible at all in a research study she is usually viewed from the perspective of adult educator's interests and ways of seeing, that is, as failing, succeeding, motivated, mastering, unmotivated, responding, or having a misconception. Rarely is the perspective of the student herself explored . . . Much further research needs to be done to uncover the kinds of variations in student experience that may obtain within and across subject matters and within and across grade levels. Indeed, we have suggested here that the evolution of student experience with curriculum should be studied across the entire student career in school. We know relatively little about the social and cognitive ecology of student experience of curriculum. How does this vary with the social backgrounds of students and teachers, and by types of schools in which they learn and teach? Presently we do not understand how intellect, will, culture, and politics meet at the intersection of curriculum materials, classroom arrangements, pedagogical approaches, and students, within whose subjective experience learning presumably takes place (pp. 467–468, 478).

Thus, some educational studies may centre on students but do not necessarily capture their experiences of schooling. For example, while the study of students' conceptions or misconceptions of scientific phenomena may clarify how students' ideas are different from those of their teacher, the research does not directly explicate how these concepts of students affect their learning in or perspective on the science classroom or the relationships they establish with teachers or fellow students in order to learn and apply these concepts (Erickson & Shultz, 1992, p. 474).

Following Dewey's conception of educational experience (Erickson & Shultz, 1992; Schubert & Lopez, 1994), studies of student experiences in elementary and secondary school have certain features that distinguish them from studies of children. Studies of student experience critically examine the individual and collective worlds of students, with a particular focus on how they navigate and negotiate the dynamic and multi-dimensional demands of their classroom and school lives in relation to the following areas:
- range of actions and interactions of students (e.g., in terms of subjects, teaching approaches, assessments, etc.);
- relational or social engagements of students in various contexts (e.g., teacher-student relationships, student-student relationships, social norms and routines, classroom culture, etc.);
- ways in which the experiences of students in classrooms and schools intersect with their lives outside school (e.g., home-school connections, links to community groups or activities, ethnic or racial identity, etc.); and
- how students make sense of what happens in or in relation to school (e.g., perspectives on teaching or teachers, views of learning in specific situations or about certain topics, voice in classroom decision making, etc.).

Each of the chapters in the Handbook addresses one or more of the above features. Where relevant to the context or nature of the experiences of students in school, some chapters also note the links to the wider literature in the study of children. But the primary focus of the authors in the Handbook is on the study of student experience in the areas outlined above.

WHY STUDY STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Since 1960, the core purposes of research on student experience in schools have included the following:
- To discover and describe the nature of students' thoughts, feelings, and actions in classrooms and schools;
- To investigate how students' thoughts, feelings, and actions interact with the thoughts, feelings, and actions of their teachers;
- To portray the social worlds of students in classrooms and schools and to examine the relationship between their social worlds and their academic practices and progress;
- To critically inquire into how the identities of an increasingly diverse group of students are influenced by what happens in classrooms and schools;
- To probe how students in different locations adapt to the structures, expectations, and work of classrooms and schools;
- To explore the challenges and possibilities of student engagement in the development of educational programs, policies, and practices; and
- To document and support the engagement of students in decisions and actions designed to improve their own learning, the practices of teachers, or the organization and operation of classrooms and schools.

The historical roots of the above research purposes reach further back than 1960. The study of student experience followed and eventually became intertwined with the long line of educators and scholars who have argued that what matters in schools is centred on students, their daily actions and interactions, and the ways they make sense of their lives. Much of this argument stems from a longstanding and, to some degree, ongoing debate between two competing images of students in school—one within which students are seen as unknowing neophytes who benefit from the wisdom passed on to them by knowledgeable teachers (transmission image), and the other, favoured by educators and scholars who advocate the importance of school experience, where students are capable and active agents in their own development who benefit from a nurturing and enabling learning environment (discovery-based image).

(For further discussions of these two images, see Cook-Sather, 2002a; Shuell, 1996.) The following chart represents the various labels used to describe these two images:

Transmission Images	Discovery-Based Images
Tabula Rosa/Blank Slate	Problem Solver
Passive Recipient	Investigator/Inquirer
Apprentice	Designer/Inventor
Respondent	Meaning Maker
Information Processor	Negotiator
Client/Consumer	Evaluator
Knowledge Worker	Theorist/Knowledge Builder
Adopter/Conformist	Dilemma Manager
Product/Object	Collaborator
Beneficiary	Activist/Advocate
Culture/Policy Taker	Culture/Policy Maker

Though broadly supportive of the discovery-based image of students, the educators and scholars who preceded much of the research on student experience came from a wide range of traditions. They include the transcendentalists and their devotion to active learning (Alcott, 1830; Bickman, 2003); the European romantics (Anderson, 1974; Froebel, 1912; Lillard, 1972; Lilly, 1967; Montessori, 1966; Pestalozzi, 1912; Rousseau 1762/1965) and their belief in the goodness of children and the capacity of children to build on and learn from a nurturing environment; the pragmatists, especially Dewey (1916; also see Dewey and Dewey, 1915), his commitment to the importance of the interests and experiences of students, and his consequent influence on the progressive education movement, with its emphasis on child-centred pedagogy by some (Cremin, 1961; Cuban, 1993; Plowden Report, 1967) and on social reconstruction by others (Counts, 1932); and various curriculum theorists (Stenhouse, 1975, 1983; Taba, 1962), including the humanistic (Combs, 1962) and holistic (Miller, 1996) educators with their deep regard for the whole child. These educators and scholars have set the paradigmatic foundation for research on student experience.

For the most part, researchers of student experience have explicitly or implicitly framed their studies based on assumptions consistent with a discovery-based image of students. They view students as knowledgeable and collaborative (e.g., with teachers) actors whose insights into and expertise on their own

ideas, comments, and actions are critical to the development of a full understanding of what transpires and changes at school. In studies of school experience, the more researchers can appreciate students as thoughtful, inquisitive, caring people whose ideas and experiences they should seek, come to know, and take seriously, the more they can reconfigure ideas about who students are, what students can and should do, and what it means for students to be and to become productive and engaged in classrooms and schools. Over the last forty-five years, the research has evolved in ways that apply this common framework for understanding the image of students in three distinct orientations to the study of student experiences in elementary and school.

THREE ORIENTATIONS TO THE STUDY OF STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Though the study of student experience in elementary and secondary schools is comparatively recent, there are three distinct but interrelated orientations to research in this area: (1) how students participate in and make sense of life in classrooms and schools; (2) who students are and how they develop in classrooms and schools; and (3) how students are actively involved in shaping their own learning opportunities and in the improvement of what happens in classrooms and schools. Frequently, a study of student experience is centred in one orientation but also includes elements that respond to many of the purposes of or address one or more core themes relevant to one or both of the other orientations. The main purposes of each of the three orientations are as follows:

Orientation One: How students participate in and make sense of life in classrooms and schools:

- To discover and describe the nature of students' thoughts, feelings, and actions in classrooms and schools;
- To investigate how students' thoughts, feelings, and actions interact with the thoughts, feelings, and actions of their teachers; and
- To portray the social world of students in classrooms and schools and to examine the relationship between their social world and their academic practices and progress.

Orientation Two: Who students are and how they develop in classrooms and schools:

- To critically inquire into how the identities of an increasingly diverse group of students are influenced by what happens in classrooms and schools; and
- To probe how students in different locations adapt to the structures, expectations, and work of classrooms and schools.

Orientation Three: How students are actively involved in shaping their own learning opportunities and in the improvement of what happens in classrooms and schools:

- To explore the challenges and possibilities of student engagement in the development of educational programs, policies, and practices; and
- To document and support the engagement of students in decisions and actions designed to improve their own learning, the practices of teachers, or the organization and operation of classrooms and schools.

To contextualize and substantiate my discussion of the three orientations, I include in my exploration of each orientation a review of studies conducted during three time periods: 1960 to 1975, 1976 to 1990, and 1991 to 2005. I cite a few references prior to 1960 to point to the earlier roots of, interest in, and studies about student experience; however, in so doing, my intent is to illustrate a longer tradition of research into student experience in elementary and secondary schools and not to provide a comprehensive historical analysis of the field. For each orientation, I define the orientation (purposes, core themes); note any reviews, special issues of journals, or edited books on one or more of the core themes of the orientation; provide in tabular form an outline (author, title, sample, methodology, a quote on the key findings) of 20 published studies conducted across two or all three time periods; present detailed descriptions of four of the studies listed on the table; supplement the table and the detailed descriptions with a summary of studies on a range of topics related to the core themes; and conclude with a comment on how the research in the orientation has evolved over two or all three periods under review.

Orientation One: How Students Participate in and Make Sense of Life in Classrooms and Schools

Introduction   Studies that assume the first orientation focus on how students understand, adjust to, and, to some extent, influence their experiences in classrooms and schools. In the research with a particular emphasis on students' lives in the classroom, four themes are prevalent: how students relate to and interact with other students and with their teachers; what students do in the course of the school day (e.g., respond to assigned tasks, adhere to social conventions or academic routines established by the teacher); how students make sense of what and how they are taught in particular subject areas; and what qualities or characteristics students do and do not value in teachers. In the research with a particular emphasis on students' lives in schools, four themes dominate: how students relate to and interact with other students and with their teachers in different contexts inside and outside the classroom; what students do in the course of the day at school (e.g., attend required school events

or ceremonies, participate in extracurricular activities, comply with school requirements about punctuality, follow school regulations about movement through the halls); what qualities or characteristics students do and do not value in schools; and how students react during changes or transitions from one school to another (e.g., from primary to middle school or from middle to secondary school; in their first year of their school careers; in their first year at a new school). Frequently, studies in one realm (e.g., classroom) also extend to the lives of students in the other realm (e.g., outside the classroom in other spaces in or around the school).

Reviews, special issues, and edited books   One marker of the importance of a field of study is the emergence of published volumes that either include reviews of research conducted on one or more themes in the field or that bring together— in special issues of journals or in edited books, papers, or chapters—scholars who have recently completed inquiries in the various themes of the area. In the 1960–1990 period, there were no special issues of journals devoted to research on how students participate in and make sense of life in classrooms and schools. With the exception of a chapter entitled, "How Pupils See It" (Cohen & Manion, 1981), most of the reviews of the 1960–1990 period centre on the social interaction in the classroom (Bar-Tal, Y. & Bar-Tal, D. 1986; Bidwell, 1973; Withall & Lewis, 1963), on the characteristics of classroom and school environments (Doyle, 1986; Dreeben, 1973), or on how the attitudes, perceptions, and behaviours of students mediate instruction (Wittrock, 1986).

During the 1960–1990 period, many of the more frequently cited edited volumes relevant to Orientation One are primarily based on ethnographic studies of the classroom and school. Though not always exclusively focused on the lives of students, the edited books usually have sections or chapters that focus on pupil adaptations and pupil perspectives in a wide range of classroom and school settings (Delamont, 1984; Hammersley & Woods, 1976; Hammersley & Woods, 1984; Pollard, 1987; Schostak & Logan, 1984; Spradley & McCurdy, 1972; Stubbs & Delamont; 1976; Woods, 1980; Woods & Hammersley, 1977). Silberman's 1971 text, entitled *The Experience of Schooling*, draws on a wide range of psychological, sociological, anthropological, and philosophical studies to document the critical problems schools create for students. He organizes the book into the following parts: "The Hidden Curriculum," "Teacher Favoritism," "Crowded Classrooms," "The Threat of Evaluation," "Student Powerlessness," "Peer Group Tensions," and "Students' View of Schooling."

In the period between 1991 and 2005, there was a significant increase in the number of published reviews, special journal issues, and edited volumes. Two journals had special issues on students: *Theory Into Practice* (Volume 34,

Number 2, Spring 1995, edited by Penny Oldfather, and on the theme Learning From Student Voices) and *Academic Exchange Quarterly* (Volume 5, Issue 2, Summer 2001, edited by Rosario Capporimo, and on the theme Seeing Education Through the Eyes of Students). The reviews range from an analysis of research on the students' curriculum experiences (Erickson & Shultz, 1992; Schubert & Lopez, 1994) to the challenges of becoming a student (Paris & Cunningham, 1996) to student views on their participation in classrooms and schools (LeCompte & Preissle, 1992) to the impact of teachers on student behaviour (LeCompte & Preissle, 1992) to the influence of transitions (into elementary school, from middle to high school) on students' motivation to succeed (Eccles, Wigfield, & Schiefele, 1998) to the dynamic, socially complex, and culturally diverse world of the classroom (Fraser, 1996; Gallego, Cole, & The Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition, 2001; Schuell, 1996; Weinstein, 1991).

The edited volumes of recent years both extend areas of interest from the 1960–1990 period—for example, in the study of the mediating influence of student perceptions on classroom practice (Schunk & Meece, 1992) or in the views students develop about beginning teachers (Cooper & Highland, 2000)—and venture into new areas of importance in how students participate in and make sense of their life in classrooms and schools. Some researchers delve further into the social spaces student inhabit, invent, or co-construct (Blatchford & Sharpe, 1994; Mayall, 1994; Nicholls & Thorkildsen, 1995). Others further explore the perspectives of school children (Pollard, Thiessen, & Filer, 1997), with a few giving the pen over to students so that they can speak for themselves either as co-authors (Shultz & Cook-Sather, 2001) or as sole authors (Cushman and the students of What Kids Can Do, 2003). Cushman and the students of What Kids Can Do (a non-profit organization committed to the study and dissemination of the ideas of American adolescents) provide the following ten collated accounts about the relationships that enable learning:

Knowing Students Well

Respect, Liking, Trust, and Fairness

Classroom Behavior

Creating a Culture of Success

Teaching to the Individual, Working with the Group

Motivation and Boredom

Teaching Difficult Academic Material

Teaching Teenagers Who Are Still learning English

When Things Go Wrong

Studies in and across core themes   In this sub-section, I use three interweaving devices to illustrate the range of studies that explore how students participate in

and make sense of their lives in classrooms and schools. Table 1 includes sum-
maries of primarily book-length studies conducted during all three of the time
periods under review. The uneven distribution (from a small number of studies
in the 1960–1975 period to a larger number of studies in the 1976–1990 and
1991–2005 periods) reflects the greater frequency of Orientation One studies
over the last two decades. The choice of studies for the table shows some of the
variability not only in the broad areas of research on life in the classroom and
in the school but also in the specific topics considered in each of the themes
within these areas. The second device for demonstrating the scope of research
in this orientation involves the detailed description of four of the studies from
the table. These detailed descriptions highlight the contributions of researchers
whose work is frequently cited by other scholars in this orientation. The third
device is to cite other studies that either link to or expand upon those listed on
the table. Here I broaden the references to include other books and a sample of
studies from the much larger number of published chapters and journal articles
on student participation in and perspectives on classrooms and schools.

The most longstanding and enduring research interest in this orientation is the
study of students' views on teachers and teaching and on schools. Over a century
ago, in a survey of 2,000 grade-2 to grade-8 students on the qualities their best
teachers, Kratz (1896) reported the most frequently noted characteristics: "helped
in studies," "personal appearance," "good and kind," "patient," "polite," and
"neat." Studies have varied in how they access and analyze student images of the
good or effective teacher: Jersild (1940) asked about the characteristics of teach-
ers who are "liked best" and "disliked most" and organized the findings in terms
of human qualities (kind, cheerful, etc.), disciplinary qualities (fair, consistent,
etc.), physical appearance (well groomed, nice voice, etc.), and teaching qualities
(helpful, democratic, etc.); Nash (1976) interviewed students about teachers
they "got on with" and teachers they did "not get on with" and discovered that
their views differ on the teacher's ability to keep order, on whether or not they
explained things to students, and on the extent to which they were interesting or
boring, fair or unfair, and friendly or unfriendly; and Cooper and McIntyre (1994)
observed units of lessons and then interviewed both the teacher and a sample of
students about their experience of the lessons and about things they believed were
effective in terms of teaching and learning (see also Cooper & McIntyre, 1996).

Numerous other studies have sought students' views on a wide range of
questions about instruction, teacher performance, or the image of teachers
(Amatora, 1952; Bearne, 2002; Cobb, 1952; Cook & Leeds, 1947; Everton,
Hopper, & Thwaites, 1999; Hart, 1934; Hollis, 1935 as reported in Cohen &
Manion, 1981, p.142; Josephena, 1959; Leeds & Cook, 1947; Morgan &
Morris, 1999; Nash, 1974; Taylor, 1962; Thompson, 1975; Weber & Mitchell,

TABLE 1 Orientation One Studies

Name and Year of Publication	Title	Sample and Methodology	Selected Findings/Quotations
Jackson, 1968	*Life in Classrooms*	Four classrooms (grade one, grade two and two grade four) Qualitative: ethnography (observations and participant observation)	Classroom for students is governed by interactions, evaluations, and power relations. Students learn how to behave through both explicit instructions from the classroom teacher and implicit expectations from the "hidden curriculum."
Dennison, 1969	*The Lives of Children: The Story of the First Street School*	23 Black, White, and Puerto Rican students, three full-time teachers and researcher (a part-time teacher) Qualitative: participant observation, observations, journal entries	Small class sizes, one-on-one interactions, and the development of relationships between students and teachers improve student experiences and learning at school. Intimacy (close relationships) and freedom (non-structured routines) were key elements in the lives of students at the First Street School.
Nash, 1974	"Pupils' Expectations of Their Teachers"	Thirty-four 12-year-olds in the same class Qualitative: repertory grid technique, interviews	Students' views on whether or not they liked their teachers varied depending on the teachers' ability to keep order, how well they explained things, how interesting they were, and how friendly and fair they were perceived to be.
Davies, 1982	*Life in the Classroom and Playground: The Accounts of Primary School Children*	Upper primary school age (10- and 11-year-old) students: two groups of boys, five boys in each group; several dyadic and triadic clusters of girls' groups Qualitative: ethnography (conversations)	Children interpret the world through the culture of childhood. Children are able to function in two world contexts (or cultures): the adult world and the childhood world. In order to support the development of children, teachers need to understand children's childhood culture.

TABLE 1 *Continued.*

Name and Year of Publication	Title	Sample and Methodology	Selected Findings/Quotations
Rowland, 1984	*The Enquiring Classroom: An Under-standing Children's Learning*	A class of thirty-three 9- to 11-year-olds in a primary school Qualitative: ethnography (observations, field notes)	A recurring theme is the importance of teachers and students interrogating each other's ideas. Ideas are challenged through conversations, comparing points of views, and a balanced approach to control in the classroom.
Measor and Woods, 1984	*Changing School: Pupil Perspectives on Transfer to a Comprehensive*	A comprehensive school and one of its seven feeder middle schools Qualitative: ethnographic case study	Children experience a number of phases and sub-phases that run the course of the whole first year as they transition into the comprehensive school. The study reveals how informal (student social life experiences) and formal (school's and teachers' agendas) cultures are interwoven and work together or conflict during the transition from middle school to comprehensive school.
Woods, 1990	*The Happiest Days? How Pupils Cope with School*	Critical review and application of literature	Students influence the cultural conditions that frame their relations in the classroom and contribute to the growing consciousness of and responses to the dividing forces of class, gender, and race. Negotiation (with their teachers) is a key feature of how students were able to influence their classroom settings.
Cullingford, 1991	*The Inner World of the School: Children's Ideas About Schools*	Semi-random sample of 110 children divided equally between those in last year of primary school and first year of secondary school Qualitative: ethnography (interviews)	Students are faced with various challenges and tensions between formal and informal learning in school, between social and academic aspects of school, and between schools and the communities they serve. Friendship is the social centre of their school experience. What they learn in their personal lives is different from what they learn in school. Learning in school is neither self-directed nor purposeful.

Nicholls and Hazzard, 1993	*Education as Adventure: Lessons from the Second Grade*	Teacher and her grade-two class Qualitative: case study (observations, interviews)	This study describes the everyday occurrences in a grade-two classroom and demonstrates how students and their teacher collaborate in their learning and in the shaping of the curriculum and classroom. Over time, collaboration is accompanied by an increase in self-directed learning and participation.
Sinclaire, 1994	*Looking for Home: A Phenomenological Study of Home in the Classroom*	28 grade 3/4 students and their teacher Qualitative: phenomenological study (stories of classroom experiences and recollections and memories of teacher's life)	Classrooms can be transformed into "homes" for students whereby a higher sense of ethical and moral consciousness is developed in students and learning becomes a joint responsibility among students and with the teacher.
Pollard, 1996	*The Social World of Children's Learning: Case Studies of Pupils from Four to Seven*	Five children during their first three years in primary school Qualitative: case study stories of individual children	"Young children become effective learners when their self-confidence is high, the classroom social context poses manageable risks and they receive sufficient appropriate instruction and support" (p. 311). Outside the classroom, parents influence their children's perceptions of their success levels at school.
Cothran and Ennis, 1997	"Students' and Teachers' Perceptions of Conflict and Power"	Four urban high school teachers and their students Qualitative: observations and interviews	The traditional view of teacher as sole controller of power has been altered due to social and economic changes. Now teachers and students share control of the learning environment. Students reported using non-participation, the power of their personality, disruptions, and teacher rewards to control the class. Teachers felt their power had diminished so they used strategies of strategic withdrawal and student rewards to pursue their values. The mutual influence on one another resulted in a negotiated state of order.

TABLE 1 *Continued.*

Name and Year of Publication	Title	Sample and Methodology	Selected Findings/Quotations
Meier, 1997	*Learning in Small Moments: Life in an Urban Classroom*	Two teachers from different social and educational backgrounds co-teaching in an urban public school Qualitative: self reflective accounts	The heart of teaching and learning in culturally diverse urban schools is tied to the overall quality of human interaction in the classroom. The book demonstrates the significance of the human, social, and adaptive world of the classroom.
Blatchford, 1998	*Social Life in School: Pupils' Experience of Breaktime and Recess from 7 to 16 Years*	Children tracked at 7, 11, and 16 years of age in inner London school Quantitative/Qualitative: interviews	Activities and games, friendships, teasing and name-calling, and fighting are what goes on during breaktime. "It is a time when pupils can find freedom and a social life independent of the classroom, where the rules of conduct are more their own, and where activities stem from their own initiative" (p. 1).
Phelan, Davidson, & Yu, 1998	*Adolescents' Worlds: Negotiating Family, Peers, and School*	55 adolescents from four desegregated high schools in two urban school districts Qualitative: ethnographic case studies (interviews, shadowing, documents, demographic information)	Six types of transition and adaptation patterns adolescents face between school, family, and peers are evident: 1) values and beliefs are the same and students make transition successfully; 2) though there is a difference between the sociocultural beliefs and values between the home and school, students manage to adapt successfully; 3) family, peers and school worlds are distinct and students have a difficult time adapting to these different contexts; 4) values, beliefs and expectations are so different that it is impossible to move easily

			from one world to another and so they resist transitions; 5) values and beliefs are the same yet students cannot make transition successfully; 6) though their home, school and peer worlds are culturally different, they shift from one context to another without difficulty.
McCadden, 1998	*It's Hard to Be Good: Moral Complexity, Construction, and Connection in a Kindergarten Classroom*	One teacher and her 24 kindergarten students Qualitative: classroom ethnography (participant observation, interviews, documents)	Two kinds of morality are developed in school: organizational morality, the inside morality of the classroom defined by the teacher through rules, routines, and norms that govern academic and social interactions; and the outside morality of the playground where students construct their own codes for building friendships, playing games, or, more generally, sorting out right from wrong.
Morgan and Morris, 1999	"Good Teaching and Learning: Pupils and Teachers Speak"	207 pupils and 133 teachers in British comprehensive schools in diverse areas Quantitative/Qualitative: interviews, surveys	"For quality teaching and learning, a balance is required in the classroom—a balance between positive social relationships, control and order with a sense of purpose, and wide ranging teaching skills for presenting, explaining and delivering learning activities" (p.136).
Gallagher, 2000	*Drama Education in the Lives of Girls: Imagining Possibilities*	19 girls from five grade 10 classes Qualitative: ethnography (videotaping, interviews, discussions)	High school girls use drama to draw on the experiences from their own lives to explore their cultural, sexual, ethnic and class-based identities in relation to the world around them.

TABLE 1 *Continued.*

Name and Year of Publication	Title	Sample and Methodology	Selected Findings/Quotations
Lampert, 2001	*Teaching Problems and the Problems of Teaching*	Fifth grade mathematics class Qualitative: ethnography (daily accounts, videotapes, audiotapes, journals, student work)	Problem solving is approached from a variety of angles based on ways students learn together in school and the learning they bring with them from outside their schooling experiences. Ideas that define the content of teaching mathematical problems are continuously negotiated against the management of social tensions that exist in a classroom. This negotiation occurs with the changing dimensions of the teacher-student-content relationship.
Pope, 2001	*Doing School: How We Are Creating a Generation of Stressed Out, Materialistic, and Miseducated Students*	Five successful tenth and eleventh graders Qualitative study – case studies (observations, interviews, journals)	"By rewarding certain kinds of success among others, Faircrest High may actually impede that which it hopes to achieve. Instead of fostering in its students traits such as honesty, integrity, cooperation and respect, the school may be promoting deception, hostility and anxiety" (p. 150). Successful students used strategies of establishing allies and treaties, cheating, multi-tasking, and aggressive behaviour in order to succeed.

1995). (See the chapters by Rudduck and Wilson & Corbett for comments on other studies on the qualities of good teachers). When the net is cast more widely regarding students' views on school, the ideas sought from students have come from surveys on "the school I'd like" (Blishen, 1969; Burke & Grosvenor, 2003), case studies of particular schools (Ahola & Isherwood, 1981; Chang, 1992; Cullingford, 1991; Cusick, 1973; Dennison, 1969; Lynd & Lynd, 1929; Meighan, 1977a; Pope, 2001; Stanley, 1989), ethnographic accounts of the transitional experiences of beginning a new school (Beattie & Thiessen, 1997; Brooker, 2002; Delamont & Galton, 1987a, 1987b; Lounsbury & Clark, 1990; McCadden, 1998; Measor & Woods, 1984; San Antonio, 2004; Tennebaum, 1940, 1944; Waterhouse, 1991), or moving from school to work (Aggleton, 1987).

Though not expressed in the more alarmist language of the romantic critics of the 1960's (e.g., Kohl, 1967; Holt, 1964, 1967, 1969), Jackson's *Life in Classrooms* (1968) nonetheless offers a similar critique in one of the earliest and most illuminating studies of the "Daily Grind" (chapter one) of students in an American elementary school classroom. After being an observer and a participant every day for two years in four classrooms (grade one, grade two, and two grade-four classrooms), Jackson concludes that life for students in the classroom is governed by crowds (most things are done with others), praise (words and deeds are continuously evaluated by others), and power (clear differences in the authority of teachers and students). Students learn to follow the lead of the teacher in terms of what to do, when, for how long, in what ways, under what conditions, and with which rewards or punishments; to be passive and to comply with rules, regulations, and routines (hidden curriculum); and to be patient in the face of frequent delays, interruptions, or social distractions.

Twenty-five years later in a study entitled, *The Moral Life of Schools*, Jackson, Boostrom, and Hansen (1993) return to the "daily grind," this time to probe how students directly and indirectly experience the often subtle but pervasive moral lessons in the transactions and cultural norms of classrooms and schools. Subsequent studies in the spirit of Jackson's up-close look at classrooms include *Classrooms and Corridors: The Crisis of Authority in Desegregated Secondary Schools* (Metz, 1978), *The Feral Classroom* (Macpherson, 1983), *Westhaven: Classroom Culture and Society in a Rural Elementary School* (Johnson, 1985), *The Enquiring Classroom: An Approach to Understanding Children's Learning* (Rowland, 1984), *Education as Adventure: Lessons from the Second Grade* (Nicholls & Hazzard, 1993), *Looking for Home: A Phenomenological Study of Home in the Classroom* (Sinclaire, 1994), and *Learning in Small Moments: Life in an Urban Classroom* (Meier, 1997).

Other studies on teaching have made more explicit or elaborated on some of the taken-for-granted or common features of classrooms through various "micro" studies of what students understand about and do in school. Researchers have inquired into students' perceptions of or perspectives on such topics as: classroom management (Allen, 1987; Carter & Osler, 2000; Cothran, Kulinna, & Garrahy, 2003; Everhart, 1983); the classroom as a learning environment (Pointon & Kershner, 2000); classroom rules (Mergendoller et al., 1981); curriculum events (Morgan-Flemming & Doyle, 1997); coursework (Sosniak et al., 1987); the causes of success and failure at school (Boaler, William, & Brown, 2000; Frieze & Snyder, 1980); care (Lang, 1983); grading (Evans & Engelberg, 1988); cutting classes (Sanon, Baxter, Fortune, & Opotow, 2001); and power (Borman, 1978; Cothran & Ennis, 1997; Menke, 1997; Robinson, 1994).

Studies of life in classrooms have also examined how students make sense of what and how they are taught in particular subject areas. With the constructivist turn, many researchers have become interested in the naïve or everyday understandings students have of the concepts that define the content of discipline-based instruction. Interest in the constructs students bring to subject-based classrooms have been especially strong in studies in the areas of science and mathematics education (Baker & Leary, 1995; Confrey, 1996; Cushman, 2003; Dibley, 1987; Driver, 1983; Measor, 1984; Newman & Schwager, 1993; Osborne & Collins, 2000; Sullivan & Leder, 1992), language arts (Alvermann, 1996; Bondy, 1990; Borko & Eisenhart, 1986; Evans, 2002; Knight, 1992), and, to a lesser extent, history (Davis, 2005; Evans, 1988) and physical education (Dyson, 1995; Graham, 1995a, 1995b; Pissanos & Alison, 1993). Though generally aware that students' constructs of subject matter can influence the pedagogical decisions of teachers, few of the above studies have designed their research in order to analyze how content and pedagogy intersect or to search for how students explain or come to know the content through the pedagogical moments of the classroom (for exceptions in literacy, see Dyson, 1989, 1993; in drama education, see Gallagher, 2000; in science education, see Harwell, 2000).

Lampert's (2001) study, *Teaching Problems and the Problems of Teaching*, offers another exception through an in-depth inquiry into how her teaching requires "working in relationships with students . . . [and] working in relationship with the content of the school curriculum" (p. 31). Lampert is a faculty member at Michigan State University who has taught fifth-grade mathematics in the same elementary school one hour a day for a five-year period. The study relies on a day-by-day account of one academic year in which Lampert elaborates on what it means to teach problems in mathematics to 10-year-old

students and to cope with the common problems of practice (she documents these problems through two videotapes of most lessons, an audiotape of every lesson, a daily handwritten teaching journal, students' classwork, tests, homework, reports to students on their parents on the students' work, etc.). The chapters of the book follow her depiction of what she does as a teacher:

I set up the room and the schedule (establish a classroom culture). I plan lessons. I work with students while students work independently or in small groups. I instruct the whole class at once. I link lessons over time. I cover the curriculum. I motivate students to do what needs to be done to learn. I assess whether progress is being made. I manage diversity of all sorts. And finally, I bring the year to a close. Each of these activities presents me with problems that need to be addressed in my relationships with students, with curriculum content, and in the effort to productively connect students with content (p. 45).

In this elegant, teacherly account, students have distinct roles to play, ones that challenge Lampert to appreciate how their varied approaches to solving problems arise from "a mixture of what they experience together and the life experiences they bring with them into the classroom" (p. 441). The three-dimensioned problem space of the teacher-student-content relationship requires her continuous attention to the connections among the ideas that define the content of teaching mathematical problems and the ongoing management of social tensions that pervade a classroom where students vary in purpose, relational skill and disposition, and cultural interests and commitments.

   In much of the earlier research in Orientation One (especially in the 1960–1975 period), students are described in a subordinate position with little or no choice about what they do from day to day in classrooms and schools. They largely strive to fit in to what their teachers and schools prescribe, adapting to situations where they have some flexibility to do so and protecting their interests wherever possible. Those students who do not comply with what the institution expects are usually reported as disruptive, maladjusted, or misbehaving. From 1976 onwards, studies began to represent students as "protagonists" in the classroom (Delamont, 1976) and to analyze their relationships with teachers and their peers more in terms of the dynamics of negotiation and bargaining (Denscombe, 1980; Furlong, 1984; Goetz, 1976; Leacock, 1969; Pollard, 1985; Sedlak, Wheeler, Pullin, & Cusick, 1986). For example, Gannaway (1976) describes how students have three tests they apply to their teachers before full acceptance and support is granted: Can the teacher keep order? Does the teacher understand pupils? Can the teacher 'have a laugh'? Beynon (1985) outlines six "sussing" strategies used by students to assess a teacher's managerial expertise and parameters of control: group formation and communication (to show a united front in the challenges made of the teacher); joking (e.g., for a "good" laugh and to test the boundaries); verbal challenges

(e.g., asking stupid questions, "joining in with lip," answering back); non-verbal challenges (e.g., putting on a show, rude gestures, making noises); inter-ventions (e.g., loud or dramatic interruptions, walkabouts, bellowing); and play (e.g., fidgeting with pens, bag games, ruler flashing). For some studies, negotiation is a form of micropolitics, and thus when pursued by students, it is an attempt by them to wield power through strategies that both influence oth-ers and protect themselves (Ball, 1987; Blase, 1991). Spaulding (1997) reports six micropolitical strategies used by grade-two students: stalling for time, use of repetitive questioning, ignoring ("Oh did you tell me to stop?"), interrupting and pleading ("Mrs. Cole. . . . . . Mrs. Cole. . . . Pleeeese, can I?") affection ("You're the best teacher in the world!"), protesting ("It's not fair, you always let the girls go first"), and use of intermediaries ("So we told our parents. . . . . Now Mrs. Cole can't do that anymore").

Woods (1990) provides a far-ranging interpretation of student negotiation in classrooms and schools in his book, *The Happiest Days? How Pupils Cope with School*. While probably best seen as a critical review and an application of the literature, the book is one of the highlighted studies because of the forma-tive influence on the arguments presented here of Wood's previous research in schools in England (Grugeon & Woods, 1990; Hammersley & Woods, 1984; Measor & Woods, 1984;Woods, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1983). For Woods, students live at the dialectical juncture between "individual subjugation and cultural determinism" and "individual interests, perspectives and volition" (p. xi). Cop-ing can entail both reproduction and production of knowledge; compliant, negotiated, and oppositional stances; and adoptive, adaptive, and inventive strategies. In their life at school, students then influence the cultural conditions that frame their relations in the classroom and contribute to the growing con-sciousness of and responses to the dividing forces of class, gender, and race (see Orientation Two for further studies about coping with differences). They also invest time in the scope, scale, and nature of their work: ". . . . the chief characteristic of teacher-pupil interaction was negotiation, as teachers sought to maximize pupil efforts on their terms, and pupils often to modify them on theirs" (p. 157). Throughout these many demands, students manage through laughter and humour, "the coping agency par excellence" (p. 191).

Whether discussed as part of the hidden curriculum or the rules and routines of the classrooms and corridors (Jackson, 1968; Sherman, 1996), the shared construction of learning (Oldfather, West, White, & Willmarth, 1999), the emotional experiences of the classroom (Batcher, 1981), the relational and interactional spaces in and patterns of school (Bossert, 1979; Edwards & Mercer, 1987; Ennis, 1998; Isaacs, 1930, 1932; Kutnick, 1988; Mooney, Cresser, & Blatchford, 1991; Muller, Katz, & Dance, 1999; Waller, 1932), or

the cultural norms on the playground or at breaktimes (Blatchford, 1998; Davies, 1982; Evans, 2002; Sluckin, 1987), the social dynamics and contexts of students figure prominently in efforts to understand their participation in and perspectives on their lives in classrooms and schools. Their social world at school is also shaped by their experiences with and views about friendships (Davies, 1982; Blatchford, 1998; Demetriou, 2003), family (Phelan, Davidson, Locke, & Yu, 1998), and the community (Feuerverger, 2001; Nespor, 1997).

In Pollard's (with Filer, 1996) book, *The Social World of Children's Learning: Case Studies of Pupils from Four to Seven*, his primary interests are to understand how students become effective classroom learners and how "social factors, such as family life, friendships with other children and relationships with teachers, influence the fulfillment of children's learning potential" (p. 1). Based on the theoretical frameworks of social constructivism and symbolic interactionism, Pollard conducted a longitudinal study of ten students during their seven years of primary education. In this book, he reports on five students in their first three years at a primary school in England. In his review of the findings, he argues that parents play an especially important role as "mediators of the external world" and as the "most significant reference point with regard to children's identity, learning stance, the scaffolding of understanding and the valuation of learning outcomes" (p. 307). In the classroom, students strive to manage their identities and negotiate with both peers and teachers to maximize their opportunities to learn. Those who become more adept at maximizing their opportunities to learn develop insights into and some degree of influence on the working consensus of social expectations and power relationships in the classroom. They are both more willing to take risks on behalf of their own learning and more capable of seeking the support they need to sustain their effectiveness as learners. In *The Social World of Pupil Career: Strategic Biographies through Primary School*, Pollard and Filer (1999) continue to study the changes in the social world of students across their careers and, in *The Social World of Pupil Assessment* (Filer & Pollard, 2000), focus on student experiences with assessment in the primary years.

Changing Priorities in Research   Research related to how students participate in and make sense of life in classrooms and schools has evolved during the 1960–2005 period. Topics and themes do not necessarily disappear so much as change in the spirit of more of "X" and less of "Y." The major changes in Orientation One research are as follows:

- Focus more on what students think, feel, intend, or care about and less on student behaviour;
- Greater emphasis on how students negotiate both academic and social aspects of classrooms and schools;

- Growing effort to understand how students make sense of their varied and changing contexts and situations in classrooms and schools and in relation to their lives (past and present) outside school;
- Increased attention to the mutual influence of students and teachers on their respective roles and responsibilities, on student performance, and on the culture of classrooms and schools; and
- Use of frames for understanding student experiences that probe how and why students act and interact in terms of norms, relationships (with teachers and students), or transitions and adaptations to changing contexts (e.g., new school) or practices (e.g., innovative teaching practices).

Orientation Two: Who Students Are and How They Develop in Classrooms and Schools

Introduction   Studies related to Orientation Two are about the identity of students, how various social dimensions of the identity of students affect their life in schools, and how schools either enable or complicate the development of the identity of students. Some of the research in this orientation foregrounds and creates a consciousness about what students learn concerning gender, race, ethnicity, class, religion, sexual orientation, ability and disability, and language. A significant portion of the research to date examines the lives of students who struggle in or are not well served by schools, are located on the margins of school life, and generally do not fit into what schools expect and value. In this latter emphasis, the studies document and frequently critique the ways students have to adapt to an often difficult or alienating learning environment and to confront structural or systemic problems that often exacerbate their best efforts to cope or succeed. In the research focused on the development of the identity of students, three themes are dominant: learning to be a boy or a girl, an African American, a lesbian, etc., where the focus is primarily on one of these dimensions of student identity; learning to be a Muslim girl, a boy with a learning disability, an Afghanistan-born immigrant to Canada who speaks English as a second language, etc., where the focus is on the intersection of two or more of these dimensions of student identity; and learning to embrace one or more of these identities in a particular context (e.g., inner city, urban or suburban environment, rural setting). In studies of students who have difficulty in or with school, the key themes address the experiences of particular groups of students: students who have problems with learning or struggle with what the school asks them to do (e.g., special-education students, students in different tracks or in different ability groups); students who consistently do not succeed at school (e.g., at-risk students); students whose actions are contrary to school expectations (e.g., "trouble" or "problem"

students); and students who reject school (e.g., dropouts). Frequently, studies in the development of the identity of students are also about students who are struggling in and with school.

Reviews, special issues, and edited books   In the 1960–1990 period, there were no published reviews or special issues of journals that explicitly and exclusively address research on who students are and how they develop in classrooms and schools. The better-known edited volumes of the period appeared after 1980 and concentrate on disaffected, maladjusted, or deviant students (Barrett, 1989; Schostak, 1983) or on students who had dropped out of school (Farrell, 1990; Weis, Farrar, & Petrie, 1989).

In the period between 1991 and 2005, there was a significant increase in the number of published reviews and edited volumes; no special journal issues of the literature in Orientation Two were released. While there are no reviews fully devoted to studies about the identity of students and to students who experience difficulty in schools, there are a number of reviews that have sections relevant to the area. In *The Handbook of Qualitative Research in Education* (LeCompte, Millroy, & Preissle, 1992), LeCompte and Preissle developed an ethnology of student life in schools and classrooms that includes three relevant categories: student behaviour as a function of cultural congruity (further divided into studies of cultures in conflict and congruent cultures); student behaviour as a function of links between school and society; and student behaviour and learning as a social construction (see the chapters by Peter Woods, "Symbolic Interactionism: Theory and Method" and by Richard Quantz, "Critical Ethnography [with Some Postmodern Considerations]" for other chapters that review studies related to Orientation Two). In the Schubert and Lopez (1994) review on "Students' Curriculum Experiences," there are helpful sections on "ethnographic studies," "empirical and interpretive studies of school and nonschool curricula," and "critical and phenomenological interpretations." In a section entitled, "Studies in the Hidden Curriculum," Erickson and Shultz (1992) comment on studies where students resist, oppose, or are alienated from schools. Gallego, Cole, and The Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition (2001), in their chapter entitled, "Classroom Cultures and Cultures of the Classroom," review studies on the culture of the home and how these "birth cultures" (e.g., ethnicity, gender, class) enter the classroom and interact with the cultures and traditions of classrooms and schools.

The edited volumes in the period between 1991 and 2005 take up themes that first emerged in the studies of particular groups of students in the 1980's and reconstruct themes that permeate the research on the identity struggles of students. Students designated by schools for special assistance are the subjects of

study in three collections. The chapters in Varma (1996) explore the *Inner Life of Children with Special Needs*; the researchers in Lloyd-Smith and Davies (1995) look at the careers of students who have been identified as "problem pupils" (e.g., disruptive, truant, aggressive, non-conforming) and in need of special provision; and the authors in Jones and Charlton (1997) describe strategies for working with pupils with learning and behavioural problems. Harris (1997), in her edited volume, *School Experiences of Gay and Lesbian Youth: The Invisible Minority*, delineates the everyday tensions and challenges of students who have not always found a secure and constructive place for themselves at school. In *Beyond Silenced Voices: Class, Race, and Gender in United States Schools*, Weis and Fine (1993) provide a series of essays that both confront the structuring of silence among powerless students and, in the section, "From the Margins to the Center: Beyond Silenced Voices," create a platform for the voices of "children and adolescents who have been expelled from the centers of their schools and the centers of our culture" (p. 2) (e.g., lesbian and gay students; white, male working-class youth; dropouts; girls). Woods and Hammersley (1993), in *Gender and Ethnicity in Schools: Ethnographic Accounts*, have compiled a series of studies that document students' perspectives on such themes as injustice, resistance, achievement in adversity, and the preservation of dignity. Goodwillie and the Children's Express (1993) published the results of interviews by teen journalists for the Children's Express (a Washington-based news service reported and edited by teenagers) on children's and youth's experiences with violence in schools and the community. And with the aid of junior ethnographers from community youth organizations, Heath and McLaughlin (1993) discuss the multidimensional identities of inner-city youth who, in the possibilities afforded them by some of these organizations, transcend the limitations sometimes felt by seeing their lives only through traditional and dichotomous images of ethnicity and gender.

Studies in and across core themes   Table 2 profiles primarily book-length studies conducted during the last two periods under review (1976–1990 and 1991–2005). Whether framed through the eyes of individual students or through the collective experiences of a number of students, the dominant research interest of Orientation Two is the study of the development of identity in diverse groups of students in schools. The groups under study can be based on at least three categories: affiliations established by students; program groups structured by the school; and groups defined by social characteristics or conditions. The groups can come from associations students develop on their own (e.g., formed around common interests, similar styles or appearance, perceived "coolness," shared programs or extracurricular activities, community affiliations) or from

TABLE 2 Orientation Two Studies

Name and Year of Publication	Title	Sample and Methodology	Selected Findings/Quotations
Hargreaves, 1967	*Social Relations in a Secondary School*	Boys (between fourteen and fifteen years old) from an all boys school in a problem area Qualitative: social psychological and micro-sociological case study (questionnaires, interviews, participant observations, discussions)	The social system of the school and in particular the structure of peer groups in streams and subcultures polarize students. The school creates the conditions that differentiate students into two groups, an "academic" group who were actively engaged and supportive of the goals of school, and a "delinquesent" group who were disengaged and even hostile to school and all that school stood for.
Willis, 1977	*Learning to Labour: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs*	12 non-academic working-class boys Qualitative: case study (interviews, observations, group discussions)	These working class boys—known within the group as "the lads"—rejected school and denied the importance of the knowledge emphasized by teachers and schools. The lads formed a culture of resistance and adopted strategies akin to those employed in the wider class struggle of workers in a capitalist society.
McLaren, 1980	*Cries from the Corridor: The New Suburban Ghetto*	A portrayal of daily life in an elementary school in the "Jungle," a six block community in a suburb north of the city of Toronto	Disadvantaged students experience structures of oppression and an inequitable school system. Schools perpetuate myths about poor youth that contribute to inequalities. One way for children to succeed is to learn on their own terms and not from a curriculum based on middle class, white society.

Continued

TABLE 2 *Continued.*

Name and Year of Publication	Title	Sample and Methodology	Selected Findings/Quotations
Best, 1983	*We've All Got Scars: What Boys and Girls Learn in Elementary School*	Primary age girls and boys in a single school Qualitative: case study (observations, unstructured interviews or conversations)	Students in elementary school coped with three curricula: the academic curriculum, the sex-role curriculum, and the self-taught sex education curriculum. They learned to confront gender-based stereotypes and to relate to opposite-sex peers as friends.
Heath, 1985	*Ways with Words: Language, Life and Work in Communities and Classrooms*	Children and families in two rural communities: Roadville and Trackton Qualitative: ethnography	"[In the two communities], the different ways children learned to use language were dependent on the ways in which each community structured their families, defined the roles that community members could assume, and played out their concepts of childhood that guided socialization" (p. 11). Teachers learned how to use the cultural knowledge students brought to school.
Thiessen, 1987	"Curriculum as Experienced: Alternative World Views from Two Students with Learning Disabilities"	Two learning disabled adolescent boys students Qualitative: life history (interviews)	The two students describe the repeated changes in their classrooms and schools, the struggle to understand their learning disability, the reliance on teachers to help them adapt to the expectations of school, and the negative reactions of those outside their learning disability classes and schools.
Mac an Ghaill, 1988	*Young, Gifted and Black*	Case 1: Nine Asian and Afro-Caribbean female students who view school positively Cases 2–4: the interaction of teachers and two groups on anti-school Black male students	Many teachers attribute the problems of Asian and Afro-Caribbean students to the students themselves and to their cultural background. The students on the other hand, described the primary problem as racism, including teachers' stereotyping and labelling. The students culturally responded with different forms

		Qualitative: Case studies (participant observations, interviews)	of resistance, by visibly distancing themselves from and opposing school in the case of the Afro-Caribbean students; and by more invisible strategies (e.g., using own language, diversionary tactics) in the case of the Asian students.
Sleeter and Grant, 1991	"Mapping Terrains of Power: Student Cultural Knowledge Versus Class-room Knowledge"	28 eighth and ninth grade students that represent a culturally and racially diverse cross-section of the student body Qualitative: interviews	Students have a strong understanding of their own cultural knowledge but are unable to control or relate to classroom or school knowledge. "School knowledge was not being absorbed by students as a conceptual system for helping them understand and act on the world—it was compartmentalized within their own conceptual system and thought of as sets of activities done for someone else in a social context" (p.63).
Thorne, 1993	*Gender Play: Girls and Boys in School*	A grade 4/5 combined class on the California coast and a kindergarten and grade two class in a school based in Michigan Qualitative: ethnography	Children as social agents contribute to their socially constructed gender roles/identities. The children demonstrated a variety of ways of thinking about gender, such as: through distinct categories; as a matter of social relations dependent on context; and through power structures between adults and children.
Kelly, 1993	*Last Chance High: How Girls and Boys Drop in and out of Alternative Schools*	Two alternative high schools are examined – 84 students and over 20 teachers, counselors and administrators Qualitative: case studies (interviews, conversations, field notes, observations, focus groups, essays)	In the suburbs, mostly middle-class white students attend alternative schools while in the cities, African-American and Latinos mainly attend alternative school. Mainstream high schools attempt to mask their own dropout and expulsion rates by sending marginalized students to alternative or 'continuation' schools.

TABLE 2 *Continued.*

Name and Year of Publication	Title	Sample and Methodology	Selected Findings/Quotations
Nieto, 1994	"Lessons from Students on Creating a Chance to Dream"	10 diverse (different ethnic, racial, linguistic and social-class backgrounds) and academically successful junior and senior high school students Qualitative: case studies	Students described how teachers had low expectations for minority students and how they felt discriminated against in their classrooms. They also found teaching to be traditional, boring, uncreative and uninspiring, and the curriculum unrelated to their own personal lives.
Lewis, 1995	*Children's Understanding of Disability*	Two studies: (1) Ten 6- and 7-year-olds from a mainstream school and ten 4- to 8-year-olds from school for students with extreme learning disabilities; and (2) Three groups of eleven 10- to 11-year-olds working with nine 12- to 15-year olds from a school for students with learning disabilities Qualitative: case studies (audio/video, interviews, diaries)	Seven themes/questions emerge from studies of how pupils with severe learning disabilities work with non-disabled students: (1) Is partial integration or a "visitor status approach" a step towards inclusion?; (2) Need to balance roles so that one group of students does not always lead or dominate the other group of students; (3) Both groups increased their efforts to communicate with one another; (4) Supplementary methods of communication are needed (e.g., signing by mainstream school children); (5) Respect for the variability among individuals is crucial; (6) Being consistent in responding to misbehaviour; and (7) It is vital to monitor integration and inclusion.
Dei, Mazzuca, & Zine, 1997	*Reconstructing 'Drop-Out': A Critical Ethnography of the Dynamics of Black Students' Disengagement from School*	150 female and male Black student in four Toronto high schools, 55 parents, guardians and caregivers, 41 teachers Qualitative: critical ethnography (observations and interviews)	The defining moments of Black students' careers are often the moments when they were treated differently based on their race. The timely care and attention of an individual can make the difference between staying in or dropping out of school.

Dyson, 1997	*Writing Superheroes: Contemporary Childhood, Popular Culture, and Classroom Literacy*	A class of second graders observed throughout the year and into the following year as third graders; Qualitative: Interpretive ethnography (observations)	While playing and acting out situations with superhero characters, students play with each other and develop relationships with each other. Their social lives are thus defined and constructed through the use of ideas and symbols of popular culture.
Herr, 1997	"Learning Lessons from School: Homophobia, Heterosexism, and the Construction of Failure"	One lesbian student; Qualitative: case study	Homophobia and heterosexism contribute to the construction of school failure. One lesbian student's experience of dropping out of high school is described as a public, socially constructed problem that needs to be addressed at a level beyond the individual.
Connolly, 1998	*Racism, Gender Identities and Young Children: Social Relations in a Multi-Ethnic Inner-City Primary School*	A group of 5- and 6-year-old children in three reception/Year 1 infant classes; Qualitative: ethnography (interviews and observations)	Young students showed social competence when reflecting and intervening in their social lives. 5- and 6-year-old children can both adopt and adapt discourses on race.
Gallas, 1998	*"Sometimes I Can Be Anything": Power, Gender and Identity in a Primary Classroom*	Two classes of first and second grade students; Qualitative: participant observation, unstructured interviews	Students' interactions involved issues of power and control. Though questions of gender and race were present, other social constructs were also evident and, at times, more pervasive as situations and contexts changed.
Nagle, 2001	*Voices from the Margins: The Stories of Vocational High School Students*	20 working-class students in vocational high school; Qualitative: phenomenology (interviews)	In the everyday social practices in schools, students of working class backgrounds experienced barriers to accessing school literacy. These students' sense of failure lead them to withdraw to the margins of school, with little or no voice in their own development, and increasing isolation in social relationships with their peers.

TABLE 2 *Continued.*

Name and Year of Publication	Title	Sample and Methodology	Selected Findings/Quotations
Dias-Greenberg, 2003	*The Emergence of Voice in Latino High School Students*	18 Latino high school students (ages 15–18 years) Qualitative: Participatory research (interviews, critical analysis)	The students' comments showed that "coming to voice leads to the acquisition of power . . . [with power] the locus of learning and creation of knowledge becomes a dialogical process in which the teacher and students alike can be cocreators. . . . Culture and language are central to the development of ethnic identity, which is an expression of the inner self called voice. . . . Education was described as a learning process that needed to incorporate reflection as an essential element" (pp.78–79).
Smyth, Hattam, with Cannon, Edwards, Wilson, & Wurst, 2004	*'Dropping Out,' Drifting Off, Being Excluded: Being Somebody Without School*	209 young people who dropped out of school or were at risk of leaving school early Qualitative: interviews	Students' voices are lost in the rush to cover curriculum and respond to academic accountability. Students dropped out because of the mismatch between their identity and the identity that school expected. Students who dropped out stated that the academic world of school and the push to go to university did not suit their needs. In addition, the school did not help them in the transition from school to the workforce.

labels given to them by others (e.g., peers, teachers, researchers). For example, students have established groups who identify themselves as jocks and burnouts (Eckert, 1989), ear'holes and lads (Willis, 1977), Black Sisters, Asian Warriors, and Rasta Heads (Mac an Ghaill, 1988), spice girls, nice girls, girlies, and tomboys (Reay, 2001), Social Queens and Tough Cookies (Finders, 1997) and hallway hangers and brothers (MacLeod, 1987); researchers have categorized groups of students as academics and delinquescents (Hargreaves, 1967; for a more detailed account of this study, see below), goodies, gangs, and jokers (Pollard, 1984), ordinary kids, "rems" (remedials), and swots (students with a goal to use education as a vehicle to get out of the working class) (Brown, 1987), and friendships, cliques, and gangs (Dimitriadis, 2003). The identity development of students can also be connected to the ways schools locate, structure, and group students according to their chosen or designated pathways and programs (e.g., in special education classes, in career-based program tracks or streams, in ability groups, in specialized schools). The third grouping category includes research on the ways schools address the socially ascribed and embodied aspects of students in terms of their gender, race, ethnicity, class, language, or sexual orientation. In the studies noted below, at least two if not all three types of groups are important to what shapes and defines who students are and become in schools.

Hargreaves (1967), in his book, *Social Relations in a Secondary School*, reports a study of fourth-year (the final year of compulsory schooling), 14- to15-year-old boys in a British secondary modern school for boys where the social conditions of the school supported the careers of those boys in the high stream (the "academic" group) and limited the possibilities of those boys in the low stream (the "delinquescent" group). As a participant observer for a full school year, Hargreaves taught all 100 fourth-year boys, observed the students in lessons of all teachers, surveyed, interviewed, and informally talked with the boys, and accompanied them on some official school visits or out-of-school activities. The academics were dedicated to academic success, were punctual and obedient, and maintained high standards of dress, hygiene, and behaviour. Conversely, the delinquescents found school difficult and unsupportive, and thus they rejected much of what the school stands for. In effect, they formed a counterculture that opposed any academic rules or requirements; they spent more time "having a laugh," fighting, hanging around outside class or in the community, or not coming to school at all. Hargreaves argues that the school works to differentiate (into streams and sub-cultures) and polarize students (sub-cultures are self contained and opposite in their views about school). He further claims that the formation of a counterculture by the lower stream delinquescents is a reaction against the middle-class norms of the school.

Two of the interrelated areas studied by Hargreaves—the streaming or tracking of students and the development of countercultures or antigroups in school (Lacey, 1970)—are the prime interests of many other studies. Some researchers have uncovered the difficulties students encounter in lower-track ability groups or classrooms (Damico & Roth, 1993; Page, 1991; Rist, 1970), while others have documented the contradictory and confusing forces students face in schools that attempt to create greater flexibility in tracking choices (Yonezawa, Wells, & Sern, 2002). Valli (1986) and Nagle (2001) critically portray the experiences of high school students who choose particular career-oriented paths through vocational education. In *Voices from the Margins: The Stories of Vocational High School Students*, Nagle describes the level of marginalization, loss of voice, and feeling of disempowerment of 20 students in six vocational high schools.

Lacey (1970) and Ball (1981) also discovered the development of pro-school and anti-school subcultures in a boys' grammar school and a co-educational comprehensive school, respectively. While Lacey and Ball interpret the emergence of antigroups as a cultural reaction against what the school values and inculcates (and thus make an argument similar to that of Hargreaves above), Lacey also suggests that, in light of the class distinctions evident in the two subcultures, the school is complicit in the same kind of social ordering present in the wider society. In the 1975-to-2005 period, the formative stage of critical ethnography (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000; Quantz, 1992), numerous other studies explore how schools reproduce class inequalities: *Education and Social Control: A Study of Progressive Primary Education* (Sharpe & Green, 1975); *Learning to Labour: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs* (Willis, 1977); *Schooling the Smash Street Kids* (Corrigan, 1979); "Social Class and the Hidden Curriculum of Work" (Anyon, 1980); *Cries from the Corridors: The New Suburban Ghettos* and *Schooling as a Ritual Performance: Towards a Political Economy of Educational Symbols and Gestures* (McLaren, 1980; 1986); *Rebels Without a Cause: Middle Class Youth and the Transition form School to Work* (Aggleton, 1987); "The Belly of the Beast: On Cultural Differences, Caste-like Status, and the Politics of School" (D'Amato, 1987); *Ain't No Makin' It: Leveled Aspirations in a Low-Income Neighbourhood* (MacLeod, 1987); and *The Politics of Social Class in Secondary School: The Views of Affluent and Impoverished Youth* (Brantlinger, 1993). In this latter group of studies, the story of the antigroups is not as much framed as simply a cultural response to the middle-class conditions within the school but more as a form of active and intentional resistance that is part of a wider working-class opposition to the inequities of the capitalist society (Woods, 1990; Willis, 1977).

With the introduction of special education legislation in North America and Britain in the 1970's and early 1980's, attention slowly turned to the changing experiences of those students deemed to have special needs. As schools developed different ways of working with students with special needs (e.g., segregated classrooms or schools, withdrawal programs, mainstreamed or inclusive classrooms), researchers began to seek the views of students about these different locations and approaches (Granger & Granger, 1986; Grantham & Ford, 1998; Habel, Bloom, Ray, & Bacon, 1999; Nuthall, 1986; Pugach, 2001). In a life history of two adolescent male students with learning disabilities, Thiessen (1987) reconstructs their continuous struggles to understand what it means to have a learning disability, to adapt to the repeated changes in how the school system tried to support their development, and to cope with the social consequences that come with each designation to a special class. Other studies on life in school for students identified with a disability regularly appeared in the literature after 1990 (Alodi, 2002; Baker & Zigmond, 1995; Lewis, 1995; Lightfoot, Wright, & Sloper, 1999; Lovitt, Plavins, & Cushing, 1999; Nicholls, Nelson, & Gleaves, 1994; Padeliadu & Zigmond, 1996).

In the 1991-to-2005 period, studies of the experiences of racially and ethnically diverse students became more frequent and prominent in the literature. One of the most cited articles of the period is by Sonia Nieto (1994): "Lessons from Students on Creating a Chance to Dream." Revisiting case studies of ten diverse (different ethnic, racial, linguistic, and social-class backgrounds) and academically successful junior and senior high school students (Nieto, 1992), Nieto describes the students' perceptions of curriculum, pedagogy, tracking, grading practices, and racism and discrimination. Students spoke about how: the curriculum "is at odds with the experiences, backgrounds, hopes, and wishes of many students" (p. 399); the teaching approaches in their classrooms are traditional, uninspiring, uncreative, and minimally challenging; the relatively low expectations by some teachers for the performance of Black, Puerto Rican and Mexican-American students are devastating for these students; and the insensitive and sometimes discriminatory practices based on race, ethnicity, culture, religion, and language of students and teachers alike affect the chances of everyone. The article advocates the inclusion of students in the dialogue about schooling and "that their views, just as those of others, should be problematized and used to reflect critically on school reform" (p. 398).

Other researchers concerned about the racial identity of an increasingly diverse student population have studied and critiqued the struggles of these students in schools. Researchers have studied the cultural congruence or cultural conflict (LeCompte & Preissle, 1992) of Hawaiian students (D'Amato, 1988;

Weisner, Gallimore, & Jordan, 1988), Native students (Bennay, Hood, & Williams, 1988; Erickson & Mohatt, 1982; Deyhle, 1986, 1989; Schissel, 1988), Latino students (Dias-Greenberg, 2003; Flores-Gonzales, 2002; Kaplan, 1999; Social Justice Education Project, 2004), students of Asian descent (Bhatti, 1995; Ghuman, 1994; Gibson, 1988; Lee, 2001; Minichiello, 2001; Shain, 2003), multilingual students (Fu, 1995; Goldstein, 2003), and African-American or bi-racial students (Dimitriadis, 2003; Hemming, 1998; Kennedy, 1993; Lubeck, 1985; O'Connor, 1997, 1999; Peshkin, 1991, 1997; Peshkin & White, 1990; Thompson, 2002; Towns, 1996). Many of these studies explicitly address situations of racial tension or discrimination and the structural conditions that contribute to these situations; some studies, including journalistic accounts by social critics, directly frame their research to expose and critique racism (Dei, 1996; Delpit, 1995; Kotlowitz, 1991; Kozol, 1991, 1995; Troyna & Hatcher, 1992; Willinsky & Thomas, 1997).

In the post-1985 period, the above concerns about students who live on the margins in school because of class (or poverty, see Bullough, 2001) or race are reframed by researchers into studies of students who are at risk of failure in the school system or who drop out of school altogether. Some of the research captures the resiliency of students (McMillan & Reed, 1993, 1994), while most describes the cycles of detachment, alienation, and lack of purpose (Farrell, 1993; Fine, 1991; Jones & Womble, 1998; Taylor-Dunlop, Korynn, & Norton, 1997), the problems of engagement (Dei, Mazzuca, McIsaac, & Zinc, 1997), the habit of exclusion (Smyth & Hattam with Cannon, Edwards, Wilson, & Wurst, 2004), or the lack of caring (Altenbaugh, Engel, & Martin, 1995). Whether victimized by their station (class) in life or by the conditions that envelope their daily existence (e.g., racial minority group, travails of immigration), the research documents the against-all-odds challenges that these at-risk students confront in their struggle to stay in school.

Studies of the relationship between life at school and the development of the identity of students through their evolving understanding of gender, gender relations, and sexual orientation have increased in the 1976-to-2005 period. Though some of the studies focus on how their experiences in schools interact with students' construction of what it means to be a girl (Reay, 2001) or a boy (Connolly, 2004; Martino & Pallota-Chiarelli, 2003), a greater number explore how their gendered identities change in the dynamic and complex world of gender relations in classrooms and schools. Here researchers have probed the emerging sense of genderedness (Davies, 1987), the meaning of "normal" (Martino & Pallota-Chiarelli, 2005), the tensions and inequalities between girls and boys (Best, 1983; Claricoates, 1987; Kelly, 1993), the cultural importance of school talk (Eder, Evans, & Parker, 1995), the links between gender

and power (Francis, 1998; Gallas, 1998), the social world of adolescent (girls')
literacies (Finders, 1997), and the intersection of gender, race, and, in some
studies, class in "making and molding identity in schools" (Davidson, 1996;
Mac an Ghaill, 1988). The challenges of gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender
students are also part of the recent efforts by researchers to give voice to those
who have previously been unheard in the literature (Gay, Lesbian and Straight
Education Network, 1999; Herr, 1997; Kissen, 1993).

In *Gender Play: Girls and Boys in School*, Thorne (1993) relies on ethno-
graphic renditions of the classroom, lunchroom, and playground of two groups of
grade-4 and grade-5 students (one group in an elementary school in California,
the other an elementary school in Michigan) to understand how students "actively
come together to help create, and sometimes challenge, gender structures and
meaning" (p. 4). Throughout the fieldwork and certainly during the analysis of
the data, she is mindful of the influence of age, ethnicity, race, sexuality, and
social class on students' constructions of gender and of the impact of shifts in
social contexts on the degree of importance of gender in their developing identity.
Thorne concludes with the following observations: students construct "the girls"
and "the boys" as two distinct and bounded gendered categories; students find
themselves in certain situations where their dichotomous boy-girl construct is
neither applicable nor, at times, significant; "There are many ways of being a boy
or girl, some of them overlapping, some varying by context, some shifting along
lines of race, ethnicity, class, and age" (p. 158); gender is also a matter of social
relations and social organization, and thus the meaning of gender can vary from
families to neighbourhoods to schools, from play to work, or from highly struc-
tured and supervised activities to more open and flexible situations in classrooms;
and power shapes how gender relations unfold in students' interactions with
adults and their peers.

In some of the research cited above, studies on who students are and how they
develop in classrooms and schools have concentrated less on a single category
of identity (e.g., gender, race, class) and more on how students construct and
reconstruct their multiple identities in an ever-changing and contextually varied
environment (e.g., Davidson, 1996; Finders, 1997; Flores-Gonzales, 2003;
Gallas, 1998; Goldstein, 2003; Thorne, 1993). Similarly, Rymes (2001) locates
the development of identity in terms of language and cultural border crossing in
an urban context; Connolly (1998) foregrounds gender identity but then weaves
age, race, and ethnicity into a socially layered account of the development of
the identity of five- and six-year-old children in an inner-city primary school;
Sleeter and Grant (1991) study the cultural and classroom knowledge of
ethnically diverse, working-class students in junior high school (12–14 years of
age); and Heath (1985) creates bridges across language, culture, and race at

home, in the community, and in schools to understand young children's unique and educationally rich *Ways with Words*.

In *Writing Superheroes: Contemporary Childhood, Popular Culture, and Classroom Literacy*, Dyson (1997), over a two-year period, examined how seven- to nine-year-old students (and especially two focal African-American students) interconnect their lives as writers and composers, as social actors and classroom community builders, and as inventors and translators of superheroes of popular culture. The students' knowledge of the then-popular television program super-heroes, *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers, X-Men*, and *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, and their constructed categories of gender, race, and class, are cultural capital from which they draw to create their stories and to participate in an "Author's Theater" (student writers direct the performance and discussion of their written stories with their peers serving as actors and audience). Their development as writers, then, involves an interplay of their literacy learning, their skills as social players in the classroom, and their capacity both to understand and to express who they and who their peers are and can become. In *The Brothers and Sisters Learn to Write: Popular Literacies in Childhood and School Cultures*, Dyson (2003) takes us further into the culture of childhood in her detailed portrayal of how five African-American first graders in the East San Francisco Bay area, through remixing and sampling their "textual toys" (symbolic materials from television, film, music, and cartoons), learn to write in ways that both honour the cultural insights they bring to school and respond to school-based literacy requirements.

Changing priorities in research   The study of who students are and how they develop in classrooms and schools has steadily increased over the 1976–2005 period. In this relatively short timeframe, the general topics and themes have endured, albeit in different forms and complexities in recent years. The major developments in the research of Orientation Two include the following:
- Focus more on the interplay and development of multiple identities of students (e.g., class, race, gender, ethnicity, language, religion, sexual orientation);
- Increased attention to understanding how the identities of students inside school interact with their lives outside school (e.g., living under conditions of poverty and violence in inner cities or urban settings);
- Emphasis on how students adapt to the efforts of schools to identify and respond to students in need of additional support (e.g., those students who are at risk of dropping out of school, require special education assistance, are in program tracks where low achievement persists);
- Growing effort to understand the reasons for and impact of the use of different coping strategies by struggling students: compliance, accommodation,

negotiation, covert opposition (avoidance, non-participation, withdrawal), overt opposition (confrontation, protest), or dropping out; and

• Greater interrogation or critical examination of the tensions between two or more of the following frames for understanding the experiences of students who struggle with or are not well served by schools: alienation, disaffection, disengagement, marginalization, disenfranchisement, resistance, equity, resilience, and empowerment.

On this last development, the school is studied less as an institution that manifests and perpetuates the inequities of the wider society and more as a site of contestation and change where students can participate as agents in transforming schools—an aspiration also shared by researchers in the third orientation.

Orientation Three: How Students Are Actively Involved in Shaping Their Own Learning Opportunities and in the Improvement of What Happens in Classrooms and Schools

Introduction   Studies relevant to Orientation Three are about how students participate in decisions that affect their own learning and in actions designed to improve how classrooms and schools are structured and work. In the research centred on students' role in the development of classroom practice, three themes are prevalent: students shaping their own curriculum, teaching, and learning experiences (e.g., through negotiation, consultation); students teaching other students (e.g., peer tutoring); and students teaching beginning and experienced teachers. In the research that examines students as partners in improving schools, three themes are stressed: students as decision makers, involving students in school governance; students as (action, collaborative, participatory) researchers, where they both describe and evaluate reforms; and students as community developers, studying and supporting the improvement of community life and, in some cases, the relationship between schools and the community. As with the broad areas and themes in the other two orientations, studies of student involvement in change in classrooms often are connected to or raise implications for improvements in the school as a whole.

Reviews, special issues, and edited books   In the 1960–1990 period, there were three published reviews in the form of chapters on the student role in educational reform: educational change (Fullan, 1981), school-based curriculum development (Skilbeck, 1985), and school improvement (Marsh, 1988). There were no special issues of journals. Boomer (1982) edited one of the more influential texts of the period in a book entitled, *Negotiating the Curriculum: A Teacher-Student Partnership*. The chapters are primarily accounts by teachers

who describe a wide range of inquiries about their efforts at negotiation in the classroom. Boomer explains negotiation as follows:

> Negotiating the curriculum means deliberately planning to invite students to contribute to, and to modify, the educational program, so that they will have a real investment both in the learning journey and in the outcomes. Negotiation also means making explicit, and then confronting, the constraints of the learning context and the non-negotiable requirements that apply (p. 132).

Much of the research on how students are actively involved in their own learning and in the improvement of what happens in classrooms and schools has occurred since 1991. Three additional reviews appeared and two journals had special issues with some papers dedicated to topics in Orientation Three. Fullan (with Stiegelbauer, 1991; 2001) updates his earlier review of the role of students in educational change, Levin (1999) develops a rationale for and an elaboration of a "meaningful role for students in defining, shaping, managing, and implementing reform" (p. 155), and Cook-Sather (2002a) synthesizes a wide range of studies to argue for "Authorizing Students' Perspectives: Toward Trust, Dialogue, and Change in Education" (title of article). In the journal, *Theory Into Practice* (Volume 34, Number 2, Spring 1995), a special issue edited by Penny Oldfather was published on the theme, "Learning From Student Voices," with some papers on student involvement in the development of classroom practice (e.g., Commeyras' article, "What Can We Learn from Students' Questions?" and Johnston and Nicholls' article, "Voices We Want to Hear and Voices We Don't"). *Forum* (Volume 43, Number 2, Summer 2001) released a special issue edited by Michael Fielding on "Student Voice," with articles bearing such titles as "Revolutionizing School-based Research" (Crane), "Rehearsing for Reality: Young Women's Voices and Agendas for Change" (Cruddas), and " 'Walking on Air'? Pupil Voice and School Choice" (Urquart).

   The edited volumes I note here from the period between 1991 and 2005 focus on negotiation, students as researchers, students in democratic schools, and the voice of students in educational reform. Boomer, Lester, Onore, and Cook (1992) follow up Boomer's earlier edited volume on negotiation with a book entitled, *Negotiating the Curriculum: Educating for the 21st Century*. Steinberg and Kincheloe (1998) in *Students as Researchers: Creating Classrooms that Matter* and Egan-Robertson and Bloome (1998) in *Students as Researchers of Culture and Language in Their Own Communities* offer collections of cases where students are engaged in research to understand and improve their various learning environments. *Democratic Schools*, the edited volume by Apple and Beane (1995), profiles four schools that help students understand what

democratic citizenship entails. In an edited book entitled, *Creating Democratic Classrooms: The Struggle to Integrate Theory and Practice*, Beyer (1996) includes chapters that outline the experiences of students and teachers as they work to build authentic and inclusive democratic classrooms. Jensen and Walker (1989) in the book entitled, *Towards Democratic Schooling: European Experiences*, offer a set of cases of schools in Iceland, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Portugal, and England committed to democratic practices. In studies of the challenges of school reform, Rudduck, Chaplain, and Wallace (1996) in their widely cited book entitled, *School Improvement: What Can Pupils Tell Us?* provide a comprehensive portrayal of how students feel the learning, teaching, and organization of secondary schools need to change; Kushman (1997) explores the students' perspective on change in *Looking at Who's Talking Now: Student Views of Learning in Restructuring Schools*; and Rubin and Silva (2003) address the "dilemmas and possibilities of equity-geared reforms" (p. 208) in their book, *Critical Voices in School Reform: Students Living Through Change*.

Studies in and across core themes   Table 3 describes articles, chapters, and book-length studies, most of which were conducted during the last period under review (1991–2005). Much of the research in Orientation Three is concerned with understanding and, in some cases, enhancing student engagement in schools. In *Student Engagement in Learning and School Life: National Project Report*, Smith, Butler-Kisber, LaRoque, Portelli, Shields, Sparkes, and Vibert (1998) discuss the results of a three-year study of the meaning and practice of student engagement in ten elementary and secondary schools in five provinces in Canada. In classrooms, student engagement is evident in teacher consultation with students in such areas as: classroom rules and procedures; concerns and changes in the curriculum; decisions about topics, textbooks, or assessment; or in matters of discipline or classroom management (pp. 122–124). At the school level, student engagement involves "some voice in, and responsibility for, the development of school rules and leadership in designing some student activities" and "in decisions concerning every aspect of school life including curriculum and governance" (p. 127). The construct of student engagement that emerges from this research stresses the importance of making students an integral part of the conversation about learning, the school culture, and the relevance of school to the lives of students, of educators working with students (a "doing with" approach to students), and of creating the conditions that lead to increased opportunities for student choice and independence. In contrast, the report argues that student engagement is not about striving to achieve success, complying with school expectations, assuming the sole responsibility for their active involvement, relying on teachers, program, or resources, or "doing for" approaches to students

TABLE 3 Orientation Three Studies

Name and Year of Publication	Title	Sample and Methodology	Selected Findings/Quotations
Hull, 1985	"Pupils as Teacher Educators"	Secondary school pupils and their classroom teacher Qualitative: Collaborative classroom research (videotape of lessons and critical analysis)	Students were given the right to comment and critique lessons designed to implement an innovation in classroom practice. When involved as partners and colleagues, students can apply the principles of research to improve the experience in the classroom.
McKelvey and Kyriacou, 1985	"Research on Pupils as Teachers Evaluators"	Critical review and analysis of the literature	A review of research concerning students' ideas of teacher effectiveness showed evidence in favour of the use of student evaluations of teaching performance. Student perceptions are consistent over time and with other evaluators and a helpful source for teacher self-improvement. Furthermore, engaging students in a dialogue about teacher effectiveness stimulates a more equitable and mutually supportive school environment.
Oldroyd and Tiller, 1987	"Change from Within: An Account of Collaborative Action Research in an English Secondary School"	An ethnographic researcher, the school's professional tutor, and 15 voluntary teacher action researchers Qualitative: collaborative action research (reflection, diaries, observations meetings)	For change in schools to occur, the active collaboration of significant actors within each institution is essential. The required implementation tools include: ongoing planning; broad, active, full participation of staff; staff development activities which support the school improvement process; and self-review.
SooHoo, 1993	"Students as Partners in Research and Restructuring Schools"	12 middle school students from one school, participating as co-researchers Qualitative: shadowing students, observations, journals, individual	Students identified three areas that inhibited their learning environment: learning, care and connection, and valuing oneself. Through the co-researchers group, they took action within their school to make

	Title	Method/Sample	Findings
		interviews, group collaboration, meetings	changes to improve their learning environment. They became involved in the decision making process.
Allen, 1995	"Friends, Fairness, Fun and the Freedom to Choose: Hearing Student Voices"	Focus groups of 10 to 12 students from five elementary schools; teachers and administrators. Qualitative: focus group interviews, individual interviews, observations	Students focused on relationships within the school community (with peers and with teachers) and freedom to choose (classroom decisions and school decisions). Creating structures such as class meetings and student councils provide a forum for democratic practices.
Alvermann, 1996	"Peer-led Discussions: Whose Interests Are Served?"	Three gifted middle school students. Qualitative: case study	Peer-led discussions from the perspective of middle school students showed social hierarchies form when student-led discussions are left to students. The power dynamics within a classroom can significantly affect efforts to encourage students to express their ideas or to take the lead in discussions. Student voice is not necessarily a way to greater empowerment.
Rudduck et al., 1996	*School Improvement: What Can Pupils Tell Us?*	80 high school pupils. Qualitative: interviews	"The conditions of learning that prevail in the majority of secondary schools do not adequately take account of the maturity of young people, nor of the tensions and pressures they experience as they struggle to reconcile the demands of their social and personal development with the development of their identities as learners" (p. 173). While society has changed and students experience more responsibility outside of school, a relatively unchanged school structure leaves less opportunity for learning related tensions to be explored in school.

Continued

TABLE 3 *Continued.*

Name and Year of Publication	Title	Sample and Methodology	Selected Findings/Quotations
Wasley, Hampel, & Clark, 1997	*Kids and School Reform*	150 students in five high schools; detailed account of the secondary school experiences of six students Qualitative: interviews, focus groups, classroom observations	The effort and accomplishments of the six students went beyond the norm when: the variety in teaching approaches was balanced by consistent routines; high expectations and caring were both present; the curriculum is both rigorous and innovative; and the size of the school was small enough to promote an increase in civil discourse.
Wood, 1998	*A Time to Learn. The Story of One High School's Remarkable Transformation and The People Who Made It Happen*	Federal Hocking High School community Qualitative: Case Study (reflections and observations)	Understanding what goes on in the lives of students and teachers outside school can have a positive effect on what happens in school. The key to school improvement is to build a sense of community.
Smith, Butler-Kisber, LaRoque, Portelli, Shield, & Sparkes et al., 1998	*Student Engagement in Learning and School Life*	Two schools (one elementary and one secondary) in each of five school districts, chosen from five provinces in Canada Qualitative: multiple case study	School improvement can be achieved through policies that aim to create conditions that foster student engagement. "Student engagement cannot be separated from the underlying beliefs and values that influence human interactions and approaches to curriculum, programs, and governance within a school" (p. 110).
Brooker and MacDonald, 1999	"Did We Hear You? Issues of Student Voice in a Curriculum Innovation"	27 teachers and over 110 students in 11 secondary schools in Queensland Australia	A reflective critique of a traditional curriculum development project after it was completed. The curriculum was organized around activities and

		Qualitative: interviews, critical analysis	culture students experience outside of school. The use of evaluations, formal assessments, and student comments provided space for student voice. The voice of students provided the foundation for how best to relate curriculum to the lives of students outside school.
Lee, 1999	"In Their Own Voices: An Ethnographic Study of Low-Achieving Students within the Context of School Reform"	40 students in an inner-city high school who displayed low achievement and behavioural difficulties. Qualitative: ethnography	Aspects of effective teaching articulated by students included a challenging curriculum, high expectations, interactive learning, and closer relationships with students. Student recommendations to assist low-achievers include making modifications to instructional practices, improving adult-student relationships, and building a stronger sense of community.
McLaughlin, Carnell, & Blout, 1999	"Children As Teachers: Listening To Children"	Two teachers whose role is to listen to and be advocates for distressed children. Qualitative: case study (interviews, classroom reflections)	Teachers have difficulty listening to children. Teachers need to be learners and allow students to teach them too.
Kaba, 2000	"'They Listen To Me But They Don't Act On It': Contradictory Consciousness And Student Participation In Decision Making"	Chicago's Student Local School Council (LSC) representatives. Qualitative/Quantitative: surveys and interviews	While student participation fosters a sense of equality and ownership among LSC student representatives, they are not given a corresponding opportunity to substantively affect policy and other changes in their schools.

Continued

TABLE 3 *Continued.*

Name and Year of Publication	Title	Sample and Methodology	Selected Findings/Quotations
Prieto, 2001	"Students as Agents of Democratic Renewal in Chile"	Eight students from two secondary schools, four university lecturers and an international consultant Qualitative: Participatory Action Research	Students realized learning can be dialogic and interactive. Different partnerships can exist between students and teachers where each learns from each other and students can become agents of their own change.
Klein, 2002	"We Want Our Say: Children as Active Participants in Their Education"	Critical review and application of literature	Schools that encourage active student participation create structures and experiences that enable students to develop communication skills and to be involved in planning, decision-making and policy-making.
Mitra, 2004	"The Significance of Students: Can Increasing 'Student Voice' in Schools Lead to Gains in Youth Development?"	Two groups—mostly first generation immigrants from working class families—in a California high school who rarely have a voice in schools Qualitative: Case study (interviews, observations of meetings, documents)	"Student voice activities can create meaningful experiences for youth that help to meet fundamental developmental needs—especially for students who otherwise do not find meaning in their school experiences. Specifically, this research finds a marked consistency in the growth of agency, belonging and competence—three assets that are central to youth development" (p. 651)

Pedder and McIntyre, 2004	*Consultation in the Classroom. Developing Dialogue about Teaching and Learning*	Teachers and pupils from six grade eight classes in three East Anglia Schools Qualitative: interviews	Based on pupils' accounts, four main themes outline what students value in their learning in classrooms: 1) engaging pupils more deeply in their learning, 2) contextualizing learning more appropriately, 3) fostering a sense of agency and ownership among pupils, and 4) arranging social contexts that are more amenable to learning.
Bradley, Deightone and Selby, 2004	"The 'Voices' Project: Capacity Building in Community Development for Youth At Risk"	A group of 10 young people in a rural Australian town Qualitative: action research (documents, interviews (students and counselors), theatre group)	Involving young people actively in the research had immediate benefits for students and also contributed to a change of policy in the town's council and resulted in the appointment of a youth coordinator/researcher.
Whitehead and Clough, 2004	"Pupils, the Forgotten Partners in Education Action Zones"	Grade 8 pupils at two inner city schools Quantitative/Qualitative: questionnaires, interviews	"If zone schools are to live up to the promise of 'empowering people and communities,' pupils need to be included as stakeholders who shape the implementation of policy and become part of the solution to the difficulties" (p. 215). Pupils need to be recognized as co-constructors of learning. A shift towards more democratic forms of relations is needed for students' voices to be heard.

(pp. 141–142). Other studies that pursue research questions similar to those posed by Smith, Butler-Kisber, LaRoque, Portelli, Shields, Sparkes, and Vibert (1998) come from researchers listening to students commenting on how they learn in school (Klein, 2002; Kushman, 1997; Lodge, 2005; McLaughlin, Carnel, & Blout, 1999; Pollard & Triggs, 2000; Swain & Brechan, 1989; Thomas, Smees, & MacBeath, 2000), observing students teaching other students in various peer tutoring, peer mediation, and cross-grade projects (Alvermann, 1996; Ellis, Small-McGinley, & DeFabrizio, 2001; Morrison, Everton, & Rudduck with Cannie & Strommen, 2000), and analyzing efforts to empower students through inclusion in decision making (Aikin, 1942; Alberty, 1947; Allen, 1995; Goldman & Newman, 1998; Ingram & Worrall, 1987; Kaba, 2000; Onore, 1992; Patmor & McIntyre, 1998; Rugg & Shumaker, 1928; Shields, 2002).

For Jean Rudduck and her colleagues, student engagement through consulting students has been the most recent focus of a program of research in Britain that has spanned much of the 1991-to-2005 period (Arnot, McIntyre, Pedder, & Reay, 2004; Flutter & Rudduck, 2004; Rudduck, Chaplain, & Wallace, 1996; Rudduck & Flutter, 2004; for a review of some of this work, see the chapter by Rudduck; for related research, see the chapters by Demetriou and Hopper, and Nicholls). In one of the studies in this program of research, Pedder and McIntyre (2004) evaluated "The Impact of Pupil Consultation on Classroom Practice" (title of chapter). Over a two-year period, they studied six year-eight classes (two each of English, Mathematics, and Science) and six students in each of these classes (three who were doing well and three who did not enjoy or do well in these classes) to determine what students felt enabled or inhibited their learning and what strategies their teacher could use to enhance their learning. Their teachers were asked to consider the recommendations of their students and, where appropriate, to incorporate these recommendations into their classroom practices. The more successful students were more capable of describing what enables or inhibits their own learning and the learning of their peers and of understanding the basis of why their teachers made certain decisions about how best to facilitate learning. While the specific recommendations of students differ, most students address four areas: engaging students more deeply in their learning, contextualizing learning more appropriately, fostering a sense of agency and ownership among students, and arranging social contexts that are more amenable to learning (p. 10). Their teachers varied in both the form and the extent to which they implemented the students' recommendations. Those suggestions that teachers did adopt with some impact were often consistent with the teachers' current practices, had some practical value, and were judged as feasible given their many other demands and time pressures. In general, teachers valued and learned from the

teaching and learning insights of their students. The influence of working with students (e.g., consulting, negotiating) on teacher learning is embedded in many of the studies in Orientation Three (e.g., Gartner & Lipitisky, 1990; Hull, 1985; Thiessen, 1992).

Learning about teaching through interaction with students has also been studied in projects with beginning teachers. In the United States, there are some projects structured to support prospective teachers' learning that consist of university students and elementary school partners holding weekly exchanges focused on traditional subject areas, such as literature (Randolph, 1994; Sullivan, 1998) or writing as a tool for learning across the curriculum (Sipe, 2000); there are others that focus on student teachers providing encouragement and support for students (Bowman & Edelfield, 2000); and there are still others that focus on student teachers learning about the needs of a particular population, such as second language learners, from that population (Hadaway, 1993). In England, there have been various efforts to explore how students can contribute to the development of student teachers (Cooper & Highland, 2000; Fielding, 2001; Hull, 1985; Meighan, 1977b;). Two projects, one based in United States and one based in England, go beyond the notion of creating occasions for pre-service teachers to interact with students and actually conceptualize students as teacher educators. One of these, based in the northeastern United States, positions students to share their perspectives on teaching and learning with student teachers through weekly email exchanges and weekly meetings among the high school students (Cook-Sather, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c, 2006). The other project, based in England, positions secondary school students as mentors of student teachers during their practice teaching (Youens & Hall, forthcoming).

For some time now, researchers have recognized that, in the process of introducing new curriculum, it is critical to seek the views of students when designing, implementing, or evaluating innovations (Brooker & MacDonald, 1999; Mac an Ghaill, 1992; Rudduck, 1984, 1986; Shanks, 1994; Silcock & Wyness, 2000; Wilson, 1998). Students, however, can be more than data sources for evaluating innovations; they can also be at the centre of the innovations themselves. Over the last two decades, such school reform initiatives as the Coalition of Essential Schools, the Manitoba School Improvement Program (see the chapter by Pekrul and Levin), the Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound, or the Foxfire Fund have included in their model of schooling some of the principles and practices of student engagement outlined above (for reviews of these school reform models, see Herman et al., 1999; Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1999; Wang, Haertel, &Walberg, 1997a, 1997b). As a result, the researchers of these school reform initiatives not only

have sought the perspectives of students about the change process but also have documented the changes they have experienced in terms of their engagement in the life of the school (e.g., for the Manitoba School Improvement Program, see Earl, Torrance, Sutherland, Fullan, & Ali, 2003).

One study that attends to students as both subjects and objects of reform is reported in *Kids and School Reform*. Wasley, Hampel, and Clark (1997) follow the lives of six students from their second to their final year (three years in total) in five diverse high schools, each of which is part of the Coalition of Essential Schools, a major school reform initiative in the United States (Sizer, 1984, 1992). The key question guiding the research was: "Can we see evidence of the connection between the changes adults are making to improve their schools and the students' educational experiences?" (p. 16). Based on the then-nine principles that guided the redesign agenda, these high schools introduced strategies to enable more in-depth study (e.g., reduced the number of classes students attend per day, lengthened the class periods), to increase the academic counsel for each student (e.g., began an advisory program), to enhance collaboration and integration (e.g., teachers work in teams, students organized into cohorts for certain subject areas and junior grade levels), and to provide meaningful assessment and graduation requirements (authentic assessment tasks, graduating project presented to and evaluated by a panel of teachers and community members). In their analysis of the classroom and school changes experienced by the six students over the three years, the researchers conclude that there are certain connections schools must make so that students are engaged and successful, namely those between: routines (students become familiar with and confident about activities expected of them) and repertoire (students experience a range of approaches to support their learning); caring (students regularly interact with teachers who are concerned about their progress) and expectations (all students understand from their teachers that they can do high-quality work); innovation (students appreciate that changes are made from time to time to improve student learning) and rigour (students perform based on precise instructions and clear and high standards); and small scale (students receive individual attention) and civil discourse (students participate in decisions that respect the greater good) (pp. 17–18). In schools committed to these connections, students learn to be workers who are responsible for their own learning.

Shortly after the publication of the above Wasley, Hampel, and Clark study, the Coalition of Essential Schools introduced a tenth principle, one that stresses the importance of democracy and equity: "The school should demonstrate non-discriminatory and inclusive policies, practices, and pedagogies. It should model democratic practices that involve all who are directly affected by the school. The school should honor diversity and build on the strength of its communities,

deliberately and explicitly challenging all forms of inequity" (CES National Web, 2005). Subsequent research of schools in this network has consequently probed into the democratic practices of students (Cushman, 1999).

Preceding the efforts of the Coalition of Essential Schools, more radical movements in school-based democracy emerged in the late 1960's in the form of publicly funded alternative schools (Neumann, 2003) and free schools (Miller, 2002). Spawned in part by a growing criticism of conventional schooling (Goodman, 1960, 1964; Herndon, 1968; Holt, 1964, 1967, 1969; Kozol, 1967; Postman & Weingartner, 1969) and by the influential example of *Summerhill: A Radical Approach to Child Rearing* (Neill, 1960), a number of the early alternative schools and most of the free schools were characterized by an emphasis on democratic community, student involvement in governance, freedom of thought and expression, and self direction. By the late 1970s, the free school movement had all but ended and the more democratic-oriented and participatory alternative schools had reduced in number (for a critical examination of the accounts and studies of five democratic alternative schools, four of which have endured, see Neumann, 2003, ch. 6). In recent years in both public and private schools, researchers have also analyzed the complexities and possibilities of different forms of democratic student engagement in classrooms and schools (Bradley, Deighton, & Selby, 2004; Collins, 1923; Holdsworth, 2000; Meier, 1997; Prieto, 2001; Thomson & Holdsworth, 2003; Whitehead & Clough, 2004; Wood, 1992, 1999; also see the descriptions of democratic practices at Bedales, King Alfred School, and the White Lion School, three independent schools in the United Kingdom, reported in Rudduck & Flutter, 2004, pp. 115–117).

While students have often been called upon in research in all three orientations to convey their understandings of, judgments about, or recommendations for improving their classroom and school experiences, they have not usually had much say in the method of collecting, interpreting, or drawing conclusions from the data in these studies. In recent years, however, they have had a more active role in both the research of and for school improvement. Students have been research assistants or analysts in investigative clubs (Buchanan, 1993; Pollard, 1987), evaluators of teaching practices (Campbell, Edgar, & Halsted, 1994; Hedin, 1987; McKelvey & Kyriacou, 1985), collaborative inquirers (Farrell, Peguero, Lindsey, & White, 1988; Lee, 1999; Oldroyd & Tiller, 1987; SooHoo, 1993), co-investigators into their own communities inside and outside school (Berry, 1998; Curry & Bloome, 1998; Oldfather, 1995; Oldfather, Thomas, Eckert, Garcia, Grannis, Kilgore, Newman-Gonchar, Peterson, Rodriguez, & Tijoe, 1999; Wigginton, 1985, 1989), and lead or sole researchers (Atweh, Christensen, & Dornan, 1998; Mitra, 2004; Raymond, 2001; Wetherill, 1998).

In "Students as Radical Agents of Change," Fielding (2001) describes a three-year action research project entitled, *Students as Researchers*, with a 13- to 17-year-old group of students at Sharnbrook Upper School in England. In the first year of the project, after some initial training in research methodology, students (with teachers in a support role) defined their research topic, collected data, analyzed the data, and recommended changes that were reported to other students, to teachers, and to the governing body of the school. They studied student voice, student experience with trainee teachers, and the school's assessment and profiling system. In subsequent years and with the assistance of some of the year-one participants as Student Consultants, other groups of students examined careers education, the quality of school meals, and the life skills program. In addition to the description of his own action research project (to introduce student action research to Sharnbrook Upper School) and the documentation those action research projects of the students, Fielding also proposes two frameworks, one for evaluating the conditions for student voice "for any set of arrangements which seek to move more closely and more authentically to a practice of dialogic democracy" (p. 133), and a second about levels of student involvement in school self review and improvement. In the framework about levels of involvement, Fielding develops a four-part model with students as data sources, as active respondents, as co-researchers, and as co-researchers. He argues that it is only at the level of co-researchers that the transformative possibilities of student engagement are fully realized.

Changing priorities in research   The study of how students are actively involved in their own learning and in the improvement of what happens in classrooms and schools has emerged with considerable force during the 1991–2005 period. The key topics and themes have not significantly changed, though certain areas have become more prominent than others. The major characteristics in the research in Orientation Three include the following:

- Focus on how students influence what and how they learn in classrooms and schools (e.g., in decisions about the classroom, the structure, and routines of the classroom);
- Emphasis on the complex and varied meanings, forms, and locations of student engagement (e.g., as an active participant in research, as a source of insight and advice in curriculum innovation projects, as a catalyst or facilitator of teacher development and evaluation); and
- Use of frames that both describe and extend the voice and choice of students in the ongoing improvement of schools (e.g., through such frames as authority, authorship, power, control, and negotiation).

Recent Developments Across the Three Orientations
in the Study of Student Experience

In addition to the changing priorities described above for each of the orientations, there are four general directions in the recent studies of student experience that cut across two if not all three of the orientations. As they combine the purposes and themes of more than one orientation, researchers seek to better capture the dynamic complexities of students' lives in classrooms and schools. For example, inquiries into the engagement of students in school reform (Orientation Three) often build on an understanding of the changes in the identities of students (Orientation Two) and in what their daily lives at school are like (Orientation One). In these more recent multi-orientation studies, researchers give greater attention to insiders' accounts of student experience, delve more deeply into the importance of student voice, critically examine the nature of student engagement, and design multi-faceted research and development projects to appreciate and to advance the scope and impact of the experiences of students in their classrooms and schools.

All research in student experience in elementary and secondary schools is about "knowing students." Following from Fine and Sandstrom's (1988) book entitled, *Knowing Children: Participant Observation with Minors*, "knowing" is both a verb and an adjective. In this double entendre, when used as a verb, "knowing" students refers to the goal and the methodological stance in the study of student experience. When used as an adjective, "knowing" students recognizes students as knowledgeable participants in both schools and the research process. In recent years, the respect for students as knowledgeable actors on the classroom and school stages has extended beyond a matter of taking the ideas of students seriously and into the serious study of students as constructors and co-constructors of knowledge. Though slower to develop, the acknowledgement of student knowledge has evolved independent of yet alongside of the growing regard afforded to teacher knowledge (Mumby, Russell, & Martin, 2001). The development of a research interest in student knowledge has been further aided by the increase in the number of insider accounts of classrooms and schools written by teachers and centred on their interactions with their students (Armstrong, 1980; Dennison, 1969; Gallas, 1998; Katch, 2001; Kohl, 1967; Lampert, 2001; Meier, 1997; Naumberg, 1926; Paley, 1981, 1990; Pratt, 1948; Rose, 1990; Rowlands, 1984; Waugh, 1964). The other insiders, the students, have also contributed to this development through accounts either co-written with teachers or researchers (Shultz & Cook-Sather, 2001) or written largely on their own (Cushman & the students of What Kids Can Do, 2003; Goodwillie and Children's Express, 1993; Hunter, 1992;

Jones & Newman, 1997; Perry, 1988; Pupils at Wheatcroft Primary School, 2001; Schoolboys of Barbiana, 1970; Wirth, 1970).

The second development is in how students' views are studied. Between 1960 and 2005, researchers in all three orientations have generally shifted away from the study of student attitudes and student perceptions and towards the study of student perspectives and student voices. The research on student attitudes and perceptions seeks responses of students to either global (e.g., What do you like and dislike about school?) or particular questions (e.g., What do you do to get good grades?) in an attempt to identify how the collective views of students mediate teacher or school practices. In contrast to attitudes and perceptions, student perspectives are constructed, individually varied, situated or contextually bounded, and negotiated in the socio-political realities of classroom and school life. Researchers who study student perspectives develop more complicated and changing portrayals of how students make sense of their lives at school; they explore how students come to know and cope with social and academic demands; and they inquire into students' views on those educational policies and practices that shape their time at school. As authors of their own life stories, students provide important insights into the classrooms and schools they experience. In the research focused on student voice, researchers recognize that students have both authorship of and authority in their lives at school. Studies on student voice, then, not only listen to what students have to say (as in the studies on student perspectives) but also listen for when students "have a say" in what classrooms and schools do on their behalf. Such research examines where, under what circumstances, in what form, and to what degree the voices of students matter to decisions about how schools work and improve (for discussions of student voice research see Cook-Sather, 2002a and chapter 6 in Rudduck & Flutter, 2004).

Student engagement, the third development in research into student experience, is the study of how students are involved in the many facets of school life. Studies on student engagement have diversified considerably and now include: a longstanding but less prominent interest in student behaviour and the factors that motivate students to act in ways that increase their chances for academic success; a growing focus on the different ways student participation can influence their own development and the development of others in or connected to the school; and, in recent years as part of the above shift to research on student voice, an emphasis less on how students react or cope with classrooms and schools and more on how students are involved in decisions that touch every aspect of their life at school. In studies in this last area, the research concentrates on the experiences of students as agents or co-agents in their own learning and as advocates of their own interests.

Finally, the fourth development in the study of student experience is in the nature of the research done in this field. Parallel to the changes in qualitative research more generally (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, 2005), the studies of student research embrace quite different designs amidst the continued diversification of paradigms, modes of inquiry, and frames of analysis becoming more readily available each year. Within this rich array of paradigmatic choices, a particular research agenda has surfaced with some notoriety, especially in studies about who students are and how they develop in classrooms and schools (Orientation Two) and how students are actively involved in their own learning and in the improvement of what happens in classrooms and schools (Orientation Three). There is a noticeable rise in action, participatory, and activist-based research designs where researchers and research participants (e.g., students, teachers) are part of projects that include strategies both to enrich the understanding and to further the engagement of students in the reform of their schools. Whether working for or with students who are different from the mainstream, who struggle in the margins, or who are part of the majority, researchers in these action-oriented projects are taking a stand on the kind of experiences students should have in classrooms and schools and, either within the cycles of fieldwork or as a planned follow up to the data gathering phase, joining with research participants to improve the voice, choice, and engagement of students.

ORGANIZATION AND FORMAT OF THE HANDBOOK

The Handbook is organized into three sections, with each section including chapters that report on research related to one of the orientations. In the introduction to each section, an overview of the section is provided as well as a summary of each of the chapters. I offer a brief overview of each section here.

Section One—How Students Participate in and Make Sense of Life in Classrooms and Schools—consists of nine chapters that present studies conducted by researchers in Canada, England, and the United States. As discussed in the introduction to this section, these chapters highlight the importance of attending to how students name their experience and the ways in which that naming is similar to and—more importantly—different from the ways adults might name that same experience.

Section Two—Who Students Are and How They Develop in Classrooms and Schools—consists of nine chapters that present studies conducted by researchers in Canada, Ghana, Ireland, Pakistan, and the United States. As discussed in the introduction to this section, these chapters highlight the argument that identity must be understood as informed by multiple sources and manifested in multiple

ways and that it is important to access the perspective and experience of the young person claiming or being labeled with a particular identity.

Section Three—How Students Are Actively Involved in Shaping Their Own Learning Opportunities and in the Improvement of What Happens in Classrooms and Schools—consists of ten chapters that present studies conducted by researchers in Australia, Canada, England, and the United States. As discussed in the introduction to this section, the chapters throw into relief the many manifestations of "student voice" research, analyzing initiatives that strive to listen and respond to student perspectives on their educational experiences, to consult students and include them as active participants in the critical analyses and reforms of schools, and to give students greater agency in researching educational issues and contexts.

The final chapter of the Handbook uses the interpretive framework that 'translation' in its various definitions provides to facilitate re-imagining of the work of investigating students' experiences in school. Rather than revisit each chapter in the Handbook and reiterate the arguments made or recapitulate the discussions offered in this chapter regarding the background, basis, and trends in research into students' experiences of school, the final chapter draws on each of the 28 chapters included in this volume to explore how researching students' experiences of school challenges those involved to engage in a number of forms of translation. The first is a translation of particular terms that evoke ideas, identities, roles, and institutions that are often the focus of our analyses of classrooms and schools. The second is a translation of qualitative research methods—a challenge to translate approaches to studying students such that those approaches more effectively facilitate our accessing and responding to students' experiences of school. And the third, inextricable from the first two, is a challenge to translate ourselves as researchers into new versions of our researching selves that are able to access and present new versions of students' experiences of school.

Other ways of organizing the Handbook (including adding other sections) were considered but, in the end, did not become part of this project. For example, the literature includes many studies on student views on and experiences in the many subject areas. There is not a section on how students understand and interact with different subjects, though there are a number of chapters that examine particular themes in particular disciplines (literacy: Alvermann and Eakle, Dyson; science education: Ballenger; drama education: Gallagher and Lortie; ESL: Curdt-Christansen and Maguire, Feuerverger and Richards, Bullough Jr.). The Handbook also does not include a separate section for studies of elementary school students and a separate section for studies of secondary school students (12 of the chapters examine the lives of students in primary/elementary and middle schools and 13 of the chapters examine the

lives of students in secondary schools) or a separate section for studies outside of North American, Great Britain, or Australia, but elementary and secondary school studies are part of all three sections and studies outside of North American, Great Britain, or Australia are reported in three chapters (see chapters by Bullough Jr., Dei and Opini, and Vazir) and referenced in a number of the other chapters. Similarly, there is not a section devoted to methodological questions in the study of student experience, but the chapters represent a wide range of research traditions (action research, analysis/critical review, biographical/autobiographical study, case study, classroom-based inquiry, cooperative/collaborative research, discourse analysis, ethnography, critical ethnography, micro-ethnography, life history, mixed methodology, narrative inquiry, participant observation, participatory research, phenomenological inquiry, portraiture, survey/large-scale interview study, teacher research) and many comment on the particular challenges of researching student experiences (for other references on the study of student experience, see Christensen & James, 2000; Fine & Sandstrom, 1988; Graue & Walsh, 1998; Holmes, 1998; Lewis & Lindsay, 2000; Soto & Swadener, 2005; Waksler, 1991). Future, multi-volume handbooks can further divide and expand on the three sections in this Handbook.

While the presentation of each chapter follows the particular style of the authors and the traditions of the research approach used to describe and discuss the study, there are a few elements that are common to all chapters and that reflect the guidelines established by the editors. Unlike some handbooks, the authors in this collection were not asked to submit a review chapter that provides a broad sweep and a critical examination of the studies in a particular area of student experience research. Instead, the invitation to the authors read as follows:

The chapter will highlight one or more of your recent studies (e.g., content, methodology, context). It will include a detailed representation of student perspectives or voices and/or accounts of student experiences in school in an area relevant to the broad theme of the section (orientation). Where appropriate, your chapter will also address the diversity of students, the contextual conditions that interact with or frame their lives in school, and the place or role of students in defining or changing their present or future educational experience. While you will situate your research within a particular area of the wider field of research on student experience, we encourage you to be selective rather than exhaustive in your literature review. The Handbook as a whole will provide a valuable overview of and links to the literature; your chapter will only need to address those references that most inform your research.

The Handbook as a whole, then, achieves the more conventional review-like goal of other handbooks through the introductory and closing chapters (1 and 29) and through the cumulative effect of combining the more selective literature reviews in the 28 chapters in the three sections. The chapters themselves,

however, delve into one to five studies of student experiences in some detail and depth. They describe how their student research was done, what students experience in schools and other educational environments, how students themselves feel about their lives in such settings, and why such research is important work.

Students are prominently but differently located in the chapters. Many chapters focus on students themselves and on what we can learn about, with, or from students by more concentrated and extended studies of their lives and careers. Some chapters use the insights gained from rich accounts of student work, experiences, and/or perspectives to generate or extend current concepts or theories about student learning and development. A few chapters rely on student accounts or points of view as further or compelling evidence to question policy, critique current practice, or address—and occasionally redress— wider educational or social concerns. Despite the variations in how students are located in the research reported in the Handbook, the voices and actions of students nonetheless permeate, frame, and are central to the pursuit of understanding of how students experience classrooms and schools.

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SECTION ONE

HOW STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN AND MAKE SENSE
OF LIFE IN CLASSROOMS AND SCHOOLS

INTRODUCTION TO SECTION ONE

The nine chapters in this section focus on how students participate in and make sense of life in classrooms and schools. Consisting of studies conducted by researchers in Canada, England, and the United States, this section includes chapters focused on the experiences of young people from 6 to 20 years of age. Some chapter authors aim to discover and describe the nature of students' thoughts, feelings, and actions in classrooms and schools, others work to investigate how students' thoughts, feelings, and actions interact with the thoughts, feelings and actions of their teachers, and still others endeavor to portray the social world of students in classrooms and schools and to examine the relationship between their social world and their academic practices and progress.

This first group of chapters throws into particularly stark relief the importance of attending to how students name their experiences and the ways in which that naming is similar to and—more importantly—different from the ways that adults might name the same experience. Authors address this issue philosophically—in regard to the phenomenon of naming itself—in terms of particular school experiences—such as ways of engaging in literacy practices and ways of experiencing social phenomena in school—and in relation to roles within schools, particularly the roles of mentor, student, and teacher.

In the first chapter in this section, "Naming Student Experiences and Experiencing Student Naming," Max van Manen, Jerry McClelland, and Jane Plihal explicitly take up this phenomenon of naming. They "engage the art of phenomenological inquiry to explore the meaning and significance of student experience by using the phenomenon of naming and its relevance for pedagogy as an example and as a source for reflection." They suggest that while educators commonly speak of student experience, we do not really know what happens when a student has an experience—we do not know how students experience their experiences. And yet, "in everyday life, in schools and classrooms, teachers call on students, address students by their names, pronounce, mispronounce or confuse their names, and sometimes forget student names altogether." In their chapter, van Manen, McClelland, and Plihal draw on anecdotes they gathered—with anecdote defined as "short stories

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about single events" within which "the student describes an incident experientially—from the inside out, as it were"—composed by U.S. and Canadian students in elementary school through university. They present students' experiences of various naming phenomena and in so doing they not only provide illuminating glimpses of particular students' experiences of naming, they also begin to unpack the act of naming itself, in which all chapter authors in this volume engage.

Explorations of naming also take as their focus terms for physical phenomena: Cynthia Ballenger, in her chapter, "Teaching as Research: Puzzling over Words with Fourth Graders," employs a form of teacher research to explore how two immigrant boys develop their own and her understanding of the names for speed and motion. Working closely with a 4th grade teacher in a diverse urban school in the northeastern United States, Ballenger uses interviews and observations to document and analyze the "puzzling" in which these students engage and the puzzling on the part of teacher and researcher that the students' puzzling occasions. Ballenger both argues for and enacts a careful reconsideration of names, of words and what they signify, both in regard to physical phenomena and in regard to students' learning.

Widening the scope from single words to literacy practices, Anne Hass Dyson, in "School Literacy and the Development of a Child Culture: Written Remnants of the 'Gusto of Life,'" draws on a yearlong, ethnographic study of the interplay of child-controlled (or unofficial) communicative practices and official school governed ones in a first grade (6-year-old students) in a mid-sized, central city in the Midwestern United States. Her chapter focuses on "the relationships between literacy as articulated in district and school documents, in an officially enacted curriculum in a first grade and, most importantly, in how the children themselves interpreted what instruction demanded of them." Dyson focuses on the specific literacy activities of planning birthday parties and planning and enacting war games, childhood practices that she found richly revealing of official and unofficial linkages because they spread widely throughout the class. Drawing on audiotapes of class meetings, observation notes, and students' written work, Dyson illustrates that "given some time and space for decision-making in official writing activities, children's unofficial play practices may come to frame their writing decisions, and their official literacy practices become a resource for unofficial childhood cultures."

Widening the scope yet further, Donna Alvermann and A. Jonathan Eakle, in "Dissolving Learning Boundaries: The Doing, Re-doing, and Undoing of School," explore how data they gathered from studying young people's literacy practices in a library, school, and museums point to possibilities for rethinking

the notion of boundaries in literacy practices. Alvermann and Eakle focus on the experiences of two groups of students in a southeastern U.S. metropolitan area: one is a group of 30 students between the ages of 12 and 15 who were reading two or more levels below the grade level expected for average-achieving youth in grades 6 through 9 on state-administered reading tests and who attended 14 weekly sessions of a Media Club—an after-school activity—that took place in a public library three afternoons a week; the other is a group of adolescents between the ages of 12 and 15 who experienced seven museum events in two art museums, two groups during school field trips and two groups who freely toured the same museum exhibitions with minimal regulated supervision. Like boundaries between words and boundaries between words and practices, boundaries between contexts also demand rethinking from the student's perspective. Using both observation and participant observation, Alvermann and Eakle document that through "doing, re-doing, and undoing school" youth are able to show "through their actions, words, and products how textual engagement is achieved with little regard to boundaries across space, place, and time." The chapter authors examine everyday literacy practices of adolescents "in spaces of deregulated attention economy (library), where they show how power can produce social literacies of active adolescent text construction, and of limited attention economy (school and museum), which promote marked territories that often form reactive individuals rather than affirmative transactions."

Naming student experiences inevitably includes the evocation of certain principles that guide participation and practice in schools. Helen Demetriou and Bev Hopper, in their chapter, " 'Some Things Are Fair, Some Things Are Not Fair, and Some Things Are Not, NOT Fair': Young Children's Experiences of 'Unfairness' in School," focus on students in two primary schools in England—a group of 14 students aged between 6 and 8 years who attended a small, semi-rural school and a group of 12 students aged between 6 and 10 years who attended a slightly larger, inner-city school. Drawing on individual interviews with the students, Demetriou and Hopper illustrate how students experience and make sense of their schooling within the frames that the words "fairness" and "unfairness" provide. Through presenting a wide range of examples and stories in which students evoked the terms "fair" and "unfair," Demetriou and Hopper help us see that these terms are complex and point to similarly complex sets of dynamics and actions within classrooms, on the playground, and elsewhere in schools.

Focusing on the relationship between children naming their experiences of school and their moral development, Theresa A. Thorkildsen, in her chapter, "The Role of Personal Standards in Second Graders' Moral and Academic

Engagement," builds on previous research on "students' conceptions of how school is and ought to be organized and highlights commonalities in how second graders (7-year-old students) understand and accept responsibility for their education." Thorkildsen draws on participant-observation notes as well as structured interviews with students and their teachers in several midwestern U.S. public schools. She presents a strategic model of motivation that guides her work and findings across interview and observational studies that support inferences concerning the structure of children's personal standards and how knowledge is commonly organized in moral engagement. Details from her ethnographic studies illustrate "how teachers foster epistemological development, involve students in the design and realization of a fair classroom, and helped students strengthen their conduct, conscience, and identity by encouraging them to identify patterns of behavior, providing opportunities to refine moral thought, and recognizing the importance of describing personal needs, orientations, and interests."

Naming student experience also inevitably includes evoking the names of particular roles and exploring from students' perspectives how they experience those roles and how those roles might be reconceptualized to better meet students' needs. Exploring a role that is not standard in every school but that throws into relief educational relationships, Julia Ellis, José (Joe) L. da Costa, Carol Leroy, and Carol Anne Janzen, in "A School-Based Adult-Child Mentorship Program: How Students Benefit," offer an analysis and interpretation of the ways in which elementary students in a city center school in Canada benefit from a literacy mentorship program with adult volunteers (teacher education students) serving as mentors. The central goals of the program are "to provide students with (a) support for literacy development and (b) one-on-one caring relationships with adults." Drawing on surveys and interviews, Ellis et al. focus in their chapter on the program experiences of children as construed by children, mentors, and teachers. In particular, they address "emotional nurturance, sense of self-worth, guidance with social behaviors, a philosophy for coping, and learning skills as among the most important benefits of the mentor relationship identified by students." The qualities that students named as most important to them are not necessarily the qualities emphasized in the literature on mentorship, and thus this chapter helps us rethink how the role of mentor might better serve students.

Focusing on a role that is central to all schools—the role of student—Bill Nicholl explores in his chapter, " 'I've Decided to Change and It's Just Really Hard to, Like, Show the Teachers That," the ways in which eleven students, who were between 12 and 15 years old, attended one of four secondary schools in England, found learning in school difficult, and were disruptive and/or

disengaged, found a way back into school and were able to make more of what it had to offer them. The project on which the chapter is based sought to create roles from within which these young people could "break out of the identities that were constraining the development of alternative ways of relating and of achieving recognition." Drawing on interviews with students and their teachers as well as observations of the students in their schools, the research team that studied the project concluded that, "The process of disengagement can be reversed, for a short time at least, if students feel that significant others in the school are able to see and acknowledge some of their strengths." The students were able to show those strengths through taking on unaccustomed roles within their classrooms.

In the final chapter in this section, "Students' Perspectives on Good Teaching: Implications for Adult Reform Behavior," Bruce Wilson and Dick Corbett address the question, "What should adults be held accountable for in order to encourage schools to support the kind of teaching students say is most beneficial to their learning?" By focusing on the teacher role and how that role can best serve student needs, their chapter offers student perspectives on issues that draw together many of the other chapter focuses in this section of the Handbook. Their chapter has four sections, all of which draw on interview-based studies the authors conducted in the northeastern United States. Drawing from a three-year study of 250 African-American and Hispanic middle school students (students who are generally between 11 and 14 years old), the first section details students' views on teaching and the characteristics of good teachers. The second section provides a detailed example, using the case of block scheduling, of how students refer to these characteristics of good teaching in making judgments about the value of particular reforms their schools have implemented. The third section extends the idea of using student-generated characteristics of good teaching as the basis for whole-school comprehensive reform policy by drawing on data from a larger, federally funded, three-year grant to explore efforts by urban districts to close the achievement gap between higher and lower achieving students. And the fourth section considers issues of educational reform policy more broadly, using students' perspectives in the first three sections as a springboard.

Through their explorations of students' thoughts, feelings, and actions within classrooms, in relationship to their teachers, and within the dynamic between their social world and their academic practices and progress, chapter authors in this section illuminate both the school structures that shape, in part, students' experiences of school and the particular ways of naming their experiences of those structures and what happens within them that students employ.

MAX VAN MANEN, JERRY McCLELLAND, AND JANE PLIHAL

NAMING STUDENT EXPERIENCES AND
EXPERIENCING STUDENT NAMING

As adults we may have had many experiences with naming, misnaming, or name forgetting. We may have heard the story of how we came to be named as we are. The name was chosen before we were born, or parents waited until they saw us and then decided on a name. Or the girls in the family take the mother's name and the boys take the father's name, or perhaps we did not receive a permanent name until a ritual in adolescence settled a name upon us. Some of us received shortened names or nicknames, honorable or dishonorable, humorous or affectionate. Giving names seems an ordinary and yet a most peculiar act. What occurs when one gives a name? asks Derrida (1995). What does one give? One does not offer a thing. One delivers nothing. And yet something comes to be. The act of naming seems indeed a wondrous phenomenon.

The stories of who named us and why that particular name was chosen are a link to our origin and take on significant meaning for us. When someone calls us by our name (especially when this someone is a significant person), then we may feel addressed in our singularity. Calling a person by his or her first name may create a sense of intimacy and trust. Sales people of all kinds know well this phenomenological feature of naming. And sometimes we may feel irritated when a sales person adopts a tone of intimacy with our name that seems misplaced. Teachers also know that naming is a crucial aspect of the relation they maintain with students. Many teachers try to memorize their students' names early in the new school term; they realize that it is important to be able to recognize and call their students by their proper names.

Naming is recognition. We are able to recognize aspects of our world by naming them. Not only do we make things recognizable by naming them, but also we make them real somehow. That is why Gusdorf (1965) suggested that "to name is to call into existence" (p. 38). And just as we call things into being by naming them, so we ourselves need to be named to exist for others and for ourselves. Things that fall outside of our linguistic reach may stay more indeterminate. And this is also true for proper names of people. The strange thing is that people, even those we think we know, do to some extent remain indeterminate until we remember their names. Somehow, by being able to call them

by their names we seem to be able to reach them and stand in meaningful relation to them. When, as teachers, we call students by name, we point to the singularity of a specific student, and we may take for granted that calling the name calls the student into relation with us.

To be called by our names is to receive recognition and to receive recognition literally means to be known. Someone who recognizes us thereby acknowledges our existence, our very being. This is not the same as fleetingly noticing people whom one passes in a busy street. To cognize means to know, but to recognize is to know again in the sense of becoming part of people's memory. When we recognize someone, we revive our cognitive experience; this person has become part of our experience, our life history. He or she exists for us; this person is now memorable. It is not surprising, therefore, that naming and recognition play such a critical role in people's lives. One's very existence depends on being named and recognized, on being known by others. To paraphrase Descartes: "I am recognized, therefore I exist." The experience of recognition is inextricably intertwined with selfhood, identity, and one's sense of personal being.

In light of these preliminary reflections, it is strange that the pedagogical significance of students' experiences of naming has received virtually no attention. We wonder: How do students actually experience being called by their names? What is it like for them to be misnamed, nicknamed? Or how do they experience incidents when their names are forgotten altogether? We solicited from about 150 grade nine students and about 30 university students a school memory involving an experience with their name. Our aim was first not to determine how students thought about their name or naming incidents. Rather, we wanted to try to gain insights into the experiences themselves, before the students would form opinions or thoughts about the meaning of these experiences. Asking students about their name experiences in school and classrooms does not necessarily yield experiential results. When we ask individual students questions regarding their name experiences, they may say things such as: "It is important that the teacher knows who you are" "The science teacher still did not know my name by Christmas time!" "I don't like it when a teacher calls me by my last name." Comments such as these suggest that name experiences are important to students and that they are able to tap into these experiences if only we give them the opportunity to do so. But it is important to distinguish between student accounts that offer interpretations, views, or beliefs about name experiences and student accounts that describe as much as is reasonably possible the experiences as lived through. A phenomenological inquiry requires lived experience accounts as data for reflection. To this end, students are prompted to describe their experiential moments themselves. How do we orient to student experiences?

ORIENTING TO STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Researchers who have taken a narrative or ethnographic approach in their inquiries tend to be sensitive to lived experience—experiences as lived through. By way of example we note a researcher who is aware of the danger of treating experience as a reductive concept, a philosophical idea, or an abstract variable. Dahl (1995), who is interested in students' early reading and writing practices, articulates the importance of focusing on the students' experience: "We need to listen to them, pay attention to what they show us about themselves and their views" (p.124). She suggests that taking student experience seriously may give teachers more relevant understandings and insights for teaching. "Learning from children's voices allows us to know at a deeper level who children are as learners and, because we have that knowledge, to expand and enrich our sense of what it means to teach" (p. 130). In her ethnographic study, Dahl offers descriptions of the child Addie, an "angry girl" in first grade:

> This teacher "called the shots" and Addie was put through her paces with no time for stalling or power plays. Addie would rebel, having tantrums over such requirements as making the letter *d* correctly or reading a sentence accurately. She wanted it to be her way, whether it was letter formation, word identification, or the decision about the next activity. She acted out and made loud groans in defiance, but the teacher kept the lesson going. It was a battle of wills. These sessions were difficult for both teacher and learner. (p. 128)

Rather than reduce student experience to some variable or general concept, Dahl aims to give us a sense of the reality of the classroom and of Addie's mood or disposition. Yet, this description could go further, letting Addie herself tell what it is like for her in this class. Perhaps Dahl believes that a grade one child cannot tell how she feels in a situation. Dahl's description is told from the adult perspective, not Addie's. As well, the observational account lacks concreteness and specificity. We are told how Addie would rebel in these kinds of situations, but we do not learn how Addie "rebelled" in this specific moment when the observation took place. A more careful look may show that the child's experiences in this situation were actually much more complex and multi-faceted. By having the terms "rebel" and "battle of wills" placed on her behavior, Addie's actual lived experience disappears from view. What really did Addie experience? And how might this experience be best described? We would have to practice close observation, trying to understand her experience from subtleties of her gestures, physiognomy, utterances, her eyes, and so forth.

What was it about being in the reading recovery room on that day that was important to Addie? Would she rather have been somewhere else? Or somewhere else in the room? How did she experience the teacher's presence? And the researcher's presence? Their gestures, glances, and tone of voice? Their

instructions? Their attentiveness, inattentiveness, misattentiveness? Certainly, obtaining an account from a child in the primary grades has special challenges, but the use of observations alone still leaves us considering student experience from the outside. This example from Dahl's work is taken not to criticize her work per se but rather to illustrate how commonly used methodologies may unwittingly lead researchers to speak on behalf of students, rather than letting students speak for themselves.

And even if the researcher lets the students themselves speak, these accounts may still be *about* their experiences. When students are asked to tell about their school, they are likely to respond with comments such as, "I have ten friends or so and at the breaks I usually play football . . . My school is red, it was green before . . . We can play outside, we can draw, we can play with Lego. In natural sciences, we get to taste different fruits. In handicraft lessons, we can make balls of wool. We usually paint several figures" (Allodi, 2002, pp. 188, 189). When researchers, such as Allodi, ask students to tell about school experience, they tend to receive general descriptions *about* experience rather than descriptive accounts of experiences as they happened, as the children actually *lived* through them.

NAMING THE EXPERIENCE OF NAMING

It is true that even with older children or young people, obtaining students' accounts is not easy. Some researchers feel that they have collected students' experiential accounts by interviewing them or by asking them to write about their experiences. But, as suggested above, what they may have gathered are opinions, perceptions, views, and explanations by the students, not accounts of the experiences themselves. To give an example of what we mean by taking serious a fuller meaning of the notion of student experience, we offer some accounts from students.

We focus here on the student's experience of the most elemental and basic aspects of classroom life: getting to know and becoming known by the teacher, including being called by one's name. Here is an account told by a grade nine student. We call this kind of experiential account an anecdote (see van Manen, 1997). The student describes an incident experientially—from the inside out, as it were—by recalling the experience as it happened a few weeks prior to writing it for us:

"Square roots, class!" Mrs. Richards exclaims excitedly. "There's just so many ways to look at them." Sitting in math class early on a Monday morning is never a really exciting experience. However, here I am, for I have no other choice. We are taking notes and, as all teachers do, Mrs. Richards is trying to get us actively involved in the discussion. Personally I don't see how anyone could be interested in square root signs (but let's keep that quiet).

Dutifully I raise my hand to share my insight to her first question. Catching my eye, Mrs. Richards calls out, "Yes, Stiffany!" I pause for a moment, certain that I have just misunderstood; she probably has just said my name "Stephanie." Glancing around the room, I spy Tiffany who gives me 'the look.' It is a 'did-she-just-say-what-I-think-she-said?' kind of look. Tiffany is cool, though I don't know her very well. After this momentary pause, it is evident to everyone in the room what happened just now, and immediately laughter breaks out. Mrs. Richards, however, seems to be unaware of her mistake of mingling my name Stephanie with Tiffany's. I desperately try to look as though I have no idea about the sudden uproar, and share my thoughts about the square root problem with stifled giggles in between. We return to taking notes, but my attention is elsewhere. I must say that I am rather pleased about the slight name confusion and not at all offended. Now, whenever I see Tiffany in the halls, we always call one another Stiffany or Stiffy. I find it rather cute and comical. We have become friends. This new nickname seems to have connected me to Tiffany in a simple but significant manner.

What do we see here that we do not see in the account about Addie? When Stephanie relates her actual experience in a descriptive form, it becomes visible for us in a way that it is not visible using other means of description. How would this account differ from the one that Dahl may have written as observer? Would she have caught on about the name confusion? Would she have been able to describe the subtle significance that is involved in naming and misnaming? Of course, we can never know for sure what Stephanie's experience was or completely understand it (that is not the aim of our interest here), but in this type of experiential telling we see hints of what the situation might be like for her. We notice how the misnaming experience seems to have created a bond between Stephanie and Tiffany. The moment Stephanie describes is a simple one, and we see it repeated in various forms in many classrooms every year. Yet in this ordinary moment, there may be something worth noting. Even though Stephanie was not offended by being called Stiffany, there must be something slightly amiss in Mrs. Richards' blending the names. Both laughter and Stephanie's focus on the episode while the class returned to square roots show us the mistakenly called name must matter in some way.

Through these experiential accounts, we gain a sense of how important names are to students. After all, when a teacher calls a student by name, then something is called into being: the student as unique person. But sometimes the student is prevented from experiencing a sense of personal identity and uniqueness because of a teacher's casual habit or indifference to such sensibilities.

"Go get'em, Mac!" he says. I sigh, but leave the bench anyways. What possesses him to give me a nickname? Does a nickname really help anybody anyways? Is Benjamin not short enough for him? He could call me Ben. Or can he not remember? Yes, maybe that is it. Maybe he just cannot remember my name. As I ponder that, I almost miss the puck as it slides down to my end. Quickly, I recover and shoot it back down the ice to one of our forwards, a player whose name our coach can spell backwards. I am a little upset. After all, this has been going on all season. "Come on Mac, keep your head in the game." He must know, though. I mean, how can you

coach a hockey team and not know our own players' names? The whistle blows and I skate back to the bench, trying to think of any other names that our coach has forgotten. There is that one kid he calls Bobby, but I think that is a reference to Bobby Orr. Same with Fuhr, Wayne, and Rocket, all great old-time hockey players. I also suspect he enjoys naming people something they're not. Can there be some fabulous hockey player named Mac? or possibly nicknamed Mac? It doesn't seem very likely to me, for I know a lot about hockey and the players, and not once have I heard of a Mac. So what should I do? What can I do? I have to make him use my proper name. How can I go around as Mac for another year? I walk up to our coach. "Hey Mac." "Sir. My name is Benjamin, remember!" "Well sure I do," he says. I exhale a sigh of relief that I'd been holding, pleased that is over with, and a little embarrassed that this name thing had gotten me all worked up. "Your shift's up. Now get out there, Mac!"

Benjamin does not mention in this story that his last name is MacPherson. Perhaps he does not realize the physical education teacher is playing on his last name. Or perhaps he does not like to be called by his last name, especially a nickname version of his last name. But what matters is that Benjamin does not like being called Mac.

Naming is a relational experience, but by misnaming the students, the teacher of Stephanie and Tiffany gets it wrong (seemingly without being aware of what goes on with the students). In contrast, the coach of Benjamin seems to want to get it wrong. Something about gender could be at play here. The coach is playing *tough* as is not uncommon in physical education classes, where the relation between coach and players tends to be boisterous. Our point is that only through listening to the student do we learn that, indeed, an experience occurred and what the nature is of such experience.

Although our focus in this chapter is not on teachers' experiences of naming students or being named by them, it is worth noting that attending to teachers' experiences can stimulate reflection on students' experiences:

The first few times that I meet my classes I remind myself to look over the class list to make sure I know all the names of the students. As I quickly rehearse the names, I try to connect these names with the persons to whom these names belong. Soon, some of these students I will know so well that I no longer have to remember them. I will simply know them. I will have trouble remembering the names of other students for quite some time.

For example, in my grade nine class I have a boy who looks very much like his older brother who was in my class last year. During the first few weeks of school, I kept confusing and calling Tim by his brother's name, Don. One day, when this happened again, I could see that Tim was clearly annoyed even though he did not say anything. So, spontaneously I made a public apology to him. Of course, I felt embarrassed having to do this and my confession was somewhat like self-punishment. But I knew it important to let Tim know that he mattered to me. I told him how sorry I was that I kept confusing his brother's name and how I appreciated him for who he was.

While the teacher may never have reflected on the phenomenological signifi-cance of the student's experience of being named (in this case by a wrong name), the teacher does seem to realize that this is not an unimportant

matter. The teacher senses how misnaming the student by his brother's name somehow does violence to his sense of self and self-identity, to who he is in his own right. We turn now to a student's description of an experience of being connected to a sibling by name.

"Sally Tilburn?" "Here." The first day of school has finally arrived. Mrs. Larson is taking attendance. My older brother, Ben, attended this school for three years. He set the reputation for me. Let's just say he wasn't exactly the teachers' favourite student. The benches in the hallway saw a lot of Ben throughout his school years. Every teacher I meet and talk to on this crisp September morning makes this connection to Ben. When I confess my name is Sally Tilburn, I can see the glimmer of hope in their eyes. Hope that I am not like my brother. "Tilburn, as in Ben Tilburn?" "Yes," I respond. "Oh . . . I see," Mrs. Larson's voice lowers, no doubt remembering the times she had with Ben a couple years back. Everyone's eyes turn to me. The whole class realizes what type of student Ben must have been, just because of the disapproving look on Mrs. Larson's face and the awkwardness it creates. I glance at her. It seems as though she has no problem remembering who Ben was. Trying to lower my head, I can only imagine what the next few years of school will be like.

How does Mrs. Larson's association of Ben with Sally influence the possibilities for the relationship between teacher and student? When other students in the class see Mrs. Larson's disapproving look and then turn their gaze to Sally, what are the possibilities for Sally's relationship with her classmates?

When a teacher doesn't use a student's name correctly, then the student may experience immediate and often intense feelings and thoughts.

Mrs. Smith is in a particularly foul mood this depressing Monday morning. I mean, she always seems to pick on me but today is especially bad. Science is a dreaded subject for me, but this year has to be the worst, all because of her. I raise my hand to answer her question and am really not expecting what I'm about to hear, for I have been in her class for about eight months already. But, in a horribly sharp tone, she says, "Yes Alexandria, what do you have to say?" For a moment, I think about what to reply and then I say, "I'm sorry, Mrs. Smith, but that isn't my name." (I believe that I answered quite appropriately considering the mistake she just made, after having me in her class for over eight months). "Oh right, well get on with it then, Alexis," she answers in a terribly unkind tone. The class erupts with overflowing laughter. Jeremiah, the class clown, of course, pipes in and yells, "Her name's Alexa." And he repeats, "Alexa!" Well, that just about makes Mrs. Smith's patience snap in half. "Shush up! All of you!" she exclaims. She is obviously embarrassed. We go on with the lesson, but I can't help but notice the slight rosy tinge on her cheeks for the rest of the period. Should I be happy, or should I not be happy, that she got the embarrassment she most certainly deserved?

We can hardly blame teachers for occasionally making mistakes with student names. The act of teaching is inherently improvisational. Teachers must instantly (inter)act in situations of contingency, and they must often lead their students through a myriad of activities in fast-paced environments where split-second decisions need to be made and where students' comments and actions are often unexpected. So it is no surprise that teachers

are bound to slip up on students' names now and then. Our discussion here is not to be critical of teachers when this happens but rather to call attention to students' experiences and to what it means when we try to determine what it is like for a student to have an experience. Even university students may feel sensitive to name confusions in their relations with their teachers.

Last term, I took philosophy from Professor Banner, who I really liked. And he seemed to like me because he often called on me and would say things like, "Frieda really makes an excellent point . . ." or "Frieda, what do you think of this issue?" and so on. Some of my friends would laugh when professor Banner called me by the name Frieda. But I did not mind so much because he really seemed to respect me. At the end of the term, after writing the test, I went up to him and said: "I really liked your classes and I think you are such a wonderful teacher. I have learned so much from your philosophy classes. However, I want you to know that I am not Frieda. My name is Jane." Professor Banner had been smiling as I thanked him but then looked shocked. "Oh, no, I am so sorry!" But I said, "Never mind, you had it partially right. My name is Jane Friedman."

There seems to be a paradox related to Frieda and Alexa—we don't really know a person if we don't know his or her name, but we can know his or her name and not really know him or her. Likewise, we may not know a person's name but have a brief encounter and now know some aspect of the person intimately. Both Frieda and Alexa seem to hesitate about correcting the teacher. Perhaps they know intuitively that it can be embarrassing for a person to forget someone's name. And, of course, there is the practical challenge that it is not easy to remember all names of people we meet.

Many teachers would agree that the first question educators always need to ask themselves is, what do the students who are in our classes actually *experience*? More importantly, it matters less what we, as educators, *say* that children experience; more crucial is what students themselves say. For example, a teacher may believe that he is caring about a student whom he teaches, but if the student does not *experience* the teacher's act as caring, then the teacher's belief is less relevant than what the student experiences.

HOW TO GAIN ACCESS TO STUDENT EXPERIENCE

How then can we attempt to come to understand how students themselves experience things? Here we like to show that we can ask them to describe specific instances of their experience in as much concrete detail as possible. We have done this by asking students to write anecdotes—short stories about single events. To understand how students experience teachers' use of their names, we have asked them the following:

Can you recall a name experience? Think of a specific time when a teacher called you by your name or by an incorrect name, or possibly when a teacher seemed to avoid calling you by any name. Tell what happened without explaining or giving opinions about it. Just describe the experience as you lived through it. Recall what was said by the teacher, by you, and by others. How did the teacher act, talk, and use gestures? What was the tone or feeling of the interaction? What did you say, think, feel, do? (This event may have happened recently or several years ago. Do not use real names of teachers or students.)

When we work with students we show interest in their writing and, in collaboration with the teacher, even teach them to write vivid experiential accounts. Students are given the following suggestions to increase the narrative power of the anecdote (van Manen, 1999, p. 20). An anecdote

1. is a very short and simple story
2. usually relates one incident
3. begins close to the central moment of the experience
4. includes important concrete detail
5. often contains several quotes (what was said, done, etc.)
6. closes quickly after the climax or when the incident is passed
7. often has an effective or "punchy" last line.

Depending on the events themselves and how able students are to describe them in detailed, concrete words, the anecdotes will vary in complexity and depth. For example, the following anecdote was written by a school student who recalled an experience she had in the third grade when her class was lining up in the hallway on their way to lunch.

Ms. Polanski was reminding us to get in two lines. "No pushing, no playing tag." She was coming down the line but, in truth, I had hardly noticed. I had been daydreaming. Except that I suddenly felt that something brushed my face. I startled a bit and automatically turned my head . . . but then I saw that it was the teacher. She had stopped and now looked at me while continuing to stroke my hair out of my eyes. "Monica!" she said in such a nice voice that I felt completely warmed by her touch. "Monica," that is all she said. Just my name. Then she kept on walking down the line. I think she was still talking about not leaving the cafeteria until we're excused, but I'm not sure. I just felt so special!

Compared with Stephanie's anecdote presented earlier, Monica's anecdote is simpler, and yet also rich with meaning. Anecdotes can be meaningful because, when students are asked to write them, it is they who recall experiences that are vivid and that hold meaning for them. And it is they who relay what was said, by whom, and in what tone. The student describes how he or she felt and thought and what he or she did in the situation. In some sense, the student is enabled to discover his or her own experience by writing it, and, furthermore, by writing the experience it becomes real, and it may entice the student to now reflect on it.

From the researcher's point of view, students writing their experiences as they lived through them give the researcher access to the subjectivity of classroom

life. Lived-experience descriptions (such as the anecdotes in this text) are written experiences that the researcher borrows in order to examine what meanings may inhere in them with respect to a particular phenomenon, such as the name experience. The researcher can then interrogate the anecdotes, looking for what, at first reading, might be unseen, probing for deeper understanding of the situation and of the meanings the incident held for the students. For example, in Monica's anecdote, we see a situation that may occur in any elementary school any time of the day. There is nothing special about lining up to go to the cafeteria, library, gym, bus, or playground. And we may observe similar gestures in teachers. So what was it about this episode that made it so significant for Monica? What was it about having her name called that led Monica to feel liked? Perhaps it was that the teacher seemed to single out Monica for no apparent reason. A touch and saying the student's name creates a moment of intimacy in the midst of an otherwise ordinary situation. In this moment of connection, Monica seems to experience being 'seen' by her teacher.

However, Monica's description of her experience may also be used to reflect further on the ambiguous nature of experience itself. These reflections should make us aware that we have to be very careful with our theoretical as well as the common sense understandings of the nature of experience. In other words, the notion of student experience that we have been trying to express is still too simplistic. When we speak of experiences as data then what is the nature of these data? What do we refer to when we name something an experience? Or perhaps we may ask, How are experiences experienced? Or are they?

WHAT IS NAMED WHEN WE SPEAK OF "EXPERIENCE"?

Experiences seem to arise from the living flow of everyday existence. In German language, this living sense is retained in the term *Erlebnis*, translated as "lived experience." Gadamer (1975) suggests that there are two dimensions of meaning to lived experience—the immediacy of experience and the content of what is experienced (p. 61). Both dimensions have methodological significance for qualitative inquiry. In recent years, there has been a resumption of interest in the notion of experience. Scholars such as Wood (2002) and Jay (2005) are resurrecting the focus on the meaning and significance of experience in contemporary inquiry. They argue that lived experience forms the starting point for inquiry, reflection, and interpretation, from Hegel through Heidegger, to Foucault and Derrida. This thought is also expressed in the well-known line from Merleau-Ponty (1962), "The world is not what I think, but what I live through . . . . If one wants to study the world as lived through, one has to start with a direct description of our experience as it is" (pp. xvi-xvii).

The "contents" of experiences are recognizable in the sense that we can name and describe them, or perhaps they come into being as experiences as we name and describe them. No doubt we could distinguish many more such experiences in the above student accounts. For example, in Monica's description we could distinguish the experience of waiting, the experience of being startled, the experience of the teacher's look, the experience of the touch of the teacher's hand, the experience of hearing one's name spoken in a certain tone of voice, the atmosphere of the cafeteria, and so forth. Every nameable experience seems to acquire an identity that makes it potentially distinguishable from other experiences. We could single out any of these moments that we just named and ask, "What is the phenomenological meaning of that experience?" or "What is the phenomenology of being startled by feeling something touching our face?" Next, it is possible to focus more carefully on the nature of touch and ask, "How is the experience of being touched or struck by an object different from being touched by a person's hand? What is the phenomenology of the human touch? How is being touched by a friend or a teacher experienced differently from being touched by the hand of stranger?"

Indeed, phenomenology always asks those sorts of questions: "What is the nature and meaning of this or that experience-as-we-live-through-it?" and "How does this phenomenon present itself as a distinguishable experience?" It is often baffling how the meanings of experiences are so much more difficult to determine than the meaning of concepts, which can be studied by examining their use in language. Gadamer (1975) explains that all lived experience has a certain immediacy that eludes every determination of its ultimate meaning. Why? Because when we try to recover the contents of our experiences through memory or reflection, we are in some sense always too late. We can never recover experience as it happened in the instant of the moment. Moreover, says Gadamer (1975), everything that is experienced "is experienced by oneself, and part of its meaning is that it belongs to the unity of this self and thus contains an unmistakable and irreplaceable relation to the whole of this one life" (p. 67). Indeed, what belongs to a certain experience cannot be exhausted in what can be said of it or in what can be grasped as its meaning.

The phenomenological interest is focused on the *phenomenon* as an aspect of our existence. It tries to grasp the living sense of the moment before we have lifted it up into cognitive, conceptual, or theoretical determination or clarity. Indeed this conceptual or theoretical clarity would be misleading or at least full of assumptions. We, therefore, try to come to an understanding of a phenomenon by constantly investigating and questioning these (psychological, personal, cultural, theoretical) assumptions. We ask, "What is experienced in

that moment before we reflect on it, before we conceptualize it, and before we even name and interpret it?" Only through this type of questioning can we come to discern the complex and subtle nature of experience when we speak of *student experience*.

We need to acknowledge that even in naming a student experience we have already lifted it up, so to speak, from the raw reality of human existence. That is why we have to constantly remind ourselves that we are trying to understand not some named concept but rather the prereflective existent, that raw moment or aspect of existence that we lift up and bring into focus with language. Is experience ultimately a linguistic phenomenon? And how is the body involved in our experience as we live it from moment to moment? Does experience already have meaning before we are consciously aware of it? Or are these experiences more primal phenomena? And how is this prereflective moment already part of our lived experience? The point for us is not that we should try to develop philosophical answers to these questions but that we must remain aware of their openness and reach.

THE PEDAGOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF ORIENTING TO STUDENT EXPERIENCE

So what we are learning (coming to understand?) about any experience, and the experience of naming in particular, is that we need to realize that even by naming an experience we already do violence to the prereflective nature of experience as we live it from moment to moment. And yet, we must try to do the impossible and reflect on the possible meanings of the experiences that we live.

I am a foreign student who has been in Canada only for a few months. My Chinese name, Huixia Ling Ho, is difficult to pronounce for Canadians. I am also rather quiet in my classes due to my inadequate English skills. All in all, that makes me feel rather invisible in class. In one of my classes, I am impressed by the teacher's ability to motivate students' participation in class discussions. The teacher learned everyone's name very quickly despite the large class size. He always calls students by their first name. However, he rarely mentions my name. I thought that I did not mind it that much. But one day, when he discussed each group project, calling each student's name as if he appreciated every member's effort, I found myself waiting for my name to be mentioned. At last it was our turn. There were four in our group. I concentrated on the teacher. He began to name the first two individuals in our group. Then, I saw him hesitate for a moment and skip my name to the fourth member. I was unrecognized. I was a bit surprised at myself. I did not expect that I would be so disappointed. I was embarrassed. I was painfully aware of my Chinese name which makes me who I am. I realize that I have become nameless, a nobody in this class.

Huixia, who is a secondary school student, shows remarkable insight into her experience. But we should realize that this awareness is only possible because

she has expressed her experience in language (here in written form). She seems to realize that, at the collective level, her Chinese name gives her a certain identity, but she also realizes that at the personal level her name refers to her singularity, her uniqueness. On the one hand, it is her uniqueness that is denied by the teacher's not including her by her name. By the teacher forgetting or skipping her name, she cannot feel recognized—she feels nameless. On the other hand, her cultural identity is also at stake in the teacher's name forgetting. Huixia seems to experience hurt that is associated with the withholding of recognition at two levels of subjectivity—her universal subjectivity (being Chinese) and her singular subjectivity (being her own unique self).

Even though we seem to be speculating about Huixia's and, earlier, Monica's inner lives, we need to point out that this is not really our intention. We are not their teachers and we are not really able to "know" Monica or Huixia as unique individuals. Our subject is not this or that student; our subject is the phenomenon (the experience) of naming. Monica's and Huixia's descriptions of a naming incident are examples of this human phenomenon (what it is like to be named, misnamed, unnamed, etc). And so are all the other experiences we borrow from students. We are trying to construct a qualitative text that makes the experience of naming recognizable to readers. In this recognition lies the possibility of becoming more pedagogically sensitive to the experiences of individual students such as Monica, Stephanie, Alexa, Jane, and Huixia. A teacher practitioner has a broader interest than we do in this text; the teacher must be interested in his or her students' individual experiences as well as in the phenomenon of the naming experience. In concrete classroom situations, the phenomenological and the personal understandings merge into a fuller pedagogical understanding.

From the perspective of professional practitioners, there are always two pedagogical aspects to a phenomenological interest such as the student experience of naming. On the one hand, there is the experience of naming as a human phenomenon, and on the other hand, in actual teaching-learning situations there is the inner psychological experience of this or that particular student. Of course, phenomenology, as a philosophical methodology, cannot help us understand the psychological lives of particular students. As researchers we can only focus on phenomenological understanding. And yet, there is always the larger picture of the actual lifeworld where teachers must deal with the psychological lives of real children. At the general level, teachers can increase their thoughtfulness by reflecting on the phenomenological meaning and significance of naming. At the level of everyday thinking and acting, the teacher also needs to know psychologically, as best as possible, how a particular student experiences a specific learning moment or specific classroom incident. In concrete and practical

pedagogical relations and situations, these two types of understanding (phenomenology and psychology) cannot really be separated. They are grasped together and enacted, as pedagogical thoughtfulness and tact, in the present instant of each teaching moment.

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CYNTHIA BALLENGER

TEACHING AS RESEARCH: PUZZLING OVER WORDS WITH FOURTH GRADERS

Children are so powerfully attracted to the world that the very motion of their curiosity comes through to us as a form of love.

George Dennison, *The Lives of Children*, p. 9.

This wonderful statement by George Dennison reminds many of us of why we entered teaching. It describes that feeling of connection we have with children as we participate in their thinking. And yet this sense of the relationship between love and intellectual curiosity often gets buried as we develop our craft, buried under layers of bureaucracy, not enough time, infuriating staff development, anxiety about tests, about control in the classroom, about covering the material, and so on. Recovering the feeling Dennison is talking about is one way of describing the task of teacher research as I know it.

It is important to realize that I speak on this topic from a particular history. I learned to do teacher research as a member of the Brookline Teacher Researcher Seminar (BTRS) beginning in 1986. Later, I left teaching for a number of years and became a staff member of the Chéche Konnen Center (CKC), where I was able to work with teachers who were both implementing some of the insights of the BTRS and developing approaches of their own. The work included here was done during this period.

Teachers make inquiry a part of their teaching in various ways. But all of those who do teacher research as I know it are seeking to see children in new ways and to see their ideas with new insight. The methods and vision that underlie the many forms of teacher research derive from many sources, but they always address questions that emerge from practice, from the problems and concerns of day-to-day teaching and learning. Here I will discuss primarily the contributions to the methods and the vision of teacher research made by anthropologists and linguists and other scholars interested in the variety of ways in which people talk in different settings (e.g., Au & Jordan, 1981; Boggs, 1985; Cazden, 1988; Duckworth, 1987; Dyson, 1993; Foster, 1983; Gee, 1989; Heath, 1983; Hymes, 1972; Labov, 1972; Michaels, 1985; Warren et al., 2000, 2001). This work exemplifies critical principles, methods, and categories from the fields of

ethnography and linguistics. Seminal work such as Hymes' (1972) edited volume, *The Functions of Language in the Classroom*, sets the larger stage for my work with its focus on the role of race and social class in school success.

This work contains as well, and crucially, a sense of delight and enthusiasm for the multitude of ways in which people talk to learn. It has been taken up by teachers, as well as researchers working as colleagues with teachers, as an invitation to explore and learn from the ways in which children from differing cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds talk, in and out of school, and how their contributions are valued in the classroom. It has been taken up as an invitation to look closely at the life of the classroom and at classroom talk (Ballenger, 1999, 2004; Brookline Teacher Researcher Seminar, 2004; Maclean & Mohr, 1999; Paley, 1990; Pothier, 1999; Wells, 2001).

In order to look closely at classroom life and talk, both teachers and researchers have found that some manner of "stopping time" (i.e., of creating some sort of artifact like a tape recording or detailed notes) is a crucial first step. This stopping of time is necessary so that we can return to what was said and done and explore it with others in a more reflective manner (cf. Carini, 1979; Phillips, 2004). It helps us to create distance from our assumptions and automatic judgments.

Further, in recording on tape or developing detailed notes, we have come to see that it is especially important to consider and re-consider the ideas and talk of those children whose learning is less transparent to the educators involved, that is, children whose ideas are puzzling, who do not seem to be doing well. Scholars and teacher researchers who examine the puzzling ideas of children find that it regularly challenges them in many ways. The children's assumptions, their habits of thought, and their ways with words are often not what we expect. And yet we often find that these students, while they appear to be struggling, are in fact asking deep questions about the material, making acute and challenging observations, and connecting personal experience to the material in significant ways that frequently complicate what we think we know (Ballenger, 2003, 2004; Brookline Teacher Researcher Seminar, 2004; Gee & Clinton, 2000; Michaels & Sohmer, 2000; Warren, Pothier, Ogonowski, Noble, & Goldstein, 2000; Warren, Ballenger, Rosebery, Ogonowski, & Hudicourt-Barnes, 2001).

I intend in this chapter to illustrate the practice of teacher research as I describe it above and the values and vision underlying it with a detailed account of two immigrant, fourth-grade boys and the work they did to understand the language used in their class's study of motion. I hope to demonstrate the value of researching as a part of teaching and, in particular, the rewards, within practice-based inquiry, of a focus on what we call "puzzling children."

In addition, I hope that studying the boys' remarks will help us to consider, in a specific case, how school-based language usage becomes evident and useful to students and to see the kinds of classroom activities that support an increased attention, or attentiveness, to language; the boys we observed used and changed everyday words, and in doing so they taught us, researchers and teachers, something important about how language functions for them in their learning.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Mary DiSchino was the classroom teacher in this study. She is a third- and fourth-grade teacher in a diverse urban school. She has been teaching for 25 years. DiSchino has explored her own teaching and learning and has written about both (DiSchino, 1987; 1998). She has also participated in the Chèche Konnen Center (CKC) seminars for eight years, learning science there with other teachers and researchers, and exploring her teaching.

The Chèche Konnen Center is organized around the principle that good science teaching, whatever else it may include, involves continual inquiry into the science itself and into the diversity of children's ways of understanding it. Teachers in the Chèche Konnen Center routinely and as part of their everyday professional practice come together to explore their own questions about the science that they are teaching and about the children's ideas. Teachers and researchers do science together. They also explore tapes and transcripts of the work the students are doing in the classroom, with a particular focus on talk and discussion. Through this experience, teachers come to recognize and value a broader range of ways of connecting with science on the part of their students; they see more ideas as on topic, more confusions as relevant (for more, see Rosebery, 1998).

In 1999–2000 I was involved, as a member of the Chèche Konnen staff, in Ms. DiSchino's classroom while she taught science. The ideas presented here were developed in close collaboration with other members of the CKC.

The children were engaged in a science unit on motion that Ms. DiSchino developed with the help of conversations at CKC, her own experience learning motion at CKC, and some pieces from the Investigations curriculum on speed and the mathematics of change (see Rosebery, 2000). She began with the idea of representing motion as a means of communication. The children made pictorial representations of trips they took down a 9-meter paper strip (e.g., they skip for three steps, fall down, twirl to the end). These representations, which developed and changed as the class tried them out, were intended to be read and then followed by other children so that they could take the same trip and

end up at the same place (see Monk, 2000, for an account of these trips and their development). Throughout this unit the children were concerned with questions such as:

> What are the different ways a child might move to get from one end to the other of this strip?
> How can we show this in a chart?
> How can we ensure that each traveler ends up at the same place?
> How can we ensure that each traveler goes at the same speed as the original traveler did?

These concerns led the class to talk about standard measures, about speed, about systems of representations, about distance and about how charts like their chart worked to organize information, among other issues.

Ms. DiSchino did not plan the curriculum out in advance, although she had clear goals in mind. Rather, she videotaped class discussions and activities. She then watched these videos with others, CKC staff and sometimes other CKC teachers, in order to investigate what and how the children were thinking. She was a part of rich discussions involving many different perspectives on what the children meant and what the class might do next. Then, in light of this process, she would plan the next classroom activities. These planning meetings took one to two-and-one-half hours per week after school (see Rosebery, 2000).

THE STUDY

The Chèche Konnen Seminar, following and modifying a tradition of the Brookline Teacher Researcher Seminar, has developed a practice of focusing teaching and research attention on children considered "puzzling," children about whose academic progress there is concern, children we are not always sure how to teach (Brookline Teacher Researcher Seminar, 2004). As I said above, we focus on this puzzling with a dual purpose. We do it first in order to help these children and to find out what they are thinking and how they are approaching topics. But more than that, we do this because it has been our experience that these children have the most to teach us.

Thus, it was a normal, if still emerging, part of CKC practice for Ms. Dischino to ask me, as a part of the CKC staff, to pay particular attention to two Haitian-American boys in her class, Saintis and Roland. I followed these boys at her request because she found them puzzling and was concerned about their academic progress, Saintis more than Roland.

A teacher research study has effects at the time, as it is carried out, and also, afterwards in many different classrooms and with many different children. An inquiry attitude changes the way you work with a child at the time, how you

respond to his ideas, and how you value them as you listen to him or her. But teacher researcher also has value later, when you have the time to explore again what was said and done in even greater depth for the sake of your own understanding. This part of the work is for the children who come after, whose ideas you will see more easily because of it. The present study is an endeavor of the second kind. Saintis and Roland taught Ms. Dischino and me a great deal. This is not an account of how we taught them but rather of what they taught us, which we will use with many other students.

The boys were both fourth graders. Saintis had only recently learned to read and write, not having attended much school in Haiti. He had learned to read in English during three years in the bilingual program and had recently been integrated into the mainstream classroom after three years there. Roland, too, had spent three years in the bilingual program for Haitian children and had recently been integrated into mainstream classes. I became, on occasion, a part of their cooperative groups in science and paid particular attention to them in the group discussions. I brought their ideas to the planning sessions with Ms. DiSchino. I videotaped and transcribed what they said in discussion, questioned them and took notes on their ideas in informal contexts, collected their science writing, and interviewed them twice, once after a few sessions of science and once at the end of the unit. We did these interviews because we wanted the boys to have time to elaborate on their thinking, time not always available in the classroom schedule.

The interviews were very open ended. They began with the question, "What have you learned?" In this chapter, I explore how the boys answered this question. After hearing their response in the earlier interview, I then looked through all instances in the class discussions where they talked and chose for further analysis those instances that seemed to bear on what they said they had learned. So the following analysis will include both some relevant classroom talk and some data from the interviews.

What is most noticeable in what the boys have to say about their learning is the way that they were struck by the chart that their class developed and the way it, in concert with the activities it referred to, affected for them the meaning of familiar words. The chart, which was intended, as I described, to represent the trips children took down a 9-meter strip of paper and to communicate these trips to others, eventually contained the headings: "Speed," "Movement," and "Distance." The boys referred to these familiar words, words that they knew well and had used in the past, as what they had learned. I argue that these children were especially intrigued by the way this tool and the context in which it was used affected the meanings and uses of these familiar words; they had learned that words can take on new aspects of meaning in new intellectual and social contexts.

While I am looking here at these boys as individuals, and they seem to have done at least some of the thinking discussed here somewhat silently while the class went on, it is nevertheless very important to note that they were students in a classroom that encouraged thinking out loud, restatements in various forms of significant ideas, and in which words, particularly big, impressive, scientific words, were regularly questioned. Attention to language and alternative points of view was a well-developed part of the content of science discussion (see DiSchino, 1998).

I will begin with Saintis and explore some examples from his class participation and then from his interview.

Classroom Conversations: Saintis

In the course of the first classroom conversation in which the children were beginning to develop the chart, the children were exploring their sense of the categories they would need to communicate their trips (see Monk, 2001). The early stories they wrote included such directions as: walk three steps, stop to pick up a dog, twirl three more steps. Ms. DiSchino had proposed that one heading should be "kind of movement." She asked the children, after proposing this, "What are some kinds of movement?" For most children the question prompted them to list such activities as skipping, running, walking. But some children brought up movement that did not cover space in the same way, like blinking. These suggestions were written down on chart paper for everyone to consider. Saintis, when asked for his contribution, suggested "playing," or at another point, he suggested the word "moving" itself. When he suggested "moving," his teacher tried to help him understand that she wanted examples of the category, not the name of the category itself.

Puzzled by his contributions, I asked him later for an example of movement—he suggested "cooking" and acted out moving up and down a counter while doing various things with his hands, suggesting, to me anyway, a restaurant chef dealing with multiple dishes. Playing, he told me again later, "like in playing volleyball," he explained.

Here is the puzzling child. I believe at the time we thought he was unable to understand the category of movement as it was being used. Further reflection, however, revealed that everything he proposed certainly did involve movement. He was not choosing anything that was actually still. But, while the other children either suggested movements that covered linear distance or that contained fairly discernible rates of movement, like blinking, Saintis, by suggesting cooking and playing, even moving itself, was offering unexpected ideas. We stored our puzzlement.

In the next class session the sense of appropriate movements had narrowed. At this point in the study, Ms. DiSchino had proposed headings for the chart: "Kind of Movement," "Distance," "Speed," and "Pause." The children were trying to use the chart to see how these headings worked. They were charting the following trip that they had written together: Walk two steps. Run three steps. Powerwalk to the end. As they charted, it turned out that many students felt that "run" belonged in the "Speed" category, not the "Kind of Movement" category, although they did classify "walk" as a kind of movement. Other students argued that, if "walk" was a kind of movement, "run" must be too. These latter children eventually proposed words like "slowly" or "fast" for the "Speed" category.

Kind of movement	Distance	Speed	Pause
Walk	2		
(Run)	3	**(Run)**	

In the course of an animated discussion on whether or not "run" was a speed, Saintis, who said he believed that "run" was a speed, told the class, as he moved his hand up and down slowly, "That's a speed. . . . And you can feel the air." The other students waved their arms slowly like he did. Gail responded, "And you can stay still but you're still breathing, that's a speed." Saintis had broadened the discussion with his sense of speed, and also introduced a physical sense of speed.

Saintis and some of the others were interested in a kind of speed that you could feel, but one that did not necessarily involve distance in the same way that running three steps does. The activities the children were engaged in, moving down a 9-meter strip of paper and making a chart of this movement, were planned to move them towards a view of speed that was based on linear distance and time. But eye blinking does have a speed as does arm waving, and cooking and playing do require movement in various senses.

It is worth noting that Ms. DiSchino neither corrected the children nor left them to work out their ideas on their own. Rather she returned to discuss the chart and where "run" belonged a number of times during this unit. The class eventually, as a result of their activities as well as their discussion, agreed that "run" and "walk" were both kinds of steps, but they devoted considerable time to alternative viewpoints. Saintis participated less in later discussion in the unit. He was, it appears, more interested in *his* view of speed and movement.

The Interview: Saintis

In his interview Saintis told me what he had learned:

> Saintis: I learned that anything you do is a movement, like when you walk, anything that you do, like when you are sleeping and you turn.

"Movement" is not an exotic word. There was no sense that Saintis did not understand it when he was first asked for examples of it. And yet this is what he chose to say he had learned.

I followed up by asking about speed, and he tied his answer back to movement, of the body and more cosmically.

> CB: What have you learned about speed?

> Saintis: Speed is a movement too, because when you go like this [waves arm slowly], you go slowly, . . . it's fast. You think it's going slow, but it's fast, cuz the world is turning, is turning very fast, so the body of someone is turning very fast too. They think they're going slow, they're going very fast, even if you're going so slowly, like if someone is calling you slowpoke, you're going mad slow, you're like like this [moves arm slowly] you're like going fast.

Saintis first said that speed is movement. Equating speed and movement in this way recalled the idea that "run" might be a speed. Saintis had offered his demonstration of speed during that discussion by moving his hand slowly and feeling the air. Since he purposely moved his hand slowly, he clearly did not feel that speed must be fast movement. Rather, it is something you feel when you move.

He perhaps was also distinguishing a sense of movement that entails a change in position, "like when you walk," from a kind of movement in which you end up where you started, "like when you are sleeping and you turn." He noted the differences but he was interested in the way in which they are all kinds of movement—"anything that you do."

As he went on, Saintis tied speed and movement together in a different way, a way that problematized what you can directly feel. For example, in the second utterance Saintis seemed to be viewing speed and movement from outside his body: If you're in space and watching the earth turn, people who are barely moving must seem to be going quickly. In his view of movement he seemed to be considering the idea that it is impossible to be still: even when you are asleep, you are moving from the perspective of outer space. While he was interested in the way you can feel the air when you move, he was also exploring a perspective on movement where you would not be able to sense your own speed.

At the same time as he was making these rather cosmic or philosophical points, he was also invoking a very down-to-earth scenario of some other child calling him slowpoke while he was going "mad slow." He used his view of speed to argue with this hypothetical other who only sees him moving in relation to distance on earth, who does not realize how fast he is going from a different perspective. He tricked this hypothetical other by this shift of perspective on determining speed. This suggests a riddle—something like, "How can you move slowly and fast at the same time?" Riddles are a kind of joke or verbal play that is well developed in Haitian culture.

I now feel that when Saintis offered "playing" as an example of a kind of movement in the class discussion, it truly was not because he did not understand the category system the others were using; in fact, other activities within this unit demonstrate that he could on occasion categorize these actions conventionally. Instead, I see him using the chart as a place to ask of these terms, "speed" and "movement"—What possibilities are there for their meaning? What limits if any are there on what they can mean?

Although we did not recognize it at the moment, I now believe that Saintis was energetically engaged in defining these terms, bringing in a great deal of his experience in the world. His method was to try out what he seemed to consider extreme cases and see how they fit. By using examples like "sleeping" or "cooking," which are not canonical examples of movement, he tried to figure out what aspects of meaning were central or what could count in one situation and not in another. What is wrong with playing or cooking as examples of movement? Or turning over in your sleep? Could something move and yet not cover distance? Could something be fast and slow at the same time?

This is a fine method, one frequently used in science and philosophy. It also could lead to his riddle-like formulations about appearing to go "mad slow" but really going very fast from the perspective of outer space. However, such reasoning was unexpected and we were not able to capitalize on it at the time. Saintis's interview was a help in understanding his thinking, but it took place after the class had moved on from the issues he remained concerned about. It is certainly worth asking whether, if we had been better able to address Saintis's approach to movement or speed, he would have moved further with his class in addition to pursuing his own view. With hindsight, it appears that, while we provided a space for him to do some very interesting thinking, we failed to provide a way to bring that thinking into useful contact with the curriculum and the class's direction.

Since this time I have seen a number of teachers take an idea like this, a puzzling one, and highlight it for the class in the seminar (Pothier, 1999). The class is then asked what is the child thinking. In this way the work of figuring out the

puzzling child's meaning is shared and does not fall entirely on the teacher; in addition, the result often clarifies much for the whole group. In some sense the conversations around the question, "Is run a speed?" were this kind of event; Saintis took a strong role in these and, I think, benefited from them. However, when they were over, I think it might have been useful to do this as well for Saintis around his ideas of movement, had we known. Perhaps he would have found a way to stay in the later discussions more actively.

Classroom Conversations: Roland

Let us turn to Roland, who took a somewhat different approach. We see him first in the classroom talking about a hypothetical walking trip down the piece of adding machine tape laid on the floor and marked into nine meters. Ms. DiSchino asked him what the numbers (meter marks) on the tape were doing (i.e. why she had put them there).

> Roland: The numbers are doing/see how far you go like, say, like anybody in the classroom that's walking is/lands on like 5 and you see how far you are and you look back and you're like **fa:r**.

Ms. DiSchino asked a question that in its form could be a request for one particular answer—"What are the numbers of the tape doing?" she asked—the answer could be, "They mark the meters." In fact, she may have been looking for that answer. And yet, categorizing a teacher's questions as open or closed often misses the role of classroom culture in how children respond and how their responses are taken up. In this classroom, Roland felt he could answer this question with a very different sort of answer. His teacher could have corrected him, and might have in another instance. Here, she gave him the time to offer his thoughts, different from hers, on the role of the numbers.

Roland responded by telling a kind of a story and at the same time offered something that sounds like a mathematical rule. Say you or I or "anybody in the classroom that's walking" took this walk, he said, thus claiming that what he was going to say was true in general and had the status of a rule, at least in his classroom. But then he moved to a more expressive kind of talk, reminiscent of oral stories, "You look back and you're like **fa:r**." He emphasized "far" and elongated it. Let me consider each point a little further.

His use of this rule-like beginning —"like anybody in the classroom that's walking is/lands on like 5"—reminded his listeners that this experience of "far" has a standardized aspect. This was an issue that the class had taken up: step size can vary, 20 steps might be far for a short child, while five steps might be far for a taller child with larger steps, but if you attend to the numbers on the line, "5" is far. This, Roland claimed, was true for all people in the classroom.

Then, when he said, "And you look back and you're like **far**," he seemed to be giving some felt sense of the distance traveled. His use of the indeterminate pronoun "you," no particular "you" but "you" in general, seems, at one and the same time, to offer the listener the opportunity to put herself into the situation and to make reference again to the standardizing role of numbers. You will go to a particular place designated by "5," and you will feel "you're like far." Using "like" as he does allows a hesitation before the next word, which then receives an emphatic stress, a real down beat and one held for an extra length of time; Roland did that with the word "far." "Like" is also often used to introduce direct discourse in everyday speech. When he said, "I was like far," it feels rather as if Roland had walked the five meters in front of the listener, looked back, and then exclaimed "far." All of this serves to give his listener an imagined experience of how very far Roland had come. Roland was both drawing on oral language skills that are important in everyday story telling and combining them with his developing sense of mathematical language.

And yet, he is only five meters from the start. One might ask, "Five meters is far in what world?" Roland, I think, was also realizing that "5" is far within this activity but not necessarily elsewhere; five meters is not far in just any world, the world of airplane travel for example. There seems to have been a sense of irony in that "far." Someone outside the classroom, who had not shared their experiences, might not recognize five meters on the tape as far, but within their activities five meters had to be understood as far. Like Saintis, Roland has uncovered something about how language shifts in different contexts.

When I asked Roland in his interview what he was learning, it was language and particularly distance that he mentioned.

The Interview: Roland

I began, as I did with Saintis, by asking Roland what he has been learning.

> Roland: I'm learning how, like, I never knew what distance were and some stuff from speed.
>
> I never knew what that like, hopping, I never knew that was [a] speed.
>
> Me, I used to hop in one spot, so now I know, what hopping means.
>
> I can hop here to there and hop anywhere.
>
> And now I think what speed is, like moving your body, like speed.
>
> I used to think it was just walking or running or just racing or crab walking.

Roland claimed to have learned what distance meant and "some stuff from speed." He was struck that hopping could cover distance. The children also discussed this in relation to spinning. In this context, for example, Roland knew

that hopping had to cover distance because of the necessity of getting down the meter tape, and the demands of the chart, where the heading after "kind of step" is "distance." This felt to him like a new way of understanding the word.

He agreed with Saintis that speed is moving your body, a much larger category, he told me, than he had previously, "just walking or running or just racing or crab walking." I asked him to tell me more about what he thought about distance now.

> Roland: now I know what distance means.
>
> Because distance, I think it means the numbers and movement.
>
> It means like when you move, like movement, like crab walking, like running.
>
> And distance, I used to never know what that means.
>
> I didn't even know what distance means.
>
> Now I found out, it means numbers like distance between 5.
>
> Now I know what the distance [of] 5 means.

When I asked him what he now understood about "distance," he addressed the question in terms of movement. As he said, "I think it means the numbers and movement. It means like when you move." He was referring to the chart here, I believe, and the way that the trips had come to be charted. Roland was defining these words in terms of each other: "Distance . . . means the numbers and movement." Saintis, too, said, "Speed is movement." It appears that the structure of the chart led them to see the words "speed," "movement," and "distance" in relationship to each other and to the particular imagined world they were engaging in.

The "distance of 5" he said he now understood. If skip is the movement, it is possible to label the distance as "5," meaning five skips. For a period of time the children did exactly this, but they noted that if you calculated distance in this way, five skips might not get you to the same place as five runs would, nor were every child's skips the same size. However, if by "5" you mean five meters, then it did not matter what the movement is, or who the person taking the movement was, you would end up in the same place. I think that it was this understanding that Roland was claiming when he said that, "Now I know what the distance [of] 5 means."

Unlike Saintis, I think that Roland did not explore the chart's headings so much as spaces for cosmic or riddling questions about word meaning. Rather, Roland was struck that the terms "movement," "distance," and "speed" all must remain in some relationship in the chart. Hopping must have a distance as well as a speed. Distance must have movement as well as numbers. Their definitions must explain these relationships.

And yet it is not exactly true that he learned what "distance" meant or at least that "he never knew." When I asked him the distance to his house, he said

"like five miles" without hesitation, which is about right. Distance is not a new word to him that he never understood before. Rather, I believe it is an old word that he was seeing anew in the context of the chart.

DISCUSSION

The students here are accomplishing something perhaps analogous to what Goodwin (1997) calls developing "a professional vision." He discusses, for example, a group of graduate students working with a chemical reaction that they must stop at just the right moment. This moment is signaled when they observe just the right color of "black." "Black" is unproblematic in many contexts, hardly considered sophisticated vocabulary. It is something we know, but these students, in order to stop the reaction at the right moment, discover qualities of black, ways of discussing what "black" means and of seeing the complexities within black, that are important for them. They refer, for example, to the "gorilla fur" aspect of the right kind of black.

In an analogous way, all the children in this classroom are developing "technical" meanings for words, meanings that are necessary for particular academic activities, such as the ones they are engaged in, meanings that are a part of this set of problems and tools. In this example, the terms they were using were long-familiar words; the changed meanings were the result of the perspective that the students took, with their teacher, on movement, distance, and speed, as they tried to communicate successfully in a world of charted and actual trips of ten meters.

In fact, for the entire class the process of filling in the chart had been one of raising consciousness regarding the meanings of words in this new context (e.g., Does spin have a distance? Is run a speed?). These are not questions one normally asks about these terms. They were prompted by the chart and its structure and by the trips that the children were trying to fit into the chart's structure. For all the children, the chart, and their interaction with it, directed attention to the language it contained.

Saintis and Roland, supported by the habits of mind cultivated in their classroom, made their own inquiries. Roland explored the way the activity of walking down the 9-meter strips defined what was "far" in general terms for anybody in his classroom. He went on to redefine for himself distance, speed, and movement in this context. Saintis used the chart and some of the classroom discussions to further his own thinking about speed and movement, somewhat outside of the conventions being developed among his classmates, and yet in ways that were very engaging and productive for him. The discoveries these boys made are more than just the actual new senses of motion, distance, and speed that they

articulate. The excitement that they communicate about what they now know results from their broader discovery: that words change with context. A good part of what we term academic language is exactly this—not new words but old ones with new resonances, new connections, new commitments. To speak the language of power in our schools, a knowledge of how words can be bent, shaped, expanded, and interrogated is a crucial component.

Various studies have demonstrated the idea that within the teaching of vocabulary it is useful to distinguish three types of words. At one extreme, there are the most unusual, most academic words, like "photosynthesis," for example, that relatively few people can properly define. At the other extreme, there are the very common words that everyone knows. And then there is the middle category. These words are described in various ways—as moderately uncommon, as words with many meanings, as everyday words with technical meanings. I would argue that words such as "black" in the example just above, or "speed," "distance," and "far" for Saintis and Roland, are part of this middle tier.

Words from this middle tier are rarely taught, and it is easy to understand why. They escape our notice because they sound so ordinary. Further, the middle tier is an unstable place, a moving target; it is not always obvious what words belong there in any particular context. In a new investigation, a new study, different words can come to have very special uses, technical meanings, as we have seen. They are everyday words, but they can become something more.

Close investigation of what these two students were saying rewarded us with a better sense of the complexity beneath terms and usages that otherwise we take for granted. The chart, the terms it contained, the sense of movement that Saintis was considering, the sense of "far" that Roland was concerned with, help us to see what it means to talk in disciplinary ways on this topic and in this classroom. In a rich context such as the one provided here, where there was regular attention to language and interpretation as an integral part of doing science and where the curriculum was responsive to children's ideas and to the discipline, closely watching children such as these deepens our own understanding of what we and they are engaged in. We can see how students are taking on new meanings and purposes for words and why. We can see where they put their energy and what they find challenging.

The question, "What children do you learn from?", is not often asked in teacher preparation. And yet I think it might be a question that, as educators, we ought to ask routinely, picking out our puzzling children in various ways and at different points for interview, for further probing and study. Roland and Saintis and their attention to language is only one example of the kinds of assumptions puzzling children can unearth for us to understand better what we are teaching.

Seeing children as puzzling is also a stance that changes how you respond to such children. It slows down the impulse to correct or inform. Because we knew they had something to teach us, we gave them extra time to explain themselves, stopped ourselves from correcting them in many cases until they made us understand their meaning—but more complete understanding takes time. Although we did focus on children we expected to learn from, we were not able to understand everything as well as we would have liked while the curriculum itself was going on. The child may have moved on to the next grade as we continue to ponder his or her ideas or approach. Our "ear" for thought and ideas is improved through these ruminations, and Roland and Saintis have tuned our ears to new aspects of the curriculum; these aspects will help us to hear other children.

Although we can never understand completely and respond to every child's intentions and ideas, this was a curriculum and a classroom and a way of listening that valued diversity in "ways with words" and expected that puzzling children were making sense. It is that confidence in children, all children, that teacher research takes from the foundational work done in linguistics and in ethnography in education and that guides the thinking and planning of many fine teacher researchers continuing this work.

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ANNE HAAS DYSON

SCHOOL LITERACY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CHILD CULTURE: WRITTEN REMNANTS OF THE "GUSTO OF LIFE"

In every child's pocket there is a piece of chalk. And with this chalk he . . . sketch[es] upon the pavements intricate designs and forms which assist him in devising new games and . . . keeping the old ones alive . . . [T]he unfailing [chalk] patterns may be seen, which at night, after the children have retired from their play, resemble abandoned houses which once were full of the gusto of life.

Ethel and Oliver Hale, *From Sidewalk, Gutter, and Stoop* (1938, see Dargan & Zeitlin, 1990, p. 85)

No less than the chalk patterns on old New York City streets, the written texts of young school children can "resemble abandoned houses which once were full of the gusto of life." Watching young school children write often entails watching them talk, sing, and dramatically play as well (Dyson, 1989). And all that symbolic and intentional activity can be organized in the service of playful childhood practices.

Indeed sometimes children, like 6-year-old Lyron, treat their old composition books as scrapbooks filled with the tracings of past happenings. "This is when I was playing a game, a bag of money [game]," Lyron comments about an entry. (His peer Tionna had written about stealing his money.) "But this ain't a war," he added. Playing war became a major literacy practice among Lyron's classmates (at least until it was banned), as was planning never-to-be get-togethers.

The notion that writing may figure into the playful practices of children is a far from dominant one in conceptions of child literacy. In the current politics of accountability in the U.S., writing is a collection of skills, particularly in financially strapped urban schools like Lyron's. Traditional 'basics' (e.g., writing conventions) loom large at least in part because they are easily tested by grade-level benchmark assessments and by school-wide achievement tests required by federally supported reading programs. In this basics-skills approach, children are invisible, indexed only by their achievement test scores. These scores are themselves treated as a kind of scrapbook artifact, indexing effective or ineffective instructional programs.

And yet, ethnographic work in preschools and elementary schools has documented the existence of unofficial or peer-defined cultures (e.g., Corsaro, 1985, 2003; Thorne, 1993). If they have some time and space for decision-making in official writing activities (e.g., opportunity to talk and share with peers), children's unofficial play practices may come to frame their writing decisions (e.g., Dyson, 1989, 2003). In this way, children's official literacy practices become a resource for unofficial childhood cultures. Over time, then, not only may individual children develop as skillful participants in literacy practices but cultures—configurations of shared practices—themselves develop.

In this chapter, I draw on an ongoing study of children writing in a regulated (i.e., test-monitored) urban site to examine children's textual mediation of child play practices. This textual play figured into and helped construct the ongoing cultural life of the children, just as the children's cultural life supported their control of the written medium. The data set drawn on was constructed over the course of an academic year primarily in Lyron's first grade classroom; I observed the children's responses to school literacy activities and, also, their playful practices in the classroom and on the playground. Through the project as a whole, I aim to probe the ideologies of childhood and language that undergird activities imagined by policy makers and curriculum developers in these back-to-basics times and, most importantly, how those activities are enacted— and transformed—by children.

In the sections to come, I first elaborate on the interrelated concepts—literacy, child cultures, development—that provide a theoretical stage for viewing the child action to come. I next briefly describe the project itself and, finally, turn to my main purpose: to trace the interplay between official and unofficial (or child-governed) practices during classroom writing time. In the politics of early education, literacy is a collection of skills, and childhood literacy is for purposes of future school achievement and, ultimately, the health of the nation (i.e., workers who will sustain the country's economic needs). However, as I will argue, in the politics of childhood, literacy is potentially a symbolic resource for negotiating present relationships and pleasurable activities. Its use has consequences for individual and (child) collective change.

CHILD COMPOSERS IN CHILD CULTURES

Writing should be meaningful to children . . . an intrinsic need should be aroused in them, and . . . writing should be incorporated into a task that is necessary and relevant for life. Only then can we be certain that it will develop not as a matter of hand and finger habits but as a really new and complex form of speech. (Vygotksy, 1978, p. 118)

Within the communicative practice approach adopted herein, literacy learning is a contextualized process, not a set of sequentially learned skills nor merely a set of habits. This process is enacted as children participate in, and thereby enact interpretations of, the recurrent value-laden activities (the literacy practices) of their daily lives in and out of school. For this reason, their unfolding written texts are not containers into which meaning is poured; they are mediators of cultural practices through which meaning is produced. However, children, like adults, are not participants in singular cultural communities. And in classrooms, ideologies governing what is relevant for life—and worthy of one's time—may vary.

Practice as Social Dialogue

A communicative practice or genre is a kind of social dialogue (Bakhtin, 1981; Hanks, 1996). That is, to enact a practice (e.g., storytelling, arguing, preaching), authors, be they speakers or writers, assume a certain social stance toward others, their addressees. Their history of participation in that practice echoes in their very words, as they appropriate characteristic ways of addressing others in such a communicative situation. That is, their utterances are 'voiced'—articulated by an intentional, positioned person.

A practice is not a script, though. Authors do not assemble prefabricated messages but, rather, respond to the very particular others in their midst. Moreover, a practice is not an isolated abstraction; it exists within a configuration of other practices, and those interconnected practices comprise a cultural world (Hanks, 1996; Miller & Goodnow, 1995). Thus, authors also respond to, and help shape, cultural worlds themselves. That is, over time, they adapt their tools, including written language, as their needs and possibilities evolve (Street, 1993). This is the case in this project: children both become participants in and develop the nature of cultural worlds. However, the cultural worlds in question are neither stable nor homogeneous.

The dynamics of any cultural world are shaped by, and constitutive of, societal structures, for example, of age, race, gender, and social class (Bakhtin, 1986). When people speak, the very words they use "taste" differently to those differently positioned in a complex, stratified world (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 293). In the official cultural world of the classroom, these societal structures were sometimes made visible as children's writing refracted any seeming homogeneity. For example, the word "war" is an especially ideologically charged word, particularly in the current project, given the then (and now) ongoing U.S. military engagement in Iraq. Even as his teacher worried about the actual war, Lyron wrote that war was "fun." Even a single word can sound differently as it

reverberates against a "heteroglossic" landscape, that is, a condition of diverse social voices (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 263).

To complicate matters, language users may participate in multiple, not always compatible, cultural worlds. Their efforts to use language in "contact zones" where two or more worlds meet leave tracings in their texts (Pratt, 1991). To use Bakhtin's (1981) words:

> [A speaker's] orientation toward the listener [or addressee] is an orientation toward a specific conceptual horizon, toward the specific world of the listener; it introduces totally new elements into his discourse; it is in this way, after all, that various different points of view, conceptual horizons, systems for providing expressive accents, various social languages come to interact with one another. (p. 282)

Bakhtin had in mind adult speakers and literary artists, but this hybridity is evident in the efforts of young school children as well. It is the complexity of the observed urban classroom, and of children's efforts to please multiple addressees, that accounts for the interplay of official and unofficial worlds of interest herein (cf. Hanks, 1996).

Childhood Practices and Literacy Development

Like all cultural worlds, classrooms figure into societal dynamics of age, race, gender, and social class (Erickson, 1986; Gillmore, 1985). Moreover, these dynamics contribute to the very existence of *official* classroom worlds, governed by institutional authorities, and *unofficial* worlds governed by children. And yet, literacy studies have paid much less attention to childhood cultures than to youth cultures.

Perhaps this is in part because oral traditions are so central to child cultures (e.g., Opie & Opie, 1959; Opie, 1993; Sutton-Smith, Mechling, Johnson, & McMahon, 1995). Children's games and word plays, passed on through generations of children, enact age-old themes (e.g., of chase-escape, attack-defend, escape-capture [Sutton-Smith, 1995]), even as they incorporate contemporary media material. Children's play involves a trying on and moving among dominant identities (e.g., those defined by relations of gender, power, violence, and love). Out on the playground, one may hear children mock gendered love and sing their desires for it; one may witness mock battles that transform into verbal duels if someone is actually hurt. The folklorist Rosemary Zumwalt writes that children's fluid play "eludes the static state of the printed word" (Zumwalt, 1995, p. 45).

And yet, classroom writing periods, even when deemed times for applying basic skills, are amenable to children's transformative play. The production of written language has not yielded the commercial profits nor the political

maneuvering of its more easily tested, and more materially dependent, reception (i.e., reading). It typically includes, at least at some point, children, blank pieces of paper, and pencils. Children may spend a significant amount of time sitting at their desks, as teachers circulate or work in one-to-one conferences with children. Sitting side by side, children carry on their relations in whispers and sometimes shouts, even as they write.

As they do so, children may make use of familiar peer relations and childhood practices to organize their participation in the new demands of school writing. Reframing school practices within childhood relations may support children's grappling with the written system, even as it supports the further elaboration of child cultures themselves. Learners orchestrate, and manipulate the workings of, symbol systems on the basis of intentional action (Werner & Kaplan, 1963)— intentions that are sensible to them as children, not as future adults.

Nonetheless, this reframing process is not to be romanticized. As children recontextualize the stuff of unofficial childhood play into official composing times, they cross borders of symbolic media, social relations, and governing ideologies (Dyson, 2003). Thus a mediational means of writing-time play—the written text itself—may become a fixed display of individuals' written language knowledge, skill, and school 'appropriateness' (Bauman & Briggs, 1990). If and when brought to the official public's, including the teacher's, attention, what are the consequences of, say, a declaration that "war is fun"? Whatever is or is not done, this interplay of official and unofficial dialogue is an avenue through which children learn about composing themselves in the school-governed world relative to the worlds beyond its control.

Below I intend to illustrate this complex interplay between official and unofficial worlds, an interplay in full swing in a writing period with a mandated emphasis on applying the basic skills. I begin by providing a situational and methodological context for the dramas to come.

TRACING THE INTERPLAY OF OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL PRACTICES: PROJECT METHODS

Lyron and his peers were all members of Mrs. K.'s first grade in an elementary school in a mid-sized, Midwest, central city. The school's reading program was in the process of applying (successfully) for federal support, and, as required by the state's federal grant (entitled a *Reading First* grant), all primary-grade children (K-3) took a standardized achievement test (*Iowa Test of Basic Skills*). Like all state schools so supported, the children in Lyron's school were primarily from low-income homes; they identified with diverse ethnic heritages, among them

African American, Mexican, White, and American Indian. Eighty-five per cent [85%] of the school's children qualified for the federal school lunch program. (Appendix A contains demographic information on those children who were in Mrs. K.'s classroom for the entire year; Appendix B indicates which children sat at Table A, a cluster of pushed-together desks, and which at Table B, a second cluster of desks.)

Mrs. K., who was white, had spent her entire teaching career of over 20 years at this school site. During the school year, she had a student teacher, Ms. H., Mexican American and in her twenties. Ms. H. closely modeled her teaching practices on those of Mrs. K.

Mrs. K. had taught through many curricular upheavals but, throughout all, continued to sing, read, tell stories, and laugh with her children. She had participated in the district's professional inservices on writing workshop peda-gogy (i.e., on children drafting and editing their own texts). And she had also attended the district meetings on mandated textbook-based lessons; beginning in second grade, these lessons were paced uniformly across the district and culminated every six weeks in classroom tests.

Writing was of secondary interest in the new federal guidelines; within writing as a curricular area, emphasis was on teaching skills through modeling, direct instruction, and provision of structured practice (e.g., through copying sentences, writing the alphabet, identifying naming and action words, completing sentence starters). There was no expectation because of brain development (see Bruner, 2000) that, outside teacher structured lessons, children would attend to audience views of their writing or that they would vary their writing for different genres (as explained in the teacher development handbook distributed to *Reading First* teachers). Both the handbook and the state, grade-level standards viewed personal narratives and, more particularly, 3–4 coherent sentences, as reasonable goals for first graders.

Mrs. K.'s writing activities incorporated textbook exercises on basic skills, extended child writing (for which topics were modeled but not required), and teacher-led editing conferences to reinforce taught skills. During the daily journal time, Mrs. K. modeled her own writing process. She made a 'quick sketch' to plan her writing, and then orally monitored her encoding of an unfolding message. After this modeling, the children drew and wrote, as Mrs. K. circulated and chatted briefly with this child or that one, helping them plan, spell, or reread their writing. Then she sat at her worktable and called children over for an editing conference. At the end of the period, the children all shared their papers, if there was time. The sharing was often quite rushed, as the clock inevitably rushed toward the time-to-get-ready-to-go-home bell.

I observed such a writing period and, in fact, the entire afternoon in Mrs. K.'s class on average twice a week over the course of an academic year (approximately 5–6 hours a week). Because I was interested in children's nonacademic as well as their academic practices, I could not observe only the writing period. I usually began observing shortly after lunch, so that I could follow the children through varied subject matter lessons and an afternoon recess (or, if weather did not permit, a free choice period), and finally, writing time.

Although I observed all of the children, I focused on three children who had different vernacular resources, were oriented to different childhood pleasures, and had overlapping but distinctive circles of chosen companions. Tionna identified herself as Black, as did Lyron; Ezekial identified himself as Mexican. In this chapter, though, it is not their distinctiveness that matters so much as their common intention to use written symbols to participate in official and unofficial practices.

I am a middle-aged white woman with a long history of observing in urban primary schools. As is my usual way, I adopted a low key but friendly and attentive stance toward the children; I explained that I was interested in what it was like to be a kid in this class and that I would be very busy writing down what they did so I could remember it. In addition to taking notes, later written out as formal field notes, I also audiotaped continuously while observing (resulting in 85 hours of audiotape) and photocopied all written work produced during writing time (N = 1512 for the 16 children who were enrolled in Mrs. K.'s room for the entire year).

In studying the collected data, I was interested in how children interpreted basic lessons and activities. For example, what sort of non-academic cultural and textual resources—vernaculars, play practices, valued texts—did children draw upon during official writing events? With what official and unofficial consequences (e.g., with what responses from teacher and children)? Conversely, how did officially modeled skills and practices figure into children's social ends and playful practices?

Based on my field notes, I identified the kinds of events (i.e., practices) that regularly comprised teaching "the basics," including the teacher modeling practice discussed herein. Most importantly for this chapter, I traced the linkages of children's composing actions and decisions (i.e., all actions related to the production of one written text, which could be oral, written, drawn, enacted, or multimodal) to their involvement in official and unofficial, or nonacademic, worlds. I paid attention to discursive material that indexed these worlds (e.g., words, phrases, or actual social relations among players). The use of diverse cultural resources in the production of one text was the means

through which official and unofficial worlds became interwoven in children's composing (see also Dyson, 2003).

Certain childhood practices were richly revealing of official and unofficial linkages because they involved many children in the class, as opposed to being the province of a couple of friends. In this chapter, I feature two such writing time practices: planning birthday parties and planning and enacting war games. Below I begin with Mrs. K.'s modeling of the writing act and of applying basic skills. Then I consider the practices of planning parties and playing war, anchoring each discussion with a single child's product. As the two practices illustrate, given paper and pencil and the company of each other, young children do far more than master voice-less writing skills. Rather, they use that old-world technology to give voice to and help construct their agency in official and unofficial worlds.

FROM TEACHERS' PLANS TO WRITTEN ROUTINES
AND CHILDHOOD INVENTIONS

"I have to tell you about this," Mrs. K. might say, before beginning her 'quick sketch,' the planning part of the daily practice of modeling the writing process and the use of basic skills. Mrs. K. (and her student teacher Ms. H.) wrote about many topics, but most were about anticipated ("I am going to . . .") or completed ("I went . . .") events. These events tended to involve small trips or errands—outings for shopping, dinner, movies, or to her own children's school affairs. Mrs. K. saw such 'life stories,' whether plans or narrative reports, as an accessible text type in writing instruction, as did the curricular handbook and the state grade level guidelines.

Mrs. K. had an inviting, conversational style with the children. She talked throughout her sketching, pointing out, for example, the movie theater seats, the restaurant table at which she sat, the store facade she had entered. The children often piped up with comments and questions (e.g., "What's Chicago?"). During the actual writing, Mrs. K. wrote in a standard English and called her children's attention to periods and capital letters, spacing and arranging of letters and words, and the process of rereading for left out words and errors of convention.

The children's own writing suggested that they learned lessons from this modeling practice not included on any curricular documents. Mrs. K., just as was expected of her, modeled the act of writing and the use of rules to be mastered. But the children responded to the social event of the lesson (cf., Dyson, 1984; Erickson, 1982; Hymes, 1972), including the social stance adopted, the words used, even the implicit values about what is worth talking,

or writing, about. Among those lessons was a demonstration of a kind of social dialogue (i.e., sharing "fun" plans, to use Mrs. K.'s common word), its linguistic markers (e.g., "I am going to . . ."), and, ideologically, the worthiness of a filled social calendar.

Indeed, a future orientation (e.g., an "I am going to" or "I will") was a dominant feature of Mrs. K.'s children's journal entries, contained in about a third of all journal entries from September through December and almost half of all entries from January through mid-June. Sometimes the phrase seemed simply a written routine, even resulting on occasion in odd texts like, "Yesterday I will go . . ." For young children, such routines are common; they ease the task of controlling the complex symbolic system of writing, providing content, structure, and spelling (Bussis, Chittenden, Amarel, & Klausner, 1985; Clay, 1975; Dyson, 1989; King & Rentel, 1981).

But, by the winter months, child talk surrounding writing suggested that, at least in some cases, the phrase was indeed about future plans, often involving school friends in the world beyond school. The plans could range from anticipated recess play, to Elly's elaborate intentions to take several classmates on a birthday trip to California, to Ezekial's more modest plans to play at a friend's house over the weekend.

The children's future-tense plans, though, were anything but straightforward. For example, when children's outside-of-school plans involved in-school friends, the plans functioned as a kind of play. Planned home birthday parties, trips to all-you-can-eat buffets, and weekend play dates at friends' homes could give rise to much oral interaction. But those same events were seldom mentioned after the anticipated date had arrived. When I inquired about how the party, for example, had gone, children would report that for one reason or another (e.g., unknown addresses, mothers saying no), the plans did not work out.

Teacher plans, then, could give rise to childhood dreams. The children, after all, lived in a very different world than did Mrs. K. (or her student teacher, Ms. H.). Mrs. K.'s plans could involve disposable income, however modest (e.g., money for a weekend trip and a nice hotel, for a non-fast food restaurant, or a movie out). The children had no direct control over how money and time were spent in their families, unlike Mrs. K., who seemed also to have more disposable income. (The focal children, for example, talked about watching movie videos but not about actually going to the theater, unless they went through the after school program. Rather than a conventional restaurant, they talked about, played, and at least one [Lyron] had a parent who worked in, a fast-food place.)

The children, though, were quite adept at assuming new roles through dramatic play, a familiar means to power and pleasure in their lives. Play was an essential aspect of the child practices that wound their way through

the alleyways of official classroom time and spread out unabashed during free activity periods and recess outings to the playground. During the writing period, a new forum for such practices took shape. Instead of cops and robbers, principal and bad children, girl friend(s) and boy friend(s), or fast-food counter clerks and cooks (among other roles), the children could be, for instance, party givers and invitees, the play practice featured in the next section.

The Birthday Party

I am going to have
fun at my brfa [birthday, i.e., birthday party]
Brad and
mAnny and
Joshua and.
Ezekial are coming
to my brfa [birthday, i.e., birthday party] it will
be fun and LYron will cum . . . (written by Jon in March)

Jon's text is seemingly a kind of "life story," as Mrs. K. phrased it: children write their eager anticipations of important happenings. But Jon was anticipating a party that was not to be.

Indeed, sitting here in my chapter, the text is a kind of scrapbook entry. Its "I-am-going-to" frame and its physical placement in Jon's writing book link it to the official world. But there are tracings too of its place in the imagined spaces children constructed. In the subsections to follow, I first discuss the features of the party practice that led to such tracings and, then, briefly recount the enactment and social consequences of Jon's birthday party events.

Planning Private Parties in Public Places

Birthday parties were a regular feature of official classroom life, and birthdays themselves were a common topic of children's official writing book entries. (All but three children wrote about birthdays.) Children's birthdays were listed by month on a classroom bulletin board. Moreover, the class celebrated each child's birthday with a rendition of the happy birthday song and a special treat. If a child's parent(s) so desired, they could send along cupcakes and punch for the celebration, but they had to send enough for everyone. This valuing of inclusiveness was a recurrent theme in the class, whatever the occasion. And children's official writing on official birthday

celebrations consistently indexed this inclusiveness in some way. For example, note Tionna's use of "we" and "our" in the piece below:

> today we are going to selbrat mannys [Manny's]
> Birthday we are go[ing] to eat cupcakes with spreackls [sprinkles] on
> thim thay will tast very good
> we will brobby [probably] not have a nof [enough]
> time to read are [our] writings.

Official class parties were for everyone, but this was not the case for parties held outside of school. Because of this, writing about the latter parties opened up communicative space for children's imagination and their 'social work' (Dyson, 1993). There are tracings of this work in Jon's text, particularly in its inclusion of the names of specific children (as opposed to everyone). Children's named invitees could be close friends, just boys or just girls, everybody in the class, or an evolving cast of characters.

In this racially and ethnically diverse class, girls' close friendships were primarily homogeneous in declared racial identity and, among boys, primarily homogeneous in gender. Still, oral negotiations could lead to social and textual changes, as Jon's birthday events will illustrate. Indeed, this link to oral negotiations—and to revisions of invitees (if not of writing conventions)—leads to another distinctive feature of unofficial birthday play: the way in which it became embedded in a discursive field of practices; that is, the way it figured into and helped construct child culture.

An Emerging Repertoire of Interconnected Practices

"Hey Janette! You going to my birthday party?"

Jon's birthday was four months away, when he shouted out this request to Janette. The time lag between anticipated (it was only November) and at least possible party date was not unusual. Out-of-school birthday parties were future affairs in which fun was anticipated, and that anticipation itself seemed to be the fun. Children's social relations were newly problematized as anticipation became entangled in interconnected practices learned about in and out of school. For example, written anticipations of a party gave rise to oral negotiations and to others' written intentions to attend. They also engendered the exchanging of written names, phone numbers, and bits of addresses. Those acquired names and phone numbers could be organized into lists of invitees.

In fact, Jon's query to Janette may have been his response to the lists of invitees she, Tionna, and Mandisa were each making during activity time for their parties. Even though their birthdays were all months away, they made their lists, each careful to include each other plus the other member of their friendship group, Lyron (the only African American male in the class). They did not, however, include Jon.

Ezekial spent that same activity time making his party list. Ezekial had no set group of friends, playing with many children in addition to his best friend, Joshua. He did not declare his invitees but walked around with a list, inviting children and, usually, asking for their phone numbers. Joshua responded with great enthusiasm:

> Ezekial: Joshua, do you want to come to my party?
>
> Joshua: Party?
>
> Ezekial: Yep.
>
> Joshua: Yippee! I'll be there.
>
> Ezekial: 'Cause I'm going to [a fast-food place catering to children] so we can play basketball there.

Elly, witnessing the action, offers Ezekial a written invitation—and a polite request—to the current form of her anticipated party (a trip to California):

> Ezekial Plese come to Califony

Ezekial's big grin suggested that he was enormously pleased to be invited.

These brief vignettes of children planning for their birthdays suggest the way in which an officially modeled text—a personal text—became recontextualized within unofficial social and playful relations. Moreover, the children appropriated from the landscape of voices—of kinds of communicative practices—surrounding them at home and at school to stretch their social and textual work beyond the confines of the curriculum (which did not envision interconnected fields of communicative practices). Of course, they also stretched beyond their own powers to control time, space, and money, even as they exploited the non-inclusiveness of unofficial parties to gain some control over each other.

The following subsection, focused on Jon's birthday, illustrates the key features of the birthday practice: the precarious temporal link between anticipating a party and actually having a birthday; the potential desirability of being included in a party-related text that names names; and the embeddedness of the central birthday practice (i.e., anticipating a private party) in a constellation of practices appropriated from in and out of school (list making, oral negotiations,

gathering and exchanging phone numbers). Jon's 'future-tense' text, seemingly a 'life story' in the literal sense, figured into, and helped construct, the ongoing cultural life of the children.

Jon's Birthday: A Textual Slip from Fiction to 'Life Story'

Jon's planned birthday began in a common and relatively contained way. He wrote about his upcoming birthday party with his regular male companions in the class: Brad, Manny, Joshua, Ezekial, and Lyron. However, pressure came to bear from the girls who sat around him in his table cluster, particularly Mandisa and Elisha, and also, from Elly, who liked Jon.

As these children began to write their own plans to go to Jon's party, Jon's plans themselves became more inclusive:

> Ezekial is kuming
> and Joshua
> Elisha
> Elly and
> Mandisa are
> kumying
> to my bira [birthday]
> Tomorrow. and
> Manny it will
> be fun and wey [we]
> will have kedy [candy].

Accompanying Jon's evolving plans were exchanges of phone numbers, addresses, and elaborate plans for who would be picking up whom. The planned event could itself become relatively elaborate, as when Elisha wrote about how she was

> going to Jon's Birthday, and
> we will git to hit the
> pehota [piñata]. And I will give it
> my best hit. And I will
> git all the candy out and.
> I wish there will be mony
> in it.

On the day of Jon's actual birthday, the negotiations and anticipation reached unusual intensity and spilled beyond the borders of the unofficial world. When the get-ready-to-go-home bell sounded, the children went out into the hall by table clusters to get their coats, hats, and gloves from their lockers. Once outside the room, Janette, Ezekial, and Elisha gathered around Jon. They were all anxious to ride home with him to his birthday party.

Jon listened quietly and then said that his little brother would be in the car with his mother when she came to pick him up. There would be no room for extra children.

But those extra children persisted. He said he thought Ezekial and Janette could maybe squeeze in the front seat. Elisha started to cry. Jon said he thought they could all squeeze in. As this negotiating was going on, children from the second table cluster were rounding the classroom doorway, heading toward their lockers. One of those children was Manny, who, hearing the conversation, announced that he too would be getting into the car. Also newly in the hallway was Elly, who, standing by her locker, said in a plaintive, high pitched voice, "Hope I can come to the birthday boy's party tonight."

Jon went back into the classroom and directly asked his teacher, "Can I call my mom to see if some of my classmates can come to my party?" "It is too late for that," his teacher said.

"You should have given out invitations," said Mandisa, and Elisha agreed. Jon went home and the disappointed others eventually went to the after-school care program (but only after a couple had phoned their mothers in the office and, unsuccessfully, sought parental permission to go over to Jon's house, wherever that was).

The children's participation in the birthday party practices and, in particular, in Jon's birthday plans, illustrate the complex interplay between official and unofficial worlds. His texts on his birthday party, considered as singular pieces, seem simple anticipations of a pleasant upcoming event. For Mrs. K., these texts elicited no particular concern, beyond the usual matter of editorial help with "the basics" (e.g., capitalization and punctuation, spelling, usage). However, viewed over time and, from the vantage point of the unofficial world, Jon's written anticipation was quickly embedded within a complex of peers' oral and written events aimed at securing inclusion and joining in on the anticipation. Jon's own rewritten anticipation became a kind of revised party plan; in his revisions, Jon was concerned, not with editorial matters, but with relational pressures, particularly from his table mates. Hence, he included girls in his text.

Unusual for such unofficial play events, Jon's birthday events were pushed by his peers across the borders of childhood play. But there could be no actual party without adult cooperation. "Can I call my mom?" Jon had said. It was too late for that, his teacher had replied. There would be no party, but there also were no perceived official or unofficial consequences (beyond the admonishment that an additional literacy practice should have been used: giving out invitations).

Still, in a classroom where inclusiveness was valued, exclusive party plans were allowed a public and official reading during sharing time. During such a

reading, included children tended to sit alertly and smile; those unmentioned tended to remain ostensibly passive or otherwise occupied (with a neighbor, a scratch, a shoe . . .). The public reading about private parties was not a matter of official concern. But concern was raised about the next practice considered, that of war play.

War Play

> We are going to play a
> wer [war] it will [be] the girls a gints the
> boys all the girls are going
> to bet the boys nobody can stop the girls because
> we have a 1,0000001500000
> of misssl and the boys
> oldy [only] have one missl no way
> the boys can bet the girls thay
> can't lay a [hand] on us no you cant
> stop us not a bit because they
> don't have a nofe things
> to get adit [attack] us we are 'tofe girls'
> we stol there money thay
> are made [mad] thay oldy have
> one tent we have a lot of
> cacle [castles] all we haft to do
> is to thow a rock to kill them (written by Tionna in May)

Like Jon's textual anticipation of his birthday party, Tionna's anticipation of a successful war is a mere shell of an elaborate peer negotiation. Nonetheless, that shell is a complex hybrid—not only does it have tracings of the official event (e.g., its future tense frame; its very physical placement in her journal), but it also has clear links to the unofficial world. Tionna's indexing of her fellow girls, her signaling of their worthiness as opponents ("we are tofe"), even her slippage into a present-tense encounter with "you boys," all contextualize the text, and herself as author, within and against two distinct kinds of childhood play (war games and gender play).

Below, I discuss the movement of war play from a physical and oral playground game to a multimodal and text-mediated practice. Then I briefly recount the enactment and unofficial and official consequences of Tionna's textual war play.

Reconstructing Relations through Writing-Time War Play

During the spring months, war play on the playground was a kind of team-organized chase game, a traditional variant of war play (e.g., Newell, 1963/ 1883). In this game, children tossed pinecones (and sometimes wood chips)

at each other. These bits of nature were imagined as kinds of bombs or, alternatively, as pingpong balls (i.e., as substitutes for the ping pong ball projectiles in a kind of toy gun, which none of the children actually had).

Observing on the playground, I saw only a chase game and occasional arguments about who was hit and thus subject, in one variant of the game, to getting on the other side's team or, in another variant, to pretending to be dead for two minutes before returning to battle. The players were mainly boys, but girls sometimes played too.

Although there were occasional references to the discourse of the Iraq war (e.g., "weapons of mass destruction"), the recess games were not transformations of that war. The playground wars had teams, not armies, and the teams lived in castles, not in camps. (Lyron attributed their use of castles to a cartoon show featuring a "barbarian.") If anyone threw too hard and actually hurt somebody else, angry words, tears, and sometimes a complaint to a teacher would follow.

Writing-time war texts began, like the party texts, as a kind of 'life story,' an anticipation of what a child was going to do. Basically, a child author was going to play war, and that child was going to win. Also like the party texts, war play texts were contextualized within specific peer relations. Those relations were influenced by classroom seating patterns and marked by friendship, race, and, most vividly, gender.

Initially, Lyron and Manny, who sat near each other, were the major authors of war-play texts. Their texts were brief and seemingly straightforward, for example:

> Manny I ["and" written over "I"] are going to
> have a war I am going to
> winn Manny is goin to
> los I am going to winn. (Lyron, early March)

Both texts anticipated the action (e.g., the "going to" frame), named the players, and proclaimed who would win (in Manny's text, Manny wins).

However, as with the birthday texts, the war-play texts had tenuous links to actual events—at least to actual events on the playground. During composing time, the official 'quick sketch' for planning a text became an unofficial duel of graphic actions accompanied by speech; that is, it became the play itself (cf. Dyson, 1989). The boys had separate teams of many stick-figured men. The men fought with swords, lasers, and/or bombs, and they flew about in rocket ships that came from and soared into outer space; these images and narrative actions were linked to a diversity of popular media materials. The drawn men were nameless, though; the actual players were the tough Lyron and Manny, who tried to outnumber and outmaneuver each other.

Consider the following brief excerpt from the talk that occurred before Lyron wrote the preceding text:

Manny and Lyron, seated kitty corner from each other, are doing their respective 'quick sketches.' They each have their own journals, they each are drawing, but they are clearly playing together:

Manny: Here's my big ship, my space ship.

Lyron: Here's *my* big space ship.

Manny: My people are going to destroy you [Lyron], right?

I'm sending every single space ship that's on Earth.

Lyron: Look at my big space ship. Look at how much fire it takes . . .

Manny: Elly, look! I'm outnumbering his [Lyron's] guys.

Lyron: Manny, look at this!

And so the play continued, mediated by the boys' drawings and by their playfully oppositional talk.

On the day before she herself entered the war play, Tionna wrote about her tablemates Lyron and Manny's text-mediated war play. She literally translated their voices into written form, providing a more detailed text than either boy usually did. Perhaps I influenced Tionna's decision to compose what were, in effect, field notes. Sitting right behind her, taking notes on Ezekial's behavior, I heard Tionna ask Lyron: "What did you say?" I turned to see her writing intently. Her field notes validate my own. (Note, though, that Tionna eventually situates herself in the play, as a kind of female in distress.)

Manny and Lyron all was [always]
rite about fiting [fighting] Justin [just] like
today but this time thay
put Brad in Brad is
saying he has blacer [lasers] in his
casle [castle] but you can't see thim
Lyron is saying his team
wone Brad [is saying that] his team
wone he blow up his
hole casle and Lyron blow
up his casle wiled thay were getting reddie in
the casle and he [Lyron] has
to make sher [sure] the casle
that I am in dos'n blow
up. (Tionna's text in early May)
Lyron's own text on that day was a variant of its usual form:
I will have a ponte [ping pong]
ball war with Manny
and Brad I will

> stand on Brad's
> kasall if I won
> the war and I did
> win the war.

As illustrated, the war texts were similar in key ways to those anticipating birth-day parties. They demonstrate the following: how children recontextualize an official literacy practice (journal writing) within the imagined space/times of childhood play practices; how texts mediate children's social, or relational, work; and how an unofficial practice may spread out horizontally among class members, becoming intertextually linked to a diversity of communicative events and related practices.

At the same time, though, the writing-time war play provides striking contrasts to the birthday-party play. The visual dimension of the composing act was much more important in the action-packed war play than in the more organizationally oriented birthday-party play. Pictures mediated the placement of castles, the advancement of teams, the paths of projectiles, and, sometimes, the dense scribbles of destruction. Most importantly for this chapter, in the official world, the dramatic play entailed in the composing was obvious, rela-tive to that of birthday-party play. Obvious too was the exclusivity of textual war play, at least in terms of gender.

Mrs. K. did not like war play, nor did the school as an institution (which did not allow toy or imaginary guns). Still, Mrs. K. viewed war play as part of being a boy in our society, and such has been the dominant ideological view, at least since the nineteenth century (Rotundo, 1998). It was Tionna, in fact, who viewed the boys' domination of war play as problematic, and it was her textual actions that unintentionally led to the banning of writing-time war play (for a description of a similar gendered response to superhero stories, see Dyson, 1997).

Tionna's Entry into Battle: A Critically Transformative Hybrid

At Tionna's table (Table B), almost all the boys (Lyron, Manny, Brad, Aaron, and Jason) engaged in text-mediated war at some point, unlike the girls (Janette, Sasha, Elly, and, until that fateful May day, Tionna). At Table A, however, Tionna's good friend Mandisa and her tablemate Elisha had entered into both playground and text-mediated wars. No child at that table ever raised the issue of gender.

This was not the case, though, at Table B when Tionna decided to become a team player, so to speak. As journal time began, Tionna turned around and looked over at Table A, where Mandisa was beginning to negotiate team

members for war games. "Can I play?" she asked. Mandisa immediately included Tionna in the negotiations, as illustrated below:

The children have just named the members of the varied teams, including Janette with Mandisa and Tionna (even though Janette says nothing and, as she later explains to me, "does not even like war"). The next concern is time:

Mandisa: Ours [our war] is at . . . What time is yours [Ezekial and Joshua], night time or morning? We have night time.

Tionna: Let's have ours afternoons on Mondays and Tuesdays.

Mandisa: No. Mondays and Fridays.

Tionna: Mondays and Fridays? Okay.

Mandisa: Yeah, 'cause Friday nights are really dark and we need the lights so somebody can see us.

Tionna: I know it, and on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and Thursdays it's gonna be afternoon. Blowing up castles, okay?

The girls now turn to coordinating their pictures, which moves their talk from planning the future to detailing the present state of their castles (e.g., "Our castle goes through the whole page, okay?"). But Lyron, overhearing their talk, objects.

Lyron: Me and Manny have our own war. You guys don't even know about war. (Note Lyron is categorizing Tionna as one of 'the guys,' that is, as one of the girls.)

Tionna: Yes we do. I watched the war on TV.

Manny: You're just copying offa us.

Tionna: We got the girl war. No boys are allowed.

With "no boys are allowed," Tionna recontextualizes within war play an utterance from gender play (a variant of which is another kind of chase game [cf., Thorne, 1993]). The boys on Table A respond, giving chase, as it were. Jason even makes gun sound effects toward Janette (who has once again been assumed to be an active player with her good friend Tionna; no such assumptions are made about the three white girls at the table). Tionna speaks up again:

Tionna: Jason, we're not playing in your war. We're not playing with you, in a war with you.

Jason: [You are.

Tionna: [So you can kill us by yourself. You might be killing us, but we're not killing you and we're not on your team and we're not playing war with you guys . . .

Jason: Okay.

Lyron: No! We're *letting* you guys [girls] play with us.

Jason: No man. A girl army's strong.

The war texts were already hybrids, in that they indexed the children's "diversified field of reception" (Hanks, 1996, p. 279): the official and unofficial worlds. The children wrote about a fun event in which a good time would be had by all. However, the unofficial world developed fissures. Two old friends, Tionna and Lyron, who shared a racial identity, articulated a gender clash. In Lyron's view, a girl was not eligible to play war. Tionna talked back. Her good friend Lyron was not, at the moment, an invitee to her birthday but a member of the gendered opposition. At the same time, another friend, Janette (the only girl in the class to play hockey with the boys), quietly distanced herself from the play, not on gendered grounds but on pacifist ones (i.e., she did not like war, even when it was fake).

At this point, Mrs. K.'s firm voice is heard, reminding children of official expectations:

Mrs. K: You know what? I'm looking for writers. You know what? I like 'quick sketches' . . . And if you're drawing a lot of pictures that's taking time away from what you should be writing . . .

But Lyron and Manny keep drawing, coordinating their castles and their space ships, which will allow them to connect up in space and undertake their battle against the girls. Tionna keeps drawing too, as she imagines the scene and the evolving action—the girls hiding treasures in boxes, securing hidden lasers to surprise the boys when they come out of their castle, and fighting them with bows and arrows (a kind of strategic talk seldom heard from Tionna).

Mrs. Kay reiterated that sharing time was near, and now the war game players at Table B began to write. Manny and Lyron declared, in writing, that the girls would lose, but Tionna rejected all that losing, adopting a defiant female voice. Tionna had been using dialogue in her writing since February, but her war piece, long even for her (108 words compared to her spring average of 52), was the first in which she assumed such a voice. In her text, the boys "can't lay a hand on us," and, thus, the "tofe girls" prevail against the boys, who did not initially want them to play.

The war play on that day, especially on Tionna's table, was intense and loud. The gendered nature of the talk, especially the talk about killing, was disconcerting to Mrs. K. (and to me). During sharing time, the read war-play texts elicited similarly boisterous (but not gendered) responses from many children (e.g., "in your dreams [you will win]").

The unofficial play merged with, and mediated by, official writing pushed beyond the boundaries of the imaginary for Mrs. K., who felt she had to "do what was right." As she later explained to me, the war texts on that day were not about one boy playing against another but about boys doing violence against girls. (After all, Tionna was the only girl who wrote specifically about fighting boys.) Especially given the context of the Iraq war, this was inappropriate. She decided to ban war, at least during writing time.

Mrs. K. thought the children would be angry when she announced the ban. But they were not. They were interested. Just a brief excerpt follows from a long conversation:

Mrs. K.: I have noticed in your journals, I've heard you talking . . . a lot of talk about war, OK? And from this day forward that is a topic that we are *not* going to write about. The reason that we're not going to write about it is because, number one, I don't like to read or hear about you uh killing each other . . . I'm hearing . . . *a lot* of the boys that um killing the girls and you're gonna do this and you're gonna do that. And I don't think that that is an appropriate topic to be writing on. Kay? . . . [Number two] Okay. There's a lot of war going on right now, you know. And people really are getting killed . . . [I]n *real* war when somebody gets killed they do not get up and walk away. They are dead.

Mrs. K.'s tone is firm, declaratory, as when she disciplines the children. But the children seem to respond as if she is sharing interesting facts. When she says that most definitive statement, "They are dead," the children turn to each other and begin to paraphrase her comments (i.e., when one is really dead, "you never come back.") Mrs. K. listens and then reiterates their sentiments: "In real life, when someone gets killed they do not get up and walk away. They are put in a box and buried." Unless, as Elly pipes up to explain, there is no more room in the earth, and then they are plopped in the sea (i.e., "put 'em in the water").

So war was banned in the classroom because, as Lyron explained to me, Mrs. K. was thinking about real war, not fake war. And "when it's a real war you die and you don't get up." Still, the pinecone wars continued on the playground, as did gender play in varied forms. (The very next day, Lyron wrote about a 'girl attack' he experienced because Tionna, Mandisa, and Janette "like me".)

The war-play texts, recontextualized in the official world, seemed violent and even vulgar. Contextualized within unofficial practices, the texts seemed "abandoned houses" (Hale & Hale, 1938, see Dargan & Zeitlin, 1990, p. 85) that had been intertextually linked with others in complex adventures. The children had drawn from a repertoire of popular media images—castles, rocket ships, swords, lasers—and longstanding societal narratives about conflict, power, and gender. Highlighted herein, Tionna stretched these narratives and, quite literally, her table-mates' brief texts, adding a verbally tough stance. This stance was quite different from her occasional roles as cheerleader or even princess awaiting saving. Pencil in hand, she strategized her defensive and offensive maneuvers against the boys, who didn't want girls to play. The war play itself was rarely rooted in good guy/bad guy

scenarios (unlike the real war talk about Iraq of the then U.S. president); it was rooted in the battles of teams, who, sometimes, want to play for an audience under the nightlights.

The issue here is not the worth of war play (which has its own treatises[1]). It is the interplay of childhoods and of official writing practices. Writing involves manipulating symbolic material in order to manipulate social others, and this the children did. In Mrs. K.'s classroom the institutional concerns about writing were for basic skills, but the children's concerns were about relations and about play; these latter concerns organized writing within practices that sometimes spread throughout the class. Moreover, when texts mediating the play were recontextualized within the official world, the children's differing values and beliefs about how the social work worked (i.e., their ideologies) were potentially evident. These values and truths were about physical power and verbal posturing, and about social power and who is in and who is out—social judgments linked to communicative practice, physical proximity, race, and, most dramatically herein, to gender.

What do childhood cultural resources and practices, writing as participating in dialogic relations, and ideological beliefs undergirding matters of social relations have to do with the basics? I consider that question in the closing section of this chapter.

THE BASICS OF LITERACY AND CHILDHOODS

I [as teacher] might have told Christopher and Stuart [my four-year-old students], "You're not coming to my birthday unless you clean up that mess." Then the limits of my anger would be perceived . . .

(Vivian Paley, 1988, p.44)

Vivian Paley, a master early childhood teacher, understands about birthdays as markers of friendship, about battles as opportunities for control, and about enacted, told, and written stories as mediators of childhood pleasures and concerns.

Of course, in the current curricular climate, "birthday" and "battle" might be merely exemplars of "B" words. The traditional basics involve distinct knowledge and skills, linearly ordered, subject to standardized tests, and envisioned as foundational to complex learning (typically involving larger units of text). These basics are conceived of as neutral conventions for encoding and organizing language in written graphics. Children are linearly ordered too, according to how they perform on varied assessments of basic skills. And what is necessary and relevant for children, particularly those in federally supported schools, is a carefully controlled curriculum with attention to each skill (see Moats, 2004).

The problem, of course, is that children are not so easily controlled, nor are the so-called basics easily separated from some kind of social and ideological meaning. Although the basics of writing are conceived of as voiceless, they cannot be taught except through situated voices and communicative practices and activities involving certain social relations and values, including values about language itself, oral and written.

The point is not that there should be no official attention to specific skills. The point is that the largest meaningful unit—the practice—is always present. Indeed, young children make tasks meaningful precisely by contextualizing them within social events and cultural practices (Miller, 1996). And these practices are what energize and organize authorial agency, that is, some decision-making as authors draw from and stretch their repertoire of conventions, words, phrases, whole practices. Tionna, for example, knew that the voices of war players were quite distinctive from those of, say, party givers or pleased invitees.

Given the centrality of practices, it is not so surprising that Mrs. K.'s children paid attention to and initially appropriated her anticipation of fun events. They linked her plans to their own and, then, began to move beyond the use of routinized "I am going to" statements. Their official writing was potentially embedded in unofficial relations and playful practices. Although the curriculum was oriented toward individual achievement in writing, children were at least sometimes collaborators in the play of planning parties or war games (which became, through graphics and talk, actual fake wars). In addition, although the official curriculum was disjointed, each subject and skill having its own vertical line of progress, the children interrelated practices, stretching out over relational space and unfolding time to enact their childhoods.

The texts resulting from this interplay of official and unofficial worlds were kinds of hybrids. Mrs. K. held the children accountable to writing texts of a particular length, clarity, and, with her help, conventional accuracy. But children held each other accountable as well in their shared practices. Moreover, children's tablemates may not have been their chosen playmates, but they could be persistent neighbors and, thus, lead to reconfigurations of the usual racialized and gendered groupings for particular activities.

Eventually, though, most written texts, including those mediating childhood play and relations, were read to the official classroom public. And the audience members may not have taken kindly to exclusion from a party, however imaginary, nor did they necessarily approach war as a game. And in that classroom public, the teacher, not children, had the power to finalize or to open up the meaning of children's texts (Bakhtin, 1986).

Sharing times, whether in "basics" or "writing process" curricula, are tradi-
tionally about listening receptively to children's texts and seeking clarity about
information (e.g., Graves, 1983). There is seldom a suggestion that values,
world views, and differences in sociocultural positioning might figure into
those times, but indeed they may. Children's texts, like children's play, draw
from the wider world. For example, it is not only in Mrs. K.'s room that war is
viewed as fun or contested as a gendered matter (e.g., consider entertainment
sources like movies and video games, varied metaphorical uses of war for
sports and games of all kinds, popular media and ancient legends about women
soldiers [Goldstein, 2001]); moreover, the ongoing war in Iraq was itself a very
divisive issue in the local area.

Play, however it is mediated, is an arena in which children confront real
inclusion and exclusion and, in the imaginative world, explore possible
selves in, at least currently, impossible situations. Death, burial, killing in
real war were issues that grabbed the children's attention. In fact, throughout
the project, there were many issues that the children's eye rolling, irritated
mutterings, and voiced hurts (e.g., "You said I was going") suggested were
possible topics of critical discussion.

A sense of one's options for communication surely are informed by one's
awareness of the fragility of textual meaning and by a growing awareness of
what is viewed as problematic outside one's usual play circles or even of the
unexpected responses of taken-for-granted others (like the war players'
assumption that Janette would want to play). These matters are linked to tex-
tual decisions about narrative characters, plots, dialogues, about particular
words or even punctuation (!) that are made in anticipation of one's audience
(Dyson, 1997).

The public sanctioning of pretend private parties, the banning of war, the
critical rethinking of gender. Teacher decisions made about such matters do
not seem to me the essential matter. Allowing children, as well as the teacher,
to voice how texts appeal or not (e.g., because of topic, characters, language
features, visual images, and one's own history and societal experiences) does
seem what is essential. In this way children experience the heteroglossia that
surrounds any written text—the way text meaning depends on participants
and social conditions (Bakhtin, 1981). Within heteroglossia, imagined worlds
are open to reconsideration from varied vantage points. It is such experience
that would seem to further flexible, thoughtful, critical participation not only
in communicative practices but also in the life of any community.

A child's text, sitting all alone on a teacher's desk, or even separated from
other children's in its own private folder, may be hard to interpret. It may well

be a mere shell, an abandoned house, separated from the social, political, and playful efforts that gave it life. Indeed, educators and researchers may find that, despite the best efforts of current educational policy, writing is an avenue into children's shared lives in particular curricular and sociocultural conditions. That is, composing time is one potential means for gaining insight into childhood pleasures and worries, in short, into the "gusto" of child life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

APPENDIX A

Sex and Ethnicity of Mrs. K.'s Children

Sex	Ethnicity
Girls (7)	
Brittany	White
Elisha	Black
Elly	White/Irish
Janette	Black
Mandisa	Black
Sasha	White
Tionna	Black
Boys (9)	
Aaron	White
Alex	Indian
Brad	White
Ezekial	Mexican
Jason	White
Joshua	Indian/Mexican
Jordan	Mexican
Lyron	Black
Manny	Mexican

Note. List includes only those children who attended throughout the academic school year. Named ethnicity for children of color is based on children's self-identifying talk (e.g., "I'm Mexican."); "Indian" refers to Native American as opposed to an Asian ethnicity.

APPENDIX B

TABLE A	
Jon	Ezekial
Elisha	Joshua
Mandisa	Lyle
Alex	Brittany

TABLE B	
Brad	Jason
Tionna	
Aaron	Lyron
Manny	Ellie
Janette	Sasha

Seating at two desk clusters ('Table A' and 'Table B') during the reported pinecone war period. (Two additional children were receiving special services during this time of the day; Lyle, European American, was a relatively new child in the classroom.)

NOTE

[1] Among the educational publications considering the worth of war play are those by Carlsson-Paige and Levin (1987) and Levin (2003).

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DONNA E. ALVERMANN AND A. JONATHAN EAKLE

DISSOLVING LEARNING BOUNDARIES: THE DOING, RE-DOING, AND UNDOING OF SCHOOL

Considerable interest exists in some corners of the academy in deconstructing what is commonly referred to as the in-school/out-of-school binary. Characterizing this place- and space-sensitive categorization as unnatural and problematic, literacy scholars in particular (e. g., Ben-Yosef, 2003; Hull & Schultz, 2001; Leander, 2003; Leander & Sheehy, 2004) question its validity, especially given the changing nature of students' literacy practices in a world increasingly blurred by information communication technologies that tend to heed neither place nor space boundaries. Our particular interest in this larger project is to explore how data that we have gathered from studying young people's literacy practices in a public library (Alvermann, Hagood, Heron, Hughes, & Williams, 2001) and museums (Eakle, 2005) point to possibilities for rethinking the notion of boundaries in the context of youth literacy practices. Specifically, we want to argue that it is in "doing, re-doing, and undoing school" in school and out-of-school settings that youth are able to show through their actions, words, and products how textual engagement is achieved with little regard to boundaries across space, place, and time.

BACKGROUND AND THEORETICAL FRAME

To bind literacies by category as school-based or library/museum-based is to divide up engagement with texts, places, and spaces as though there were no relations among them. Although it is arguably the case that schools focus predominantly on oral and written language, it is also the case that a number of other sign systems (e.g., those of music, art, mathematics, and movement in dance, gesture, drama, and athletics) are readily available to youth. In other words, "doing" school is not solely a practice found within a transmission model of instruction wherein teachers fill students' heads with book knowledge. Rather, there are other non-linguistic resources available to students from which to choose and explore the meaningfulness of texts of all kinds. Additionally, youth assemble from these various communication resources the tools that they use to "do" (accommodate), "re-do" (reproduce), and

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"undo" (resist and/or disrupt) institutionalized notions in a multiplicity of spaces, such as schools, libraries, and museums.

Indeed, the young people whom we know and with whom we work outside of school rarely, if ever, rely on language as their sole means of communication. Rather, like Short and Kauffman (2000), we have observed that youth quite readily integrate art, movement, and music with language as they talk with their friends, do research on school assigned topics in the library, peer over each other's shoulders to read a downloaded rap lyric, chat quietly (and sometimes not so quietly) in front of a museum exhibit, and as they occupy what we call in-between spaces, such as highways, restaurants, sidewalks, and coffee shops, in between the institutions where we, and most education researchers, typically observe and transact with youth.

That youth are engaged in literacy practices outside of school that blur the very categories we wish to deconstruct is not surprising. As Resnick's (2000) essay on literacy apprenticeships so aptly reminds us, "schools are not the only—or perhaps even the primary—source of literacy competence" (p. 38). At least as typically conceived, schools are arguably out of touch with the everyday literacies that many youth find relevant and into which they, in part, are socialized. This problem, according to Resnick (2000), does not detract from what schools do reasonably well: teaching the basic skills of literacy. Although we agree with Resnick's (2000) overall assessment, we doubt seriously that her proposed solution in the form of literacy apprenticeships— arrangements in which youth and/or teachers work to find a match between literacy practices espoused within and outside schools—are the answer to the problem. Nor is it likely that such apprenticeships would be deemed practical given what we know about the attention economy phenomenon (Goldhaber, 1997; Lankshear & Knobel, 2003) and how it operates outside and within schools as a force among groups and individuals that produces, reproduces, and disrupts concepts of schooling.

The term "attention economy," as defined by Goldhaber (1997), is a zero-sum game. To illustrate why he calls it a zero-sum game, Goldhaber challenges us with the following task:

> Attention is scarce, and the total amount per capita is strictly limited. To see why, consider yours, right now. It's going to these words. No matter how brilliant or savvy at multitasking you are, you can't be focusing on very much else. (Goldhaber, 1997, n.p.)

Applied to our interest in how youth "do, undo, and re-do" school in out-of-school settings, the concept of an attention economy offers some useful insights into problematizing the notion of boundaries in the context of youth literacies. Consider, for example, the multiplicity of choices

adolescents have in how and where to seek and give attention outside school. Now, contrast that with the often limited or restricted choices afforded in school, such as the textbooks students are required to read. Similarly, consider the deregulated attention economy in which today's youth are growing up. According to Rowan et al. (cited in Lankshear & Knobel, 2003):

> They learn how to allocate their attention between and among a wide range of communication technologies, both mass and personal. They are adept at juggling the inputs of various attention seeking technologies. . . . They know that much of what they do in school is of a different order, only useful in terms of attracting attention within a closed attention economy. In this respect, the attention economy of schooling is only relevant to those students for whom it provides a basis for attracting attention in the world outside. (p. 201)

Distributing and managing attention among multiple communication inputs is characteristic of today's youth, who confidently and somewhat effortlessly manipulate multiple forms of texts, including electronic chats, instant messages, print text messages, web pages, and blogs while they listen to music mpegs, talk on cellulars, and complete their homework assignments. To view these multiple activities as discreet, separable, and unrelated is to reinforce attitudes that would divide young people's lived spaces as being either in or out of school. Such a view is antithetical to Lefebvre's (1981/1991) and Soja's (1999) theorizing of "thirdspace," or what they commonly refer to as "lived space," a term that we use here to examine how doing, undoing, and re-doing school mutually inform each other.

Deleuze and Guattari (1991/1994) describe attempted divisions such as the in-school/ out-of-school binary as territorializations, the distinctive marking off of places, spaces, peoples, and things—divisions that we think need to be reconsidered. Of course, marking off territory is sometimes useful in that it provides a bit of order in chaos. As Deleuze and Guattari (1991/1994) remind us: "Nothing is more distressing than a thought that escapes itself, than ideas that fly off, that disappear hardly formed . . ." (p. 201). To prevent this from happening, to create a bit of order, and to concentrate our "attention resources," we all, according to Deleuze and Guattari, construct artificial sets and strategies that slow down phenomena, which serve to mark off and harness the chaos of the world. Examples of the staking out of territories are the bound set logics found in mathematics and the so called "leveled books"—compilations of print texts designed for use with particular categories of school readers, who are, in turn, assigned to particular territories or spaces, such as gifted or remedial classrooms. Territorialization is, in part, the substance of "doing school."

Further, there is a number of territorializations and other strategies that schools often use to create what Foucault (1975/1977) describes as "docile bodies" (p.135). These are disciplinary tactics intended to provide what are

often called productive learning spaces (spaces where attention is concentrated) and include a multiplicity of minor processes that serve to control students or make them compliant with school expectations. These strategies include marking territories through "the art of distributions" (p.141) and can be as mundane as the rowed arrangements of separated desks in a classroom or the lunchroom lineup exercise where students are required to be silent and keep their hands to themselves, or they can take form in the practice of creating spaces within school spaces, such as the special areas marked off to train students in behavior management.

According to Foucault (1975/1977), strategies to make bodies docile are undertaken through surveillance, which demarcates particular disciplinary spaces between observed and observer. In many of today's schools this surveillance is accomplished in part by the watchful eyes of school personnel through examination and by the comparison of students against linear and normalized trajectories of progress. As we know, watchful examination and comparison have increasingly become principal concerns of teachers and school administrators and, by extension, students in "doing school" under current U. S. education policy.

Marking territory is also part and parcel of social practices and can sometimes result in what Foucault (1975/1977) describes as "binary branding" (p. 199). This practice is evident in the following words of Monisha (one of the young participants we studied who identifies herself as African American) as she describes a category of young people she marks as "thugs."

I see thugs, a huge bunch that be wanna wear their pants saggin', and bendin'over, in the car and drivin' with one arm, and blastin' the music; I don't get that. What's so cool about bein' a thug? What's not a thug is a person that's intelligent, wears their pants up with belts. Sits like they supposed to in the car while drivin' and don't blast the music so everybody can hear it and don't be puttin' rims and all of that kind of stuff on their cars.

As we see in Monisha's assessment of "thugs," marked boundaries can be drawn using some of the multiple textual practices that we mentioned earlier in this chapter, such as movement, music, and gesture. From these practices we can also glean everyday bids for gaining notice in an attention economy, such as the blasting of music "so everybody can hear it," a salient phenomenon of everyday life that is familiar to urban drivers, bids for attention that are often curtailed in the regulatory spaces of institutions such as schools, libraries, and museums. Additionally, in this case, the lines traced out by Monisha show how textual practices of popular culture are sometimes mixed with a binary branding that involves a person's intelligence—a trait typically associated with "doing school" well. In turn, "branded" youth often construct spaces through multiple textual forms that attempt to disrupt, or "undo," perceptions and rules that are put in force to regulate young people.

Whether they be social lines dividing people on issues of intelligence and textual practices of popular culture or abstract lines outlining mathematical sets or reading levels, all are bounded practices or territorializations, and as Foucault (1970/1971) points out, they are symptomatic of particular (and historically mobile and possibly alterable) ways of thinking and transacting with the world. In this vein, rather than considering marked territories as impenetrable fortresses, we prefer, thinking through Foucault, Deleuze, and Guattari, to regard marked barriers as merely, albeit often powerful, products of social forces and conditions. Yet, because of the artificiality of these boundaries, the practices of everyday life, or lived space (de Certeau, 1984; Lefebvre, 1981/1991; Soja, 1999), are often much more open than we realize. It is these fragile, leaky, historically symptomatic territories—such as those marked out by the practices of schools and, more often than not, accommodated by students—that we believe some youth resist by using multiple textual strategies. And, it is these everyday tactics of resistance and/or disruption, what we call "undoing school," that particularly interest us in the present project.

Looking at accommodations, resistances, and possible escape routes from the boundaries set up by schooling institutions requires us to look at power and forces that operate in and out of school. However, rather than taking the conventional perspective that power is usually oppressive and is held by certain individuals, such as teachers and museum docents, we look at power as being productive and circulating through social bodies (Foucault, 1975/1977; 1982/1994; Deleuze & Guattari, 1991/1994). In this chapter we use power as a tool to analyze youth's lived spaces. This analysis is based on data obtained in earlier studies that we conducted both in and out of school but not within an attention-economy perspective marked by young people's strategies for territorializing space, which is the framework of choice in our present analysis.

"DOING, UNDOING, AND RE-DOING SCHOOL" IN A PUBLIC LIBRARY

After-school spaces support a deregulated attention economy, which although different from the attention economy of schooling, nonetheless overlaps it and gives license to marking territories that can accommodate, resist, or even provide escape routes from boundaries set up by schooled literacy. This claim was borne out in research that Donna and her colleagues conducted with youth in an after-school program that focused on developing young people's critical awareness of textual practices of popular culture as represented visually, aurally, and digitally by mass media (Alvermann, Hagood, Heron, Hughes & Williams, 2001). The 30 adolescents in that study, all between the ages of 12 and 15 and all reading two or more levels below the grade level

expected for average-achieving youth in grades six through nine on state-administered reading tests, attended 14 weekly sessions of a Media Club that took place in a public library three afternoons a week. Meeting in groups of approximately ten each, participants in the study divided their time between activities arranged by the three adult facilitators (Donna Alvermann, Margaret Hagood, and Alison Heron) and activities they chose to pursue on their own. Club members also participated in researching their own after-school literacy practices by keeping a daily log (including weekends) for which they earned a weekly compensation of $10 for 14 weeks.

Of interest here are the ways in which Media Club members engaged in "doing, re-doing, and undoing school" as they negotiated a deregulated attention economy that produced spaces, which although not free of surveillance, were nonetheless marked by youth-oriented choices. We view such spaces as strategic intersections where adolescents' interests in and uses for popular culture texts created opportunities that made "doing, re-doing, and undoing" school both visible and analyzable. Moreover, we propose that it was in this lived space that youth who were identified by their teachers as struggling to read academic texts were able to use their knowledge of schooled literacy to accommodate, resist, and occasionally escape from its force in the deregulated attention economy that the library-based Media Club afforded through its various activities involving broadly defined textual practices.

Freedom Activities in the Media Club

Ned, a pseudonym for a 14-year-old, African-American, eighth-grade member of the Monday Media Club, coined the term "freedom activities" for the projects that he and his peers elected to do as part of their participation in the study. The term, which quickly caught on in the Wednesday and Thursday groups as well, referred to student-selected projects that involved texts of various types: rap lyrics, celebrities' web pages, magazine articles on hair styles, the latest *Harry Potter* book, Football Fantasy rules and score sheets, *Pokémon* manuals, video games, Japanese animé, and news articles on saving the environment in the youth-oriented magazine, *Time for Kids*. Because they were self-selected, these projects provided opportunities for Media Club members to explore textual practices of popular culture in ways that were meaningful to them on a personal level. As Ned explained when he first learned that he could choose his own project, freedom activities were something special because they would be different from the homework assigned at school.

Ned's freedom activity   Although Ned was only one of 30 Media Club members, his case, documented at length elsewhere (Alvermann, in press; Alvermann, Hagood, & Williams, 2001), is representative in several respects of other club members' experiences with their freedom activities. Ned's case is featured here because it allows us to examine in some depth our earlier claim that in "doing, re-doing, and undoing school" in out-of-school settings youth are able to show through their actions and words how textual engagement is achieved across space, place, and time. It also allows us to examine how power circulates in a deregulated attention economy, such as that which was operating in the public library where Ned attended Monday Media Club.

According to school records, Ned scored consistently in the lowest quartile on district-wide standardized reading tests. Described by his middle school teachers as being "not academically inclined," Ned's daily effort in his core classes nonetheless had been sufficient to earn him eligibility status on the school's football team, where he was a valued running back. However, when Ned's grades began to decline toward the end of fall semester, he was dropped from the team.

Along with his interest in football, Ned had an affinity for rap music. A self-styled rapper, he had formed his own rap group and later created a home page for it on the Web, which he named the M-L-P Boyz (Major League Player Boys). The group, which consisted of Man (aka Ned), L'il Thug, Tron, and G-money, composed raps that they subsequently committed to memory and performed locally. But Ned's major interest in rap centered on a group from Atlanta, Georgia, known as the *Goodie MOb*, an acronym for *The Good Die Mostly Over Bull*. The *Goodie MOb*'s first album, *Soul Food* had been one of the earliest Southern rap albums to appear on a major label. In addition to this pioneering achievement, *Goodie MOb* had distinguished itself by addressing serious social issues in the 'hood.

When Kevin Williams, a member of the research team and a former class-mate of three members of the *Goodie MOb*, learned of Ned's interest in focusing his freedom activity on the Atlanta-based group, Kevin volunteered to help. Shortly thereafter, Kevin and Ned struck up an e-mail correspondence as a condition of the freedom activity in which both contributed information on the *Goodie MOb*'s whereabouts and latest music releases. In fact, it was this reciprocity of knowledge sharing between two individuals with a common interest but greatly differing reading abilities that makes Ned's and Kevin's case particularly appropriate for including here. Theirs was a storyline—a cultural model (Gee, 2004)—in which issues of power

were inseparable from the deregulated attention economy that framed this analysis and made accommodation possible.

Accommodation   With at least nine years of public schooling behind him (having failed a grade), Ned was no doubt quite adept at reading the social order and levels of hierarchy operating in a closed attention economy such as the classroom, a space where historically he had had little if any chance of attracting (positive) attention from teachers or perhaps even his classmates. The storyline was clear—in the attention economy of schooling, youth are typically accorded the right to assemble meaning from only certain kinds of texts. Moreover, the right to impart knowledge is reserved for their elders who are deemed in that particular economy to be more competent and more knowledgeable than the youth they teach.

However, in the space of the library-sponsored Media Club, with its contrasting deregulated attention economy, Ned and Kevin were free to read and email about the *Goodie MOb*'s rise to fame and its sustained popularity among socially conscious rappers on a more or less even footing. Evidence of this phenomenon can be seen in a micro-level discourse analysis of their e-mail correspondence below, where it is evident that Ned and Kevin asked questions of each other that they deemed relevant to their purposes for reading, that they challenged each other to find answers to those questions, and that they appreciated each other's efforts in what they viewed as a co-learning process—in this instance, a process more akin to "re-doing" than "undoing" school.

In Stanzas 1 through 4, using Gee's (1999) system of analyzing discourse, it is possible to show the co-learning process through Ned's and Kevin's own words. (Note: participants' spellings are preserved throughout the chapter.) Briefly, the central premise in Gee's discourse analytic is that whenever we speak or write, we always and simultaneously construct or build particular forms of reality, such as: what social languages are relevant and irrelevant; what discourses are being re/produced; what status, power, and identities are relevant or irrelevant; and what sorts of connections—looking to the past and/or future—are made to other people, things, ideas, institutions, and discourses. (For a fuller description of how Gee's analysis was used with the Ned and Kevin exchange below, see Alvermann, in press.)

Stanza 1

1a *My favorite* rap group is *Goodie MOb*
1b because they *talk about life*
1c and *the sciety* in there neighbor[hood]
2a Like for instance
2b the song *I think* should describe them

2c is *Sky High*
2d because that's like a *fact in life*
3a If you would *listing to their songs*
3b *you would know* that they rap
3c from the *hart*
4 Because I'm doing a *project* on them
5a Could you give me
5b some kind of *facts about them*?
6 Sincerely, Ned

Stanza 2

1a I hear you like my *home boys*
1b *Goodie MOb*!
2 *I will help* you with your project.
3a One *condition* is
3b that you *have to* e-mail me
3b and *keep me informed*.
4a Today I will *start* with a little basic information
4b about the *members* of the group
5 All of the members are from *Atlanta*, GA
6a They all attended *Benjamin E. Mays High School*
6b named after a great *Civil Rights educator* in Georgia
7 B.E. Mays was once the President of *Morehouse College*
8a Today I will *start* off
8b with information about *Khujo*
8c my *closest friend* out of the group. . .
9a The *next time* I write
9b I will *tell you a little more* about Khujo
9c in terms of when he *started rapping*
10 Sincerely, Kevin *PEE-WEE* Williams

Stanza 3

1 Hi Kevin
2a I *found* two good websites
2b about *goodie mob*
2c you *might want to know* about
3a *www.cdspider.com/music/artist/goodie_mob/htm*
3b and *www.nr/uc/edu/s98/5-13/goodie.html*
4 by Ned

Stanza 4

1a I *appreciate* you
1b giving me the *web sites*.
2 I have *enjoyed* looking them up
3a My *home boys* are coming real good
3b with their *new album*
3c called World Party!
4a I hear that one of your *favorite* members

4b is *T-Mo*
5 I am good *friends* with him as well
6a I will *write* you something about him
6b if you would like
7a E-mail me some *questions* about him
7b and I *will try* to answer them
7 Kevin Pee-Wee Williams, *M.P.H.*

Success aside, Ned's and Kevin's relationship was not an easy one and it did not just happen. Instead, we would maintain that it was Ned's experience in watching and "doing school" over the years that made it possible for him to re-do school by assuming the role of teacher to Kevin's student and vice versa as the situation demanded. Ironically, perhaps, it was in "re-doing school" that both Ned and Kevin were able to make room for a different kind of attention economy—a deregulated one in which doing led to an undoing, or at the very least, to an accommodation of the other more restrictive model. Speculating even further about the possibilities for re-doing school and literacy boundaries within a deregulated attention economy, we turn next to an instance in which Ned resisted a textual practice presented by Donna and thereby escaped moving backwards into a highly regulated and controlled school economy where the rules for giving and receiving attention are well established.

Free-Choice Activities in the Media Club

Although the terms "freedom activities" and "free-choice activities" might seem one and the same to someone outside the Media Club, in fact they represented two very different ways of spending one's time as a club participant. Freedom activities were well within what most educators, including the club's facilitators, would deem a school attention economy. That is, freedom activities referred to the projects that the participants had agreed to complete as a condition of being in the Media Club study. As such, the projects demanded students' attention, and failure to give the appropriate amount of consideration to them would certainly attract the facilitators'—all former classroom teachers—attention.

Free-choice activities, on the other hand, referred to all other ways of spending time in the library during Media Club. For example, club members were free to surf the Web, e-mail, read magazines, and listen to music or play video games in a special meeting room that the youth librarian reserved for the club's use. In this respect, free-choice activities fit well within the deregulated attention economy of the library. In a public domain outside of school, such as the library, rules for giving and gaining attention (as well as controls for enforcing the rules) are far less formal and visible than in a school attention economy.

Participants in the Media Club study were well aware of this peculiar, albeit largely unwritten, distinction.

So, too, the club facilitators. For example, when Donna, Margaret, and Alison became anxious midway through the study that the participants were not spending an adequate amount of time during each meeting to complete their freedom activities, they wrote in their planning notes:

Let's explain that free-choice time should be inclusive of two things: freedom activities and free-choice activities. In other words, if their [participants'] freedom activity is on [designing] hairstyle magazines but they want to also listen to music that is fine. But they need to work on their freedom activity in some way during their free time.

Close to the time that the facilitators communicated this new rule to club members, Donna purchased a copy of the *Goodie MOb's* first album, "Soul Food," for Ned to use as part of his freedom activity. Although she did not know it at the time, this purchase would set off a series of events that would cause Ned to resist her (perhaps) unconscious attempt to impose certain schooled literacy practices in a space that he had marked off as Media Club territory and hence presumably safe from such incursions.

The series of events   Following is a transcript of Donna's field notes describing the events leading up to and following her introduction of the "Soul Food" album.

Shortly after 4:00 p.m., I arrived at the meeting room reserved for the media club's use in the left wing of the public library, a large modern building located adjacent to the middle school that Ned attended. As was typical, the majority of the club members had arrived early and had settled into their favorite activities. Bob, Seymour, and James were seated on the floor around a Nintendo game already in progress, which Ned, who had arrived after me, then joined. . . . Within five minutes of joining his friends, Ned looked up and hollered down to my end of the room: "Miss Donna, did you get *Goodie MOb*?" I had, but it had slipped my mind. When I produced a copy of "Soul Food" from my black canvas bag, Ned left his three buddies to finish the video game by themselves. He immediately opened the CD case, read off the list of raps on the back of the case, and put the CD to play in one of the two boom boxes nearby. With headphones on, he was soon engrossed in the group's music. I also noted that he was reading the printed insert that came with the CD as he listened to the group rap.

After some time had passed, Ned came over to where I was working [with another club member] and asked me if I wanted to listen to *Goodie MOb* with him. I said I did and followed him back to the CD player, where he proceeded to turn up the volume on "Soul Food," the song for which the album is named. Although I listened intently, I had trouble distinguishing one word from the next in some of the raps—a fact that didn't escape Ned's attention. Strategically, he reached over to the CD case, withdrew the insert containing the printed lyrics, and began running his finger under the lines of the rap that boomed out into the room. No one else looked up from what they were doing as Ned and I sat on the floor for a good 15 minutes listening to the various tracks on the *Goodie MOb's* first album.

After listening to the track titled Cell Therapy, I reached for my book bag to get out the most recent issue of *Blaze*, a magazine that I had purchased for its feature story on the *Goodie MOb*. When Ned showed no visible interest in reading the article, I asked him if he'd like me to read aloud the part on Cell Therapy. He said he would, but after a couple of paragraphs I could tell he wasn't interested. His attention wandered, and he began to play with the CD case, opening and closing it for no apparent reason. I asked him if he'd rather I read about Cee-lo, his favorite of the rappers. He said he would. This time he remained engaged, following along as I read aloud, for about a page.

When it was time to switch activities so that those who had not had access to the computers in the young adult section of the library could take their turn, Ned quickly headed to a computer with the CD in hand and e-mailed Kevin the names of the individuals who were listed on the insert's dedication page.

As illustrated in this excerpt from Donna's field notes, Ned used his free-choice time to engage in different activities; first, he played a video game with friends in the club and then he listened to a CD of his favorite rap group. Whether he would have multitasked and done both of these activities while he worked on his freedom activity (the semester-long e-mail correspondence with Kevin concerning the *Goodie MOb*) is unknown. The computers for e-mailing were in another part of the library separate from the special-use room that the librarian had set aside for listening to music, playing video games, designing hair style magazines, and so on. What is known, however, is that Ned and Donna were on a collision course when it came to making sense of the deregulated attention economy that was operating in the library.

Resistance and escape   In attempting to avoid as much as possible the types of activities that mark school literacy and set them apart from the everyday out-of-school literacies assumed to be available in the library, Donna, Margaret, and Alison had purposefully worked to open up spaces in which members of the Media Club would feel free to reject activities that they found irrelevant. Thus, one could infer that Ned had read the facilitators' intention correctly when he resisted Donna's attempt to interest him in a magazine article about his favorite rap group. For example, when he initially showed no interest in reading the article himself, she began to act in a teacherly fashion by offering to read it to him. In turn, Ned withheld his attention by playing with the CD case. Guessing that he might be more attentive if she were to read about Cee-lo, his favorite rapper in the group, Donna offered to concentrate on that section of the article. Although Ned appeared to follow along for about a page, once the opportunity to e-mail Kevin presented itself, Ned made his escape.

We would argue that Ned's success in resisting Donna's attempt to insert, or re-do, a schooled literacy practice in a space he had already mapped as his own—for example, recall that it was Ned who first invited Donna to listen to

the CD and that she changed the dynamics of the situation by introducing a printed text—is a good example of how power circulates. It also illustrates how a deregulated attention economy made visible the "doing and undoing" of schooled literacy practices.

The same might be said about literacy practices in the library. As suggested in Donna's field notes about Ned's and her transactions around "Soul Food," traditional print texts such as magazines were joined by videogames and rap music CDs—all to dissolve in the deregulated learning space of a library. In fact, we would speculate that it is, in part, this multiplicity of textual forms that has transformed library spaces (once considered to be print archives of quiet, regulated study) into what are now referred to as multimedia centers. Next, we turn our attention to how a school and its adolescent students used another institutional archive, museums, which are spaces where variations of multiple media are also present and deregulated and traditional literacies can be made possible.

"DOING, REDOING, AND UNDOING SCHOOL" IN A MUSEUM AND AN ACADEMY

Museums often have extensive education programs that rely on a range of expertly constructed multimedia materials, exemplary spatial designs, and remarkable objects. These are spaces where multiple literacy practices are prominent, which is of particular relevance for educators as communication practices both in and out of school increasingly rely on diverse and mixed modes of expression. The uses of multiple modes of literacy are especially apparent in the art museum, where Jonathan studied adolescent literacy practices. Granted, a central focus of art museums involves visual concepts, yet these concepts are frequently supported by language texts (e.g., scripted docent tours, audio taped guides, informational wall print, and labels). In this regard, although sometimes described as "informal learning environments" (Paris & Hapgood, 2002, p. 37), museums are more like formal spaces of school practices, three-dimensional textbooks that dispense expert knowledge and encourage regulated attention economy models of learning, spaces to "do and re-do school."

As with the after-school spaces described earlier, museums can also support a deregulated attention economy and the means and strategies to "undo school." Frequently, museums offer the conditions through which free choice activities can take place. In this vein, alongside more regulated and formal education characteristics, such as asking students to listen quietly and carefully to docent lessons or search for and record information about an exhibit

for a classroom assignment (e.g., scavenger hunts, which can be likened to library or Internet research), museums commonly provide their visitors the freedom to experience exhibitions without necessarily engaging with the expert knowledge of documents and language texts.

To explore the conditions of possibilities of doing, re-doing, and undoing school that are commonly afforded by museums, Jonathan studied adolescents between the ages of 12 and 15 experiencing seven museum events in two art museums, two groups during school field trips and two groups who freely toured the same museum exhibitions with minimal regulated supervision (Eakle, 2005). The museum and school study was situated in Marthasville, a city at the center of a Southeastern U. S. metropolitan area. The school group was part of the Marthasville Christian Academy (MCA), a kindergarten-eighth grade private school that serves what school officials identified as African Americans of low economic status. As in the regional public schools, MCA curricula focus on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, and although a goal of the academy was to prepare students for college-bound, high school courses, the students were assessed as below grade level in academic achievement. In the next sections of this chapter, data from four adolescent MCA eighth-grade students are presented: Monisha, Bishop, DiDi, and Flo aka Mic (pseudonyms the adolescents chose). Their African-American, veteran teacher, Lakesha, also appears in the following sequences of doing and undoing school. In these sequences, we begin with an instructional activity in the school academy space and then present data of the adolescents' out-of-school museum experience.

Doing School at Marthasville Christian Academy (MCA)

A typical technique that Lakesha used in teaching the academy's basic curriculum illustrates what we have identified as limited or restricted choices afforded in schools. The teacher's approach was to introduce a topic, have her students read about the topic in textbooks, and then review the material during what Lakesha described as "classroom discussion." The classroom reviews were usually comprised of short question/answer techniques, as shown in the following exchange about the U. S. Congress.

Lakesha: What's the job of the legislative branch?

DiDi: They make laws and change laws.

Lakesha: They really go and what you?

DiDi: What you?

Lakesha: Yeah, they what you?

Monisha: Help you?

Lakesha: Not help you. They go to *represent* you. Now what's it called?

Bishop: Congress?

Lakesha: No [gestures a roof angle with two index fingers]. A house. So you can think of them in a big house. It's the House of?

Monisha: The House of Rice?

Lakesha [wrinkling her nose]: No, that's a restaurant in your neighborhood. [Class laughter]

Lakesha: Congress is made up of what?

DiDi: Men?

Lakesha [sighs]: No, representatives. So, it's the House of Representatives . . . Let's get out our handy dandy study books. Y'all need to study. We're gonna have a quiz on Thursday.

After the "classroom discussion," the students spent the rest of this class period reviewing workbook information about Congress in preparation for a test on Thursday.

This everyday classroom exchange points to how school was done at MCA and to possibilities to "re-do school." Lakesha staked out a territory around the "right" answers to her questions, answers the "expert" teacher had in mind. We think this is a characteristic classroom scenario that shows how power often circulates in school space. In some instances the adolescents offered "correct" answers, such as DiDi's assessment of the duties of congress. Responses such as this could have been accommodated and could have encouraged a flow of exchange between students and teachers. However, in this schooled space the flow was blocked by the preset responses Lakesha had in mind—what she wanted the students to concentrate their attention upon; the teacher was unwilling to cross what she had staked out as proper "doing school" territory.

More importantly, we think, is that the exchange offers a glimpse of other possibilities made available by adolescents during classroom transactions, potentials that affirm life. Monisha's reference to a neighborhood restaurant brought the classroom conversation into local, everyday space—the personal. Although her response might be considered off topic, perhaps even a means to "undo" the teacher's lesson, it nonetheless points to the possibilities of making a relevant connection rather than remaining in marked, schooled, territories of abstraction. Perhaps, instead of Monisha's answer being treated as wrong or as a source of classroom laughter, her personal connection to local space could

have been transformed into a discussion about similarities between Congress and local businesses that are part of the adolescents' everyday, lived spaces.

Additionally, DiDi's assessment of Congress being composed of men provided possibilities for ways to "re-do" and "undo" school. For instance, from her response there was an opportunity to discuss the predominant male voices in government and other "old school" notions that linger on in societies, particularly relevant in terms of the concept of democratic representation that Lakesha was attempting to teach. The teacher could have addressed whether groups, such as females, African Americans, and lower economic classes, are reasonably represented in government—a significant topic to the MCA students, which could also serve to "undo old school" models while "doing school."

Doing and Re-doing School in Museums

Doing school for MCA students was not limited to the boundaries of the school building. During Jonathan's investigation, among other places, the students went on fieldtrips to two Marthasville art museums. The museum tours were marked with controlled, disciplined movements, where, as Lakesha reported, the students were "steered to do the right things . . . [to exhibit] appropriate behavior for public places," such as keeping their hands to themselves, paying close attention, and not talking loudly.

One of the museums the school visited, The Carver House, displays African and Diaspora art. The similarities to the students' formal schooling experiences and their excursion through the museum is prominent, as shown in the following exchange between the MCA adolescents and Montsho, an African-American, Carver House docent, around a portrait of a "faceless" African American. First, as in the MCA classroom, the students were asked by the docent to look at the image or, using a broad definition of literacy, what we call read the visual text. Then, as had the classroom teacher Lakesha, Montsho led the students in a "schooled discussion":

Montsho: What is the first thing you notice about this painting?

Bishop: The man has no face.

Montsho: Right. Now let's talk about politics. This painting was done in 1961. How was the average Black man treated in America in 1961? Well or not well?

Flo aka Mic: Not well.

Montsho: And you know about civil rights; what were they fighting for?

Students [in unison]: Freedom!

Montsho: Right, freedom. So this man had no face, no recognition, no vote. So the face was left out. Sometimes, you can tell something by leaving something out rather than putting it in. Many people in the South were working as sharecroppers at this time. Did sharecroppers own the land? What do we know about sharecropping?

Bishop: When a person doesn't own the land, but they take care of it.

Montsho: And you're *paying* the landowner. The reason I bring up share-cropping is that it's really just a form of slavery. In essence, you were still a slave, it just wasn't acknowledged as such . . . When we think about civil rights we think about the big names. But really, the main people who rose up and fought for civil rights and their freedom were the sharecroppers of the South. They said they weren't going to take this kind of abuse anymore.

As this exchange suggests, Montsho used exhibited paintings (visual texts) in the museum to do another type of school: to teach lessons of local resistance and African-American identity. The museum became a space, a marked-off territory, where particular issues of everyday, Southern culture and histories could be expressed. Not only were the art texts used to talk about the abuse of sharecroppers and civil rights but also about the ongoing effects of slavery in local spaces such as Marthasville. Discussing the paintings in the museum exhibit, for example, Montsho suggested these effects, and in some instances he drew a connection between slavery, the African-American students, and himself:

Montsho: [This painting] represents the fact that when *we* were brought over into slavery that basically *we* were broken down; *we* were torn apart and *we* have to pull ourselves what?

MCA Students [in unison]: Back together!

Like Lakesha's schoolhouse lesson, the students' short responses to Montsho's comments were incorporated into the docent's teaching strategy. Also akin to Lakesha's instruction, Montsho had a message in mind, which he delivered to the MCA students, and the space was not made available for the students to elaborate upon their personal views. At best, the adolescents' responses were fleeting props used by the docent to hold their limited attention while he laid out his lessons of history, identity, and resistance. This example illustrates the way that school was typically re-done in the museum, where the instructional focus was centered on images, the expert docent's oral interpretations, and concepts that he, the authority, thought were important to learn from the picture texts.

In both institutional spaces of "doing school" the students were subjected to and participated in particular academic discourses. Both spaces reflect the strategies and territories that form schooled subjects. The Carver House museum exchanges point to the forces through which the "schooled" African-American subject position is formed, whereas in the example shown at MCA, the students were being schooled in the facts of U. S. citizenry, democracy, and representation, perhaps paradoxically, through teaching them to be docile recipients of the teacher's and docent's authoritative knowledge.

Undoing School and Adolescent Voices

In the academy and museum the MCA students' roles were defined, more or less, by the "schooled" idea of children as the passive recipients of knowledge within a limited attention economy. However, when the students were provided the space to express their views outside their classrooms and the museum, elaborated connections between the museum and everyday life events became visible. Some of these connections were about how work situations and "doing school" influence their lives, especially prominent issues for the population that MCA serves. For example, DiDi accommodated the notions of sharecropping and work from the Carver House paintings and used the ideas as an opportunity to mention the types of books she likes to read and to elaborate on what she called the "drama" in her life, as shown in the following observation she made:

> In some of the paintings you could see the fields and everything, so you could tell that there was work going on. The paintings were like drama. Drama is my favorite kind of book. Me and my mom we're going through drama; we're just trying hard to make it. 'Cause she gotta go to work and school a lot of time . . . We hardly get to see each other . . . So there's a lot of drama there, cause we never see each other anymore.

For Flo aka Mic and Bishop, work was also very much a part of their everyday lives and present in their thoughts. Throughout the investigation, their in- and out-of-school preoccupations were with their present and future work with rap music—a line of creative escape from the economically depressed spaces in which they lived. Although from closed attention economic perspectives their interests could be seen as recreation or child's play, outside the surveillances of schooled spaces the pair took many opportunities to mark off territories—in between classes, in the lunchroom, during museum fieldtrips, in corners during study periods—where they could diligently and seriously discuss and write rap lyrics and poetry or perform impromptu music compositions for their classmates. Further, similar to what was formed by Ned of the Media Club group, Flo aka Mic and Bishop made a pact to start a music

production company and to earn summer money performing odd jobs such as lawn work and to work in convenience stores to finance their future rap music business ventures.

Creative rap music work and its potential for rewards were lines of escape from the everyday, sharecropper-like spaces the adolescents were willing to accommodate as they dreamed about local success that had been achieved by groups similar to *Goodie MOb*, which had intrigued Ned in Donna's Media Club study. Thus, it is not surprising that some of the connections the two youths made to the museum event were to the poetry they wrote and their music, as suggested in the following observations and compositions made by Bishop and Flo aka Mic during one-on-one, open-ended interviews with Jonathan in two different "unschooled" spaces:

> Bishop: To me basically, art is like drawing and poetry, and stuff like that. It's basically a type of music. To me art, the drawing like I saw at the museum is like a silent type of music. The artists basically really wanted to express themselves . . . it's like *everything* is like a music note, like if I can write a song about what I do, it will be *directly* with what I do.

> Flo aka Mic: The paintings [at the museum] are like how you express your mind. Put it on paper and draw it . . . It was kinda unique how you think of something and put it into pictures, like drawing it from the mind. Drawing it, now that's unique. Like the same thing with my lyrics, how I can put it down from my mind. But, I didn't draw it, I write it. The same thing with poems. Just like poems. People who like art and music, who like art period, should go to the Carver House Museum.

The connections Flo aka Mic and Bishop made between the museum art, poetry, and music were not abstract musings. As Bishop said, art and music are directly related to what he does, to everyday life—lived space. For example, he reported and demonstrated through a personal notebook he kept that the museum event encouraged him to return to an earlier interest he had in drawing, an interest he had abandoned in previous years. In this vein, following the museum event and outside "schooled" space, Flo aka Mic and Bishop created and informally performed for classmates what they called a "freestyle rap"— another freedom activity that further shows their interest in making creative connections to lived space, drawing attention in deregulated territories, and also their knowledge of the dynamics of disciplined schooled space:

The eighth graders went on a field trip yesterday

We had so much fun, we did not have anything to say, so Hay.

But we did not waste any time,

But our teacher make sure we stayed in line.

So all the kids had questions on there mind

and just remind yourself that we made up this rime . . .

(The students' spellings are preserved as recorded in Bishop's notebook)

Flo aka Mic and Bishop's reference to being kept in line reflects one of the
schooled practices we mentioned earlier, where Lakesha "steered [students] to
do the right things" while out in public. And we look at this reference as part
and parcel of the practices that attempt to make docile bodies and mark terri-
tories, the lines drawn in the doing of school. What is particularly interesting to
us in this brief snippet of freestyle rap is that during the museum event Flo aka
Mic and Bishop realized the MCA adolescents had, as they wrote, "questions
on there minds" but that the students remained silent because, we argue, of
how they have been trained to "do school." Yet, the adolescents had much to
say about the museum event outside schooled space when they made connec-
tions between the museum event and relevant dimensions of their everyday
lives using creative modes or lines of escape, such as when they engaged in
"freestyle rap."

SOME PARTING THOUGHTS

The literacy practices exhibited by youth in the deregulated spaces of the
Media Club were similar in many ways to those exhibited by the MCA stu-
dents. For example, both groups of adolescents expressed an abiding interest
in reading and writing rap lyrics, and both demonstrated in their own special
ways an awareness of how "doing and re-doing school" in out-of-school set-
tings can produce forms of textual engagement that schooled spaces, such as
the academy, often do not. This is not to say that out-of-school settings are
superior to schooled spaces, or that the former should replace the latter in mat-
ters related to literacy practices. Rather, what we have tried to show through
our separate studies is the futility of partitioning youth's literacy practices into
in-school and out-of-school spaces. Although it is not a new idea (e.g., see
Garner, 2002; Hull & Schultz, 2001), it is one that heretofore has escaped
analysis from an attention economy perspective.

Argued from this perspective, we see possibilities for dissolving what have
typically been conceived as school and literacy boundaries. For example, con-
sider how the limited or restricted choices in forms of student interaction at
Marthasville Christian Academy were endemic, even in the lesson taught by
Montsho, a docent at the Carver House. There, despite what would appear to
be deregulated museum space, MCA students demonstrated that they knew

how to "do school"—to be attentive pupils and offer short responses to Montsho's docent-led presentation about the lack of civil rights among the South's sharecroppers. Consider, too, that although the surveillances of schooled spaces were internalized in the talk of MCA students, such as Flo aka Mic and Bishop, they knew how to re-draw this everyday practice using it as a lyrical component to express resistance in a rap about the eighth-grade class trip to Carver House. The adolescents' transformation of such practices into what might bring them notice (e.g., from their classmates, a wider rap music listening audience, a future record company, etc.) gives us a glimpse of how the attention economy works at the local, student level.

These examples of MCA students dissolving school and literacy boundaries have parallels in the Media Club study. For instance, the ways in which Ned and others fashioned their freedom activities afforded evidence of how participants in the Media Club used a public library's spaces—not as passive recipients of information produced by others but rather as active producers of their own meanings and uses of texts broadly defined. What we found particularly interesting is the degree to which the adolescents in our two studies engaged in textual production when the material and concepts that they were working with had some kind of everyday relevance, whether it be in writing a rap lyric, securing employment, composing a note to a classmate, or describing rap artists in an e-mail correspondence.

We think that it is important to point out that as active producers of texts the adolescents used what was readily available around them in their efforts to accommodate, transform, and resist school practices, or to "undo school." For instance, Flo aka Mic and Bishop's rap assemblage demonstrates how elements of mundane experience are grafted one upon another to create personally meaningful, attention-laden products. Their museum trip, a regulated line-up exercise, and the language structure of "freestyle" composition became ingredients of a rap recorded on notebook paper that was subsequently performed for classmates using sound, gesture, and movement. Similarly, material from the *Goodie MOb* CD text insert was displayed by Ned to Donna in a "doing school" teacherly fashion using another gesturing movement, finger pointing, which was also grafted by him into an e-mail message to Kevin.

From these examples, we think it is important to consider that the medium (e.g., a sheet of notebook paper, a workbook, an electronic message, a music CD insert, a gesturing movement) in a deregulated attention economy could be of secondary importance to the everyday relevance of a particular activity. In the restricted attention economy of schooling, Ned (and for that matter, Kevin) had long been exposed to an autonomous view of school-based literacy (Street, 1995) in which reading is regarded as something that is done independently of

social contexts and assessed as an individual trait. This model prizes print-text learning and the acquisition of proper information, such as the MCA workbook exercise and Lakesha's definitions of the constitution and functions of Congress. It is a perspective that we believe needs to be closely examined as we increasingly move into an attention economy.

Indeed, with the flood of easily accessed information in our changing, digital world it can be seen how autonomous models of literacy wane in the mounting wake of an attention economy. What is made visible in our analysis is that adolescents in deregulated space territorialized certain aspects of the enormous information available to them, transformed personally relevant material, and entered into social flows that were catalyzed by their notions of generating attention. Unlike concepts drawn from autonomous literacy perspectives, these flows are multi-directional, strategic, socially driven, and function on a grid of power (Foucault, 1975/1977). When considered in regard to the productivity of power, the materials in the hands of the adolescents we studied (e.g., a rap CD, a museum trip) were used not only as lines of escape from regulated activities, but also were transformed by the participants into active textual productions. This we believe demonstrates how power often functions: oscillating at the boundaries of regulation and creative production, with each field feeding off the other.

In learning and productive spaces a key aspect of power is to what extent attention is given and received. The spaces of deregulated attention economy introduced through our studies show how power can produce social, circulating literacies of active adolescent text production, whereas spaces of limited attention economy promote a marking off of territories that often forms reactive individuals rather than affirmative transactions. These spaces are not a function of particular institutions or boundaries but of perspectives, and in this respect we believe that a task of teaching institutions is to pay closer attention to attention. In this vein, it is through listening to and closely watching students such as Ned, Bishop, DiDi, Monisha and Flo aka Mic that new possibilities for education can be conceived. Schools, museums, libraries, any learning place, can possibly accommodate everyday experiences, capture and give attention, and thus promote productive flows of multiple literacies.

To reify distinctions between in-school and out-of-school literacies serves mainly to divorce these literacies from the very spaces that give them meaning and make them worth pursuing. It also limits what teachers and researchers can learn from students' experiences, at least to the extent that students are willing to share their perceptions of those experiences. Listening to and observing youth as they communicate their familiarity

with multiple texts across space, place, and time can provide valuable insights into how to approach both instruction and research—insights that might otherwise be lost or taken for granted in our rush to categorize literacy practices as either in-school or out-of-school and thus either worthy of our attention or not.

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HELEN DEMETRIOU AND BEV HOPPER

"SOME THINGS ARE FAIR, SOME THINGS ARE NOT FAIR, AND SOME THINGS ARE NOT, NOT FAIR": YOUNG CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES OF 'UNFAIRNESS' IN SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION

We know a lot from the body of psychologically based studies about the development of moral understanding in young children. We know much less about how they think about, feel about, and respond to incidents of 'unfairness' and how prominent experiences of unfairness are in their everyday lives in school. It is not clear what role issues of fairness play in the ecology of the primary school pupil. The two main questions we will be asking are: "What is a young pupil's idea of an incident that is unfair?" and, "When faced with an incident of unfairness, what range of response strategies is open to a young person in school?" These questions will take the following into account: the resourcefulness of pupils at managing situations; the perceived constraints on the responses they might make; whether they merely accept such incidents as part of school life; and to what extent pupils empathise with the victim or, indeed, the perpetrator of the unfairness. To set the scene, we outline some theories and research that have focused on moral development.

Toddlers have a strong sense of the moral structure of 'unfairness.' For instance, between 2 and 3 years of age, they begin to use standards in evaluating their own behaviour and the behaviour of others, thereby marking the beginning of moral understanding (Buzzelli, 1992). With increasing cognitive development, children's comprehension of the feelings and thoughts of others improves, and by 3 years of age, children can understand the links between situations and the emotional reactions they provoke (Borke, 1971; Harris, Olthof & Terwogt, 1981; Harter, 1982). There is also evidence of the emergence of a "moral self" (Emde, Biringen, Clyman, & Oppenheim, 1991). By 4 years, children can distinguish moral rules (e.g. fairness to others) and social-conventional rules (e.g. politeness), and it is this capacity that is central to the development of moral understanding. At this stage, they are

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able to judge for themselves the comparative seriousness of moral and social-conventional transgressions (Smetana & Braeges, 1990).

In her classic observational study, Murphy (1937) concluded that preschool-aged children do not try to help distressed classmates very often, though most do on occasion. In an attempt to account for the variations in 2- to 4-year-old children's behaviour in the playground when they were confronted with their peers' distress, this study investigated children's 'conventional morality or duty.' Results showed that children who displayed ". . . guilt and self-accusation in relation to injury to another child" (p. 191) were those who were more sensitive both to the competitive nature of their relationships with other children and to disapproval from adults. In a study of 3- to 5-year-old children in two preschool classrooms, involving 30 hours of observation, the majority of the children responded prosocially to distress on at least one occasion, but only a small proportion of all episodes of distress evoked a prosocial response (Caplan & Hay, 1989). Interestingly, when interviewed about a video-recorded incident of distress involving a classmate, these children showed that they were well aware of how a hurt classmate might be helped, but they stated that it was the responsibility of adults to tend to children's needs.

By middle childhood, children have acquired a complex and rich understanding of guilt. The ages of 6 and 7 years have been thought to represent the initial and possibly critical period of moral development, at which stage children begin to comply consciously with the norms and rules of interaction and behaviour when they find themselves in situations of moral choice (Iakobson & Moreva, 1992). Of the 6- to 10-year-olds who were asked to consider a victim's feelings after wrongdoing, older children were likely to exhibit more intense guilt in their subsequent responses (Thompson & Hoffman, 1980). Other research has investigated children's ability to consider the context whilst reasoning about fairness. For example, Thorkildsen (1994) described a classroom of 6- to 11-year-olds in which everyone was trying hard to learn how to read and where some children finished the assignments more quickly than others. She then asked the pupils to rate the fairness of the faster readers helping the slower readers in each of three scenarios. Results showed that the nature of the activity made a difference in the judgments of all the children. All of the children thought it fair to have a reading lesson in which children work independently or help each other, although they felt it would be unfair to introduce competition. Moreover, if the activity was a test, children thought it unfair to help. Overall, 6-year-olds were as good as 11-year-olds in taking social context into account.

A report by the Home Office Research Development Statistics in the UK (2004) explored 7- to 15-year-old children's understanding of their social

and moral responsibility. Among the objectives of this research were: to describe children's understanding of rights and responsibilities, in particular exploring the notion of civic responsibility; to describe children's feelings of belonging and inclusion as well as the opportunities available to them to contribute to their communities and to their involvement in both antisocial and prosocial activities; and to explore the factors that shape children's views on family, media, school, and friends. The findings revealed that children generally understand the reasons for rules and accept their legitimacy, though they do question some of them. Furthermore, they report finding it easier to renegotiate rules at home than at school. It was also shown that children usually comply with rules, commonly because they feel it is the right thing to do. Rules that they view as silly, or see are not being enforced, are less likely to be observed. The biggest complaint by children, particularly about the school environment, was that they were not listened to. Few of the children felt that they had any real say at school. A few schools had participatory systems to encourage children to become involved in the decision-making in school, but many of the children were skeptical of these schemes where they thought their involvement was tokenistic. These children were quick to spot unfairness, especially where they felt that rules were not being applied reasonably. Children complained of rules that adults enforced but did not abide by themselves. They had two main responses to wrongdoing: retribution and restoration. Although their immediate suggestions for responding to wrongdoing were often punitive, most children spontaneously demonstrated an understanding of the perspective of the victim and a concern to put right the wrong that had been done, often suggesting some sort of restitution.

By secondary school age, pupils begin to blame any misbehaviour at school on adverse family circumstances and issues of fairness of teacher actions (Miller, Ferguson, & Moore, 2002). Noblit, Rogers, and McCadden (1995) write of a case where the children told them that the sign of a good teacher was when he or she talked with them. Other studies have shown that older pupils are able to reflect on the dynamics of their working relationships with their friends (Demetriou, 2003; Demetriou, Goalen, & Rudduck, 2000). Interviews with secondary school pupils indicate the strength of pupils' feelings about fairness and how ready they are to recall and recount stories of incidents that they feel uneasy about, especially those that seem to them to contradict basic principles of fairness and respect for others. In particular, boys express their belief that teachers do not trust them, especially compared with girls, whom they believe teachers favour in class. Moreover, these pupils believed that the failure to get enough positive attention was a critical aspect of their ability to learn in the classroom (Rudduck et al., 2000–2003).

But what factors influence the development of children's moral values (and by moral values we refer to one's beliefs about what is important in life, such as how one should act—for example, honestly, altruistically, and with self-discipline)? Many factors have been thought to play a role, and here we cite three examples: (1) individual differences, (2) the influence of teachers, and (3) the influence of parents. Imitation has long been considered a mechanism for the development of conscience, and studies of individual differences have shown that the imitation shown by toddlers could predict the development of a child's conscience by the time she reaches preschool (Forman, Aksan, & Kochanska, 2004). This particular study examined whether individual differences in toddlers' responsive imitation predict preschool-age conscience. Specifically, mothers modeled actions for their children to imitate, and both matching behaviour and motivation were observed at 14 and 22 months of age. Preschool conscience was measured by observing children's internalised conduct and guilt at ages 33 and 45 months, and imitation measures consistently predicted preschool-age conscience. Such results are consistent with the claim that responsive imitation reflects a general receptive stance to parents' guidance and with both neo-psychoanalytic and social cognitive views of imitation's importance in early moral development.

An observational study (McCadden, 1997) in a kindergarten classroom attempted to understand how morality was constructed by the teacher and the children. In so doing, it revealed that the teacher utilised a series of rituals to help the children shed their external (home) roles, make the transition to their school roles, and reaggregate as pupils (as opposed to children). While the teacher conceptualised these activities as merely organising the children for the school day, McCadden interpreted the activities as a manifestation of rites of passage in which she explores the teacher's use of transitional rituals to construct the moral identity of the role of pupil and foster the children's attachment to that role.

Individual case studies have also revealed fascinating insights into the link between home and school life, as in the example[1] cited by Nicholls, Thorkildsen, and Bates (1997) of the social world of a boy called David, described as having learning difficulties. Through participant observation in David's elementary school in North America and in his home, the researchers gained enough insight to interpret why David actively resisted involvement in classroom activities and manifested signs of alienation. It was found that at home David displayed a level of artistic sensitivity that he seemed reluctant to reveal at school. The authors describe this resistance as a "self-protective" mechanism and concluded that, "a divided personal and social life could inhibit achievement" (p. 138). Rather than concluding that such children are

displaying 'lack of ability,' we are asked to recognise that some children may have different priorities from those of their teachers. Holding onto these priorities may be an important aspect of maintaining personal integrity and sense of identity. This kind of work takes us further towards understanding why some children remain on the margins of school life and hold views about many aspects of school as unfair.

In a more recent article, Thorkildsen, Manning, and Walberg (2003) emphasise the need for teachers to consider the moral engagement of their pupils. She encourages teachers to consider a broad view of education that includes issues of social, emotional, and moral growth and propounds the importance of preservice and inservice professional development programs that can show educators how morally constructive activities can be integrated with academic lessons during the school day. Other researchers have similarly suggested that educating teachers in aspects of care should be an important component of teacher preparation programs (Noblit, 1993; Noddings, 1984; Wolfgramm, 1995), and educationalists emphasise the importance of the school's contribution to moral development in young people. It is widely accepted that social and moral responsibility are encouraged when children learn from the very beginning self-confidence and socially and morally responsible behaviour both in and beyond the classroom, both towards those in authority and towards each other; and that guidance on moral values and personal development are essential preconditions of citizenship (Crick Report, 1998). According to this report, even at primary school age, children are already forming through learning and discussion concepts of fairness and attitudes toward law, rules, decision-making, authority, their local environment, and social responsibility.

Other factors that might influence moral development are the differences in the affective quality of parent-child relationships, family discipline practices, and the nature of mother-child conflict in the toddler years; all of these factors are strongly associated with the sophistication of children's moral reasoning (Dunn, Brown, & McGuire, 1995; Hoffman & Saltzstein, 1967; Kochanska, 1991; Kochanska, Forman, Aksan, & Dunbar, 2005; Laible & Thompson, 2002). Children's willingness to adopt moral standards also depends on whether or not they perceive themselves *as* moral agents. For example, children who provide 'external' moral justifications are laying the moral responsibility with the adult, whereas children who provide empathic reasoning for moral judgments show an internalised conscience.

The transition from 'external' to 'empathic' depends on a certain cognitive maturity, but it is also influenced by how others (and especially parents) view moral agency in childhood. A study by Dunn, Cutting, and Demetriou (2000) investigated the relation of children's behavioural adjustment, prosocial

behaviour, temperamental characteristics as reported by teachers, and family background to differences in moral understanding. Children from families with highly educated parents and those with professional or managerial occupations were more likely to judge certain acts as not permissible. Such connections could reflect family differences in expectations about and discussion of moral matters, differences in orientation to what is sanctioned or permitted, or the management of discipline and control issues. More immediate social influences include, amongst other things, the identity of the wrongdoer. Young children judge transgressions quite differently depending on whether they are the victims or the wrongdoers, and they also make contrasting judgments of acts committed by siblings and by friends (Dunn, Brown, & McGuire, 1995; Slomkowski & Killen, 1992). By the time children reach school age, they are more able to take the role of the other in communication and evaluate the self from more than one point of view; this ability in turn can lead to an awareness of a person's shortcomings and a responsibility for one's own actions. However, by 4, children who abide by parental standards do so, it is argued, not out of fear of punishment but rather out of desire to imitate parents who have established a warm and loving relationship with them (Kagan, 1987).

The children involved in the present study were 6 to 10 years of age and in Piagetian terms, children of this age are experiencing the stage of concrete operations, which extends until about 11 or 12 years of age. It is during this stage of development that children acquire an awareness of emotions as well as develop the ability to solve a variety of logical and physical-world problems. Piaget (1932) dealt with children's conceptions of morality by presenting children with stories and asking them to describe the naughtier action. He argued that a child's thoughts about moral issues are not simply a direct mirroring of what parents and other social agents teach them but are at least partly a reflection of the child's own level of cognitive development. In so arguing, Piaget proposed two levels of moral development. The first he called a *heteronomous* morality, which characterised children aged 4 to 8 years, who tend to judge the morality of actions in terms of perceptually obvious clues, such as the amount of material damage. It is only later in development, after 8 years of age, during the *autonomous* stage, that the child can penetrate beyond the surface cues to take into account more subtle information, such as the *intentions* behind the action.

Piaget also emphasised the importance of children's social interactions during the middle years of childhood as being essential to the development of mature relativistic moral thought. This emphasis is in keeping with Bernstein (1971), who suggested that the way in which each individual child constructs

his or her model of the world, and discovers his or her place within it, is strongly influenced by the values and orientations that are encoded and transmitted in the everyday conversations he or she has with parents and other adults. Moreover, of particular importance for subsequent educational achievement is the extent to which this conversational experience helps to develop an awareness of the way in which language allows particular situations, problems, and predicaments to be reflected on and explored. Limitations at the concrete operational stage include the inability to move beyond concrete reality to deal with the hypothetical—with the whole world of might-be rather than what actually is. This ability to deal with the hypothetical emerges at the next, and final, stage of development—the formal operational stage.

Why Study Unfairness?

Why is it important to examine young people's accounts of and responses to incidents of unfairness? First, at a very general level that reflects national and international concern about interpersonal violation, it is important to ensure that children have a sound sense of what constitutes unfair behaviour and what responses are appropriate. The national curriculum guidelines for Personal, Social, and Health Education (PSHE)[1] in our schools in England include a number of recommendations relevant to our agenda. For example, they suggest that pupils should learn to:

1. Recognise what they like and dislike, what is fair and unfair, and what is right and wrong.
2. Share their opinions on things that matter to them and explain their views.
3. Recognise, name, and deal with their feelings in a positive way.

Second, and related to the first point, we need to support pupils in making appropriate responses to unfair acts, and to provide this support we must learn more about how pupils think about responding, what sense of agency they feel they have, and how they balance managing situations themselves and seeking the intervention of the teacher. Third, what pupils have to say about how teachers can be 'unfair,' or about how teachers might offer better support in pupil-pupil incidents, can offer practical guidance to teachers. Fourth, where 'unfair' is a term used by pupils to describe repeated behaviours that verge on bullying or harassment, the experience can affect pupils' sense of security in school and their commitment to learning, and even attending school.

Our data suggest how emotionally charged many incidents of unfairness can be. Indeed, children recall some incidents, still with strong feeling, that happened some months, even years, back, and we may need to be more aware of the potentially destabilising effects of incidents that remain unsatisfactorily resolved in the eyes of the pupils who are the 'victims.'

THE PRESENT RESEARCH

Ours was a small-scale project that took place in two primary schools. In one of the schools, which was small and semi-rural, 14 pupils aged between 6 and 8 years were involved; in the other school, slightly larger and inner-city, 12 pupils aged between 6 and 10 years were involved.[2] A letter and consent form was sent to the parents of the children selected; it explained the purpose of the study and offered reassurances about anonymity. After the signed consent forms had been returned, pupils were interviewed individually. Pupils were told that they would be asked questions about things that were fair or unfair in school and were reassured that there were no right or wrong answers. Every pupil was asked the same questions (see Table 1), and the duration of each child's session was, on average, 15 minutes. Each session was recorded (the reasons for recording were explained to pupils), and all recorded narratives were subsequently transcribed.

TABLE 1 Questions and prompts to pupils

1. I would like you to think of a time in school when you thought, "That's not fair."
    Was it about something that happened in the classroom or in the playground or somewhere else?
    Tell me about it.

If pupils were observers rather than 'victims' go to 1b

1a. How did that make you feel?
    Why did it make you feel sad/angry . . .?
    What did you do when that happened?
    When things like this happen, do other people (parents/teachers/friends) do anything about it?
    Does this kind of thing happen often?
    Can you think of any other times when . . .?

If the incident was something that happened to someone else . . .

1b. How do you think he/she felt?
    Why did it make him/her feel sad/angry . . .?
    What do you think he/she should do when that happens?
    When you see something unfair like that is there anything that *you* can do about it?
2. **If time allows**: Can you think of any other times when . . .?
3. Now, thinking about all the unfair things that can happen in school, in the classroom and in the playground. . .
    What do you think teachers should do about them?
    What can pupils do about them?
    When do you think it is better for the teacher to take over?
4. Can you tell me about something you remember when the teacher or the headteacher[3] was being very fair?
5. Tell me what you like most about school?
    Is there anything you could think of that would make school better?

INCIDENTS THAT PUPILS TALKED ABOUT AS 'UNFAIR'

Pupils talked readily about unfairness, and the stories they told were about incidents that occurred in the classroom as well as on the playground. Rather more examples identified other pupils as the source of the unfairness, but pupils had a lot to say about incidents where teachers' actions were also deemed to be unfair. The majority of the incidents were ones in which the pupil him- or herself was centrally involved, but there were some accounts of incidents that happened to others and that the interviewee saw as unfair—evidence of a capacity for empathy even though the observers were not clear what action they might take.

"It's unfair" is a commonly used phrase, and we were interested in whether pupils used the label for anything that they were unhappy about or whether the examples they gave suggested that they were recognising a departure from an expected standard of behaviour; we have tried to speculate about meanings in relation to some of the data and thus have added comments from time to time to clarify or raise questions about the pupils' responses.

Unfairness Experienced

Whereas concerns about social justice are mostly expressed in terms of others who have been disadvantaged in some way, children's stories of unfairness were mostly about themselves—they were *self*-centred. The incidents were mainly characterised by feelings of being pushed around and 'made' to do things children did not want to do; of being left out (or missing their turn); of being misinterpreted or misrepresented.

Being pushed around by others and made to do things you do not want to do
Incidents involving other pupils occurred mainly outside the classroom. One pupil in year 2 (age 6 to 7) recalled being told to stand in a military-style game. He explained:

. . . He was telling me to stand, not where I was wanting to stand, and telling me what to do in the game, and all I did was stand there, and at the end he pushed me backwards and then he said, "Charge." It made me feel angry.

After a pause for thought, this particular boy was certain that, "Next time I won't do what he says." A year-3 (age 7 to 8) girl commented on people pushing into the front of the queue at lunchtime; it was unfair because she had to wait even longer. A year-2 (age 6 to 7) boy talks about Tony who is "usually the boss of us" and Cath who becomes boss when Tony is away:

She tells us what to do—"Be quiet, be quiet, be quiet"—and she doesn't let us do what *we* want . . . she's annoying.

Some incidents in this category bordered on harassment, and the principle at stake was one of respect for persons and personal security: the interviewees are implicitly questioning the habit or assumed right of the socially or physically stronger children to dominate the weaker children. In some cases children who were stronger by virtue of their being among the majority in terms of physical appearance, dress, or language used their secure majority status to ridicule the minority of children who were different. A year-3 (age 7 to 8) girl has suffered in this way: "I used to get bullied a bit because I've got very big curly hair and people used to make fun of me because of my hair. Made me feel really upset."

There were some stories of incidents involving teachers. Most were to do with being made to sit where the teacher said (eg. "It's unfair when the teacher stops you sitting with your 'bestest' friend") but there was a reason beyond the mere thwarting of personal preference: this is 'unfair' because "I can learn things from (him) like writing smaller and running faster." This pupil, who is a boy in year-2 (age 6 to 7), acknowledges that his friend does talk to him and 'destructs' him so that he loses his concentration, but he does not seem to see that this potential for disruption might explain the teacher's caution. A year-3 boy (age 7 to 8) says simply, "I should be able to sit next to my friend in the classroom because we work well together." A year-3 girl says, "It's not fair that I sit with people who aren't my friends. I don't work well on the boys' table because I don't really get on with them and Ben's always tugging me to say, 'What's the answer?' to something." A year-2 boy (age 6 to 7) has a similar problem but with some complex outcomes:

It's not fair if the teacher says I can't sit next to my friend because I can't get anyone to help me and some people be mean to me and stop me getting on with my work. If I can't get on with my work it makes me feel embarrassed because everyone keeps looking at me.

Several pupils said that it was unfair when they had to stop doing work they had enjoyed and had not completed just because the bell went to mark the end of the lesson. Such examples reflect the importance to pupils of unfair practice as inhibiting their ability to work well (as opposed to simply denying their social preferences); their reasons for labeling the incidents unfair are, therefore, closely tied to their sense of what is appropriate behaviour in school.

Missing out, being left out, not getting your turn   Incidents that carried a very high emotional charge were to do with being left out, mainly by friends but sometimes by teachers. Pupils recalled occasions when their usual social group rejected them. For instance: it is unfair in assembly "when my friends talk to each other and don't talk to me" (year-3 girl, age 7 to 8). Then there is

the perhaps predictable set of examples of not getting your turn, where a principle of equity is being violated or a promise broken. In a year-2 class (age 6 to 7), where being allowed to collect the work sheets at the end of the lesson was a coveted privilege, a boy tells a long story about how other pupils push in when it is his turn:

It was unfair when I was the last person to get out and I should have picked up the spellings when Bob did. The last person on the table has to pick them up and Bob used to pick them up even if I was the last person. I should be picking them up when he is. It made me feel sad. I tried to pick them up when Bob was the last person but then Tina picked them up . . . I hope I get a chance to pick them up—I might, but I can't tell the future, so . . .

A year-3 girl (age 7 to 8) explained, "It was unfair when my friends wouldn't let me have a turn with the skipping rope," and a year-2 boy (age 6 to 7) recalls not being chosen by his friend to be in the football team which had all the best players in it; he commented, "Happens often. Makes me feel sad and annoyed." In this case, there are two possible reasons that the incident is 'unfair': the pupil concerned was actually as good as the other chosen players and was rejected on grounds other than competence or the pupil is genuinely not as talented as his peers at football and is reacting to this inequity.

Pupils also recalled incidents where they were not chosen by teachers: "It's unfair sometimes in assembly when I want to do something and somebody else gets chosen" (year-3 girl, age 7 to 8). Others described times when they were not given the attention they felt they needed or deserved. Another girl in Year 3 (age 7 to 8) commented:

Sometimes when the teacher doesn't help me, I frustrate over my work and cry a couple of times. Makes me feel annoyed that she's not helping me. I don't ask my friends to help me because they're not on my table and I wouldn't ask because she normally just tells us off or makes us stand in the doorway if we talk.

Several comments were about teachers "not listening to you" and not responding to pupils' immediate needs. The pupil complainants were sometimes aware that other children were getting more attention, especially if they were the disruptive ones, and this situation was deemed to be unfair, especially if the rest of the class was prevented in some way from getting on with its work. But what some pupils described as 'unfair' seemed to be simply not being able to command the teacher's attention when *they* wanted it. The pupils did not reflect on the difficulties that such expectations presented to the teacher.

And then there were complaints about work that the child judged to be good not being selected by the teacher to be put on display. In these cases, it was evident that the children were not reflecting on possible reasons why work might be selected—which might not be about always displaying 'the best' but rather

about ensuring that every child had something on display. We heard about one contrary incident where a boy in Year 2 (age 6 to 7) said it was unfair *having* your work chosen for display, and in this case, he gave a persuasive reason.

Sometimes if I do something wrong—a picture—and I don't like it, the teacher sometimes lets me draw another picture that's better. Sometimes she doesn't let me do it and just puts it up on the wall with everybody else's. That makes me feel angry because I don't like having pictures I don't like being put up on the wall. When people look at the picture it makes me feel a bit embarrassed.

Some pupils, however, as we discuss later, were able to appreciate that teachers do not always have time to check out how individual pupils feel about particular pieces of work or hear the points of view of all those involved in a fracas.

Misrepresentation or misinterpretation, and not being properly listened to
Here the incidents mainly involved teachers rather than other pupils. Many stories were about being wrongly reprimanded. For instance, there was the familiar situation when the teacher punished the interviewee who claimed not to be the one at fault, or when the whole class is punished because the teacher does not, or cannot, find out which pupils were in fact the wrongdoers. The following story is quoted in full because it shows the strength of feeling that can accompany what pupils see as 'teacher error' in interpreting intention:

One time, I accidentally drew something out of white chalk—I kicked a chalky stone by accident that hit a step and left a white mark. The teacher came and took me to the entrance and I had to sit there because they thought I had been naughty and I had drawn it with pieces of chalk, but it was an accident. Made me feel scared because the head teacher gets really strict when someone is naughty . . . That was when I was in class 1 and I get bad thoughts about it still—bad dreams. (year-2 boy, age 6 to 7)

What he wanted the teacher to say was, "It's okay, Alex. It's just an accident."
    Another pupil recalled a time when he kicked a ball at someone. He insisted that it was an accident but "instead of asking me to explain what had happened, I was told to go to stand by the office, and I missed my playtime. The teacher could have sorted it out, asked me about it" (year-5 boy, age 9 to 10). Several pupils, such as a girl in Year 3 (age 7 to 8), argued that:

. . . Teachers should talk to people first and tell them—not just punish them, but talk first and tell them not to do it—they should give them a warning. They should say that if they do it again, they should, say stay in a break time.

But there were also stories about people being punished when the interviewee was guilty and was not reprimanded or punished. A year-2 boy (age 6 to 7) played with his friends on the grass knowing that this was forbidden:

I think it wasn't fair because she told the others off and didn't tell me off. Made me feel a bit happy that she didn't tell me off and sad that she told the others off. I told my friends to stay on the pavement.

Another pupil in Year 2 (age 6 to 7) recalls that he and his friend were shouting out and that only his friend got told off and this was unfair. A year-3 girl (age 7 to 8) in a similar situation says:

In the dinner hall, Sue was being a bit silly. I was as well but I was the one who got the blame when she was the one who was doing it the most. She was being the silliest. We should both have been told off.

There were vivid stories about punishments that the pupils thought were unfair because they did not fit the crime. A year-2 boy (age 6 to 7) tells a long story about the dreaded purple spot on the carpet that pupils who have misbehaved are made to sit on. Pupils clearly saw this as a form of public humiliation; the boy comments that it is all right if someone has done something *really* naughty, and he cites an example:

Lionel keeps trying to sit next to Chris when he's not supposed to and Chris keeps trying to move away and so Lionel now has to sit on the purple spot . . . The teacher should shout at him and tell him to sit on the spot for about a year . . . or maybe half a year. If he's only a tiny bit naughty he'll only be there for a little bit. If someone's been really bad like Lionel I do feel a bit cross and a bit sad.

However, this same pupil went on to imply that the punishment must fit the crime: "But if someone doesn't ask the teacher if he can blow his nose and he has to sit on the spot, then I feel quite sorry."

It was also seen as unfair if pupils were punished rather than being cautioned for a first or minor offence: "Talk first and tell them not to do it. They should give them a warning." A year-5 girl (age 9 to 10) explained how she would handle such situations if she were the teacher: give the pupil the benefit of the doubt. She asserts:

Instead of just telling someone off (for not queuing in the playground when the whistle blows), if I was the teacher I would probably say,

"Have you heard the whistle?" Because if you haven't I think you should listen more and here's the line so stand here.

Making sure that teachers allow pupils space to give their account of what has happened was seen by pupils as very important in specific situations. For example, a year-2 boy (age 6 to 7) commented: "Teachers should let pupils explain their way first and then decide which one is most truthful"; but listening more to pupils was also mentioned as a general principle. However, from the teacher's perspective, it is difficult to find time to sort out all the incidents that occur, and difficult too, in judging who is to blame in an incident, not to be swayed by a pupil's reputation rather than to be open to the evidence of the situation. Some pupils could see this:

It's tricky to know what teachers should do when something goes wrong, because some people tell the truth and others don't . . . Sometimes the teacher persuades them to tell the truth. When

somebody bullied to me once, they lied about it and kept lying until the teacher ended up persuading them to tell the truth (year-5 girl, age 9 to 10).

Sometimes it's hard to know who to believe. They need to get an eyewitness or people who actually saw the bullying going on (year-5 boy, age 9 to 10).

Comment   In many of the 'self-referenced' stories, 'unfair' seems to mean 'things not happening the way I want them to happen,' but some possibly reflected, without it being articulated, violations of the principles of equity, security, and respect for persons—principles that teachers are likely to talk about in assemblies and in relation to the school's mission statement. The incidents involved both fellow pupils and teachers as 'perpetrators, but there was the occasional act of God, such as the unfairness described at school dinner of the custard running out before the custard lover arrived at the serving counter. This particular pupil described how he dealt with the emotion generated by this unfair incident and managed the outcome by putting on a brave face and just coping:

Once I was really looking forward to some custard waiting to be served and when I got to the pudding, there was absolutely no custard. I felt okay because I'm not fussy about my food. (year-2 boy, age 6 to 7)

The stories reveal the complex social dynamics of the pupils' world. A parallel account of the social dynamics of the high school classroom is described by Arnot, McIntyre, Pedder, and Reay (2004) in which they investigated how different groups of learners, male and female, pupils from different social classes, different ethnic groups, and at different achievement levels experienced their learning. Particularly interesting in our research were accounts of incidents that were 'unfair' because they contravened the child's right to learn in school and presented him or her with social and educational dilemmas—although, again, the principle was not articulated:

Once Clive was actually putting his hands on my back and making noises. [The interviewer then asked, "Oh, that's annoying. Does that put you off your work?"] No, it put me off my *listening* . . . It was annoying. I was trying to listen to the teacher. I didn't know what to do because he was destructing me! The only time when I turn round and talk to him is either when he's annoying me or if he's talking to Lee. Because, do you know why? Clive and Lee actually talk when the teacher is talking. It's not very good because she has to stop and shout at them. The class probably feel a bit annoyed, because they spoil everybody's lesson and then the teacher has to shout—that's why they don't sit together. (year-2 boy, age 6 to 7)

Telling off the whole class when only a minority are messing about was seen as unfair because it "wastes the good people's (learning) time" (year-5 girl, age 9 to 10). And a year-3 girl (age 7 to 8) thought it unfair when pupils fight

or are silly in the classroom because such behaviour distracts the teacher, and if she shouts at the miscreants too much, "she loses her voice" and then the pupils miss out because she cannot teach them properly.

Unfairness Observed

We turn now to a small but interesting group of stories in which the unfair incident was observed—it happened to others and not to the child telling the story.

A boy in Year 3 (age 7 to 8) talked about a new boy who got expelled on his first day: "I felt sorry for the boy but he pushed a pencil in someone's eye, but he could have been given one more chance." In his next comment the pupil revealed a sensitive understanding of the expelled boy's possible motivation: "Some people who are naughty, like this boy, he probably feels a bit strange inside but he doesn't want to show it." Another boy in Year 2 (age 6 to 7) described his sadness on seeing a friend being rejected by another classmate:

That made me feel sad about what happened and I went over to tell John, "Please let Freddie sit next to—he wants to sit next to Tim because he's Tim's best friend." That made me feel happy because everyone was happy and that was fair.

Another boy saw a girl snatch his friend's pencil after he had been doing all the writing in the group project, and she would not give it back; this act was judged to be unfair but at the same time the observing child from Year 3 (age 7 to 8) saw the benefit of the situation: "Thing is, he was quite jolly because he didn't have to do any (more) work." Another pupil thinks it unfair when some pupils hit others in the playground—it is unfair "because people get hurt" (year-2 boy, age 6 to 7).

These accounts are evidence of a concern for the well-being of others and a readiness to see things from their perspective. A particularly interesting example of such concern and readiness is the story told by a year-2 boy (age 6 to 7) who was concerned lest the pupils who regularly copied his work lose out:

It's not fair when someone's copying me because I might have got everything wrong and then they might have got everything wrong as well. Makes me feel not very happy and angry.

HOW DO PUPILS RESPOND TO INCIDENTS OF UNFAIRNESS?

We found little in the literature about how children respond to incidents of unfairness involving themselves and others. Our data suggested that there were four kinds of response: retaliation, avoidance (i.e. withdrawing from the situation), telling the teacher, and seeking comfort from friends or resolving the situation by oneself.

The Impulse to Retaliate

When one is treated unfairly, the impulse to respond aggressively can be strong, especially if pupils have not been helped to try out alternative strategies. After sustained annoyance by another pupil, a year-3 girl (age 7 to 8) was exasperated:

He made me feel annoyed, so I want to smack him. He doesn't want to play, he just wants to annoy us. He won't go away; he's stuck to our hips.

The year-3 girl (age 7 to 8) quoted earlier who was ridiculed because she had fuzzy hair also felt the urge to retaliate: "It makes me feel that I have the power to say something back. They can do it to me so I can do it to them."

Withdrawing from the Situation

For some pupils, like Falstaff, discretion is the better part of valour, and they diffuse the situation in whatever way is open to them. A year-3 girl (age 7 to 8) gets annoyed when the teacher does not listen to her, but since direct retaliation is not within her repertoire, the girl says, "I just walk away and read a book." Another girl in Year 3 (age 7 to 8) gets angry when others talk in the lesson, "But I have to remember, 'just keep calm'—if you're not calm, it can go terribly wrong." Another seemingly mature coping strategy was recounted by a year-3 girl (age 7 to 8), who was sitting innocently with her friend in the playground when a peer accused them of staring and called them names:

One time Ella and me were sitting in the playground and she was watching this person and they said, "What are you staring at?" and they started calling them names. I felt I really want to sort that out but couldn't do that. I sort of sorted it out and sort of didn't. I took Ella away and said, "Come on, let's ignore them." She felt very relieved but was upset still.

Another pupil also saw the value of such a strategy:

Sometimes, when some people are mean to me, my friends come along and take me away . . . sometimes it's better to just walk away instead of having a fight (year-3 boy, age 7 to 8).

A year-5 girl (age 9 to 10) suffered badly from unfair incidents that involved her being picked on by others: "Sometimes they call me names, sometimes they just physically bully me, sometimes I tell the teacher and sometimes I just ignore them." She had learned that on balance it was probably best to ignore the bullies, and her resolve was strengthened by thinking about what made them resort to bullying: "Maybe the school could talk to the bullies because it may be that they have problems at home."

Other pupils decided that the best strategy was just to put up with the unfairness: one pupil in Year 3 (age 7 to 8) described the hurt and rejection she felt when her friends were occasionally spiteful to her: "They said mean things and hurt my

feelings. That made me feel unhappy and I thought that they'd let me down. But because I like them so much I didn't want to tell. I just kept it to myself." And another girl in Year 5 (age 9 to 10) remembered from several years back the ignominy of being reprimanded, unfairly she felt, by the head teacher for running down the corridor. She felt aggrieved because she was new to the school and did not know the rules: "I was little—in reception. I was only four and he acted as though I was ten. I was about to cry but I went home crying instead." She perhaps sensed that crying publicly could have made things worse for her.

Telling the Teacher

While some pupils, as we have just seen, will go home and tell their parents about the unfair treatment, others will go straight to the teacher. But it is clear from some comments that pupils do not always know when—and whether—it is acceptable to tell the teacher what has happened. Several of the pupils we talked with said that their parents told them to tell their teacher, and this response is understandable. But on the other hand, schools are concerned that pupils learn, wherever possible, to deal with incidents themselves, and in a reasonable, non-aggressive manner. At the same time, we know that the peer group culture often castigates those who 'run to teacher,' 'tell tales,' or 'sneak.' One year-3 girl (age 7 to 8) decided not to tell a teacher about her best friend reneging on her promise because she knew what the consequences could be.

Sometimes when I really want to work with my friends. My best friend Emily promised me that she'd partner me and my worst enemy—who likes Emily but Emily doesn't really like her—she said who are you going with? And she said, "I'm going with Emily," but Emily promised to go with me. I don't tell the teacher because if they know you've told the teacher, they try and get revenge on you by being *more* horrible.

Some pupils choose not to report unfair experiences to the teacher because they know that the teacher will reprimand them for telling tales. There are some complex interpersonal and moral issues here for young people to understand and come to terms with.

"The teacher's word helped," said one boy in Year 5 (age 9 to 10) who recalled an incident involving another pupil: "It got quite annoying, following me when me and my friend were playing a game." The teacher told me to tell her to leave me alone, and it worked. In another case, where a fellow pupil refused to share, the boy warned him that if he told the teacher, the teacher could make him share. However, this boy in Year 3 (age 7 to 8) went on to observe that it is not always up to the teacher to do something about unfair incidents; others could sometimes sort it out: "I could, my friends could, everyone else in my group could, the rest of the class could."

Where the teacher did sort things out, pupils were appreciative of their fairness. One year-5 girl (age 9 to 10) described an observed incident in which a boy pulled a chair out when her friend was sitting on it:

Once when a boy pulled a chair away when my friend was sitting on it, my friend got upset. The teacher dealt with it really well. She asked both children what had happened and the boy ended up telling the truth and said, "Sorry." He probably thought that if he'd pretend he hadn't done it, he would have got into deeper trouble.

And another pupil, who was quick to confess what he had done to the head teacher, escaped severe punishment because of that confession:

Well, sometimes teachers are fair. . . I shouldn't have done this. I flooded the boys' toilets in Year 2 last year, and—this was very nice of the head teacher—I just said, "Yes, it was me," and he didn't give me any punishment at all, he just said, "Good for being honest." (year-3 boy, age 7 to 8)

Seeking the Support of Friends or Working Through it on Your Own

When the teacher seemed not to be doing anything to resolve a situation that pupils saw as unfair, then pupils might rely on the solidarity of a small and trusted peer group. In one case, a year-3 pupil (age 7 to 8) talks instead to her toys:

Once I was on this table with a girl who always used to do better maths than me and I always used to get told off 'cos it was actually her who was cheating at work and she blamed it on me. That made me feel annoyed, angry and a bit upset, I told the teacher but it didn't really work. I talk to my toys when things like that happen.

One interviewee talked about a schoolmate who was being bullied: in the absence of teacher intervention they "all helped each other because we are best friends" (year-3 girl, age 7 to 8). She went on: "I think teachers should do more—teachers don't normally do much so me and my friends try and work it out." Another pupil talked about a friend who became silly and disruptive when they played together:

I've got one friend—he's really nice—but when I start a game and I ask him to join in, he gets really silly, but when he starts a game and I join in, I'm not silly at all. So I think it's unfair that he should do it to me when I'm not doing it to him. It would probably make it worse if I do it back to him. I tried it once and it got really, really out of hand—an argument, nasty things were said. But we got over it, we sorted it out ourselves. (year-5 boy, age 9 to 10).

This particular pupil was able to appreciate what would happen if he retaliated and explained how it is often possible for pupils to resolve a situation amongst themselves.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

So, what is a young pupil's idea of an incident that is unfair? And when faced with an incident of unfairness, what range of response strategies is open to a young person in school? The present study expanded on previous work by listening to younger children and focusing more closely on the *nature* of the incidents that they identified as unfair. The children that took part in this study displayed a host of emotions about issues of fairness and unfairness that ranged from incidents in the classroom and on the playground involving kindness and unkindness, work, exclusion from play, teasing, rule-breaking, or failure to share, and in which teachers, other pupils, and themselves were involved. The study demonstrates that children of 6 to 10 years of age seem able to understand the concept of fairness and unfairness, to give examples of these concepts, and moreover to suggest ways in which situations may be resolved. For the most part, pupils talked lucidly about incidents of unfairness, perhaps because issues of unfairness and the emotions that they elicit are strongly etched in their minds.

What is the nature of 'unfairness' in these pupils' eyes? And is what they call 'unfair' actually unfair? It was apparent that pupils would label a wide range of issues as 'unfair,' and such diverse issues of unfairness, as recounted by the pupils (such as missing out on the custard), reflect not so much their moral principles but are rather to do with things they dislike or are disappointed by. This suggests that many of these pupils were still fine-tuning their ideas about fairness and unfairness—about when something is morally unfair as opposed to unfair on grounds of preferences or interpersonal disappointments. Thus, despite many of the younger pupils being as able as their older counterparts to identify and discuss incidents of fairness and unfairness, in accordance with Piaget's more mature autonomous stage of morality, younger children nevertheless viewed emotions in terms of external situations accompanied by behavioural reactions, while older children possessed a rather more mature understanding of emotion and used internal mental states to define their feelings, as in the example where a pupil suggested that the bullies may behave in the way they do as a result of problems they experience at home.

It was also apparent from this study that boys were as capable as girls of communicating their feelings and emotions when talking about fairness. This ability may be something that is lost at a later stage amongst boys and makes us wonder whether we should harness boys' willingness to discuss emotional issues so that later they do not see such discussions as taboo. In addition, it seems that the more able pupils were more adept at expressing their thoughts about such issues. Our findings imply that children are not a homogenous

group and should not be treated as such by policy makers. Even within limited age bands there is a wide range of views and abilities, and even at a young age, children have sophisticated reasoning and understandings of complex issues. They navigate a wide range of rules imposed primarily at home and at school, and this work shows that they generally accept and understand the legitimacy of these rules and are happy (more or less) to comply with them. Furthermore, they question these rules and know how to renegotiate some of them, particularly at home, and they are very quick to spot unfairness in the enforcement of rules.

Pupils' accounts of incidents of unfairness centred predominantly on teachers and friends or peers. Instances of unfairness were also characterised by an imbalance in the relationship, which put the victim of the unfair incident at a disadvantage and often left him feeling sad, annoyed, embarrassed, and/or frustrated. The unfairness felt by these children resulted mainly from incidents in which they were excluded, hurt or bullied, or misunderstood. The 'moral code' that these children have developed suggests that these are not ways to behave and have led them to label such incidents as 'unfair.'

Our study indicated that pupils had no difficulty in identifying and talking about unfair incidents that they had experienced in school. The incidents were mainly about situations where pupils were being obliged, whether by teacher or by bossy peers, to do things they did not want to do, or where they felt left out or neglected when others were involved or being given attention. There were also vivid stories about reprimands or punishments that, in the pupils' eyes, were not justified.

We were intrigued by the criteria pupils were using in labelling an incident as 'unfair.' In some cases what seems to count as unfair is the thwarting of the child's immediate inclination to do something, whether to join in a game, to have his work displayed, or to finish a task that she is enjoying. In some cases, however, behind the complaints is a sense of the children's right to be included, a right that was being denied them, while in other cases it seems that the right to get on with their learning in school is being violated. In any follow-up research we would want to spend more time probing the reasons why pupils judged an incident to be unfair. We were surprised at how often the young pupils we interviewed used the word 'unfair' to communicate their annoyance at having their concentration and their work interrupted by others.

As one pupil put it ". . . some things are fair, some things are not fair and some things are not, NOT fair" (year-2 boy, age 6 to 7). Even the youngest of the pupils who were interviewed were able to distinguish between levels of unfairness and appreciated and spoke maturely about the times when, although an incident distressed them, they were able to cope with the unfairness of it

and put it in perspective. For example, being able to cope when the custard ran out. The feelings of distress escalated for such incidents when a peer was punished unfairly for a minor offence or in pupils' recollections of unfairness whilst being reprimanded when new to the school and unaware of the rules. Many pupils in this study revealed their skill at being able to differentiate between different kinds of incidents according to the severity of the situation and its impact, and they were critical of school responses that seemed to be too severe. Moreover, most pupils were able to distinguish between which incidents merited "telling the teacher," and which ones they should try to sort out independently of the teacher. It appears that close communicative relationships with friends, parents, and teachers are influential when pupils are faced with such dilemmas. This finding further substantiates the need to foster moral awareness, both at school and at home.

As well as talking about experiences of unfairness that directly affected them (self-referenced), pupils also referred to incidents that they witnessed among their peers and teachers (other-referenced), and their comments reflected an ability to empathise with others and also a sensitive concern for others' feelings. Some pupils were able to view the situation from the perspective of the wrongdoer, even when the wrongdoer transgressed against the interviewee. We were particularly struck by the extent to which some interviewees were able to reflect on incidents in an attempt to understand what the motive of the perpetrator might have been or to suggest, particularly in the case of teacher behaviours, alternative ways of dealing with the situation that would, in their eyes, have been better (i.e., fairer). Pupils commented very insightfully on the role that teachers have and the importance of respecting the teacher's position so that there can be an uninterrupted flow of teaching and continuity of learning. However, criticism of teacher practices was also voiced by pupils; they became frustrated when teachers did not seem to be listening to them or jumped too quickly to conclusions without fully examining the evidence from all those involved. At the same time, some could also see that the teacher was busy and did not have time to sort things out in a way that was fair to everyone.

The pupils in the present study were able to convey the concept of 'caring,' a term that encompasses a number of personal qualities, such as altruism, empathy, responsibility, and concern for others, and that Gilligan (1982) has used as an alternative focus for moral development. The empathy displayed by pupils took two forms: perspective-taking and vicarious emotion. The former has also been described as *person perception, recognition of affect in others, social cognition*, and *role-taking*, and all these terms refer to a cognitive phenomenon with a research focus on the intellectual processes of accurate perception of another's perspective (Borke, 1971; Underwood & Moore, 1982). This form of

empathy involves the ability to take on the perspective of another person and equips one with an awareness of another's thoughts, feelings, intentions, and self-evaluations. However, it does not require an emotional response that results from experiencing a vicarious emotion. The conceptualisation of empathy with emotional facets emphasises a vicarious affective emotional response to the perceived emotional experiences of others and in so doing, this affective component provides a bridge between the feelings of one person and those of another and is consistent with the other's emotional state or condition (Stotland, 1969). Further research might determine whether pupils differ in the types of empathy they convey according to their age, gender, and ability.

In terms of the action that pupils felt that they could take, the interviews indicated a number of strategies that they could use to help them cope with everyday experiences of unfairness; we sorted these into four patterns of response. Some pupils felt so strongly that in the heat of the moment, their immediate response was to retaliate, but some also commented that retaliation was a bad strategy because it generally made things worse and the situation could quickly spiral out of control. Others were able to act more reflectively, and several spoke about the importance of withdrawing from the situation. In some cases friends encouraged the victimised child to move away and were an acknowledged source of comfort and strength. Other pupils, sometimes following the general advice of parents, responded by telling the teacher. However, this strategy was a tricky one because teachers understandably could become impatient when pupils repeatedly reported trivial incidents to them, and they could rebuke the child for telling tales or for bothering them. In this situation, pupils were thrown back on their own resources, a direction that teachers were often keen to promote, not so much to protect their own time but so that pupils might learn to be resourceful and to act autonomously in situations beyond school when no approachable adult might be around to help sort things out. Another cautionary dimension of "telling the teacher," as the pupils were often aware, is that "tale-telling" is not a way of responding that easily finds acceptance within the peer culture.

Pupils of primary school age are often encouraged in curriculum statements to recognise what is fair and unfair and what is right and wrong, to share their opinions on things that matter to them and explain their views, and to recognise, name, and deal with their feelings in a positive way. And we know from other research (Rudduck & Flutter, 2004) how important it is to establish a climate in which young people feel able to talk through things that are troubling them with teachers and peers rather than just with external researchers. Structures like "Circle Time" provide a secure and regular space where pupils can learn to talk about things that trouble them in school, but in the case of

incidents of unfairness there is the additional dilemma of knowing how to talk about incidents in which others—who may be sitting in the same circle—are implicated.

For Gilligan (1982), the morality of caring is based on a 'network of relationships,' which develops in people both a feeling of connectedness and a sense of responsibility to one another. Noddings (1994) argues that it is the task of the school to "encourage the growth of competent, caring, loving and lovable people" (p. xiv). Indeed, PSHE and citizenship non-statutory guidelines[4] list a series of recommendations under 'knowledge, skills, and understanding,' the first and foremost of which regards the development of confidence and responsibility.

Despite being highlighted as important, these issues of morality in school are non-statutory, and it is often difficult for teachers to find the time and space to discuss them. Other documents that focus on moral issues in schools, such as the review of recent research for *Nfer*[5] (Halstead & Taylor, 2000), give little, if any, mention of issues of fairness. It is surely important to foster a sense of morality within the realm of school life, and we should not underestimate the importance of studying children's views of fairness and unfairness in relation to the development of a code of moral values.

The implications of this research, as cited at the start of this chapter, are of both national and international significance; they reflect a sense of agency and management on the part of the pupil, offer guidance for teachers, and have a direct impact on pupils' perceptions of school. Research overwhelmingly demonstrates that adults can play an important role in helping young children to understand and articulate their emotions, to develop an understanding of right and wrong, and to develop prosocial attitudes and behaviours, such as sharing and helping others, with supportive parenting remaining the critical factor in children's emotional and prosocial behaviour. Dunn (1995) believes that emotions may contribute to children's moral development because they grow out of relationships and shared experience with parents and because they indicate children's awareness of standards and dilemmas. Moreover, research about the emotional development of young children suggests that conversations with parents about feelings are an important context for learning about emotions and how to handle them (Kuebli, 1994). Do children who come from homes in which issues such as fairness are discussed openly and regularly do better at school both socially and academically? And what, if any, contributions do friendships make to children's ability to discuss such issues? Merely the habit of talking about such issues must surely stimulate thoughts and emotions. And if this is the case, we should aim to encourage such discussion both in and outside school.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NOTES

[1] Also known as Citizenship – a National Curriculum subject in the UK.

[2] The primary school system in England typically ranges from reception class to year 1 through to year 6 – a total of seven year classes with ages ranging from 4 to 11 years. The pupils involved in this study were in year 2 (6 to 7 years of age), year 3 (7 to 8 years of age) and year 5 (9 to 10 years of age).

[3] Equivalent to principal: the educator who has executive authority for a school. In the UK, the most senior teacher in a school. While some still retain some teaching responsibility, most of their duties are managerial and pastoral.

[4] Personal, social and health education and citizenship has non-statutory guidelines for key stages 1 and 2. It describes the knowledge, skills and understanding which pupils should acquire during each key stage. The key stage 1 guidelines apply to years 1 and 2, and the key stage 2 guidelines apply to years 3 to 6.

[5] The National Foundation for Educational Research is the largest independent educational research institution in Europe.

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THERESA A. THORKILDSEN

THE ROLE OF PERSONAL STANDARDS IN SECOND GRADERS' MORAL AND ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

Extending previous research on students' conceptions of how school is and ought to be organized, this chapter will highlight commonalities in how second graders understand and accept responsibility for their education. The work introduced here emerged out of a challenging tension. As a developmental psychologist, I find it socially useful to describe and accept individual differences in students' functioning because such generalizations can help us better understand one another. In such descriptive work, I justify the importance of examining students' experience by celebrating their often disregarded levels of flexibility, thoughtfulness, and achievement. As an educational psychologist, I am also inclined to nurture student growth by helping them reach unanticipated moral and intellectual heights. Equal access to excellence is more likely when I join researchers who endeavor to better understand students who fail to exhibit coveted behaviors or dispositions; children and their caregivers benefit when we strategize about how to facilitate personal progress. Rather than resolve this disciplinary tension between accepting and influencing, my commitments are consistent with an emergent model of motivation that coordinates respect for individuals and the benefits of strategic planning. The value of remaining on this theoretical fence becomes clearest in our collectively generated ideas about how to improve students' understanding of life's possibilities and strengthen their conduct, conscience, and identities.

After introducing the strategic model of motivation that guides this work, findings across interview and observational studies will support inferences concerning the structure of children's personal standards and how knowledge is commonly organized in moral engagement. Details from ethnographic studies will also illustrate how teachers foster epistemological development and involve students in the design and realization of a fair classroom. In addition, these teachers helped students strengthen their conduct, conscience, and identity by encouraging them to identify patterns of behavior, providing opportunities to refine moral thought, and recognizing the importance of describing personal needs, orientations, and interests. By remaining consistently curious about how children view the world, these

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educators implicitly understood that the standards of moral engagement can compel or inhibit children's participation in school.

ENGAGEMENT AND CHILDREN'S STANDARDS

This research is predicated on a commitment to understanding the practical knowledge that children bring forth in educational settings. I accept the Aristotelian assumption that personal standards associated with ethics and politics are commonly generated by acting in the world while deliberating about personal and collective consequences. My work extends Aristotle's (1998) logic to include children as rational moral agents who can offer thoughtful critiques of the world and their role in it while acknowledging that children are not miniature adults. Findings offer information on the breadth of children's functioning, why adults can misconstrue children's intentions, and the benefits of using multiple senses when interpreting children's thoughts, emotions, and actions.

Breadth in Daily Functioning

A heuristic for organizing knowledge about students' motivation in educational contexts can be used to illustrate the breadth of children's functioning (Figure 1). Motivation, in this view, is an intentional system that includes choices and actions (Lewin, 1951; Nicholls, 1989; Weiner, 1979). Earlier work on agentic responses to success and failure is extended here to clarify the role of more enduring personal standards in students' classroom participation. In the resulting model, "engagement" is a knowledge-driven force comprised of thoughts, feelings, and actions reflecting broad perspectives on the world. Engagement is the reflective component of a more complex motivation system that involves the alignment of personal agendas (ends), procedures (means), and behavior (acts)
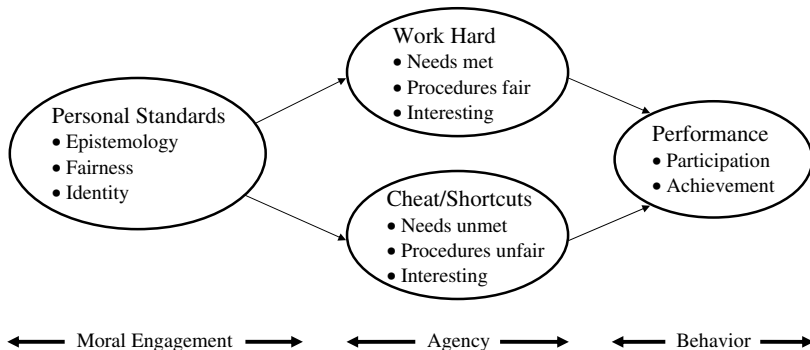
in the pursuit of some form of excellence. This force can direct the formation of intentions that in turn compel or inhibit someone's participation.

Personal success and failure, in this view, depend on the relation between outcomes and a child's aspirations and expectations rather than on relations between outcomes and standards external to the individual (Lewin, 1936). Second graders, for example, are not guided by knowledge of the performance standards established by government officials; they formulate their own standards and beliefs by evaluating the people, places, and things they encounter. Terms like "aspirations" and "expectations" are commonly used to reflect the whole of someone's functioning, while the term "engagement" reflects more specific internal mechanisms for collecting and organizing knowledge. Regardless of the detail in these inferences, motivation remains an intrapersonal phenomenon.

In addition to the standards of engagement, this motivation model includes an agency dimension that accounts for how individuals orchestrate intentional behavior. Both engagement and agency beliefs guide children's behavior and direct their success and failure experiences, but children may be engaged enough to reflect on a problem in habitual ways without translating that interest into goal-directed action. They may also formulate intentions that are independent of their enduring standards; children sometimes act without reflecting or without using the details of their experience to formulate replicable standards. In other words, action can be guided by a combination of engagement and agency processes or by agency mechanisms alone. Furthermore, when behavior is not goal directed, as can be the case with autism, it is safe to assume that neither engagement nor agentic processes is fostering action. Children have the greatest level of self-control when engagement and agency are coordinated in behavior, but less complete or fractured forms of functioning are also evident in most classrooms.

Moral and academic engagement   Two types of engagement correspond to a distinction once made by Aristotle (Aristotle, 1998). Intellectual or academic engagement has been most heavily investigated by researchers studying achievement motivation and regulates the acquisition and use of extrapersonal knowledge while individuals endeavor to understand the world. Mark, for example, revealed a rich understanding of how knowledge is socially constructed and described some limitations of textbooks by saying:

Most of the stories you read in class are pretty short and they leave out some things . . . At school, they think some things are too violent and they don't want to talk about it . . . And also, you know, sometimes you only read half of a story like with Christopher Columbus; everyone says he's so good, but he killed Indians when they didn't bring back enough gold, and used them as slaves. (Thorkildsen, 2002, p. 331).

Consistent with other signs of academic engagement, Mark collected information about a specific topic, and his analysis had little to do with himself or his interactions with others. Mark also revealed an emergent social conscience that is more directly associated with a second type of engagement. "Moral engagement" concerns the regulation of humane behavior or inhibition of inhumane behavior, and Mark's evaluation of textbooks shows an ethical epistemological interest that is often salient in such forces. Whereas academic engagement typically involves extrapersonal forms of knowledge, moral engagement entails the coordination of interpersonal and intrapersonal knowledge acquired via human interaction. When David gave himself the Indian name of Quiet Bird or later learned to express his emotions through poetry, he engaged in levels of introspection associated with conscience development (Nicholls & Thorkildsen, 1997). Similarly, when Bruce gave his teacher a report on the behavior of his classmates, he generated and defended personal standards for appropriate conduct as well as some sense that educators should enforce regulatory procedures (Thorkildsen & Nicholls, 2002).

School is only one sphere in which engagement occurs, but this sphere is central in the lives of most second graders. As I reflect on general patterns from our case studies, it is easy to see that both moral and academic engagement activate children's sense of agency (Nicholls & Hazzard, 1993; Nicholls & Thorkildsen, 1995, 1997; Thorkildsen & Nicholls, 2002). Such agency was strongest when extrapersonal, interpersonal, and intrapersonal aspects of experience were aligned because individuals were able to make wise choices that in turn affected their long- and short-term success. Despite this ideal, the nature of engagement can be more clearly articulated by isolating specific dimensions and, in doing so, I have focused on the moral standards explored by children and their teachers.

Personal standards   The structure of students' personal standards is one aspect of engagement that can be isolated well enough to measure. Findings from interview studies converge to suggest that students' moral engagement includes their standards of epistemology, justice, and identity. Like Mark, many students ask questions about the ethical values in educators' epistemological agendas. Like Bruce, students are also preoccupied with justice in the classroom and, like David, students learn best when the material they investigate enhances their self-understanding.

Personal standards related to each of these themes can often be measured, but they are central to someone's engagement even if they cannot. Connecting Aristotelian ideas with current definitions, "personal standards" are a component of engagement that reflect habitual ways of interpreting new situations

and evaluating past experiences (Bandura, 1999; Thorkildsen, 2004). Second graders, for example, may respond in habitual, rational ways without realizing that they are using such logic or without being able to verbally articulate their knowledge. Articulated or not, most children's standards have state-like properties in that their belief systems may be elicited by specific situations, and trait-like properties wherein belief systems include enduring structural features that facilitate the coordination of emotions, attitudes, and beliefs. These personal standards emerge as recurring mental models of how the world works and operate like rules used to formulate specific intentions, extract information from the environment, or otherwise define experiences.

Deontic and agentic judgments   Two approaches can be used to elicit students' personal standards because moral engagement involves deontic or rights-based judgments and agentic or responsibility-based judgments. Although second graders are not often asked to formulate "deontic judgments," they can easily generate rules or guidelines for making decisions about moral and intellectual obligations. More commonly, second graders are encouraged to generate "agentic judgments" that focus on how a particular action or event reflects back on their identity or on the identity of others. In structured interviews, my colleagues and I have asked students to generate both deontic and agentic judgments, although we have not always explicitly asked for the rule or principle being applied. Despite claims to the contrary (e.g., Damon & Hart, 1988), these second graders made wise, deontic decisions and justified their views by appealing to interpersonal and extrapersonal features of school. Agentic judgments were more salient in our ethnographic studies along with the circumstances in which these judgments were made. By blending these two types of evidence, more solid assertions concerning the structure of second graders' moral engagement can be supported. We also noticed that educators who recognized the different dimensions of children's reasoning found it easy to design activities that stimulate moral engagement.

Misconstruing Intentions

Although most adults can see children's personalities and draw inferences about their needs, children may have difficulty articulating the beliefs that guide personal behavior even when they behave in ways that suggest an ability to discriminate their own agendas and others' expectations. Children as young as 5 or 6 have attained several insights into how schools function and learned how to meet teachers' expectations (Fivush, 1984; Thorkildsen, 1989b). They can identify the goals of tests, contests, and learning situations and decide if

specific practices are appropriate in school. Despite this wisdom, most second graders do not fully understand the psychological processes that govern students' classroom behavior (Thorkildsen, 1989a, 1991, 2000; Thorkildsen, Nolen, & Fournier, 1994; Thorkildsen & White-McNulty, 2002). They may distinguish classroom and personal agendas, but they are not always able to coordinate the two sets of concerns (Nicholls, McKenzie, & Shufro, 1994). Behavior that teachers might define as cheating, for example, is sometimes understood by children as an attempt to master new material, in large part because students do not understand how testing goals are undermined by their actions (Thorkildsen & Nicholls, 1991). Second graders can confuse the idea that we copy to learn with the idea that solitary work is necessary for identifying the skills of each learner (Thorkildsen, 1991). They can also assume that simple equality in educational outcomes is so important to fairness that collaboration on tests is necessary for ensuring justice in the classroom (Thorkildsen, 1989a, 1993; Thorkildsen & Schmahl, 1997). Taken together, these findings suggest that educators who focus only on children's adherence to classroom expectations may misconstrue what, to children, seem like noble, moral intentions.

Deontic interviews reveal a wisdom among children that is not easily detected in a classroom partly because students and teachers sometimes find it difficult to describe the rules that govern their everyday behavior. Teachers can structure conversations about personal responsibility in such a way as to dictate rather than elicit outcomes. By assuming that children understand what each speaker intends, educators do not always detect sources of confusion. Similarly, the passive assumption that all children accept responsibility for their education may be inappropriate for students who have not learned to reflect on the nature and purpose of school. Children have plenty of experience evaluating their own and others' conduct, yet they may rarely critique educational practices well enough to hold themselves responsible for the outcomes.

Curious educators quickly learn that some second graders are initially suspicious when adults ask for their judgments because they do not expect adults to listen or may need coaching in how to formulate constructive critiques. Other children are so highly sensitive to the comfort levels of adults that they feel anxious to please discussion leaders by offering "correct" answers rather than honest reactions. Working with teachers who gained confidence in promoting conversations about moral themes and students who eventually trusted their teachers' motives, we discovered that moral engagement is strongest when students define the features of their identity and match those with more general epistemology and fairness standards.

LISTENING WITH ALL THE SENSES

In an attempt to more fully hear children, my colleagues and I re-discovered the benefits of relying on multiple methods of documenting their functioning. At the onset of our quest, we did not anticipate how fundamentally our informants could change our understanding of what it means to listen. In structured interviews with a highly diverse collection of children from urban, suburban, and rural areas, we heard rich examples, metaphors, and other unconventional justifications as students described their perspectives. In ethnographic studies, we were occasionally invited directly into children's activities, but more often we listened using the "eyes in the back of our heads" and appearing to attend to one aspect of classroom life while actually listening for other, more subtle, details.

Although we relied on convenience sampling methods when identifying the public schools in which we worked, within each school we obtained a representative sample of students, and we talked with individuals from all racial and social-class categories. We selected classes for more detailed study when target students directed us toward particular teachers. It is hard to say whether we noticed particular students because they had outstanding teachers or if the reverse was true, but we were definitely fortunate to find professional educators who welcomed our curiosity as researchers, were willing to modify their practices to accommodate our suggestions, and often directed our attention to sources of stress and strain in their classrooms.

Of the three teachers mentioned in this chapter, Nancy Brankis and Thyra DeBolt worked in a district where teachers are expected to design, implement, and critique the second-grade curriculum. Once everyone agreed on the experiences all second graders should be exposed to, teachers were free to implement these agendas using methods that matched their personalities. In contrast, Sue Hazzard worked in a school that held high expectations for their teachers but granted them very little professional autonomy; decisions about classroom organization and which materials to use were made at the district level and "passed down" to teachers. All the teachers were fun people to spend time with, but each adopted a unique pedagogical style that was influenced, in part, by institutional constraints. Everyone worked in schools that were situated in middle- to upper-middle-class neighborhoods and where most children had parents with at least one college degree and often some post-graduate work.

Regardless of our inquiry methods, we shared our observations directly with those involved in the generation of particular conclusions. Children and their families read the details of our case studies and interview respondents heard us check and cross-check our understanding of their ideas. Like artists who learn to see subtle variations in color, our respondents coached us on how to draw

more accurate conclusions about the nature of students' experience. Our informants taught us when they actively studied epistemology, what constitutes a fair classroom, and the conditions under which they did and did not coordinate personal and school knowledge. Although to students, these observations reflected co-occurring approaches to school, this written account reflects simplified examples of events that more clearly describe moral engagement.

Study Knowledge and How to Attain It

A major component of children's moral engagement included beliefs about what knowledge they find to be of most worth to themselves and society. The second graders in our studies held themselves responsible for learning by distinguishing various types of knowledge and formulating strategies for acquiring such knowledge. Some adults assume that discussions of epistemology fall beyond the range of second graders' abilities, but our findings suggest that children easily generate insightful deontic judgments under controlled conditions. Children also distinguish moral and academic knowledge even if they show areas of confusion over which standards to consider in everyday settings.

In structured interviews, for example, second graders consistently differentiated moral, conventional, personal, and multidimensional features of social situations (Turiel, 1998) as well as matters of logic, physical regularities, intellectual conventions, and personal interests (Miller, 1986; Nicholls & Thorkildsen, 1988). There was inconsistency in second graders' ability to distinguish controversial and non-controversial topics, but everyone recognized differences between these types of knowledge when offered direct cues (Nelson, Nicholls, & Gleaves, 1996; Nicholls & Nelson, 1992).

Given that many elementary schools devote about the same instructional time to spelling and science, we could not predict whether children would see that instructional practices should reflect the type of knowledge under consideration. It was delightful to hear children say that matters of logic, physical regularities, and controversial knowledge are better taught by allowing students to actively engage in discovery whereas moral and intellectual conventions are more easily learned if teachers simply tell students what is expected (Nicholls, Nelson, & Gleaves, 1995; Nicholls & Thorkildsen, 1989). As participant observers, we saw children improve their epistemological insights when given opportunities to compare and contrast various forms of knowledge and learn less when they were simply corrected for drawing unintended conclusions.

Share moral and intellectual authority   These and other interview studies have challenged the view that children are blank slates on which educators impart knowledge. Although that view is no longer accepted by researchers,

parents and educators sometimes assume that children who do not meet expectations are resisting their teachers' authority. In interviews, children have disagreed with this assumption by comfortably describing when educators have a legitimate role in helping students learn moral and intellectual conventions (Laupa, 1991, 1995; Laupa & Turiel, 1986, 1993). Sensitive educators quickly learn that children embrace different forms of authority in school and remain open to instruction.

Aware of these findings and of our unusual roles in classrooms, John Nicholls and I have been careful to hold discussions with students about these roles. Most of the ethnographic accounts in this chapter, for example, were recorded while John served as a communication facilitator for four boys with learning disabilities, their families, and the school personnel involved in nurturing their growth. To develop and maintain these relationships, it was important to foster unusual levels of trust, honesty, and openness to the problems faced by students who were selected because they were having social and academic problems in school. Everyone involved in that project heard about and reflected on the events unfolding, even if they were not always present for particular parts of these events. Bruce, David, Earl, and Jack, whose identities are cleverly masked, helped John choose a secret code so that when they saw details of their lives in print, they would know which stories included them. The participating families and teachers read the now published case studies both as they were unfolding and prior to their publication these many years later.

As a participant observer in these second grades, John also elicited whole-class discussions about the nature of knowledge, fair practices, and identity themes. When John first visited Nancy Brankis's classroom, for example, Nancy explained John's role as a researcher and offered suggestions on how children might understand this role. Planning to spend most of the year with these students, John explained that he hoped to learn more about what school was like for second graders and invited the children to ask questions whenever they were curious about his activities. This introduction also seemed like an ideal time to challenge children's understanding of a sometimes confusing social convention. With John's prodding, Nancy raised the issue of how children should address John by offering the choice of calling him, "Dr. Nicholls," "Mr. Nicholls," or "John." After a flurry of questions and comments, the children decided that "John" fit this person best and, with the understanding that John's role was not the same as that of the school principal, a teacher, or a parent, they used this form of address throughout the year.

Understanding the difference between John's role and that of other educators, Earl bounced around eagerly wanting to say something. When called on,

Earl hesitated and then slowly the words came out; Earl knew someone at John's university. It was hard to determine if Earl's message evolved from a desire to gain attention or if he simply had trouble collecting his thoughts, yet he knew that professors generally worked in places quite different from his classroom and, along with his classmates, was eager to serve as John's teacher. Earl was also one of the target students in John's ethnography, so it was especially comforting to see this public acknowledgement of a relationship that also included private meetings with Earl, his family, and a team of specialists.

The children continued to respectfully call their teacher "Mrs. Brankis" and Nancy shared responsibility for exploring different forms of knowledge by finding additional ways to challenge her students' understanding of conventions. Using humor during spelling tests, for example, she minimized the potential for ego-threat by joking and singing songs as she read the spelling words. "Light. The lights, the lights are yours and mine. It's always true . . ."

Nancy's techniques for focusing attention on ideas, while useful, did not guarantee that children distinguished different types of knowledge; these second graders were still happier collecting answers than thinking about the value of the information. This was apparent the week when a section of spelling words was inadvertently on a wall-chart. Jack, a second focal student in John's project, was first to notice. Like college students who, after reading a passage about morality, cheated on a vocabulary test (Dienstbier, Kahle, Willis, & Tunnell, 1980), Jack and his classmates were eager to copy. Rather than use a language of power, Nancy called attention to students' responsibilities. "You can use what you can find in your environment, but what is the point if you are just copying. I don't care, but if you copy, you're not giving me any information." As more children rushed to see the chart, Nancy joked, mildly annoyed, "Is this like the most important spelling test in your life? The one you copy?" She mocked the solemnity of tests, but she also understood that when individuals feel resentment toward authorities for imposing particular rules, they become preoccupied with reducing their resentment and not with the moral implications of their actions.

In avoiding a punitive stance, Nancy's actions were supported by research indicating that cheating is less likely when individuals attribute their emotional arousal to their own behavior rather than to external causes (Dienstbier et al., 1980). By simply watching students' behavior and listening to their conversations, Nancy could not be sure how the students understood their actions. Like other second graders, they may be more committed to collecting answers than to understanding why specific ideas might be right. They may also assume that tests would be fairest if everyone attained all the correct answers, regardless of how the answers were collected. Nancy could only guess that her students were still confused about fair testing practices and on this low-stakes test, she

encouraged them to think more deeply about their actions. Her feedback called attention to the possibility that this type of copying might constitute cheating, but she let students determine the course of their actions.

Learn facts while playing with controversies   A couple days after the spelling test, Earl was highly engaged with Shane, painting clay sharks they had made the day before. Carrying his shark, Earl said, "This looks alive!" A boy who found reading and writing difficult, Earl revealed another form of intellectual commitment when producing his lively, realistic shark. Earl's work did not match the knowledge valued on tests, but he knew he had completed something of value and acknowledged his right to do so.

Lunch and recess were approaching, so Nancy challenged the group to take responsibility for their intellectual activities. "What if another teacher came in here and said you are just playing and not learning. They might say you should be doing worksheets."

"That's boring," said Derek.

"It's none of their business," spluttered Shane.

"We can say we are learning about fish in a playing way. We are playing and learning about fish and how they do things," said Earl. On this task, Earl had enjoyed collaborating with Shane, and his earlier battle for the biggest piece of clay did not separate him from others or from the task. He could easily define the oneness of work and play, a unity that was embodied in his actions, but he still defined learning as the acquisition of factual knowledge.

Asking if the class should stop working on fish for the day, Nancy was faced with disappointed students and the unanimous assertion that everyone was eager to continue. No anarchy resulted when students and teacher disagreed; everyone used this opportunity to describe the intellectual value of their efforts and actively justified the legitimacy of their practices.

Ruth and Erica showed their fish to the boys. "That's cool," said Earl. Well known for his aggression, Earl was a different person when free to combine work and play. Absorbed with his work, he enjoyed and supported others, charming his teachers and classmates in the process. Consistent with his written report on fish, Earl's product was the image of a predator and reflected his competitive interests with grace, integrity, and strength. (More details are available in Thorkildsen & Nicholls, 2002.)

The intellectual play of rendering the topic of fish controversial was expressed differently across students. Arleigh was by himself writing a rhyming book on fish. Allan read at the end of the table where Shane and Earl made their sharks, finishing one book and comparing it with another. Earl and a collection of his peers decided to weigh their fish on the scales in the back of

the room. Despite these differences, everyone was so highly involved in their study of fish that Nancy altered the afternoon schedule.

The weighing of clay fish continued after lunch. "Ours is heavier than yours," declared Shane, and not Earl for a change. Fred ignored this challenge, and the competition died away.

"What is it?" Fred asked of Tammy's ambiguous creation.

"It's supposed to be what she says it is," called Earl, confirming her right to be inventive.

Shane and Earl began painting a new larger shark. "I'll get more water [for the paint]," said Shane. "Hurry, Shane," said Earl. "Go fast." The boys were racing the clock; driven, but not by an external slave-master. At the end of the day, the friends needed no formal grades to know they had accomplished something valuable and proudly displayed this joint effort in their after-school club.

Nancy's students assumed that learning controversial topics was a form of play, and the view that artists could be the definers of their own creations liberated them to a state of enjoyment. Outside their world of artistic production, however, even these second graders were committed to the production of facts. Answers were not always of intrinsic interest, but the children would be loath to be caught without them. Like other second graders, these boys were still coming to respect their intuitions about what is worthwhile to know and experience. They profited from opportunities to translate responsibility-based thought to deontic thought by constructing rules to govern their learning and from opportunities to test the practicalities of particular rules. The children stayed task-focused when their teacher arbitrated epistemological conversations using reason rather than power, and they were fortunate to have a teacher who respected their open-mindedness while maximizing everyone's participation.

Encourage the attainment of knowledge   Sustaining involvement is easy when students attain a certain threshold of expertise, but to become an expert, novices must be willing to participate in whatever ways they can. Teachers, who design strategies to assist even the least skilled of their students while challenging the experts, verify that mistakes are endemic to learning and expertise is acquired through effort.

Sensitive to the pressures associated with individual differences in students' interests and abilities, Nancy Brankis sought fair ways to accommodate those differences. This approach became obvious immediately after the winter vacation when children were more and less ready to return to the rigors of school. As students came into the room, they tackled assignments listed on the board. When all were present, Nancy announced, "Seven more minutes and I'll collect your 'silly sentences.' " Later, "Three more minutes." Everyone was calm and busy.

Next, the class briskly went over answers to the early morning assignments. "Remember to put a CT or DT on your paper," announced Nancy. "If you're doing it with us, put a DT to show it was done together, and if you are correcting it put a CT to show you are correcting it together." Acknowledging that whole-class instruction often leaves slower students wallowing in the wake of others, this grading procedure allowed everyone to participate in communal activities.

As the children proceeded to discuss journal entries on freedom, Nancy charted ideas so that everyone could remember the flow of the discussion. Meanwhile, Jack added two entries to his journal. In front of each thought was a star:

*You cold have a friend

*You can sell shren things

Meeting with Nancy the next day, John asked for clarification of these practices. "I was really interested in the way you do the beginning of the day . . . that CT, DT thing."

"Some are not accomplishing as fast," Nancy asserted. "Yet, they are still learning."

"Yes and they don't fetch up wallowing way behind . . . Have you been doing that for long?"

"Yes, I invented it. It's funny because I never even thought . . . that it's really providing some fairness." Instinctively, Nancy seemed to know that fairness is of major importance to children, yet when children bring up such issues, they are often greeted with the pithy statement, "Life is not fair!" To a child burning with anger or frustration, such reminders are unhelpful. Practices that promote some form of equality are more likely to foster emotional self-regulation by giving a nod in the direction of fairness while preserving children's autonomy and sense of control over their own learning. Nancy's practices also implicitly acknowledged various epistemological differences embodied in specific activities.

"And on fairness," Nancy interrupted herself, "there's a related thing. Last year, because I was doing [journal] research, I made sure I had journal time for everyone. I've slipped away from that this year . . . I'm going back more to this crud I have to get through."

John presumed, "We'll talk more of 'crud' later. The other thing that interested me was the stars in the journals."

"I started it last year," said Nancy. "They would write their own thoughts and then sit . . . They avoided using other's ideas, like it was wrong to do." Was this a sign that children over-generalized the rules against copying on spelling tests?

"It tells you something about our society," started John.

". . . you have to be an island or something." Nancy finished. "So shooting from the hip, I said, 'Put a star.' I thought a star for them is a real positive thing. So, if you learn from someone else, you give yourself a star."

Nancy's teaching style combined assertiveness and explicit guidelines with the active promotion of student initiative. "OK! You are off to the library. You *will* get two books, not no books. It's your freedom to choose what to read so take advantage of that," she would announce. Likewise, the children *would* write in their journals, but they were free to frame and pursue their own intellectual priorities.

Fulfill epistemological responsibilities   Researchers who study epistemology often privilege deontic judgments over agentic judgments and can become trapped into inventing "teacher proof" agendas. In contrast, Nancy tried to strike a balance between addressing abstract standards and remaining sensitive to individual differences in the pace at which students learn. Aware of common critiques generated by individuals working outside of schools (e.g., Evers & Walberg, 2002; Walberg & Bast, 2003), she consciously established classroom practices that enabled students to fulfill normative expectations. Nancy also expected children to express themselves as unique members of the academic community; personal standards were as important as external standards. With help coordinating personal and collective agendas, these second graders were expected to accept responsibility for discriminating moral and intellectual knowledge. Methods of correcting papers and of encouraging students to learn from peer interaction clearly suggested that these were learning situations rather than tests or contests. Likewise, by telling students to choose two books, Nancy indicated that learning entails personal initiative as well as effort. Classroom authority was situated in the work being done and in the effortful struggle to acquire expertise rather than in the teacher.

Collaborate in the Design of a Fair Classroom

Rich epistemological conversations, such as those found in Nancy's class, are most likely to occur when students embrace trust and the understanding that disagreement is central to learning. Comfortable negotiations were easiest to sustain when children formulated symmetrical relationships and coordinated their sense of being cared for with a willingness to reciprocate such care. Children who felt disconnected from others were less committed to academic tasks, but under the watchful eyes of trained educators, their feelings of isolation could be minimized. Students who found a comfortable place in their classrooms communicated with high levels of trust and social comfort, and maintaining that sense of connection was possible only once they understood agendas set for the class as a whole.

Talk about collective agendas   Like other teachers we met, Nancy Brankis paid attention to the emotions implicit in students' gestures. During a second-grade math test, for example, desks were separated and Jack found himself near Nancy. As the test proceeded, Jack nudged closer and closer until his desk was jammed against the file cabinet at the end of Nancy's desk. His behavior was like that of a troubled child reaching for contact.

After the test, Nancy decided to explore this gesture of discomfort with the class. "A lot of people have been asking me about who they can sit with. I sat you with someone who wouldn't chat too much. But maybe that's not such a good idea and I could put you with people you want to work with. What responsibilities would this put on you?" Possible pros and cons of working with friends came forth.

"You wouldn't sit with someone who would tease you or say bad things about you," suggested Earl.

Erica added, "You could learn more about your friends if you sit by them."

"Well, if we do that, it wouldn't do any good to me," said bright but lonely Allan, "because I don't have any friends in this whole classroom."

"Maybe as a class we need to think about that . . ." said Nancy. "[Think about] our responsibility as a class. How many of you think you'd like to help [Allan] with that?" Many hands went up, including Earl's and Jack's.

Ted observed, "When you're not sitting by your friends, you don't feel that comfortable." Despite variations in opinions, everyone agreed that it is easier to learn when students are comfortable and the class generated a rule acknowledging this.

While Nancy listed on the board the possible arrangements being discussed, Jack approached her to say, "I want to be with Shane."

Nancy addressed the class. "There's a possible problem."

"People you want to sit with might not want to sit with you," said Jean.

"I don't know how to solve this problem," said Nancy.

The children described various aspects of the dilemma before them. Shane proposed that boys sit with boys and girls with girls.

"That stinks," burst Earl. Although he often dominated others, he did not have the macho need to separate himself from girls.

"I want us to think for 30 seconds," said Nancy. "I hear people calling out, 'I want to sit with so and so.' Do you think that some people might now be getting their feelings hurt? There are a lot of names that haven't been [mentioned]. I wonder if my name hadn't been called out, how I would feel?"

The children saw Nancy's point and the name-dropping immediately stopped. "I have one more question," said Nancy. "We have been talking about fairness." Nancy was hoping to direct the conversation away from the conduct of individuals.

Arleigh interrupted, "You could have the . . . have the bowl of names. You could pick names."

"Yeah, that's fair," called Shane.

"It sounds fair," answered Earl. "But it means you wouldn't get to sit with your friends." He saw that procedures based on deontic judgments may be fair, but they might not always foster the intended consequences.

Eventually, Nancy decided that each child would write the names of people he or she might sit with. "[Think] who you are compatible with, and who you think might need someone to sit with. Who might not be included in a group? I'll read all these and think about it over the weekend."

Fiona chose Jill, Jean, Beth, Jacob, and the two lost males—Allan and Jack. Arleigh listed Fred, Ben, Derek, Shane, and specified as "maybes," Ted, Allan, and Jack. Jack also appeared on a few other sheets. Earl wrote, "open," indicating that he would accept anyone and specified an eclectic collection of boys and girls.

Jack chose Shane, Arleigh, Earl, and Fred; all seemingly "manly" men. Choosing none of the boys with more literary interests, and avoiding girls completely, Jack showed no interest in collaborating with anyone sharing his sensitive disposition.

Over the next few days, fairness remained a theme of many conversations and activities. In a lively group discussion about a book, for example, Nancy said, "Can we all give Jack a bit of consideration, and let him say his idea."

"Yes," the group chanted.

"Is that a fair way to treat our classmates?" Nancy reminded them.

"Yes," the children agreed.

Allow time to find the personal in collective agendas   While they highlight the importance of considering collective agendas, whole-group discussions of fairness did not immediately transform everyone's behavior. One day Ben was on the floor reading a book and Earl snatched it, taking the book to his seat to trace a picture. When Earl finished, John intervened to ask if Earl thought it was fair to take the book from Ben. Rather than admitting guilt, Earl denied that Ben was using the book. Soon, Derek came and asked for another book from Earl's desk and Earl promptly handed it over.

"Seems to me that was fair," John prodded. "But what about Ben, he was using the book and he let you take it away from him. Was that generous of him to let you do that?"

Earl muttered, "Yes."

"I think you like to be fair," said John, hopefully. Rather than scolding, John attributed good intentions to Earl and Earl saw John's point. Who could openly argue against fairness?

As these discussions about collective agendas evolved into revisions of students' personal agendas, a richer form of trust began to flourish in Nancy's class. Genuine friendships replaced more tolerant forms of social exchange, especially over the last few months of school. For example, Earl found a new friend one day when Allan wanted to go to the library for information. "Choose someone to go with," said Nancy. Allan chose Earl, and the boys left with their arms around each other in a "buddy hug." During the next day, as the class lined up for physical education, Earl stood by Allan giving him warm friendly pats on the back. A day later, Earl eagerly called, "Mrs. Brankis! Mrs. Brankis! I'm going to Allan's house." The budding friendship had blossomed.

Nancy's smile reflected her knowledge that once in a while it is helpful if adults intervene and validate children's interest in one another. Earl's friendship with Allan was cemented after Nancy suggested to Allan's parents that they invite Earl over after school. Knowing Earl's reputation for aggression and academic difficulties, Mr. and Mrs. Stencel hesitated. After acting on the suggestion, however, they told Nancy that Earl was a lovely child who introduced the bright, socially isolated Allan to comics and helped him become an "ordinary" boy. In addition, Earl seemed happy to have a break from his after-school club, and Allan's pacifist nature seemed to calm him.

This friendship between Earl and Allan lasted until the end of the year. During the last couple of weeks, Nancy recorded a message for John. "While you were observing Earl, I was with Allan, talking about what he liked about school. He said, 'What I liked . . . was when I met Earl . . . We are interested in the same things, only Earl is interested in it more practically.' [Nancy] said, 'Give me an example.' [Allan] said, 'We are both interested in electronics, but I think about electronics and how it works, and Earl, when something breaks in his house, he takes it and puts it back together and fixes it.' "

These boys had very different approaches to life and their friendship seemed to thrive on that very difference. With the encouragement of their teacher, the boys found ways to share interests without losing their sense of autonomy. They also taught one another things they would not otherwise have discovered. Once their ability differences were defined in less hierarchical terms, the boys committed themselves to a mutual friendship that added pleasure to their academic as well as social lives.

Validate personal and collective fairness concerns   The collective agenda of facilitating comfortable seating arrangements transformed a variety of personal agendas as students expanded their friendship networks and were encouraged to think specifically about how they interact with others in their classroom. Such social and moral changes did not detract from the manifest curriculum of

second grade and may have strengthened students' commitment to educational activities. Over the course of the year, many fairness dilemmas spontaneously emerged as these second graders thought about regulating conduct, distributing resources, implementing procedures, and sustaining a strong sense of community. Public conversations led to private reflections and beneficial actions. As part of the curriculum, the children read about others with similar worries, wrote about their experiences, and discovered new concepts. Their moral and academic engagement was enhanced when they used responsibility-based judgments to formulate and test personal fairness standards and practiced regulating their sense of agency.

Understand How Epistemology and Fairness Beliefs Facilitate Agency

Full participation in classroom activities is more likely when children have at least some awareness of the purposes of these activities and the types of knowledge that are embodied in them. Although second graders enter school with some understanding of what is expected, various assignments, rules, events, and conversations improve the complexity of their knowledge such that personal standards can become better informed and be used more reliably to formulate intentions. As children formulate and execute different intentions, they also revise the content of their more general standards; they renew a commitment to hard work or find expedient ways to clear their desks of teacher-assigned tasks.

Children's decision to work hard or to cheat is usually affected by the state of their standards. When unsure about the value of particular standards, second graders will reconcile their states of confusion by selecting activities that offer new information. When committed to particular beliefs, the same children can translate their values into formal intentions and may even endeavor to export those ideas into the larger community. Regardless of the state of change in children's standards, regular opportunities for reflection facilitates the engagement necessary for amplifying children's sense of agency. When educators step outside their own operating assumptions and recognize the internal dramas that second graders face, they challenge children to integrate communal questions about epistemology and fairness with personal questions of responsibility and identity.

STRENGTHEN STUDENTS' CONDUCT, CONSCIENCE, AND IDENTITY

A third highly complex aspect of moral engagement reflects individuals' self-understanding. Second graders are still exploring who they are, how their ideas and behavior evolve, and their responsibilities to others. They may easily comply with their teachers' requests and seem to distinguish their

own interests and those of others, but they are also engaged in a process of self-reflection that is revised again in adolescence. Second graders habitually regulate their conduct, speculate on the role of emotions and personality in moral functioning, and formulate short-term goals (Aronfreed, 1968). They also enjoy exploring the stable features of their identity and observing the effects of their actions on those around them (Nicholls & Hazzard, 1993; Thorkildsen & Nicholls, 2002).

Despite these abilities, the logic of second graders differs from that of adults. Most second graders find it difficult to coordinate others' perspectives with their own and fully imagine their social position in the world. They may describe what they would like others to believe, but they do not consistently depict a readily validated sense of self. In this way, it is reasonable to assert that second graders are the ultimate experts on their own experience even if they offer unrealistic, unstable, or overly concrete assessments of how others see them. When listening to second graders, therefore, educators benefit from using various means of cross-checking their understanding of the emergent ideas. Educational activities can also teach second graders to better understand how their own and others' conduct, conscience, and identity influence behavior.

Some families and policymakers claim that questions of identity are tangential to the business of schooling (Evers & Walberg, 2002; Walberg & Bast, 2003), but the children in our studies have shown and told us otherwise. Admittedly, it is a rare second grader who fully understands the implications of personal decisions, but most children are astute enough to realize this. In their quest for a broader understanding, second graders may seem bound by unilateral notions of authority that involve excessive reliance on powerful others. Educators who recognize second graders' age-appropriate sense of humility and corresponding openness to experience can strengthen children's understanding of identity by inviting them to label patterns of behavior; refine their systems of moral thought; and identify their personal needs, orientations, and interests.

Acquire and Maintain Rule-Governed Behaviors

Although they often offered agentic stories of their own and others' achievements, many children in our studies were comforted by and preoccupied with the enforcement of rules. Like others (Turiel, 1998), we found that second graders commonly realize that some rules are easily changed and others should not be altered. Nevertheless, the world of second grade takes on a predictable order when behavior is regulated by guidelines that are consistently enforced and, with encouragement, children will incorporate such rules into their discussions of identity. This preference for predictability is expressed in a variety of ways, two of which will be contrasted here using details from the lives of Jack and Bruce.

Teach personal accountability   Bruce was a boy who enjoyed the role of policeman and could be intensely judgmental of others' small transgressions. One day after Thyra DeBolt, his teacher, had been replaced by a substitute, Bruce outlined his peers' transgressions (Thorkildsen & Nicholls, 2002, pp. 36–37). Responding to a query about how well the day went, Bruce promptly replied, "OK, but Helen got in trouble." Later that day, when Bruce and two other weak readers were completing a task that involved imagination and initiative, he was so overly preoccupied with correct turn-taking that he put a damper on his classmates' enthusiasm. Similarly, when his classmates deviated from a literal version of the story, Bruce would burst forth with, "You messed up again."

While observant of others, Bruce was not particularly consistent in monitoring his own behavior. This was apparent when, in response to Thyra's suggestion, Rick proudly asserted, "Oh! I know!" and dove into his work. Bruce began looking at Rick's work with such intensity that Thyra felt compelled to use a book as a shield around Rick's paper before moving on to help another student. Instead of carrying on with his work, Bruce tried to peek around this wall, and waited until Thyra returned to offer private instruction. When Rick casually asked, "Are you all done?" Bruce turned his paper over to conceal his progress, an accusatory gesture suggesting that it was Rick who might intend to copy. These are only some examples of how Bruce sought special attention from his teacher, monitored others' actions, and ignored opportunities to direct his own agendas, but John and Thyra made a point of teaching him to hold himself accountable for at least some of his experiences. (Thorkildsen & Nicholls, 2002, contains more examples.)

Accept mistakes   Like Bruce, Jack also seemed comfortable with the idea that rules were being enforced and expressed this commitment in contradictory ways (Thorkildsen & Nicholls, 2002). Jack differed in that he seemed worried about meeting Nancy Brankis's academic expectations rather than obtaining special attention from her. Jack also expressed pleasure rather than anxiety when detecting others' social mistakes.

This boy was unusual in that the nature of his disabilities meant that a team of five specialists, in addition to Nancy Brankis and John Nicholls, attended to his case. He and his parents received direction from two psychologists (one hired by the family and one by the school district), a social worker, a speech and language therapist, and a special education teacher. With all this attention, Jack seemed so afraid of getting answers wrong that he was immobilized, and his withdrawn behavior was readily apparent to anyone who saw him in school. The specialists decided that Jack suffered from low self-esteem and lacked a

means of expressing himself. His anxiety is most clearly conveyed in a self-evaluation completed for the first report-card period. Able to decipher Jack's jumbled handwriting, Nancy read,

I need more help in math. I need more help in geography. I don't have any friends. I need help on writing. I need more help on reading. I need help working with others. Nobody likes me in the classroom. I need help following directions. I need more help on listening. (Thorkildsen & Nicholls, 2002, p. 115)

This perfectionist streak was also apparent at home where Jack's mother saw a boy who was sometimes "too good." He would get up early, make his bed, dress quickly, organize his materials for school, and wait patiently until it was time to leave. Jack certainly showed no reluctance to approach school, but his extreme preoccupation with being good and other passive or withdrawn classroom behaviors led everyone working with him to agree that he should be encouraged to assert his opinions and receive direction on how to stand up for his rights. The adults also agreed that, until Jack became more assertive, it might be best to remove the special academic interventions that had him coming and going all day and concentrate solely on strengthening his social skills. As Jack responded to this change, everyone fully expected a range of inappropriate actions, but no one expected the concealed boy who emerged.

Hidden within Jack seemed to be a secret pleasure in making and getting into trouble. Jack found discrete ways to steal that were detected only once his locker and bedroom were cleaned. His teachers and parents found in his possession books and materials from the class library and science center, papers that went mysteriously missing from Nancy's desk, and a novel that was being read to the class. He was also observed stealing pencils from the desks of his classmates and messing up the papers in others' folders. Shane's exasperated mother reported that one day her son, who was supposed to stay at school, went home on the bus because Jack had said, "If you don't, I won't be your friend."

When confronted with his behavior, Jack would lie or create diversions. Like other children facing social skills difficulties, he collected pieces from those around him to enhance a sense of connection to them. Using strategies like this and mixing up other's papers, Jack instigated conflict by showing peers how to see the confusing world he experienced as a person with ADHD

Jack's schoolwork also supported contradictory reports about a boy who tried to be "too good" and one who was actively engaged in bad behavior. When asked to respond to a question about freedom, Jack wrote, "What does freedom mean to me? turn on the teve, turn on my super Netla. I get to help my mom." His writing lacked the social vision common among other students in

his class and reflected a sense that rules were determined by external authorities. Jack also offered a rule-laden vision of school, emphasizing the value of grades and the importance of being good. He asserted that grades are good to have because "I listen," and when asked to elaborate, he simply said, "I listen to the teacher and stuff."

Consistent with this interest in rules, Jack's favorite books included Richard Best, a character who was constantly in trouble at school. When Nancy asked Jack to explain this preference, he said:

"I like to read about kids that get in trouble."

"Why is that?" asked Nancy.

"I don't know," Jack hesitated. "I can't think."

"Yes you can. Why is it?"

" 'Cause I learn words," said the boy-who-must-be-good.

"You can read about worms and learn words doing that. Is this different?"

Nancy hoped she could help Jack admit his interest in being bad.

"Because it is interesting," Jack said, ignoring the request to consider worms.

"What is interesting about it?" said Nancy.

"It is funny."

"Get that down." Nancy coached Jack to write these thoughts in his journal.

Eagerly, Jack wrote more fluently and with greater clarity than usual; the underground bad boy began to appear on paper. "I like the part when He got in tribol . . . I like when he snak ut of reading class [to go to the bathroom] Because he Dosnt like to read. I Like kids hou get in triodel [trouble] . . . (Thorkildsen & Nicholls, 2002, p. 130–131)

Identify what rules to teach Like Bruce and Jack, second graders are learning the specific rules applicable in their environments, where those rules come from, and when and how rules might be broken. Feelings of guilt and shame would be difficult to detect in a busy classroom, but we can speculate that Jack may have experienced these emotions, rendering him reluctant to share his deviant interests; he certainly expressed an unusual degree of discouragement in his progress report, but we saw no remorse when he was confronted with this dishonesty. Bruce's commitment to monitoring his classmates' behavior, on the other hand, was consistent with other second graders' attempts to enforce and reinforce an understanding of the rules, and with a tendency to find fault with others before looking inward. Strategies that may be useful for helping boys like Jack integrate agentic and deontic knowledge should probably differ from those used to help boys like Bruce, but educators could generate such strategies nonetheless. Both deontic and agentic thoughts about conduct strengthen

children's conscience as they evaluate classroom rules while formulating broader standards of engagement.

Refine Children's Moral Orientations

In addition to helping teachers maintain order, the specific rules that guide someone's conscience, when coordinated with one another, usually evolve into general principles or moral systems of thought (Colby, Kohlberg, Gibbs, & Lieberman, 1983; Piaget, 1950). Educators can be most helpful with this process if they remember that second graders typically show a preference for learning via involvement in concrete activities and rely on at least one of three types of sociomoral thought when organizing their moral and intellectual knowledge. These children may be committed to "obedience for its own sake" and collect evidence that rules are being enforced; to "instrumental systems of doing good" in order to attain personal benefits; or to "interpersonal conformity" by trying to please rather than disappoint others. The extent to which children coordinate their standards into moral systems of thought is evident in how they respond to requests for compliance. Children who respond in consistent ways have become comfortable with how they function and see little reason to change their reactions. Children whose thoughts and behavior are laden with inconsistencies are refining their standards or reorganizing their thoughts to accommodate new information. Curious educators who accept children's inconsistencies and organize opportunities to share these views are likely to find interesting perspectives on the world, and they are also likely to facilitate students' moral and intellectual growth.

Accept everyday confusion   Inconsistencies in how second graders think were apparent when Nancy Brankis's students saw another group of second graders learning math. Nancy showed a videotape of students working on particular problems, produced as part of a larger research project on children's conceptions of math concepts (Cobb, Wood, Yackel, Nicholls, Wheatley, Trigatti, & Perlwitz, 1991; Nicholls, Cobb, Wood, Yackel, & Patashnick, 1990; Nicholls, Cobb, Yackel, Wood, & Wheatley, 1990). Students in the video worked in pairs to develop solutions to particular problems, after which the whole class discussed the same problems. The tape showed lively disagreement and negotiation of mathematical questions with every child in the room deeply involved in looking for alternative ways to come up with a standard answer. Nancy and John initially thought the tape might foster deeper levels of academic engagement in Nancy's second graders. Certainly, some students noticed the intended epistemological themes, but other students identified ethical issues.

"Why were they fighting?" started Shane. "Why were they fighting?"

"They weren't fighting," said Erica. "They, ah—"

"Were they fighting?" asked Nancy with surprise.

"Yeah! Yeah! Yeah! They were fighting," called Shane.

"No. They were arguing," said Monica.

"They were telling each other, 'No this is right,' but they weren't having a fight," explained Erica.

"They were!" called Earl. His delight in observing aggression was consistent with many of his approaches to academic life, but it was amazing to see how many other children assumed that disagreement was synonymous with fighting.

"They were just telling each other," Erica persisted.

Earl chanted his interpretation of the math discussion. " 'Yes!' 'No!' 'Yes!' 'No!' 'Yes!' 'No!' 'Yes!' 'No!' " He seemed to find this validation of his superhero values to be quite exciting.

Hoping to help the children consider questions of fair and effective classroom practices, Nancy said, "Let's all take a minute and think. If you could make a change in how you learn math in here, what would it be?"

Earl volunteered, "Ah, in math, we can . . . we can . . . we could have partners and help."

"We do more of that in reading don't we?" said Nancy.

"It could be boy and girl," said Earl. Not only had he given up the idea that learning might be construed like the combat of superheroes, he integrated aspects of the previous fairness discussion into a vision for mathematics education.

Arleigh wanted "harder math, 'cause when it gets harder . . . you sit and think."

"But, but, you *know*," said Earl, meaning that Arleigh understood math better than most students.

Nancy went on to explain that they would try the collaborative approach to math, with children working in pairs before presenting their work to the entire class. After several days of having children work in pairs Nancy said to Earl, "I have to tell you that yesterday on that math, you were really thinking and really working hard." Nancy recognized and encouraged the trend. "I think that if there was a tornado that came, you still would have worked through it. Are you getting more interested in math?"

"Yeah," said Earl sheepishly.

"What makes it more interesting?" probed Nancy.

"Not sure."

"Not sure? Do you like this idea of maybe working with a partner?"

"With a partner helps." Unlike Bruce, who would learn only from his teacher, Earl seemed to thrive under the watchful eye of his peers.

A subsequent math assignment with calculators benefited both Jack and Earl. When Jack and Ruth collaborated, at first Ruth did everything, but soon Jack operated the calculator under her guidance. Earl easily worked the calculator,

saying to Allan, "OK You tell me the numbers and I'll punch them in." His partner seemed to be doing most of the thinking but Earl was fully engaged pressing buttons. A calm hum pervaded the room for twenty minutes as everyone worked happily. There was no inclination to fight despite the earlier assumption that disagreements foster aggression.

Value diversity in children's moral orientations   In another second grade, Sue Hazzard served as a director rather than a facilitator of learning, but she still found regular opportunities to help her students organize their understanding of behavioral norms (Nicholls & Hazzard, 1993). Early in the school year, Sue asked students to define norms for working well in school and formed rules using children's ideas. After abandoning the district-mandated Assertive Discipline package that was predicated on statements like, "You are not paid to put up with behavior problems. You are not paid to put up with kids talking back. . . . you are not going to be able to create that positive environment unless you are the boss," Sue encouraged her students to "talk back" in ways that helped them organize their understanding of rules. Listening to these conversations, it is possible to hear perspectives consistent with obedience, instrumental, and interpersonal moral orientations and to see changes in students' moral standards.

This sequence of events started when Peter became his teacher's advocate. After quieting a group of students, Sue quipped, "They must think I'm the Wicked Witch of the West." Peter could name recent reprimands directed toward himself, but he asserted, "Oh no! You don't know how many people have gone up to my mother and said how you turned their kids around. You don't know how many kids were in trouble that you made OK" (adapted from Nicholls & Hazzard, 1993, p. 59).

Sue's procedures for "turning kids around" were easy to detect. When issues of morality emerged in the course of everyday events, she found ways to provoke discussions that helped students identify principles applicable for the future. An incident of pushing and misbehaving in response to someone's request turned into a conversation about obeying parents, which digressed into a conversation about who has the authority to regulate students' behavior. When the principal was given an award, the class discussed why and children revealed clever insights into how they formulated principles for action by observing adults' daily behavior. Distinguishing the roles of children and adults, another discussion focused on personal responsibility and appropriate responses to power plays.

Routines as well as conversations were established in Sue's class to reinforce children's ability to formulate responsibility-based judgments. The

children took turns being "in charge" when their teacher left the room. Some children also endeavored to organize clubs, fostering protracted dialogues about bossiness. One such attempt, revealing the range of moral orientations salient in Sue's class, led to the following conversation about respect.

"Do clubs need bosses?"

"Clubs are for people to get along with each other and to learn to decide things," asserted Peter, using logic that is consistent with an orientation toward interpersonal conformity.

"When I try to have a club, everyone is wild and talking," started Ann. "When I was in cheerleading club, everything was under control. But when I have a club, everything crazy goes on. I guess people don't think I'm strict." Ann was preoccupied with obedience for its own sake.

"Then you can't get their respect," Joan added.

"What do you need to get respect?" prodded Sue.

"You need to get shades, and have a whistle and blow it a lot." Peter intended this as an ironic description of the recess monitor.

Vicki, a girl who eventually gave up a fear of adults, asserted, "When adults are around, you have to listen and be good 'cause you get in trouble if you don't. Nobody listens to children anyhow."

Sue repeated her question about the meaning of respect.

"Parents don't scare me," said Dan. "Other kids tell on me, but I just stand there."

Peter tried to add his ideas to those of Dan. "You don't *have* to respect parents. I'm not going to stop *just* 'cause *they* say. Some parents need to learn things and some don't." He seemed to understand personal responsibility in a way his peers did not, but he had trouble conveying his vision.

"Parents deserve respect because they've done a lot for you," argued Joan, raising an instrumental moral orientation.

"They're *your* parents, you have to respect them," James chimed in. His logic is difficult to classify; was he arguing for blind obedience or conformity to social norms?

"Do you think, 'I don't like the President [of the United States] because [he] don't give you freedom'? You have to obey your parents." Peter was stretching to extend his beliefs about authority to the communitarian level.

"It's freedom within the rules," suggested Sue.

"I don't like rules!" cried Joan, changing sides in this debate.

"I've been the leader of a club. Sometimes people are silly. The best thing to do is act like," he puffed up, " 'I'm so strong,' so they're scared and I'll have their attention."

"So, you have to be strong and scare people? . . . What do you think about all this, Claire?"

"I think Dan is saying you don't have to respect people who aren't in your family."

"So are there other people you respect?"

The children suggested many exemplars, including their teacher, relatives, and other school officials. Evelyn added, "Heavenly Father and Jesus."

Less deferential, Joan proposed a qualified humanism. "Everybody! You have to respect everybody! Not my sister, though."

Jodie's mother's boyfriend also qualified.

"Respect people your age and older."

"And younger," added broad-minded Peter.

"Are you scared of younger people? Is respect something that happens only when you are scared?" probed Sue.

Hearing this, Vicki snapped upright in her seat. "You respect people and they respect you back." After arguing for the intrinsic value of blind obedience, she reported an instrumental reason for doing good.

"Why?"

"They like you and want to be good to you," explained Vicki.

"They treat you the way they'd like to be treated," added Joan as the instrumental moral orientation gained more adherents.

"So, if you are a leader, how do you get respect?"

"Respect them and treat them how you want them to treat you," said Joan.

Ann proposed, "I could bring my jump rope, and people could use it if I was there to watch them."

"Ann! You're too bossy." Joan was right to worry about Ann's propensity toward bossiness.

Ann did not seem upset by this challenge, but Sue offered a conciliatory reminder. "Give her a chance. I think she's got quite a lot to think about. I think we all do."

After recess, Ann, Elizabeth, Vicki, and Jodie wanted to do a little cheer that they practiced. Their performance was well received. Later, the girls grinned knowingly when asked if there were wild arguments in their practice. "Only a little bit," said Ann. (Modified from Nicholls & Hazzard, 1993, pp. 68–70)

This conversation took its protracted form in large part because students raised dilemmas that they found confusing. The children were talking about their own internal struggles and heard positions that reflected all three of the moral orientations sometimes evident in second grade. No one child was able to articulate thoughts indicative of all three orientations, but the collective wisdom and attempts to formulate guidelines for future actions kept everyone involved. Individual reasons for caring about these issues did not always correspond to a collective concern with forming clubs, but Sue's pressure to formulate systems of thought helped at least some students meaningfully organize their experience. These second graders discussed agendas that were more and less explicit. Their ideas emerge as an expression of their motivational needs and orientations, yet another feature of identity.

Reflect on Motivational Needs and Orientations

In addition to formulating moral systems of thought, children's conscious and unconscious motivational needs also play a central role in their moral and academic engagement. Everyone experiences internal strivings for competence, self-determination, and affiliation. Expressions of these strivings are central to personality, yet they are expressed differently within and across person. Educators will find diverse profiles of motivational orientations when children locate their interests in an environment. While moral systems emphasize the evaluation of conduct and social justice, needs-based systems reflect individuals' perceptions, definitions, and evaluations of their internal experiences. An individual's identity encompasses both their moral and needs-based orientations, which in turn affect interpretations of experience and actions in the world. Thorkildsen & Nicholls (2002) offer a more elaborate version of this argument for second graders.

Define basic needs   Perhaps the most intensively researched of human needs is the "need for competence." This involves the satisfaction of demonstrating moral and intellectual expertise. Second graders formulate orientations toward teacher-assigned tasks that, in turn, reveal their definitions of success and ability (Nicholls, 1989). The second graders in our work have revealed a 3-part profile of competence orientations. Students express a "task orientation" when tasks are intrinsically meaningful and facilitate the expression of personal interests, well-applied effort, and thoughtful ideas; learning becomes a valuable end in itself. Children reveal an "ego orientation" when preoccupied with outperforming others or avoiding the appearance of inferiority; learning becomes a means to the end

of demonstrating superiority or pleasing others. Finally, students sometimes show a "work avoidant" or an "alienated" orientation when they avoid tasks, withdraw from others' expectations, or otherwise exclude themselves from the manifest agendas in their environment; learning seems to be feared, disregarded, or rejected.

Essential to agency, the "need for self-determination" involves identity-enhancing interests and the sense that some sort of effort will eventually foster success. Self-determination involves satisfaction with regulating personal behavior, making responsible choices, and fulfilling a sense of entitlement. As with competence, second graders can reveal a profile of self-determination orientations in which they sustain self-efficacy and autonomy to different degrees. A second graders' "self-efficacy orientation" involves impulses associated with duties or assigned tasks; students' sense of control reflects decisions to approach and avoid tasks that are defined by others. Children's "autonomy orientation" involves a willingness to select and sustain identity-enhancing interests; feelings of control emerge from formulating personal commitments and otherwise making meaning out of opportunities apparent in the environment. When children recognize that others also need to experience self-determination, they can step outside their own subjective experience well enough to exert a sense of moral agency.

Children's "need for affiliation" compels them to form and maintain inter-personal relationships. Two orientations are common among second graders as they discriminate ties found in families and those found in school communities. In school, second graders commonly reveal an "exchange orientation" wherein they establish, maintain, and restore positive relationships while sharing ideas and interests with others; interactions are somewhat impersonal and focus primarily on trading information and resources. Seeking high-quality friendships that differ from close connections with family members, second graders are also broadening an "intimacy orientation" that reflects warm, close, and communicative interactions; these interactions involve strong attachments that include responsibility-based bonds of trust, reliability, and mutual caring.

The needs-based forces that drive children's moral and academic engagement are in many ways similar to those of adults. Children and adults differ to a marked degree in how well they understand their own needs and those of others. Adults, for example, are better able than children to coordinate the concrete and abstract features of their experience and receive more opportunities to assert their autonomy. Experimenting to learn about internal drives, children more often than adults express their needs in ways that may or may not correspond with other personal standards. A thoughtful evaluation of

emergent classroom issues shows variation in how children prioritize their needs for competence, self-determination, and affiliation and reveals a range of orientation profiles. Educators can facilitate children's self-understanding by labeling behavior patterns as well as how particular needs correspond with consequences.

Respond to everyone's needs   While everyone experiences the same basic needs and few are lucky enough to have all their needs met all of the time, some children face an inordinate amount of difficulty in school. Educators notice these students because their behavior is driven by unmet needs rather than more balanced agendas. Children who face such fractured experience teach those in their lives about the importance of acknowledging competence, self-determination, and affiliation needs, but all children benefit when educators acknowledge each child in meaningful ways.

Jack's difficulties, while extreme, show some of the problems that emerge when children's needs remain unmet in school. Despite all the services he received, his sense of isolation became progressively more worrisome and his peers started to avoid him. Hoping to understand this avoidance, and that students might include Jack more, John and Nancy decided to hold a class discussion on establishing fair practices for all students. John justified this suggestion using previous research on children's conceptions of fair ways to organize learning in which second graders vehemently argued that all students should be treated the same in school (Thorkildsen, 1989a, 1993; Thorkildsen & Schmahl, 1997). In that research, children had thought only about individual differences in academic abilities and not about how to resolve social conflicts. As a communication facilitator, John hoped to extend the question to consider whether children would advocate social as well as academic equality.

"Not very often do people ask children what they think is a fair way of having the classroom go. And one thing that's very important in the classroom—that we'd like you to think about—is what do you do when some people learn a whole lot faster than other people. OK?" The children seemed to understand, so John proceeded. "Is it true that it's a lot easier for some people to get their schoolwork done than for others?" Everyone nodded or otherwise indicated that they thought this was true. "And when that happens, the people who take a bit longer, you could just leave them behind and let them get further and further behind. Would that be a fair thing to do?"

"No! No!" came the predictable response. The children were adamant that no student should ever be left behind.

"You'd probably feel bad at school for being so far behind, and you might get yelled at, at home," said Shane.

"People might laugh at him and he'd feel bad," said Jill.

Various ways in which slower learners would feel bad were brought up. Then, John continued. "Now . . . sometimes you don't notice that there's some other people who are having trouble. What if there was someone who was having a lot of trouble doing their work, but they are real quiet and no one sort of noticed them. What would be a fair thing to do about that?" John synthesized the languages of personal conduct and fair classroom practices with the children eagerly following his lead.

The group consensus was that anyone having trouble should look and ask for help. Sounding a different note, Jean suggested that a person might "want to do it all by their self," a perspective that was common in more structured interviews with African-American and Latino students (Thorkildsen & Schmahl, 1997).

"Why would someone feel funny about asking for help?"

"Because people might think they are not really smart." Jean knew the typical reasons why students remain ego-oriented.

"And what would [being seen as not smart] stop that person from doing then?"

"Stop them from doing their work," Jean said.

"They might stop learning," John restated Jean's point to emphasize students' competence needs. He also added a level of abstraction that Jean did not; doing work could facilitate learning.

"And they think they can't do anything," added Shane, raising a self-efficacy theme that corresponds with self-determination needs.

"What Jean said," started Fiona. "People really want to pass. You want to be independent—without help. That's why some people might not want some help." The children were keenly aware of how the fulfillment of competence needs could ultimately affect the fulfillment of self-determination and affiliation needs.

"Do you think," Nancy asked, "you ever get to the point where you are too old to ask for help?"

"No. No." There seemed to be no doubt that needing help was a fact of life.

"Not even your parents know every single thing. Not every single word!"

"My mum," said Earl, "is one of the top ten brightest people in the world and she doesn't know every word."

"Oh?" said Nancy with amusement.

Remaining with the theme of personal conduct, John moved on to issues of affiliation needs. He tried to draw a parallel between individual differences in academic and social abilities when he asked, "Have you ever thought . . . that there are some people who . . . have trouble figuring out how to be friends? Have you thought about that? Maybe for some people it's like a trick and they can't figure it out. Earl?"

"Um. For me it's more like people don't like me, but I don't know why."

"I like you, Earl," said the unsinkable Shane.

"I think quite a lot of people do," said John.

Shane went on to report what Earl's parents and the after school supervisors also said: "His brother always causes trouble. His brother . . . Everyone calls Earl chubby."

Ben volunteered, "When Arleigh called Earl chubby, then he called ME chubby."

"There is someone in this class who often doesn't get noticed and who has trouble making friends, and who has trouble with their schoolwork, and often just sort of disappears. That person is not in the class right now."

"Jack," noticed one of his classmates.

"Allan." Although Allan had trouble in class, he was sitting in the group, following intently.

"Jack, Jack," chanted the rest of the class.

"Jack, yeah," John agreed. "And, you know, it is difficult to understand other people isn't it? But I think . . . Some people have helped him a lot."

"I like him," Shane burst. "I saved his life. 'Cause we were on this ice. We made it, then when we were getting there. I was safe. I got out. And water was there."

"That was so special to him," said Nancy. "He's even written a story about it." The incident had come up often.

"I reached in and bringed him back in," Shane sputtered.

Despite this good will, the children found some of Jack's behavior inappropriate, offering good reasons for avoiding him. Erica started by revealing some of Jack's difficulties. "One time on the bus, he, ah, Jack and a friend decided to say that, um, that, he loved me. I knew that he didn't mean it. Then one time, he left a message on my message machine. And, um, he said that love stuff was a joke."

"We have to love everybody," said Shane, who had almost enough energy to do so.

"Allan, do you have any thoughts?" asked Nancy.

"I have lots of thoughts, but like sometimes when something started to happen to me, every day, I can't make any more [friends]." Allan shared Jack's difficulty coordinating his own position with the position of others.

The discussion eventually returned to Jack. "You know," John asked, "what you just told us about on the bus. Is that partly because he really doesn't understand how you feel when he does things like that? That's what I wonder . . . Does that make sense? Arleigh?"

"Yes. Well, he once said to Tom that I did not like him. And, um, I know why he did it. He wanted me to have him as his only friend." When asked to reflect on Jack's motives, the children were very generous.

"Why do you think he wanted that, Arleigh?" probed John.

"Because he doesn't have friends," said Arleigh. These second graders had difficulty labeling the emotions that might facilitate behavior, although they were astute observers of the consequences of such emotions.

"Right," said Nancy. "And, if he could have just one, how special that would be. When Shane came to his rescue that time, it was so special to him. He told you that story, he told me that story, and he wrote about that story. That's how much friendship means to him."

Tolerant Fiona had another story about Jack's inappropriate phone calls. "But I knew he just wanted to make friends." Having this discussion, despite the fact that it validated Jack's fear that others were talking about him behind his back, seemed to help the children give voice to their fears about remaining friends with Jack.

"Well, I heard about this too," said Earl. "His [older] friend was forcing him to do that." Later, Jack's parents reinforced Earl's knowledge about Jack's friend the bully—some friend.

Arleigh, too, had a story of a strange anonymous call.

"That's Jack. It has to be Jack," said Earl, excited to see a pattern to this mystery.

"OK, John," said Nancy, noticing that the children could get carried away with name-calling. "What to do?"

"Well . . . doesn't all that show he doesn't understand how to talk to people and make friends? He does these things that seem a bit silly to you."

"It seems sad," said Fiona. ". . . It's hard for us to understand him because he doesn't understand us." Nancy asked Fiona to repeat this so that everyone could reflect on it.

After some confusion, John returned to the theme of fair practices, "Can we think of things that we can do to help Jack feel OK about approaching people?"

Fiona had an idea. "When he does something you can't understand, you can tell him you don't understand." The children generated other suggestions, but no one improved on this.

Erica said, "I think it would be nice to go through the rest of the day, and try to make him feel more that he is a friend." Leave it to the girls to offer reasonable suggestions for helping Jack.

John ended the discussion of Jack with, "You have a lot of ideas. Would it make the classroom a fairer place if you thought about these things?"

"Yes! Yes!" Again, there seemed no doubt that the children valued fairness.

John turned to the question of how to be fair during recess, but the children were not ready to leave the subject of how to help Jack. "I told Jack to go and make other friends. Find people that don't have much friends . . . He starts like, telling my friends to, like, start beating me up."

After some turmoil, John called on Fiona. "One day, Jack was hiding under the table, and the next day we asked why. And he told us because he has nobody to play with. And so that day he asked us if he could play with us and we said yes. And so we asked Jack if he wanted to play with us, and he said no . . ." With that comment, Fiona faded off.

"That happens doesn't it," said John. "Here is a person who wants to be helped, but when you ask, sometimes he says no. And that makes it very hard to be a friend to him. He does that to me."

"Independence," said Jean, perspicacious and self-contained.

John was running out of ideas for how to probe the children into deeper thought while redirecting their attention from Jack's conduct to fair practices. "Well, maybe you can keep thinking of ways you can help, because I think it is a very hard problem. You've done some good thinking."

At the end of this conversation, John was rather disappointed with the lack of a clearly defined set of guidelines. Even so, the children taught their teachers about a surprising complexity in Jack's social difficulties and the extent to which everyone tried to be tolerant of Jack's behavior. As anthropologists have pointed out (Geertz, 1983), there is sometimes no substitute for local knowledge when trying to determine a course of action, and these locals were full of it.

The children gave dramatic details about the difficulty of effecting improvement in Jack's situation. Social skills training could not possibly compensate for emotional reactions such as jealousy and envy that were guiding Jack's behavior. The discussion was also a powerful testament to the value of enlisting some degree of cooperation from Jack's classmates. When community members are patient with one another, even people facing extreme difficulties can make growth-enhancing changes.

Later, Nancy and John were free to critique the conversation about fairness and discuss their worries about Jack. "I have a fear that I am going to do more damage," Nancy started. "Jack is fearful because of something." She was aware that Jack did not like having people talk about him and agreed with the specialists' sentiments about Jack's fragile nature, reported earlier in the week. "Has something happened to this child? I don't care what their cognitive ability is, children are emotional. They want to make connections . . . Whenever I go to touch him, he jumps from me. And why?" No one, not even Jack's parents, could understand why he was so mistrustful of others. Yet it was easy to reinforce Jack's fears because he did not have the emotional strength to be included in conversations about strategies for helping him.

"I'm afraid," continued Nancy, "and so sometimes instead of demanding, I drop it."

Nancy and John agreed that the class discussion was useful and that continued emphasis on fairness and helping would be productive. It would still take time before children consciously reflected on the fairness of their actions and found consistent ways to welcome Jack into their activities; regular reminders seem necessary. As sometimes occurs when the fragmentation of experience is extreme, however, conversations alone were unlikely to help Jack find comfortable friendships.

This conclusion was supported later when group negotiations of fair practices became an individual tutorial. The class was negotiating new ways of learning math and Nancy noticed that Jack was not participating. She decided not to be put off by his desire to become invisible in her classroom. So, after the children began working in pairs, Nancy called Jack to her desk. "You know, when we are sitting back on the rug, and I go [wink] like this, what do you think that means?"

"I don't know," said Jack timidly. He genuinely seemed confused about the meaning of a wink.

"I notice that sometimes when I do that, you get all worried." Nancy wanted to clear the air by helping Jack see that he was a member of their class community and a wink was a sign of affection.

"No I don't," he said quickly.

"You don't think so?" Nancy was flexible when faced with children who disagreed with her and especially appreciated this sign of assertiveness from Jack. Her easygoing manner seemed to give children permission to challenge her when they thought she needed to be challenged, yet she did not simply back down if she was sure she was right about something. "The other day, I winked at you and you went, like, 'What did I do wrong?' Do you know what it means when someone winks at you? It means they like you. Or maybe there was a joke, and you both understand it . . . So when I wink at you, like this, it means I like you, Jack."

Nancy continued by encouraging Jack to bring things in for show and tell or to share with friends. "Sometimes, when you want a friend, it's good to have something to talk about, a common interest."

"I know. I have something." Jack seemed to take Nancy's suggestion to heart.

"All right. Now, when I wink, why am I doing this?" said Nancy checking Jack's memory of their little talk.

" 'Cause you like me," said Jack with a rather deadpan expression. It was frustrating and a little sad to see this child so withdrawn that open affection drew almost no response. Jack would need constant reminders that he was welcome in this community. It was difficult to detect Jack's personal standards,

but he taught plenty of lessons on the importance of acknowledging and responding to individuals' needs for competence, self-determination, and affiliation.

Facilitate the Formation of Personal Identity Standards

The standards that comprise second graders' identity, while multifaceted, contain the structural dimensions of self-discipline, moral systems of thought, and motivational needs. Together these dimensions facilitate the development of conduct, conscience, and self-understanding. At best, observers can only glimpse the coordination of these dimensions in someone else, and second graders are still learning to articulate their self-knowledge well enough so others can follow their experiences. Nevertheless, it is clear from both observational and interview studies that children readily absorb information about themselves, others, and the world in which they live. They look to educators and peers for guidance on how to succeed in school and formulate standards of engagement using the resulting information.

NURTURING MORAL ENGAGEMENT

The complex evidence in this chapter supports the view that moral engagement reflects students' understanding and acceptance of responsibility for their education. In this intentional model of motivation, the standards of engagement are distinguished from the goals and intentions of agency, but students function best by coordinating the two mechanisms. Because children are not miniature adults or blank slates onto which educators impart knowledge, they have much to learn about how to function effectively in school even though they wisely use their experience to formulate standards for living.

Educators learn about children's sense of responsibility when they use all their senses to detect children's nonverbal reactions to classroom events as well as hear their deontic and agentic judgments. Educators expect students to adapt to their pedagogical preferences. Like developmental and educational psychologists, teachers differ in their willingness to acknowledge individual differences and instigate change toward a predefined set of social and intellectual standards. Educators who hope to instigate change toward predetermined ends spend their energies defining those ends, strategizing about how to ensure everyone achieves such goals, and simplifying the range of opportunities in their classrooms so that children are not distracted from teacher-defined tasks. Those who assume that knowledge is acquired through a process of self-definition and organization create stimulating environments in which students regularly make and talk about social and intellectual decisions. Educators who do not listen

carefully can easily misconstrue children's intentions and assume that all deviant behavior emanates from dishonest motives rather than from fairness standards that differ from those of adults. Although research evidence does not favor one pedagogical approach over another, educators who listen carefully to their students quickly learn that children differ in whether they benefit from more or less structure.

All the teachers we worked with thoroughly enjoyed the company of their second graders, but Sue Hazzard worked in a district that valued narrow standards whereas Nancy Brankis and Thyra DeBolt worked in a district that valued individual autonomy. This work with teachers who were outstanding listeners and with children and families who trusted us taught John Nicholls and me to hear many details about how students hold themselves responsible for their education. Since John's death in 1994, I have also tested various assumptions about the dimensions children use to organize their knowledge, and I have explored the strengths and limitations of various techniques for recording human functioning.

These experiences support the propositions that children are broad thinkers when asked to evaluate their educational experiences and that moral engagement includes personal standards for epistemology, justice, and identity. Children improved their understanding of epistemology in classrooms where teachers shared moral and intellectual authority, valued the information to be acquired, and offered opportunities to compare and contrast various forms of knowledge. Ethical behavior and fairness beliefs were strengthened when teachers fostered discussions about collective agendas, validated children's moral standards, and allowed ample time for students to draw personal connections with one another and the information to be learned. In addition to these interpersonal discoveries, children learned when encouraged to explore their intrapersonal knowledge thoroughly enough to evaluate their own and others' conduct, formulate moral systems of thought, and better understand their own motivational needs and orientations. Although the standards of moral engagement are not always translated into the intentions and goals of agency, children regulate their functioning best when engagement, agency, and action are coordinated.

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MENTORS FOR STUDENTS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: THE PROMISE AND POSSIBILITIES

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the value of mentorship has been recognized in many fields and for people in diverse contexts. In 2000–2001, we had the opportunity to study a school-based mentorship program in a city-centre elementary school in Edmonton, Alberta. In the program, adults serving as volunteer mentors each met with a child weekly to develop a relationship and support the child's growth, learning, and well-being. In previous research, Ellis, Small-McKinley, and de Fabrizio (2001) conducted intensive case studies of mentor pairs to clarify and illustrate the dynamics of effective mentorship in this kind of program. This chapter extends that research by studying a similar program that was larger in scale and by focusing on the perspectives of students in a more broad-scale study.

THE CONCEPT OF MENTORING YOUNG PEOPLE

Buckley and Zimmerman (2003) have provided comprehensive information and discussion about how adult mentors foster positive development and resilience for children and youth. Below, we provide a synopsis of some key ideas from their work to highlight the critical dimensions of mentoring young people.

The notion of mentorship refers to "enlisting a wise, trusted, nonfamilial adult to contribute to the education and nurturance of a young person" (Buckley & Zimmerman, 2003, p. 1). In the classical model of mentoring, the mentor supports achievement, provides nurturance, and shares knowledge, values, and culture. Importantly, the teaching, socializing, and role-modeling that transpire in mentoring require an emotional connection. It is the emotional intensity of the mentor-mentee relationship that facilitates the "development of the attachment and support that are typically essential to the mentoring process" (Buckley & Zimmerman, 2003, p. 3). This important bond largely devolves from "the

mentor's willingness to listen, to empathize, and to validate the young person's experience" (Buckley & Zimmerman, 2003, p. 2). The mentor is a friend, but unlike ordinary friendship, the relationship is shaped by the mentor's intentions to focus on goals or challenges for the child. The mentor offers security and encouragement to support the child in taking risks and exploring new territory.

FINDINGS FROM PREVIOUSLY CONDUCTED CASE STUDIES

In the 1997–1998 program studied by Ellis et al. (2001), mentors demonstrated that they took responsibility for the more academic aspects of the program by coming prepared for sessions with carefully chosen books and literacy support activities. It was also clear, by the way they spoke about the program, that they saw this work as secondary to the relationships they were developing between themselves and the children. Mentors in this program tended to be university or college students, retirees, parent volunteers, and friends or relatives of staff at the school.

Most mentors began by wanting the children to enjoy the sessions and to relate to them as friends or buddies rather than as teachers or authority figures. These roles enabled mentors to discover children's needs and interests and to respond with collaboratively constructed activities to which both parties became increasingly committed. Each pair spontaneously developed its own routines that provided structure and a feeling of comfort for the sessions. The mentors wanted to engage the children in growth-oriented literacy activities in a motivating and enjoyable way. A few of the mentors took more time to recognize the need for this way of relating to the children they were paired with. Once they did, they became increasingly responsive to the children and more creative in devising enjoyable and motivating ways to engage the children in literacy activities. There were many 'family-like' reading activities, such as baking, following the instructions to build a kite to fly outside, reading newspaper and magazine articles on topics of interest to the child, and more.

For most mentors, much of the fun and success of the program was in getting to know the children and in learning to create literacy experiences specifically for them. Given the varied backgrounds and needs of the children, these were not literacy experiences that could be anticipated; rather, they were ones that could only be imagined once the children opened up in ways not possible in the classroom. As Flaxman and Ascher (1992) explain:

Unlike traditional teaching where everyone is supposed to learn the same curriculum, often at the same pace—despite personal interests, abilities, or conflicts—mentoring asks that these very interests and conflicts be the heart of the relationship between the adult and the youth. Thus personalized care and attention to individual needs lie at the core of mentoring . . . (p. 11)

Getting to know the children—their interests, needs, and ways of expressing their responses or feelings—was or became a first priority for the mentors. Thereafter, knowledge of the children's needs and the ability to read the children's feelings constantly informed the mentors' activities and ways of proceeding.

Related Research on Similar Programs

In a review of 722 mentoring programs, Sipe and Roder (1999) found that newer mentoring programs were more likely to use a group mentoring model with two to three students, whereas programs that were fifteen years or older tended to use the more traditional one-on-one approach. Both social and academic activities were commonly included in mentoring sessions in the programs reviewed. Most mentoring sessions included academic activities, such as helping with homework, visiting the library, reading together, or working on a computer (approximately 75%). Social activities (including spending time bonding, talking, and having lunch together) and recreational activities (including playing sports or games and doing arts or crafts) took place in most sessions as well (72%).

Sipe and Roder (1999) found that most of the programs had multiple goals with the most common, cited by 74% of program personnel, being 'to have a positive impact on the student's personal development.' Personal development was variously understood or expressed as: improving students' self-esteem, helping students realize their potential, developing positive values, making positive life choices, becoming self-sufficient, and improving conflict resolution skills, social and communication skills, and/or relationships with family or peers. After personal development goals, academic goals were cited most frequently (61%). Academic goals included improving grades, standardized test scores, achievement in a particular subject, such as science or math, and improving behavior at school, including attitudes and attendance. Additionally, 19% of program personnel reported the goal of reducing delinquent behavior.

When asked which single goal was considered to be the most important for their programs, 30% of program personnel indicated that personal development was most important, followed by 22% for relationship building, and 15% for academic improvement. Sipe and Roder (1999) also found that programs existing for ten years or more were more likely to have personal development or relationship formation as the primary goals. In newer programs existing for two years or less, academic or career-related goals were the most important.

Herrera, Sipe, and McClanahan (2000) conducted research on both school-based and community-based mentorship programs to examine

whether mentoring practices or activities were related to effective mentoring. They defined effective mentoring as having certain relationship qualities such as 'higher levels of closeness, emotional support, and instrumental support.' Previous research had suggested that these qualities were related to the length of relationship between mentors and mentees and the ability of the mentor to make a positive impact on the mentee's life (Grossman & Johnson, 1999; DuBois & Neville, 1997; Morrow & Styles, 1995; Freedman, 1988 as cited in Herrera et al., 2000). Herrera et al. (2000) found that several practices were related to mentors' reports of higher levels of closeness, emotional support, and instrumental support. These included: engaging in social activities, engaging in academic activities, spending more time together, mentors and mentee sharing in the decision-making, six hours or more of pre-match training and orientation for mentors, post-match training and support for mentors at least once per month, matching mentors and mentees for shared interests, and mentees being in elementary school. Of these, the most important practices or circumstances related to feelings of closeness and supportiveness (both emotional and instrumental) by the mentor were 'engaging in social activities,' followed by 'shared interests.' It was less important whether the mentor and mentee were matched in terms of gender or ethnicity.

RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The mentorship program we studied in 2000–2001 was a relatively unique one in Edmonton. It was a whole-school program with mentors for almost every child, and it had an on-site coordinator dedicated to its development and implementation. Program goals included both psychosocial and academic mentoring. Rather than simply being given pre-set academic goals for students, however, mentors, to a large extent, learned about children's needs through interaction with them and responded to these on their own initiative. Although some teachers provided activities for mentors to help children complete during part of the mentorship session time, there was usually room for mentors' and children's own plans as well. In a supportive but non-directional fashion, the mentorship room contained a variety of resources for mentors and children to use together.

   Given the relatively open-ended opportunity mentors had with children, there was high interest on the part of program funders to learn how mentors and children spent time together and what the benefits were. At the same time, as good news of the program sparked interest on the part of other schools, it was important to clarify what was accomplished in the program and how. Since the time of this study, similar programs have been implemented in 39 schools in Edmonton

through a partnership formed between Big Brothers Big Sisters Society of Edmonton and Area (BBBS) and the Centre for Family Literacy (CFL).

The data collection conducted in our research was intended to address a variety of research questions: What were the benefits for students? How did the school culture support the program (Leroy, Ellis, & da Costa, 2004)? How did the program affect teaching in classrooms in the school? In writing this chapter we are working from the data to ask questions about how students experienced having mentors and what the mentorship sessions meant to them. When a student who is finally matched with a mentor says, "I was so scared I wouldn't get one," what is it she is anticipating, expecting, or perceiving herself to be getting?

In the case studies reported by Ellis et al. (2001), weekly observations of mentorship sessions together with weekly debriefing interviews with mentors for two months kept mentors' actions and reflections foregrounded. The study reported here provided the opportunity for a large number of students to share their views on mentoring either anonymously through surveys or in interviews with a researcher who had not met their mentors. In this work, we expected to have the opportunity to understand such a mentorship program differently by attending to students' perspectives on it more directly.

About the Program

Conceptualized as a school-based, literacy mentorship program, the program was initiated as a pilot project in January 1997. Teacher education students at university and college served as mentors for 13 of the 17 kindergarten children. Each week, for 30 to 60 minutes, mentors met with the children to visit, develop a relationship, and engage in literacy support activities. In June 1997, the principal of the school was successful in obtaining funding from the United Way to engage a coordinator for the program and provide other resource support for its operation. A mentor room was refurbished and a library of mentorship materials was compiled. The program coordinator endeavoured to recruit mentors for all children in the school. The large majority of mentors was recruited from the business sector, often through the program coordinator's presentations to companies on behalf of the United Way campaign. A wide range of people also became mentors at the school by approaching Big Brothers Big Sisters Society to learn about mentorship opportunities.

A partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters Society provided support for screening and in-servicing mentors. The in-servicing included one or two training sessions to review the 'do's and don'ts' of mentoring and to offer ideas for activities to do with children during mentorship sessions. This ongoing partnership among the three organizations has enabled the program to prosper

over the past eight years. The stated goals of the program are to provide students with both support for literacy development and one-on-one caring relationships with adults. During 2000–2001, the year of our research activities, mentors were matched with 165 children in this pre-kindergarten to grade six, inner city school. To serve in the program, volunteers had to be willing to continue mentoring a child for the duration of the school year.

Once mentors completed their screening and in-servicing with Big Brothers Big Sisters Society, they had 'getting to know you' meetings or interviews with the program coordinator based at the school. These meetings helped the program coordinator to establish relationships with mentors and to match mentors with children. Thereafter, when mentors came to the school, they went to the child's classroom to meet the child and then signed in in the mentor book. The mentors and children could use a number of spaces in the school for the mentorship session activities: the mentor room, the library, the gym, the computer room, and the playground.

Teachers in the school kept their doors open and were accustomed to mentors coming at all times to collect children for sessions. They accommodated this practice because of their belief in the value of the program and, as expressed at our focus group meeting, because they felt the full support of the principal should anyone ever express criticism of their work in their classrooms. At the focus group meeting, some of the teachers also told us that having mentors for students freed them up to focus on teaching because they knew that mentors would make sure that the children had necessities such as winter coats and would be remembered on important special occasions. Mentors in fact often brought treats or presents for an entire class or for all students and teachers in the school. Mentors also opened opportunities for the students to give, for example, through choir singing at broader community events. The principal greeted all mentors by name and expressed appreciation to them whenever they met. The program coordinator maintained a friendly relationship with mentors through hallway chats whenever she saw them before or after sessions.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school in which the program was developed and studied was in the outer margins of the downtown area, facing onto a wide, busy, commercial street and backing onto a quiet-looking, treed neighbourhood with older houses. The majority of the school doors were kept locked to in-comers during school hours. The school had a hot lunch program and a grant-funded program that provided a counselor to work with individual students and provide anger

management training to students. The school was in the top six of the list of high needs schools based on the socio-economic status of families according to census data and school transience.

The school principal was an inspirational and effective advocate for the school. For example, the principal persuaded a running shoe manufacturing company to provide all students with new running shoes each year. In the same way, another company provided all students with sleeping bags. If any students were routinely late for school, the principal provided them with alarm clocks to take home. During the year of the study, two of the mentors, who were also university students, came to the school each morning to make breakfast for all students in the school.

The ethics agreement with the school district does not permit the factual reporting of ethnic backgrounds for the student population, but we observed that the school was very multicultural, multi-lingual, and included a high percentage of Aboriginal students. During the year of the study, the provincial achievement test reports showed that in Grade 3, approximately 50% of the students writing the tests were below the acceptable standard in the total tests in both Language Arts and Mathematics. In Grade 6, approximately 50% of the students writing the tests were below the acceptable standard in the total test in Language Arts and about 20% were below the acceptable standard in the total test in Mathematics.

Data Collected

In order to learn the nature of benefits for children being mentored and also acquire insight into how such benefits occurred, we used both intensively focused and broad-scale methods. Further, to develop as complete a perspective as possible, we sought to learn the views and experiences of students, mentors, teachers, the school principal, and the mentorship program coordinator. Data collection activities included surveys, focus-group interviews, small-group and individual interviews, and observations of mentorship sessions. All of these were carried out in the school between December of 2000 and June of 2001. The following is an outline of the inquiry activities with students, mentors, and teachers.

Students   There were 180 children in the school and, of these, 165 had mentors at the time of the study. Surveys were completed in May and June by 122 students. Sample survey questions were: "What do you like best about the [mentorship] sessions?" and "What would you change about the program if you could?"

There were 43 children from grades 1 through 6 (29 girls and 16 boys, ages 6 through 12) who participated in small-group or individual interviews in

February, March, and April. Sample interview questions were: "Do you remember the very first day you met your mentor? What was it like?" and "What do you do together when your mentor comes?"

Mentoring sessions were observed three times for each of nine mentor-mentee pairs.

Mentors   Surveys were completed by 42 of the 165 mentors in May and June. Sample questions were: "What do you try to accomplish in the sessions with your mentee? How do you accomplish that (e.g., what methods, strategies, or activities do you use)?" and "What do you find most challenging in your role as mentor?"

Two focus groups with mentors were conducted in December with 11 attending one and 17 attending the other. A sample question was: "What is it like to be a mentor in this school?"

Individual interviews, approximately 90 minutes in length, were conducted with 14 mentors in March. Sample questions were: "How did you get involved with this mentorship program?" and "How has your relationship with the student changed over time?"

Teachers   There were ten teachers in the school and nine participated in a focus group held in January. Sample focus group questions were: "What has been required of you and others in order to develop and sustain such a program?" and "How does having students in the mentorship program affect your experience of classroom teaching?"

In May and June, nine of the teachers responded to a survey. Sample survey questions were: "Please describe the level and kinds of support you have received to assist you in your work with mentors" and "In what ways do your students benefit from having mentors?"

One-hour, individual interviews were conducted with six teachers in March. Sample interview questions were: "What was it like for you when the mentorship program started in this school?" and "At the grade level you teach, what would you emphasize about the significance or importance of the mentoring program for the students?"

OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS IN THIS STUDY

In the discussions to follow, we relate many of the ways in which we examined our data in search of the meaning of mentors and mentorship sessions for students. To interpret, and to test interpretations, we asked questions about this, focused in on that, bumped into new questions, then went back and re-read

transcripts and the coded survey responses differently with new questions, which led to further ideas and answers. Many of the sections below are concluded with a sub-section called "Re-reading, re-writing." Such sub-sections highlight how we came to read or appreciate material in the section differently after acquiring ideas from further searches or from insights developed in examinations reported later in the writing.

As an organizer for the reader, we will begin where we end in terms of identifying some of the important things we learned about students' experiences and perspectives. We came to appreciate that for students, the time with the mentor is a time in which they can at least be more fully engaged than they generally are in the classroom. There is no waiting for a turn to talk or ask a question. And the student might even get to play games with the mentor, and a game can be fully engaging. For some students, even getting to read a book in their time with the mentor is less tiring and more pleasurable than time spent in the classroom. At best, with their mentors, students have the opportunity to have enjoyable and productive interaction with someone who has become significant to them.

For many students, uplifting and engaging relationships with mentors devolved from the context of play or playfulness. We should mention that reading—a favourite mentorship activity for many children—was also an activity full of play for some mentor pairs. There were pop-up books, funny stories, favourite books, scary stories, and playful readings. Some students, however, experienced games and crafts as opportunities to "do something together" with mentors, and this doing was different from having mentors simply supervise or support their completion of classroom assignments. This is not to say that students failed to appreciate academic help—many students were thrilled with the success and learning they achieved through mentors' support—but rather, when students did express disappointment with sessions it was because of the loss of play, craft, or even reading time with mentors. We came to understand the appeal of game or craft activities as opportunities for being more fully engaged and for interacting with mentors in more multi-faceted ways. The forms of interaction supported by play also seemed to contribute to the comfort and closeness students experienced with mentors. Such bonds are important because, as Buckley and Zimmerman (2003) have explained, it is the emotional intensity that facilitates the attachment and support in mentoring.

SNAPSHOTS OF SAMPLE MENTORSHIP SESSIONS

Prior to exploring students' perspectives on mentoring in this program, we offer a view into everyday life in mentorship sessions through the observation field notes for two sessions.

Notes on Observation of Kaitlin and Cathy (mentor)

Cathy and Kaitlin come into the Reading Room together, where I am already sitting in a chair against a wall, trying to be inconspicuous. Three other mentor pairs are also in the room. Cathy and Kaitlin sign in, in the book provided.

Cathy asks, "Where do you want to sit?" Kaitlin chooses a mat on the floor, not far from where I am sitting. Kaitlin is a demure, grade-three girl with dark almond eyes. Her mentor, Cathy, is a soft-spoken university student with a ready smile and engaging manner. Like Kaitlin, she is also of East Asian background.

Cathy suggests that Kaitlin choose a learning game from the shelf. After choosing Brain Quest, they sit down together on the mat and begin the question-and-answer game. They sit very close together, and although I am only a few feet away from them, I can barely hear the softly-spoken words. Cathy is gently encouraging with help for tougher questions, and quick with smiling praise for correct answers. Kaitlin's soulful eyes rarely wander from Cathy's face; a little smile flickers across her face at each victory. She appears to struggle more with spelling questions, and after one difficult one, she says, "It's hard to think in my head." After Kaitlin answers a rather difficult question correctly, Cathy asks her, "Did you look at the card?" Kaitlin answers emphatically, "No!" Cathy flicks her gently on her head with a finger in acknowledgement.

After twelve minutes or so, Cathy asks, "What would you like to play now?" Kaitlin scrambles to her feet, returns the game to its spot, and without hesitation, picks out UNO Pickup and carries it to a table. As they take the game pieces out of the box, Cathy looks at the instructions and comments, "I think they give us a choice. What do you think?" Kaitlin appears to know the game well, and proceeds to set it up. This is a game of manual dexterity which involves constructing a tower of numbered blocks and then removing as many as possible before the edifice collapses. Seated across from each other, they play quietly, co-operatively and with concentration, as they alternately remove blocks; there does not appear to be much interest or attention as to who wins. They engage in quiet conversation about the past week's activities, interspersed with comments on the game's progress. Again, Kaitlin's attention is focused on Cathy. When the time is up, they put the materials away together. Cathy comments, "You just played really, really well."

They go to the sign-out table, where Cathy encourages Kaitlin to figure out the time using the wall-clock, and Kaitlin enters the correct time. They leave the room together, with Cathy's arm around Kaitlin's shoulders.

They have only spent thirty minutes together, but I am left with the impression that it has been an oasis of calm, encouragement, and affection in this little girl's busy school day. Both activities have been conducted in such a gentle manner that learning and fun seem to be part of a seamless whole.

Notes on Observation of Cory and Rod (mentor)

I walk into library a few minutes after 9:00 am (I had a bit of trouble locating them, as I had understood they would be in the Reading Room) to find Cory and Rod already seated at a table near the east door. I nod in their direction to acknowledge them, and then go and sit on the steps leading up to a little reading alcove. Although I am some distance from them and thus fairly unobtrusive,

I can see and hear them clearly. We were the only ones in the library for the duration, except for the brief appearance of two teachers.

They sit close together at a round table, Rod relaxed in his chair and Cory crouched over his work, feet swinging back and forth and banging against the table leg, pencil clutched in a death grip as he works on an assignment. Cory is a slight, wiry little boy. Rod is a stocky, middle-age businessman.

Cory and Rod are engaged in a reading and writing exercise. They read from a book and then Cory attempts to tell it in his own words with generous assistance from Rod. Their conversation swings between the work project and casual conversation.

Rod mentions the upcoming student conference at the school, "Going to bring your mom? I went to my son's last night. He has a bit of a talking problem" etc., encourages him to go; asks about Cory's marks, "How do you feel about them?" Some further conversation about Rod's son.

"Ready for our second thought?" Cory gives his interpretation of the next part of the story.

Rod: Excellent! Excellent!

Lots of dialogue about the composition of the assignment.

Cory: How do you spell. . . . .?

Rod is very encouraging of the work that Cory is doing, giving specific comments, so that Cory can see what he is doing right.

Rod: Don't start a sentence with "but."

Cory: Why not?

Rod: It's one of the tricks of the English language.

Cory [a few minutes later, as he is writing]: I know another trick of the English language.

Rod: What's that?

Cory: Whenever you write about yourself, you spell "I" with a capital.

Rod interrupts their work with the question, "Are we going to have a few shots today?" They digress into a conversation about hockey, about a game in Ontario that Rod saw recently, and about their favourite players. Rod finally says: "Tell you what. We need to get a few more thoughts down. We'll work until 9:35 and then we'll go down." They continue their hockey conversation for a few more minutes and then return to the assignment till about 9:20. They have a serious conversation about the pros and cons of indenting. Rod starts a sentence and Cory finishes it.

Rod: You've got a good memory. You're teaching me. You're my mentor.

As Cory composes a new sentence, Rod praises him enthusiastically, "Perfect. Perfect. I like it." They work on the spelling of the words, Rod spelling some, Cory spelling some. Rod explains the difference between "break" and "brake." Rod spells a lot of words for Cory, dictating as Cory writes. This assignment is a collaborative exercise. Rod offers lots of praise.

Rod mentions an incident at his home from the previous night: "There was trouble at my house. Drew was working on my computer and he had a glass of milk."

Cory: Oh, he spilled it on the computer!

Rod: This morning when I went in to use my computer, the keys were all sticky, and he didn't tell me what had happened. He's in trouble.

Cory: Is he the youngest?

Rod: He's the oldest.

They remind me of two old buddies sitting at the kitchen table and 'chewing the fat!'

They gather up their things, as Rod says: "Let's get a few shots." As they saunter off down the hall to the gym, Rod gives Cory a good-natured clap on the shoulder.

They spend a few minutes gathering up equipment and setting it up. Rod asks Cory who he is going to be today. Cory decides to be Peter Forsberg. Rod keeps him in character. They shoot back and forth, Rod giving him just enough competition to keep things exciting. He also gives Cory lots of tips for playing. At one point he examines Cory's hockey stick, which is plastic and can be bent into the desired shape, "Hey, you're left-handed. So am I"

Cory is struggling with a deep cough; he has asthma and has recently been out of school with a bad cold. Rod keeps an eye on him, encouraging him to play hard but also noticing when Cory needs to take a break to catch his breath. Rod is very matter-of-fact about the asthma: "I had asthma too when I was a kid. I grew out of it."

　　Cory: I will probably, too.

　　Rod (about his playing): You're getting better.

Rod notices the time and they gather up the equipment and return it to its place. Before they leave, they make plans for their next meeting. The following week is Spring Break, and the next week Rod thinks he will be in Toronto. They walk out of the gym, side by side.

Throughout the whole session, I have been impressed by how comfortable they are with each other, as they sit close together at the table, walk together. Their conversation flows naturally and smoothly, and they seem to take a genuine interest in each other's lives. They appear to have a good-natured camaraderie.

The observation notes for these two mentorship sessions offer a sense of the quality of the relationships. The pleasure Kaitlin experiences in Cathy's company and attention is clearly palpable to the observer. The natural flow in the interaction between Cory and Rod attests to a history of two people who have come to know and like each other.

The observation notes of the two sessions also reveal the mentors' attention to supporting the children's learning with specific feedback, encouragement, responsive scaffolding, and praise. The example of Kaitlin and Cathy's session illustrates how literacy support is sometimes accomplished in the context of a game. Their session also shows the child's participation in choosing the activities they do together.

Kaitlin and Cathy share a common ethnicity. In their review, Buckley and Zimmerman (2003) note that this can enhance the comfort and intimacy of the relationship and strengthen the mentor's effectiveness as a role model.

Rod and Cory share hockey as a common interest. Rod is a wonderful example of the ideas that "one's own life experiences in working and living qualify one to be a mentor" and that "the best mentors . . . are people who like kids and are contagiously enthusiastic about life" (Buckley & Zimmerman, 2003, p. 37). In his upbeat ways in this session, Rod not only supported Cory's reading, writing, and hockey skills but also encouraged his participation in the parent and student conference activities soon to be held at the school.

Re-reading, Re-writing

Play is a significant activity in both of the mentorship sessions described. Even though Cathy and Kaitlin only have 30 minutes for their session, Cathy is content to use the entire time for the playing of games. The student chooses both games. One provides challenge with spelling and opportunities for playfulness—"a little smile flickers across her face at each victory" and "Cathy flicks her gently on her head with a finger in acknowledgement." The other, a less demanding block construction game, provides space for personal conversation—"They engage in quiet conversation about the past week's activities." There is warmth and closeness apparent in the relationship and the mentor comfortably offers support for Kaitlin's learning—"Cathy is gently encouraging with help for tougher questions, and quick with smiling praise for correct answers." For this mentorship pair, it appears that play has facilitated a warm relationship and the relationship enables the mentor's comfortable support for the student's learning.

In the second session described, even though Cory is feeling sick, Rod is insistent that they will also play hockey as part of their time together—"Are we going to have a few shots today?" and: Rod finally says: "Tell you what. We need to get a few more thoughts down. We'll work until 9:35 and then we'll go down." They continue their hockey conversation for a few more minutes and then return to the assignment till about 9:20.

Rod plays hockey well with Cory—"They shoot back and forth, Rod giving him just enough competition to keep things exciting." During the hockey playing, Rod keeps Cory in his role as Peter Forsberg, gives him tips, and offers praise—"You're getting better." It is likely that the comfort and closeness manifested in their personal conversation and school assignment conversation has been supported by previous interactions as playmates.

DIVERSITY AND MULTIPLICITY OF BENEFITS
FOR STUDENTS

As a general picture of what happened with a whole-school mentorship program in a high-needs school, we offer the following observations and analysis. In working through the analyses of all transcripts, survey responses, and observation notes, it was very apparent to us that there are many different ways in which students benefit from mentoring in this program. As shown in the teacher's comments below, we were not alone in viewing program benefits as multiple and diverse.

I think it does different things for different children; there isn't one answer. With some of the children it's just the one-on-one contact with an adult that they can count on week after week. With other kids, I've had them working on specific skills, and it allows them success they wouldn't have on their own . . . so at any level it's really mixed. (Teacher focus group interview)

We also came to appreciate that as students individually benefited from mentoring, this in turn affected the whole community of the school, which could then also support all students in better ways. In the excerpts below, teachers reflect on this dynamic.

I think it's raised the morale of the entire school. The kids feel that much better about themselves, and I think that the mentors help them feel more capable because they're encouraging them all the time. So they're capable of learning; they're capable of doing things; they're capable of trying new things, because that's what a lot of the mentors do. They will expose the kids to new ideas and new things. (Teacher individual interview)

Some of our children who do not receive a lot of positive adult interaction are having self esteem boosted and this influences the school atmosphere. You can tell that the children are happy and feel good about themselves. Visitors to our school comment on the atmosphere and I believe this is why. (Teacher survey)

Overview of What Students Say They Learn from Mentors

The diversity and multiplicity of mentoring benefits are also suggested by students' responses to the survey sentence-completion question: "The most important things my mentor has taught me are . . ." Almost all students expressed three to five ideas when completing this statement. All of the ideas were categorized and the resulting list of categories shown below indicates the number of students giving a response within each. To clarify the categories, Table 1 provides sample student responses in each category. We are inclined to think that the students took the content of the question seriously. For example, in response to another question about how students and mentors spent their time together, 106 students specifically mentioned "reading" as one of the

TABLE 1 Categorization of what students say they learn from mentors

Categorization of Leanings Reported	Examples of Students' Responses Included in the Category
Reading	How to read better She helps me with read home reading Help me read difficult words He helps me read, that's the best! How to read big books She teaches me how to read
Hands-On Skills	How to make crafts How to play games I don't know How to play puzzles How to bake How to sew
Other Academic	Helps me with handwriting Helps me do math Helps me print very nice
Computer	To use the computer To use the internet Computer tricks
Writing	How to write stories Helps me write better How to make my stories more interesting She taught me how to become a better writer
Personal Growth	That I am my own person, everyone is different, no one is perfect, to enjoy being young, to be satisfied with myself She taught me never give up, have confidence and more stuff Helps me not to be shy
Social Behavior	Be polite Help people, never be selfish Not to act cool
About the world	She teaches me about planes About his job How the earth grows
Self-Worth	That I am smart That I am really special That I have a creative side

activities. In response to this question about the most important things my mentor has taught me, however, only 61 students mentioned reading.

Reading	61
Hands-On Skills	58
Other Academic	52
Computer	28
Writing	23
Personal Growth	19
Social Behaviour	17
About the World	10
Self-Worth	4

Re-reading, Re-writing

It is noteworthy that 58 students identified "Hands-On Skills" and 28 students reported "Computer" skills as the most important things their mentors had taught them. It is apparent that the students not only value the engagement they experience in activities with their mentors but also appreciate the further opportunities they will have for engagement outside of mentorship sessions because of the skills learned. The following student comment for an example of this idea: "How fun a board game can be, TV is not very important" (Student survey, grade six).

At the beginning of this section we noted teachers' observations about diverse program benefits for students. We wish to re-visit the following comment:

I think it does different things for different children; there isn't one answer. With some of the children it's just the one-on-one contact with an adult that they can count on week after week. With other kids, I've had them working on specific skills . . .

If some students are most in need of one-on-one contact with an adult, it would seem advisable for mentors of those children to err on the side of spending more time on engaging, playful activities with those students as a way to build friendship, comfort, and intimacy in the relationship.

WHAT STUDENTS LIKE ABOUT HAVING MENTORS

As one way of asking questions about how students experienced having mentors, we studied their responses to the survey question, "What do you like best about the sessions [mentorship]?" All of the ideas students expressed in their responses were categorized as having to do with either their (1) enjoyment of the mentor—talking to the mentor, gifts from the mentor, etc., (2) appreciation of academic activities done with the mentor, or (3) appreciation of play, game,

or craft activities done with the mentor. Of the 96 Grades 1–6 students (ages 6–12 years) who completed this item, 67 expressed ideas in more than one of the three categories. Below are examples of such responses.

- Helps me read hard words, gifts she brings me (grade-1 student)
- Being with my mentor, making things, reading and playing games (grade-2 student)
- Reading, art, and her (grade-3 student)
- Talk about how life is going, play games, reading and doing arts (grade-5 student)
- We get to play on the computer, play with board games, do work (grade-6 student)

Most of the students in Grades 4–6 (86%) expressed ideas in at least two categories. In Grades 1–3, a smaller majority (67%) did so. Table 2 provides a breakdown of categories used in responses to the question "What do you like best about the sessions [mentorship]?" for Grades 1–3 students and for Grades 4–6 students. The differences in the occurrence of response categories are not dramatic.

Enjoying Their Mentors

The category, 'Enjoyment of the mentor,' included statements about it simply being fun to be with the mentor, enjoying talking with the mentor, or appreciating the attention, caring, warmth, and gifts or treats from the mentor. Below are examples of responses in this category.

- She is nice, she gives me things (grade-1 student)
- Being with my mentor (grade-2 student)
- I like her (grade-2 student)
- Bringing me something to drink/eat (grade-3 student)
- She gives me stuff (grade-3 student)
- Spending time together (grade-3 student)

TABLE 2 What students like best about their sessions with mentors

	Grades 1–3		Grades 4–6	
Response Categorization	N = 53	% = 100	N = 43	% = 100
Enjoyment of the Mentor	23	43.39%	23	53.48%
Academic Activities done with the mentor	36	67.92%	27	62.79%
Play, Game or Craft Activities done with the mentor	36	67.92%	32	74.41%

- He is nice to me (grade-3 student)
- It's fun (grade-3 student)
- We have fun together, we learn different things from each other, we have picnics together (grade-4 student)
- When she bought me KFC, when she brang me a gift from San Francisco, when she first met me (grade-5 student)
- When she laughs, when she tells jokes, when we played games (grade-6 student)
- I can have fun, I get to see her (grade-6 student)
- Just seeing my mentor, playing games, talking to her (grade-6 student)

Children's comments such as, "Just seeing my mentor," "I get to see her," and "when she laughs, when she tells jokes," remind us of Fromm's (1956) idea that the mentor's giving takes the form of expressing that which is alive in him or her:

He gives of himself, of the most precious he has, he gives of his life . . . he gives him of that which is alive in him; he gives him of his joy, of his interest, of his understanding, of his knowledge, of his humor, of his sadness—of all expressions and manifestations of that which is alive in him. In thus giving of his life, he enriches the other person, he enhances the other's sense of aliveness. (1956, cited by Yamamoto, 1988/1989, p. 188)

The pleasure of simply being with the mentor and interacting with the mentor may be part of what makes the sessions so much fun for students. A common descriptor used by students in Grades 1 through 6 was "fun," as in "We do lots of fun stuff" or "A teacher makes you work; your mentor has fun with you." A grade-5 girl explained:

They're greeaaat! They are terrific. They help you with lots of stuff. It's just like, "Oh, yes! My mentor's coming today!" It's just like you're always happy.

In the following excerpt from an interview with two grade-6 boys, a student talks about how playing games in the mentorship sessions is fun but that he also really likes just getting to be with the mentor by himself.

Student: It's fun for me because me and my mentor usually always play Connect Four now because that's our favourite game in the place that we go to.

Interviewer: So is that what you like about having a mentor, is playing games?

Student: Yes. And then us two just being alone.

When the interviewer asked how life would be different in junior high without a mentor, this student replied:

Student: Not for me, because my mentor said she could come visit me.

Interviewer: Oh, did she?

Student: Yes.

Interviewer: Excellent! So she's planning on keeping up with you.

Student: Yes.

Interviewer: How does that make you feel?

Student: Good.

Interviewer: Why?

Student: So then I could see her.

The student's happy anticipation of being able to continue seeing his mentor in junior high suggests that he relates to her as one would to a friend or a significant person in one's life. It is likely that the choosing and playing of a "favourite game" together—*our* favourite game—was a vehicle for the development of friendship between the two of them. At this student's age, friends are often people who play with you. Also, the forms of interaction invited by the context of a game are likely to be happy and affirming ones, thus adding positive layers to an evolving relationship. The notion of play as providing a special space or time for the mentor and student to be *together* is also expressed by a grade-5 boy who describes his sessions playing hockey with his mentor as being special because it is "like a time for us to spend together."

In interviews with grade-3 girls, the mentor "being fun" seemed to have to do with the children becoming comfortable in talking with the mentors. In the passage below, a grade-3 student highlights the change from feeling scared of her mentor to experiencing her mentor as someone she can talk to.

Student: I was scared of her. I didn't know who she was. I went, "Who are you?" [giggles from others]

Interviewer: What does it feel like now?

All students together: It's fun! It's fun!

Student: And she's very kind to us, and I can talk to her—chat, chat, chat, chat!

. . . .

Student: I'm not scared of her anymore. I'm not shy of her anymore. She is—[obliterated by announcement]. She wants to make me laugh so hard, and makes me chat, chat, chat, chat, chat.

Another grade-3 student in the same group interview explained that she was no longer shy with her mentor because her mentor was "the best friend ever." A best friend, of course, is always nice to you and is always genuinely interested in you. In interviews, younger children typically spoke of the mentors bringing them

presents and cupcakes on their birthdays or stickers and snacks as frequent treats. This special treatment seemed to be just part of the mentors' ways of "being nice" or being "kind." The student said "us" not "me" in the statement, "And she's very kind to us," which may be because of mentors bringing treats for entire classrooms.

Enjoyment of mentors, as opposed to shyness, was also supported by shared interests, "getting to know each other" conversations that developed comfort and trust, and the mentors focusing on the students' interests. The following interview excerpts show how students expressed these ideas.

When I first met her I was really embarrassed because I didn't know what to say to her, and I was . . . shy too. [Then] we discussed about our favourite movie, colour, and favourite show to watch and that. (grade-6 girl)

My mentor, when I first met her, she was really nice to me, and I was kind of nervous because it was my first time having one, and I've always wanted to have one because I've seen lots of people have them. And when I met her, when we first got together and did our assignment and stuff, it was easy, because she has pretty much the same interests as me. (grade-5 girl)

The first time [we met each other] we just talked about stuff and tried to get to know each other. And now we like we trust each other and play games and stuff . . . . It's better because we get to a sense of—like what they are and—how they act, and stuff. (grade-5 boy)

Uhhh. It [the first time I met my mentor] was really, really exciting because, umm, I heard he was really into sports like me. (grade-4 boy)

In interviews, when students were asked how they would organize things in a mentorship program, many seemed to draw from and affirm their satisfaction with experiences they had had in starting their time with their own mentors. For example, a grade-3 girl suggests focusing on the interests of the student.

I'd see what my mentee would be interested in. If she or he was interested in books, I would . . . . Bring some books for her to read. And if she's interested in sports, I'd maybe...I could maybe bring some soccer balls, and we could go play outside and play some soccer or something.

Students' enjoyment of their mentors appeared to have both a history and a current lived context. At initial meetings, the structure of discussions about comparing interests—for example, "favourite movies, shows, or colours"— or other self-introductions—for example, "We talked about stuff and tried to get to know each other"—were comforting and reassuring. The mentors' giving of gifts or treats expressed care and warmth. The mentors' attention to and accommodation of the students' interests created a welcoming space. Students appreciated the mentors' encouragement for them to talk—a form of showing interest in them. The activity of play—for example, "Connect Four"—or a spirit of playfulness—for example, "She wants to make me laugh

so hard"—supported current interaction that was enjoyable. One of the comments above from a grade-5 boy—"And now we like we trust each other and play games and stuff. . . . It's better because we get to a sense of—like what they are and—how they act, and stuff"—specifically uses the word "trust." It seems as though mentors have to become both comprehensible to the students and reliable in terms of their good will towards the students. Treats and conversation to find shared interests seemed important at the beginning of many mentor relationships. Building or sustaining friendship often entailed being playful or frequent play activities. "Do you want to play?" can be understood as an invitation to be a friend.

Enjoying both "work" and play with mentors   Students also mentioned both academic and play activities in response to the survey question about what they liked about having mentors. The grade-1through grade-3 children spent most of the interview time talking about the presents and treats they received, the books they read, the writing they did, the crafts they made, and the games they played with their mentors. In the excerpted passages below, a grade-1 girl talks about making a craft, preparing for a word wall test, and playing a favourite game with her mentor.

> Student: We made stuff.
>
> Interviewer: Oh, you made stuff ! Oh, can you tell me something that you made?
>
> Student: We made cards.
>
> Interviewer: Cards! Oh, to who—who did you send the cards to?
>
> Student: Hmm, my cousins.
>
> . . .
>
> Interviewer: Word—word wall? [she nods] What's that? That sounds very interesting. What do you do there? [pause] What's that like?
>
> Student: A test on Friday—the words.
>
> Interviewer: Oh, you do? Hm. So, —so, what happens?
>
> Student: When my mentor comes we have a practice. On my words.
>
> Interviewer: Oh. Oh. Hm, hm. And does that help you?
>
> Student: Yes.
>
> Interviewer: Good. So you know your words a little better?
>
> Student: Yes.
>
> . . .

Interviewer: Now, can you tell me about something that is the best thing you ever did with your mentor? What was your very favourite thing? That you ever did with your mentor?

Student: Played games.

Interviewer: Play games? Do you have a favourite game? [she nods] What's that?

Student: Janga?

Interviewer: Oh, that sounds interesting. I don't think I know that game. What do you do? How do you play it?

Student: You take, you take the thing off, you build it up and then, you take, whoever fell, fell the blocks, he has to build it again.

Interviewer: Oh. So you're playing with blocks? Yeah, that's neat. So that's one of your favourite things that you do with your mentor? [she nods] Hm, hm. Does your mentor like to play that game, too?

Student: [in a whisper] Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah? Do you like your mentor?

Student: [very softly] Yeah.

Interestingly, when this soft-spoken, seemingly shy, grade-1 girl was asked how she felt when she first met with her mentor, her one-word response was, "Excited." Perhaps younger children who may still be more open and trusting, meet a new mentor with the same anticipation as for a present to be opened.

It also seems that the mentors are usually not disappointing "gifts." In the interviews, as students described activities in their mentorship sessions, it was apparent that many mentors were adept at tailoring activities to students' interests. See, for example, the passages below, in which a grade-3 boy talks about reading and writing that he does with his mentor. The passages show that his play interests are also accommodated by his mentor.

Interviewer: That is a lot of games. You've got a good memory, too. Now, you say you also read. How do you read? What sort of things do you read? Do you read . . .

Student: Scary ones.

Interviewer: Oh, scary ones. Are those your favourite? [he nods] Yeah? Do you—does she read them to you, or do you read them to her? What do you do?

Student: Sometimes I read them to her. Sometimes she reads them to me.

Interviewer: Oh, hm, hm.

Student: Um, um, um, I'm reading on a, I'm reading a book and it's a werewolf and a boy's acting like a dog, so he could get a dog and, and um, it's very funny.

. . .

Interviewer: [laughs] Good. OK. Now, let me see. You told me you read together, played games. Was there something else that you did?

Student: Writing.

Interviewer: Writing. Oh. What sort of things do you write?

Student: Stories.

Interviewer: Stories? Okay. Are these like for assignments in school, or just fun things?

Student: Fun things.

Interviewer: Oh, good. What kind of things do you write?

Student: Scary.

Interviewer: Oh boy. I can tell you really like scary stuff, huh? [nods] Well, do you like doing those things with your mentor?

Student: Yuh!

. . .

Interviewer: Oh, terrific. What do you like most? When your mentor comes?

Student: Playing games.

. . .

Interviewer: Now, can you tell me about the—well, I guess maybe you've already answered this—about the best thing you ever did with your mentor. Can you think of the best thing you ever did with your mentor?

Student: Challenged her on Connect Four.

Interviewer: Ohh. So what did you—how did you do that? What did you do?

Student: I won her four times by [not clear] I [not clear].

In a similar manner, when a grade-2 student was asked what she liked doing best with her mentor, she spoke of how one of her favourite mentorship activities was to go into the large teepee in the school library to read ghost stories: "I like doing math and reading a book, reading books, and I like going up to the teepee and read some ghost storybooks."

Another grade-2 student happily reported that after every 10 books she reads with her mentor, she gets a surprise. Most students described taking turns with mentors to choose books, to read alternate pages in the same book, or to read entire books to each other. The following comment by a grade-2 student, reporting on what she likes about sessions with her mentor, hints that in some cases, play or the promise of play served to render reading more palatable: "We go to the reading room. We hurry to read a book, and then we play some game, and then we do lots of stuff, and we have a book again." The response is ambiguous in terms of whether or not the student enjoys the reading in particular. The activities seem to be all of a piece, like a good meal. The feeling tone is that they are all accepted, welcomed, and enjoyed. The middle activities of "then we play some game, and then we do lots of stuff" seem important.

The examples and discussion in this sub-section have illustrated students' enjoyment or appreciation of both academic and play activities in their mentorship sessions. In all of the examples presented, the students like what they are doing with their mentors. In some examples—such as with the ghost stories and werewolf story—the mentors clearly tailored the activities to students' interests. Going into the teepee to read ghost stories also showed a playful spirit. It is noteworthy that students who expressed appreciation of academic activities tended also to be pleased with the play activities they did with their mentors. Perhaps the mentors' willingness to play games with the children reflected their general intentions to ensure that the children enjoyed their sessions together. Further, the relationships cultivated through play may have enabled greater responsiveness and mutuality during activities like reading, writing, or schoolwork. Mutuality and responsiveness were illustrated, for example, in the observation of Rod and Cory's session when they worked on Cory's class assignment.

Mentorship sessions as a break from the classroom   Whatever mentorship sessions offered, students welcomed them as more enlivening and engaging than the classroom. The following passage is from a group interview with grade-2 students.

Interviewer: How is it different having—you know, the things that you do with your mentor—how is it different from what you do in class?

Student 1 (boy): Uhh. Not doing—um, work.

Interviewer: You're not doing work all the time. Hmm, hm. OK. Anything else that you can think of that makes it a little different?

Student 1: Instead of working, we get to read.

The following passage is from an interview with intermediate-grade students.

Interviewer: What's important for you, [student's name]?

Student 1: _____ too tired.

Interviewer: Doesn't make you so tired.

Student 1: Like the classroom setting does.

It is understandable that doing anything one-on-one with a mentor could be more engaging than being in the classroom most of the time. A number of students spoke about how they often asked their mentors questions that they did not get to ask in the classroom—questions about the meaning of words, or about math. Having a mentor's undivided attention is a welcome opportunity for students.

When Sessions with Mentors Are Not As Enjoyable

Where there were difficulties or disappointments with time spent in mentorship sessions, these had to do with either the choice of activities or the time required to complete assignments provided by the teacher. Below, a grade-5 girl recalls initial disagreements about the session activities.

Student: Yes. In the beginning we didn't have much fun because we sometimes didn't agree what we had to do.

Interviewer: Oh, right. So how did that happen?

Student: I wanted to play a game and she wanted to read, so we discussed it, and we read first, then played the game.

In the following passage, intermediate-grade girls express disappointment with both a mentor's focus on reading and the intrusion of work provided by the teacher.

Interviewer: . . . . Some of the things that you do together that aren't so much fun. Do you do things that aren't fun?

Student 1: We do lots of things that are fun just like [other student's name], but the thing that I really don't enjoy is the work that our teacher gives us, because I really want to read those books and play some games, like some crafts and all that.

Interviewer: Yes, have a little break from your regular stuff.

Student 1: That's true.

Student 2: Last year we didn't have work [provided by the teacher]. We just did whatever.

Interviewer: Oh, so it's a little different this year.

Student 3: Yes. Last year I read with my mentor, and we barely had any games. Whenever I wanted to play a game I'd say, "Can we play a game?" Then she'd say, "Okay, we'll read for about ten minutes, and we'll play a game for five—we'll play a game for five minutes."

In the following passage, another two intermediate-grade girls express disappointment that the assignments provided by the teacher sometimes leave little time for games.

Interviewer: Now, you've told me about some of those fun things that you did. Are there some things that you also do together sometimes that aren't so much fun?

Student 1: Sometimes assignments take up lots of time.

Student 2: Yes.

Student 1: So there isn't time to play any games.

Student 2: And it takes the whole time, and then we can't do anything together, just do the assignment.

Interviewer: What kind of assignments do you have to do?

Student 2: Stuff that has to do with what we're working in class.

Interviewer: So the teacher gives that to you or to the mentor?

Student 2: Every week it's a different assignment.

The student's comment, "and then we can't do anything together, just do the assignment," suggests that it is not only the pleasure of more playful activities that the students miss but also the forms of interaction with mentors that are facilitated by such activities. Having a mentor seems to be experienced as a gift, and not being able to engage more fully with such a gift is evidently a source of frustration or disappointment for students. There are many activities that students enjoy and appreciate doing together with their mentors. It would seem important to protect the opportunity for multiple activities during mentorship sessions. Games that position mentors as playmates can contribute to the development of friendship. Crafts that allow space for the flow of personal conversation can also support the building of a relationship. As was mentioned earlier in the discussion of students' appreciation of learning "Hands-On" activities, with the support of a mentor, games and crafts can also contribute to students' opportunities for engagement outside of mentorship sessions.

In another group interview with intermediate-grade girls, a student made the following comments about aspects of mentorship sessions that were not enjoyable.

> Student: Yeah. And if we had a little bit more time together, and then we would really get to know each other even better. And I think maybe and um—[speaks under her breath]
>
> Interviewer: Pardon?
>
> Student: Lay off the work.

The comments from this student underscore both the press of time, the priority sometimes given to completing classroom assignments, the appeal of "non-work" activities, and the student's desire to get to know the mentor better. There are similar comments from another student.

> Interviewer: [Student's name], any things that you do that aren't fun?
>
> Student: Sometimes when we have to do an assignment, then we wanted to play a game. That wasn't fun.

Students want to have fun with their mentors. Classroom assignments can interfere with the opportunity for mentors and students to plan how they want to spend their time with each other.

Games that children like are meaningful, comprehensible, and engaging for them. The soft-spoken, seemingly shy grade-1 girl mustered her longest utterance in the effort to explain her favourite game to the interviewer: "You take, you take the thing off, you build it up and then, you take, whoever fell, fell the blocks, he has to build it again." Games can perhaps also support meaningful interaction and diverse forms of interaction between a child and a non-familial adult in ways that many other activities cannot. Games provide a context for encouraging comments, celebration, teasing, challenge, and a happy, playful spirit among players. It is likely that games provide a context for mentors and students to "be together" in fuller and richer ways than those possible in a mentor's supervision of classroom assignments or even help with reading. Thus, while a cynical view might be that students simply want to play rather than work, we would argue that students know that playful activity can facilitate a wide range of welcome and valuable interactions with the mentors who have come to them as gifts. From a strong foundation of knowing each other well, being able to read each other's responses, and being friends, a mentor and student can also work more comfortably and effectively with various learning or growth needs the student may have.

DISCUSSION

In this study, by attending to what students said about their experience of mentors or mentorship sessions, we have become acutely aware of the role that play or playful interaction can have for mentors and students. Through such

activities students can come to feel that they know mentors better, enjoy them, like them, trust them, and experience them as people who are fun to be with. The resulting comfort and attunement or closeness in the relationships enables mentors to offer appropriate and well-received support with various forms of growth and learning. In previous research by Ellis et al. (2001) students responded to mentors' expressions of warmth, caring, and giving. As mentors got to know students better, this knowledge gave direction and focus to their giving and caring. This study has highlighted the role of play for mentors and students in becoming people who are comfortable, significant, and enjoyable for each other.

These findings have important implications for programs like the one studied. Although it can be tempting for both teachers and mentors to use mentorship session time for schoolwork, it is important for students and mentors to be able to choose activities that are engaging and satisfying. In some cases students will choose the schoolwork as one of the activities because they do want the help. However, when a student asks to play a game or do a craft together with the mentor, it is important that the mentor recognize such an activity as an opportunity for perhaps the most meaningful and comprehensible interaction with the student—an interaction that can cultivate genuine friendship. In games or craft making, there is shared intentionality, a concrete referent for the meaning of language used, and wide-ranging opportunities for both students and mentors to express aspects of ability, personality, and personal history.

It is also important for such programs to be well supported by resources, including space, materials, and equipment for enjoyable reading, play, crafts, games, computer use, and sports. In this whole-school mentorship program, many of the mentors came from busy workdays to spend 30 minutes or an hour with a student. They were not likely to have had a lot of time for preparing specific activities for sessions with the students. Fortunately, the school had acquired or developed a number of resources for mentors and students to use. Most found and used enjoyable books, games, sport facilities and equipment, craft materials, and computer equipment and software. With ample materials to choose from, mentor pairs have a better chance of finding games, crafts, and books that offer variety of content and optimum challenge. With good choice in this way, students can select activities at a pace and level that support full engagement, growth, and learning. When materials that support inviting activities are available, the precious gift of the mentor's presence is also more fully enjoyed and experienced.

The students recognize mentors as gifts and mentorship sessions as full of promise. One-on-one time with a caring adult, and maybe even one with

common interests, is a prospect full of possibility for students. One of those possibilities, perhaps the richest and most generative of all, is that together they might play. The emotional connection or closeness cultivated through play renders the mentor more capable of offering genuine understanding, help, and support to the student.

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BILL NICHOLL

"I'VE DECIDED TO CHANGE AND IT'S JUST REALLY HARD TO, LIKE, SHOW THE TEACHERS THAT"

Me personally I've brought a reputation upon myself . . . and it's got me in a lot of trouble. And so I've decided to change and it's just really hard to, like, show the teachers that.

(male, age 15, in Finney et al., 2005, p. 4)

THE FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter is about the ways in which some young people who find learning in school difficult and who are disruptive and/or disengaged can find a way back. The project on which the chapter is based sought to give these young people release from the badges of identity that were constraining the development of alternative ways of relating and of achieving recognition. The research team that studied the project concluded that the process of disengagement can be reversed, for a short time at least, if students feel that significant others in the school are able to see and acknowledge some of their strengths.

The transformational idea behind the project was to make space in school for disengaged or disengaging students to use talents relating, strongly or loosely, to an arts subject in the curriculum (art and design, drama, design and technology,[1] and music) that were not fully recognised within the school curriculum. The students were given the opportunity to be 'student teachers' and to plan and lead one or more teaching sessions (called 'teaching episodes') with younger students. The impact of the experience was monitored to see if it was making a difference to the way these normally troubled and troublesome students were perceived by others and, importantly, to the way they saw themselves.

THE PROJECT

The chapter is based on a project that was funded by a small grant from the Wallenberg Foundation and coordinated by Jean Rudduck. The work took place in 2003, with some follow-up events in 2004. Four secondary schools were involved and eleven students aged between 12 and 15 years.

The four members of the research team responsible for the field work (John Finney, Richard Hickman, Bill Nicholl, and Morag Morrison) each contacted a school they thought would be interested in the project (all were in the region between Cambridge and London) and negotiated access. In each school, a teacher from the corresponding subject department (i.e. art, drama, design and technology and music—the 'link teachers') helped to identify some students in the second or third year of secondary school (i.e. Year 8 or 9^2) whom they believed had talent in some aspect of their subject. For some students, this was the only subject they liked in school. Where teachers were not aware of the students' out-of-school talents, the researchers invited students to list their hobbies and skills, and potentially relevant interests were checked out by the researchers in discussion with the young people. Finally, between two and four students in each school were then invited to participate. The selection was handled unobtrusively so that there was no sense among the others of having been rejected.

Profiles of the students involved were constructed from short interviews with the link teachers and with other teachers who taught them; teachers were asked to comment on the students' commitment to learning, self-esteem, and standing within the peer group. The profiles constructed before the project started were checked against the comments made by teachers and students at the end of the project.

The students, the researcher, and the link teacher then devised a classroom 'episode' or short unit of work that would allow the students to use their interests or skills to teach younger students or, in one case, students in the same year. When the teaching episodes were over, follow-up interviews were conducted with the student teachers and with the students they taught. Responses to the questions indicated, across the 11 students, greater self-esteem and the development of a more positive attitude towards teachers and school.

The stories enable us to see the changes in the students through the eyes of the students themselves and through the initially disbelieving eyes of some of their teachers.

THE STUDENTS INVOLVED

The eleven students involved in the project were labelled by their teachers in negative terms; they were variously viewed as "defensive," "rude," "challenging," "argumentative," "confrontational," "withdrawn," "unfocused," "difficult," "having attitude," "without ambition," "lacking in confidence," and "slow to take responsibility." The list could be extended. Some had high status amongst their peers, and their self-esteem was built on a reputation for being

difficult in class; others existed on the margins. The young people involved were seen as challenging and as such had been trusted with little agency or responsibility.

Three students worked alone (schools 1 and 3), there were two pairs (schools 1 and 2), and four worked as a quartet (school 4). Here are thumbnail sketches of the individuals and working teams (see Finney et al., 2005) (all names have been changed; some students chose their own pseudonyms):

School 1: Focus on Drama

Ashley and Kayleigh, both in Year 8, the second year of secondary school (and age 13), were close friends. They were seen by their teachers as bright but disruptive and as negative leaders in the sense that they were respected by their peers for their brash resistance. Drama was a subject they liked, and their social confidence meant that they were often chosen to take part. For their teaching episode they taught, together, a small group of Year 6s (age 11) from the nearby primary school.

School 2: Focus on Design and Technology (inc. food technology)

Lauren, in Year 8 (age 13), was often on report and in detention for rudeness and disruption; she had a short fuse and often shouted at teachers. She had a reputation that went beyond her own year group for being naughty. However, like Ashley and Kayleigh, she usually behaved well in the lessons she did well in. Her mother had taught her to cook, and in food technology classes in school she sometimes helped her slower or less competent peers. For her teaching episode Lauren taught a small group of Year 7s (age 12).

Graham and Kurt, also in Year 8 (age 13), had developed negative attitudes toward school but were not overtly disruptive. Graham achieved well in some subjects, but his tendency to boss others, coupled with his willingness to work hard in some lessons, turned him into a victim rather than a leader; he was beginning to be bullied and harassed and was losing confidence. Kurt's sporadic attendance since he joined his secondary school made him worried about falling behind, and he was trapped in a vicious circle: the greater his anxiety about keeping up, the less he wanted to come to school and the more he missed, and thus the greater yet his anxiety. For their teaching episode Graham and Kurt shared the teaching of a small group of Year 7 students (age 12).

School 3: Focus on Art and Design

Mark and Jason were in Year 9 (age 14). Both were talented in art but were generally difficult and disengaged. Jason was suspended during the early stage of the project but was followed up when he moved into Year 10. Mark, in Year 8, had been described as 'gifted and talented' in art, but in Year 9 his commitment to learning generally started to dip, and he was known for instigating off-task activities, especially among his male peers. Jason was often off task in lessons, would challenge teachers, and had generated an expectation among teachers and students that if there was an incident, he might well be implicated. Mark taught part of a lesson to his own class while Jason taught his skills to others in a school club.

School 4: Focus on Music

Tyson, Brian, Morgan, and Rachel were all in Year 8 (age 13) and all liked their music lessons. Tyson was reluctant to accept authority and could be disruptive. He liked to be the centre of attention

and was looked up to by his peers, who were possibly rather afraid of him. Teachers judged him to be highly intelligent. Brian was seen by teachers as one of the 'Top 20 Troublemakers' in his year group. He was skilled in distracting others and goading them to misbehave. He was seen as strategically clever. Morgan was the most recent in a long line of family members who had made 'bad tracks' at the school. She was seen as unmotivated, often off task, and subtly influential, using her anti-work stance as a way of maintaining authority over her peers. Rachel was argumentative and often involved in confrontations with the more overtly disruptive in her year group. She and Morgan together were seen as a potentially subversive pair. The four students worked together to teach a group of Year 7s (age 12).

This chapter focuses on Lauren, but the discussion draws on data from the other stories.

FRAMING THE STORIES

The stories are framed in three ways. First, drawing on research on student voice and participation, they explore the relatively uncharted possibilities of young people exchanging negative attitudes to learning and negative leadership roles for more positive ones; this is our main interest and is the dominant frame. Second, they draw on the substantial body of work on peer tutoring: all the students involved were able to share their talents in formal teaching sessions with younger students—sessions that they helped plan and that they led. Third, the project draws on contemporary research that points to the power of the arts in education to motivate young people.

Frame i. Enabling Students To Re-commit Themselves To Learning

Teachers often say that they despair of trying to work with groups of students who have become what Chaplain (1996) called "collaboratively disengaged" and who take heart in maintaining a noisy and explicit disdain for schoolwork: "If you fall into a bad group of friends then . . . I know one group, their kind of mission is not to do well, to mess around, to get told off . . . One of them is extremely clever and always does well but . . . It's part of her group to act like that" (female, age 15, Finney et al., 2005, p.4).

We were interested in how tensions and pressures can lead students to adopt particular attitudes and personae in school and classroom and the difficulties they have in dropping them: "It's all right saying, 'Change'; but you can't just stop like that, can you?" said a 15-year-old boy (Finney et al., 2005, p. 4). Changing, in the words of high schools students, from being 'dossers' to 'workers,' from exercising a negative leadership role to exercising a positive one, is a complex process and involves unlocking the images that teachers have of you. Students who have adopted an anti-work or anti-school persona can also find it particularly difficult to change because their peers have certain

expectations of them, as this young woman explains: "I think the trouble with me was when I come to school I messed about from day one so people got me as a mess-abouter from day one so like if I didn't mess about, 'Oh, you're boring.' You know what I mean?" (female, age 15, in Rudduck 1998, p. 140).

Students also feel that their image and habits are held in place by their teachers, who have files and memories in which students' behaviours and, indeed, their characters, are indelibly recorded: ". . . You mess around . . . you get a reputation for yourself as a trouble causer and you can't lose it—it's like there" (male, age 15, ibid.)

Students understand what is at stake and are often surprisingly insightful and tolerant. Here a 15-year-old boy describes how he had made a considerable effort and had started to do really well, but teachers were more inclined to go on seeing him as he was rather than recognise his current effort and give him support if he fell back a little: "And then, like, I went on report, and I got, like, A1, A1, best, top marks. But there's been some lessons where it's slipped and they're (saying) like, 'Oh, he's still the same.' I can understand how they feel about that" (male, age 15, in Rudduck, 1998, p. 139).

Interestingly, students who had fallen behind mostly directed the blame to themselves. They also tended to see the situation as irredeemable. One student explained: "I was just running about like a little kid and not doing (anything). I was really immature . . . and then it was like (this year) it hit me . . . I could have tried harder but can't turn back time" (female, age 15, in Rudduck et al., 2004, p. 68). Another said: "I missed loads of school, which was my own fault, and I'm suffering from that now . . . I thought, 'Oh it doesn't matter. I can make up the work,' but I didn't. I don't know what we're doing now, so it's a waste of time" (male, age 15, ibid).

Change is not easy, even for those students who want to change. The triggers for change are different for different students. For some, the process of being asked to talk about problems in learning may in itself be a turning point and can help students rid themselves of the feeling that '*they* don't listen to us.' For others, reassurance about their own capability is what can provide the trigger for change; these students may be able to build a new confidence in themselves by being asked to take on a special role or responsibility or by being able to use, in the classroom, skills and talents developed outside school that do not usually find a place in the routine curriculum.

Shotter (1993) asks, "What are the resources available to people . . . for them to draw on in their attempts to be someone of worth?" (p.187). In the project reported here the main resource was the respect that grew out of the relationship between the student teachers and their link teacher and between the student teachers and the students they taught. Crozier and Tracey (2000) have argued

that "unsuccessful pupils, those who fail in or are failed by the education system, are, as a group, in a marginal position. In an era of league tables their contribution to schools is either negligible or negative. This low status excludes them from participating" (p. 174, referring to the work of Garner, 1995). Most of our eleven students were not seen as academic assets by their schools, but their success at teaching others and their skill in analysing what was going wrong in school for them and for others like them led teachers and students to review the images they had of these students. When students are empowered to take responsibility in school, they are often surprised by their own achievements; the growth of self-respect is as important as the respect that students may engender in others. For our 11 students, knowing that their skills had been recognised, being invited to do something special, and having a successful experience in their role as teachers were critical moments in the process of change.

Frame ii: Peer Mentoring/Tutoring

Mentoring schemes are legion: "By the early 1990s, [an] author had already come to describe mentoring as a mass movement which represented a social and historical phenomenon in its own right" (Colley, 2003a, p. 522, citing Freedman, 1995 and 1999). Perhaps the most common topics for school mentoring programmes are helping students improve their basic literacy skills (Morrison et al., 2000) and providing opportunities for students to talk about their general concerns with school and schoolwork. Batty et al. (1999) ask whether the increase in mentoring schemes is based on evidence of positive impact or is an act of faith, and the authors recall president Clinton's act of faith when he called in 1996 for "the mobilization of a million volunteer tutors," claiming, "We know that individualized tutoring works" (p. 366).

The project reported here, though, was different from other mentoring projects in two respects. First, the older students were tutors rather than mentors, actively teaching rather than taking a listening or advisory role. Second, whereas the main concern in mentoring and peer tutoring schemes is to support the mentees in some way, in our project the concern was to develop the confidence of the tutors—the student teachers. And although in principle the label sounds close to what we were doing, the new variant, "engagement mentoring"—a model for social inclusion that "seeks to re-engage 'disaffected' young people" (Colley, 2003a, p.527)—sounds similar, but again, the spotlight is on the mentees rather than on the people supporting them.

Frame iii: The Arts, Peer Teaching, and Engagement

We know that, out of school, many young people devote many hours of their spare time to creative activities in the arts. Their model making, impromptu designs, singing and dancing, cartoon making, cooking, and play making,

for example, may help them to shape identities, find a sense of belonging, and feel socially included. In school, we know that some students view the arts as an element of the curriculum that is different. They are quick to recognise the opportunity to negotiate personal space in learning and at the same time develop skills linked to particular art forms. A study carried out by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) (Harland et al., 2000) reported the sense of fulfilment in their own achievements that students said they experienced in their work in the arts, and also greater self-esteem.

Where extrinsic motivation binds students to a task through the promise of praise, high grade, or other reward, the arts are also strong on intrinsic motivation—the capacity to engage young people in an activity because it is interesting and involving in its own right. Csikszentmihalyi's (1992) description of 'flow experiences' emphasises similar things: where interest is strong, you have a sense that you are being taken along by the 'flow' of a river. Feelings of absorption and deep enjoyment can come from tasks that capture people's curiosity and challenge them in ways they find exciting. This was the kind of experience we wanted the students who took part in our project to have.

When adults have high expectations of them, young people are more likely to use their skills in constructive ways. They also want, as interviews repeatedly confirm (see Rudduck & Flutter, 2004), more responsibility, more autonomy, and to feel that they can make a difference. The project responded to these desires in two ways. First, through the teaching episodes; teaching is an activity that involves both listening and being listened to, and the disaffected or marginalised can expect to have a voice and for that voice to be heard. Second, there is the expectation that as teachers they will have something valuable to offer to others; the role carries the promise of responsibility, recognition, and respect.

Hart et al. (2004) argue that there is "an endemic risk" that where the school and classroom climates "are permeated by messages of greater and lesser worth, . . . some children will be made to feel incompetent, unsafe, unfavourably perceived by their teachers" (p. 27).

LAUREN'S STORY

Lauren was in her second year (Year 8) at an 11–18 mixed comprehensive school in Inner London. The school's catchment area has patches of prosperity and considerable deprivation, and the student population is mixed in terms of ethnicity and social class. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average.

Lauren had joined the school over a year ago with above-average grades but had become increasingly argumentative and confrontational. She was

frequently in trouble, was in detention almost every day, and had been on the school's 'report card system' for almost a year with various targets, such as to try to 'listen in class' and 'stay focussed.' But changing her pattern of behaviour was not straightforward, partly because within the peer group there was a certain kudos in being seen as 'a baddy': "You're kind of proud of it because everyone goes, 'Oh, you're naughty! Oh you're cool,' and you think you're really clever."

Lauren's attainment grades had declined in all subjects, and she explained to the link researcher that she gets bored and feels frustrated because she has opinions but is never given the opportunity to express them, perhaps because teachers are wary of allowing her space to comment: "The problem with me is if a teacher shouts at me, I don't shut up and listen, I argue back." She feels that her reputation is 'fixed' in teachers' and students' minds:

I think I earned myself a bad reputation (last year) and now some teachers don't like me that much, which is not very good for me. They don't believe me when I say I am trying to be good. They say, "You don't know how to be good." I think if you come into this school you have to be good from the beginning and then you earn the respect from the teachers.

Lauren openly admits that she is partly to blame for her reputation but says that she feels some sympathy for her form tutor, whom she quite likes, who is often at the receiving end of Lauren's outbursts: "I see her at the end of the day [for registration] and by that time I've had enough."

Lauren likes the 'practical' aspects of the curriculum, particularly Design and Technology, ' "cos you don't have to write anything" and because she enjoys "making things." Lauren's mother had taught her how to cook, and food technology is the only school lesson she really likes. She normally finishes first and "enjoys helping other people" as "it makes me feel like I've got a bit of a use." Lauren has a fairly positive relationship with her food technology teacher and was excited at being invited to join the project.

Across the project, the teaching groups of younger students taught by Lauren and our other student teachers were kept small. In Lauren's case the group included two Year 7 girls and two boys, who were not among the most able or best behaved. Lauren was particularly worried about the students' attitude, saying, "They might not respect us 'cos we're only children as well." Indeed, one member of the younger teaching group anticipated that having a student to teach them would lead to chaos, although, as it turned out, he was wrong: "Some (of us) are naughty for teachers. But if (we're) naughty for a teacher, what would it be like if (we) had another student teaching us? We're not exactly just going to sit in our seats and do what we're told. We're going to be all over the place messing things up" (male, age 12).

Lauren was nervous before the lesson started, but she had planned very carefully what she was going to teach, and she was willing to seek some advice from the food technology teacher, whose lessons provided a good model of sequence and structure. Lauren taught a triple lesson (3×35 minutes) with a time-tabled break in between each lesson. The first hurdle was whether the pupils would return after the two breaks: they all did! The first part of the lesson was on food hygiene, the second was a demonstration, and the third was where the group made their own batch of cakes. Lauren had written and copied her worksheets in advance, and all the ingredients were set out in order on a trolley. Lauren looked smarter than usual and even decided, at the last minute, to wear her blazer.

After listing the learning aims on the board, she involved the group by asking lots of open-ended questions. If they were struggling to answer, Lauren reworded the questions, trying to get her class to think for themselves. Her style of communicating was simple and effective. The demonstration was thoroughly planned and well handled. The sequencing of the task was clear and the pace was good.

She highlighted key points, offered tips such as, "Mind your egg doesn't roll off the table," and used humour: "It happened to me once, but I blamed my wonky kitchen table." It was, in many ways, a model lesson.

When the students started making their own cakes, Lauren moved around the group, giving a lot of individual support. She also had health and safety in mind, reminding students that the oven doors get very hot and of the hazards of leaving them open. One of the pupils recalled after the lesson that "she made sure safety was the first thing on her list." Her teacher and the link researcher observed from a distance and did not think that their presence had a marked effect on the group's attentiveness; they were focused because Lauren was teaching well. By now Lauren was in full flow, her jacket was off, and her blouse was hanging outside her skirt.

Towards the end of the lesson, Lauren had planned a set of evaluation questions that had two distinct parts. The first set of questions focussed on 'judging' the lesson outcomes—in this case, the cakes. Lauren prepared and explained a handout that described how the pupils should judge the cake's texture, smell, appearance, and taste. The second set of questions focused on Lauren's lesson and her teaching performance. Lauren was very keen to know what the pupils thought of her lesson and asked, "What did you think of the way you were taught? Would you do it differently?" She had thought of and included these questions without consulting her food teacher, who said she had done it "completely off her own bat." The answers to these questions were so important to Lauren that when the boys started offering silly

suggestions in this part of the lesson, she felt it necessary to reprimand them. Without raising her voice and in a calm but assertive manner, Lauren told them to "stop being silly"; she added: "Let's take this seriously or it will not work." The boys did, and the evaluation continued. Even when tidying away and washing up, usually an oppositional moment, everyone helped. The atmosphere throughout the triple lesson was purposeful, productive, and friendly.

RESPONSES TO THE TEACHING EPISODE

In the de-briefing with me, Lauren reflected on her usual relationships with her teachers. She said that she could now see things from a teacher's perspective. She was surprised at just how much planning and preparation was required to teach a lesson and recalled—and regretted—the time when one of her teachers remonstrated with her saying, "I have spent two hours preparing this lesson," and she had responded, "I never asked you to prepare it." She recalled having to reprimand the boys in her group, comparing their impulse with her own: "They kind of thought they could push it," and she admitted that she does that sometimes with her teachers. She added, "I can understand now why my teachers react the way they do with me."

Lauren was enormously proud of what she had achieved; it was a lot of hard work but it paid off. She repeated a comment from one of her group: "[She said] it was all well explained and if *they* were to do it, they wouldn't teach any different to how I [did it]." This positive peer critique—the students had said they had enjoyed the lesson—clearly meant a lot to Lauren. Indeed, one student said: "I wasn't going to come in today, but I'm glad I did." Lauren also said she had learned "not to be horrible to teachers because I think I learned that it's intimidating for them to get up in front of a group of people, especially if there's only one of you and there's more of them." She went on: "I will listen to my teachers more and respond quicker [when asked to behave] and not wind them up!" Interestingly, the group of four, as a result of being taught by a student, also became more able to take the teacher's perspective: "Because like it gives you the chance to see . . . how they feel when they've been like, when they've had a hard day's work, like, with screaming kids and like with having to shout all day and go over all the work a couple of times" (female, age 12).

The students were also sympathetic to Lauren: one of the girls in the group noticed that at the start Lauren had "messed up a few bits," but the girl said, "That was understandable." Overall, the peer verdict was that "it was really good the way she did [it] . . . on the board she would write it a lot slower so you could understand it and everything. And she come round to everyone and helped them

if they needed help." Many of the pupils commented on Lauren's use of language, especially when using specialist subject vocabulary, for example: "None of us really knew what 'brittle' was. Then she explained it and we all knew." Their only reservation was about being reprimanded. One student said: "It felt kind of embarrassing getting told off by (her) but . . . like, (when) we got right to the end I realised why she was doing it—so that we could get through the lesson more quick" (male, age 12). And another asserted: *"Well, being told off was a bit annoying because, like, it's like just being told by someone that doesn't really have the rights to tell you"* (male, age 12).

THE IMPACT ON LAUREN

On the day of the teaching episode, Lauren rose to the challenge and performed beyond her teacher's expectations. Interestingly, during the three breaks in the triple lesson, Lauren had to go and see one or two of her teachers about homework that had not been done and a detention that she had missed. It was difficult to reconcile the Lauren who had just delivered an exemplary lesson and Lauren the 'baddy' who was so often in trouble.

The mere fact of being chosen to participate in the project—knowing that some of her strengths were recognised and that she was trusted—helped Lauren to think more positively about herself; even before the teaching took place, there was a change in her: She gave a thank-you card to her form tutor: "Thanks, Miss, for giving me this opportunity. Other teachers would not have given me this opportunity because of my reputation." Her teachers were seeing a side to her that was rarely if ever shown in the school. There were still flashes of the old Lauren, however, and during one of her food technology lessons, shortly before the teaching episode, she took offence at being asked to be quiet and stormed out of the lesson theatrically (not unusual), declaring that she did not want to take part in the project. Two days later, she sheepishly approached her teacher, apologised, and asked if she could still be involved.

Shortly after the teaching episode, Lauren went to see her food technology teacher on the pretence of looking for her book, and she asked directly how she had done. The teacher told her it was a brilliant lesson. Her food teacher said that Lauren's face went bright red, not with sheepish embarrassment but rather with a blushing pride at being told of her success. Positive feedback clearly meant a lot to Lauren. She was seen outside the head of year's room, but this time she was handing in homework and not waiting to be given another detention. Teachers described her as being generally more confident and mature and less argumentative. An English teacher said: "Totally different student to the first term. She is friendly and co-operative nearly all the time." Her form tutor

said, "Better relationship. Not so quick to fly off the handle. More co-operative, polite and says 'Hello' now!"

The final word is from one of the boys in Lauren's teaching group. During Lauren's lesson, he had said: "I thought you were naughty." I asked later him why he had said this. He replied: "Oh yeah, because normally she's always getting detention and she'll be naughty a lot . . . But the way she was acting there, it was sort of like she was a good student" (male, age 12).

Almost a year later, I went back to the school to interview Lauren again. I looked at her school reports and suggested that Lauren ask her teachers to write comments on her progress. Interestingly, she 'selected' only about half of her current teachers, strategically avoiding others. She had slipped back a bit in some lessons. It also turned out that she had missed several weeks of school as a result of two 'enormous' fights, one involving students in her school and one involving students from a local school. Her relationship with the selected teachers was, however, very positive; they wrote that she was "a pleasure to teach," that they "enjoy teaching her," and that she is "utterly charming most of the time."

<div align="center">DISCUSSION</div>

Several issues are raised by Lauren's account of her past experiences in school as well as by her reflections on her experiences during the project.

The first is *how schools respond to young people who are disaffected.* Lauren said that she was often in trouble, was in detention almost every day (and indeed, had two short detentions during the breaks between the three parts of her teaching episode), had been 'on report' (i.e. under close scrutiny from, and reported on by, every teacher whose class she was in—a very public form of discipline), and that teachers generally wrote on her report card that she had failed to behave as expected. The use of report cards with their personal targets for each lesson is not uncommon, and it seems ironic that this system, which was designed to monitor, encourage, and focus learning, seemed instead to reinforce Lauren's low self-esteem and contribute to her 'negative aura.' We were not expecting miracles from the project, but the encouraging thing was that Lauren had taken something very positive from being asked to teach, and she had had an experience of success, with recognition from her teacher and peers alike. This success was something she clearly had not experienced whilst being on report for nearly a year.

In another of our four schools, students who misbehaved—including one of the student teachers—were put in an isolation unit. Such strategies are not likely to support a change of identity among the disaffected; they are more likely to strengthen students' sense of alienation, their feelings

that they don't 'fit.' As Tyson said, "We've been knuckled down and it still doesn't change a lot of people" (in Finney et al., 2005, p. 58).

Lauren acknowledges that she is often uncooperative and tends to blame herself. One of our other student teachers, however, is more critical of the part the school plays in making learning difficult for some students:

I actually feel that school has grown the way it is now because of being threatened with detentions, being rewarded with commendations. Everyone has split themselves by their own frame of mind into those who say, "I want to be good. I want to get commendations. I want to get rewards. I want to get stuff." Other people, they know this is hard and it's so much easier to fall below standard. Then you get a bad reputation and there's no chance to redeem yourself. Teachers work on reputation. It splits people; it splits the school. (Brian, age 13, in Finney et al., 2005, p. 59)

In one school, the drama teacher says that students may deliberately adopt a casual, nonchalant attitude that makes it difficult to get through to them: "If you start to care about something, that's actually quite dangerous. Because if you start to care how well you do, then if you fail it matters. Whereas if you spend all your time saying 'I don't care,' then if you fail, it doesn't matter" (Finney et al., 2005, p. 83). Being responsible for teaching other students proved to be something that the students started to care about. Lauren said, significantly, "It makes me feel like I've got a bit of a use"; and Brian said of his music-based teaching episode: "All the time we had off from lessons practising we were doing something useful. If we had been in lessons we would probably just've been messing around." Starting to feel that they had something to offer in school that others valued was a critical moment in the development of the student teachers. As Lauren said, "I was listened to and it made me feel good." The turning point for Lauren may well have been when her friends called round one evening, expecting her to come out with them, and although she wanted to go out, she was also determined to do her teaching well and she stayed in, remained focussed, and completed the lesson planning.

Another issue raised by Lauren's story—and indeed by the other stories—was to do with *mutuality of respect*. Being responsible for teaching others and establishing a climate in which it was possible for them to learn was something that all the student teachers were concerned about. What the research team had not anticipated was the extent to which being a teacher for a short time enabled these difficult students to look at classroom behaviour from the teacher's perspective and to see disruptive behaviours from a different angle. As Lauren observed in the debriefing discussion, "It must be really annoying . . . when there's like my class . . . almost six out of 25 people on (report) card. It must be horrible for the teachers knowing you've got a horrible class coming into a lesson . . . They must be (i.e. they are bound to be) naughty" (Nicholl, field notes).

Ashley, another of the student teachers, commented after her teaching episode, "I've started to appreciate more sort of the teachers really," and her partner, Kayleigh, added, "Some of them have got the patience of a saint—no, they *have*!" And Brian said, "I feel more positive about school insofar as you can understand the teachers. We taught three times in two weeks not five times a day, five days a week. That must be tough, harder than we appreciate. You can understand why they get frustrated so easily, which makes you (be) better towards them" (Finney et al., 2005, p. 69).

If the students were more appreciative of their teachers, their teachers became, as a result of seeing the students design and manage and comment on the teaching episodes, more appreciative of them. These young people had a lot to offer and their insights into good pedagogic practice were clearly apparent—and were no doubt learned from good teachers in their schools.

Lauren had a good grasp of lesson structure and sequence, her cooking demonstrations were well resourced, organised, and delivered; there was a good balance of teacher input and pupil input/activity. She questioned pupils and allowed them to ask questions, facilitating collaborative engagement. She used an appropriate level of language and specialist subject vocabulary whilst consciously not speaking to the pupils 'baby like': "I know how annoying it is if the teacher stands and talks to you like you're five years old because they think you don't understand." She helped her group understand new terms by using analogies. For example, "Brittle is like when a dime bar breaks easily . . . gritty is like sand." When she forgot to demonstrate something, she did not become flustered but calmly asked the four students to gather round and then proceeded to show them what she had earlier missed—how to test the temperature of the cakes. Later, Lauren spoke about wanting to give the pupils an opportunity to "let their ideas go," meaning "that if they had an idea or opinion they said it, instead of having to keep it inside." She explained: "Because you know, sometimes you're in lessons and you have an opinion on what they're saying, [but] you can't say it because you'd get into trouble or it's not your turn to speak."

Reflecting on how she had reprimanded one of the boys in her teaching group, Lauren said she made a conscious decision not to raise her voice because this "wouldn't have worked." At the time she joked about giving the boys a detention but said openly, "I wouldn't do that 'cos they don't work either." Lauren's sense of humour helped in her teaching, and she managed to remain in control and to maintain discipline without ever coming across as dictatorial or authoritarian. When she was assertive, the pupils could see the reason why: she wanted to move them forward in order to make sure that they got through everything before the end of the lesson.

The pupils said she "acted like a teacher and for once she did become one." She allowed pupils space and was sensitive to their individual needs. She did not make a big deal out of needing to explain things twice. She was keen and positive and knew her subject: "She came round to everyone and helped them if they needed it." All four pupils were genuinely engaged throughout the triple lesson.

We saw earlier what Lauren's group said about her teaching. The students in the group taught by Brian, Tyson, Morgan and Rachel were also appreciative. One explained: "Morgan was very positive and helpful . . . she showed me clearly what to do . . . and if I got it wrong Morgan would help me." Another said: "Rachel supported us . . . she encouraged us and joined in with us." A third explained: "Tyson had confidence in us . . . he said, 'You can do it.' " And a fourth stated: "Brian gave us confidence . . . he asked us what we wanted to do."

At the end of the teaching, the four thanked the students in the group they had worked with; Tyson made the short thank-you speech: "Thanks very much for taking part...and helping us to help you; you've been really good in behaviour and practicals and every one of you were good. I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did" (Finney et al., 2005, p. 67). These young people were indeed modelling good practice.

SUMMARY AND COMMENT

The central concern of the project was to see if 'negative leaders' could change role and become 'positive leaders.' To facilitate this change we wanted to go beyond some of the traditional roles schools offer pupils, such as being monitors or prefects. The students were given the challenge of planning and teaching a lesson and had considerable autonomy with respect to its content and teaching approach. Support was available, but *they* were 'the teachers.' Rudduck and Flutter (2004) say that being treated like an adult, being shown respect, and given responsibility and challenges, with support when they need it, are things that students value and say they want more of in school (p. 77; see also Rudduck et al., 1996). The importance of autonomy and pupil's commitment to learning is highlighted in Anderman and Maehr's study (1994), and Csikszentmihalyi's (1992) flow studies suggest that it is the appropriate balance of skills against challenge that can help to maintain motivation when undertaking a task. These proved to be crucial factors in the success of the teaching episodes.

The 11 student teachers involved in the project were not the highly acclaimed, the elite, the annual prize winners; they were not among the gifted and talented in the school, as judged by their teachers. Lauren and the others were often in trouble, and were often seen as the initiators of trouble, even when

it wasn't them Lauren was described by her respective teachers in negative terms as "lacking in confidence . . . having lots of aggression . . . insecure . . . didn't feel she could do much." During one visit, I spoke with the Deputy Head who shook his head and said, "You should have a look in her file." Many of the main interests of the 11 students lay outside school and the formal curriculum and were not usually recognised or valued in school. Thus, these pupils rarely had the opportunity to express or show their talents and skills. As Jamieson and Wikeley (2000) suggest, "Schools need to systematically find out as much as they can about the interests and concerns of their young people and use this information as a starting point to debate and work with young people in designing the arrangements of schooling" (p. 446).

In the past, however, none of the student teachers involved had felt that they had a genuine stake in their school's teaching and learning, neither its content nor its processes, and they had not been judged reliable enough to be given real responsibilities. Unsurprisingly, therefore, at the start of the project they had little confidence about being able to contribute anything positive in school. But when adults have high expectations of them, young people are more likely to use their skills in constructive ways.

Involving young people in discussion and decision-making about things that matter to them can help build a culture in which students can feel that *they* matter. If students feel secure, valued, and supported in school, they are more likely to commit themselves to the school's learning purposes: "improving schools is about ensuring that schools are 'just and humane sites for learning for all' " (Groundwater Smith, 2004, p. 260).

The research team were, however, troubled by two things. First, would the change in the students be sustained, and, if not, did the problem lie with the student or with the school? Second, was the project in fact manipulating students so that they better fit the schools' image of 'a good student'?

Lauren's teachers spoke of a different Lauren. Seven weeks after the teaching episode, they described her as "more confident . . . more settled . . . more mature . . . less argumentative and responsive . . . values herself more." And she was the one student chosen to help two professional chefs prepare a meal during a high profile school charity event. Things were looking positively upbeat for Lauren. She had shown that she cared, that she could achieve, that she could be successful. She could be responsible, trusted, and rise to the challenge. The Deputy Principal had said, "We must build on the positive effect this project has had on Lauren." Alas, longer term, there were some signs of the old Lauren creeping back; she became involved in two serious fights. And, as we saw earlier, she was highly selective about which

teachers she asked to review her behaviour: those she selected thought the change had been sustained; those she did not select would probably have dis- agreed, but then they may not have changed their expectations in ways that might have helped her to sustain the new persona in their classes. Perhaps the school could have done more to ensure that Lauren's 'transformation' was known about and nurtured by a greater number of teachers in the school, so that they had grounds for believing that it was possible for a 'baddy' to change. There was a dilemma, though, for the schools involved: in a climate in which reputation depends on a collective set of performance grades, how much time can a school invest in rescuing a minority of difficult students, even though the outcome may be a significant, long-term change in their self-esteem and life chances? Would such an achievement count as 'school improvement'?

The other concern was whether the project was not so much 'releasing' the student teachers from negative images that had held back the possibility of change but instead was moulding them in ways that were more acceptable to their schools. Colley (2003b) explores such questions in her book, *Mentoring for Social Inclusion*. Some forms of mentoring are designed to match the commitment of the young people involved "to the interests of their . . . organisations, and their very hearts and minds to the enterprise" (p. 26). Colley is critical of approaches that require "young people to re-invent themselves because they are the wrong sort of people . . . displaying the wrong attitudes' " (2003b, p. 28, quoting Jeffs & Spence, 2000, p. 40). We saw the situation as requiring a degree of mutual adaptation: The project sought to provide opportunities whereby schools might see and build on the talents of students who were not finding it easy to work to their strengths in school, especially in the shadow of a labelling system which 'fixes' reputations and prevents young people from trying out alternative identities as learners. As Ashley said: "I've, like, this reputation hanging over me and I don't really want it. I want to be looked at as me not just my reputation" (Finney et al., 2005, p. 20).

For Lauren and the other student teachers, the experience gave them a chance to show a different self and for that other self to be noticed, by some teachers at least, and respected. If the experience enabled them to commit themselves more regularly to the school's learning purposes, then it was because they wanted to stop being branded as failures. As Cummins (1996) has said, "'When students' developing sense of self is affirmed and extended . . . they are most likely to apply themselves to academic effort and participate actively in instruction' " (p. 2, in Hart et al., 2004, p. 26).

It is important therefore to forget the negative labels that we stick on our students and that define them in narrow ways and instead to be alert to their 'unpredictable achievements.'

NOTES

[1] Design & Technology (D&T) is a Foundation subject (mandatory up to 14 years of age) within the National Curriculum of England and Wales. Students undertake design and technological problem solving tasks using a variety of materials (e.g. wood, metal, plastics, textiles, food and electronics).
[2] Secondary education in England and Wales mainly caters for students aged between 11 and 16 years. Year 8 students are usually aged 13 years and Year 9 students 14 years.

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BRUCE WILSON AND DICK CORBETT

STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON GOOD TEACHING: IMPLICATIONS FOR ADULT REFORM BEHAVIOR

INTRODUCTION

Current reform literature devotes a great deal of ink to the argument that the reason for setting high standards and raising the accountability stakes is to force adults into doing what is best for kids. Or, in a paraphrasing of the words of the current federal administration, the push for higher standards and tighter accountability will help ensure that we 'leave no child behind.' Interestingly, while the intention of adults is framed around a focus on students, one finds little consideration of students' perspectives on schooling in the current reform policy debates. The reason, of course, is that adults historically have viewed students as 'beneficiaries' rather than participants in the reform process (Fullan, 1991). It is rare to find researchers who actively bring students into the dialogue. Some notable exceptions include Shultz and Cook-Sather (2001), Oldfather and West (1999), Wasley, Hampel, and Clark (1997), and Poplin and Weeres (1992).

This is unfortunate. As we have found in talking with thousands of students in mostly low-income schools in a vast range of settings, students view good teaching and learning in a remarkably consistent and elegantly simple way. Good teachers make them do their work, maintain order in the classroom, are willing to help them whenever and however the student wishes, explain material clearly until everyone understands, use a variety of instructional strategies, and develop relationships with them. Good learning occurs when students encounter skills and content that they have not been taught before and when they are active.

One must keep in mind that were it not for the age difference and the lack of professional certification, students' extensive experience in schools would make them the unquestioned experts on any topic related to instruction. They spend more time in school and see more teachers teach than anyone. This chapter, therefore, poses the question: "What should adults be held accountable for in order to encourage schools to support the kind of teaching students say is most beneficial to their learning?"

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The chapter has four sections. The first details the consistency and simplicity of students' views on teaching. In this section we present the characteristics of good teachers and illustrate these characteristics with a judicious sampling of students' comments. Students' views of good teaching initially emerged from a three-year study of 250 African-American and Hispanic middle school students whom we interviewed annually over the course of their tenure in their schools. These students of color attended five urban (large city) schools in low-income neighborhoods (80 to 100 percent eligibility for free or reduced lunch). These schools were some of the lowest performing in a district that was one of the lowest performing in the state. We asked that the schools select students who reflected the diversity of instructional experience, academic performance, behavior, motivation, gender, and race—proportional to the overall student populations in each school. We interviewed all students once every spring during the course of their three years in the building. We were able to keep track of 70 percent of our original interviewees across all three years.

Our intention was to develop a rich description of instructional experiences. We began our first year conversations with a loose guideline that elicited comments about students' favorite and least favorite classes, what activities they did in those classes, what activities helped them to learn the best, how they and their teachers assessed their progress, and how teachers related to them. We used answers from previous years' interviews as a springboard for subsequent interviews, pushing for examples of if, how, and why a particular observation persisted over time. We also took advantage of the interests and concerns of students, producing a free-flowing conversation rather than a structured interview, but we maintained an unwavering focus on students' learning experiences and how they felt about them. We each took verbatim notes.

Data analysis followed a similar pattern after each year of interviews. We began by reading our respective field notes and writing descriptive memos about emerging themes. We then reread the data to decide on predominant themes and to establish categories. Based on initial coding forays we developed data displays of which students in which schools made a response. Out of this coding emerged a set of teacher characteristics that persisted in student comments across all three years *and* which continued to emerge in subsequent interviews with a range of students from similar settings. Thus, the categories of 'good teaching' were those students offered.

The second section of the chapter provides a detailed example of how students refer to these characteristics of good teaching in making judgments about the value of particular reforms their schools have implemented. In particular, we examine the case of block scheduling in high schools and describe how students disregarded the personal discomforts of longer classes and the

probability of boredom in favor of the benefits of greater opportunities to get help and more time to grasp material. Thus, the characteristics of good teaching served to sharpen the instructional implications of an organizational change that engendered considerable controversy in the adult world.

Students' thoughts about the introduction of a block schedule in their high schools resulted from interviews we conducted in two high schools in the same neighborhoods in which the middle school students lived. In fact, a good number of those students had entered the high schools by the time this research was being done and so we were able to strike up renewed contact with these adolescents. We spoke with 280 ninth- and tenth-grade students over a two-year period, equally distributed across the two schools. Both high schools served low-income, racial minority neighborhoods, one enrolling almost exclusively African-American students (98%) and the other mostly Hispanic (77%) students. Both large schools (about 2,500 students) were in the middle of implementing a well-known, federally funded, Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) model developed by a major research university. A cornerstone of the reform was the block schedule. The flexible block schedule provided four instructional periods of 90 minutes for incoming freshmen. Within this schedule, students took math both semesters (a transition to advanced mathematics in the first semester and algebra during the second), a focused literature and writing course both semesters, a science course one semester and history the other, and a special Freshman Seminar for the final course during the first semester. Elective courses were available during the second semester.

Student interviews occurred in the late spring of each school year to ensure that students' opinions reflected a whole year's experience. The students were randomly selected to capture a range of performance and attendance in the schools, based on reviews of their first semester report cards. We balanced our sample by gender and made sure we spoke with a few students from each of the homerooms. No one refused to speak with us; almost all students were eager to share their thoughts and openly discussed what they liked and did not like about school. Our conversations were open-ended, allowing students to talk about instructional and curricular issues of importance to them, but we made a point to review how well they were doing, what they liked and disliked about their classes and the program, thoughts on their teachers, and plans for the future. The conversations typically ranged from 30 to 45 minutes and all our notes were handwritten.

We employed a similar analysis strategy for the high school interviews to that we used with the middle school students. We each reread our field notes after agreeing that the implemented block was central to the instructional story told by students. A set of benefits from the block also emerged from this

analysis. What emerged was a picture of students willing to exchange personal preferences regarding learning for a structure where learning opportunities were more plentiful.

The third and final data-based section of this chapter extends the idea of using student-generated characteristics of good teaching as the basis for whole-school comprehensive reform policy. In other words, what would be the operating principles for a school whose teachers acted in ways that students argue are the most effective? The data from this research was part of a larger, federally funded, three-year grant to explore efforts by urban districts to close the achievement gap between higher- and lower-achieving students (Corbett, Wilson, & Williams, 2002). We selected two small city schools for two reasons. First, we wanted to work in settings with many of the same demographic characteristic of large, city schools (i.e., low income and low achieving) but without the trappings of large bureaucracies. Student enrollment in each district was around 10,000 with more than ten elementary schools and four middle schools. Second, we felt that the environment for looking at disparity in achievement would be enriched in districts that acknowledged such an achievement gap. Both districts acknowledged this gap not only formally through the creation of local task forces and mission statements, and they had also implemented programs to reduce the gap.

The first year of data collection confirmed that most teachers in the two districts subscribed to the belief that all students can learn and succeed. But there are three distinct meanings given to that seemingly laudable belief. The first added the qualifier that all children can succeed if they were willing to try. Teachers espousing this perspective often argued that students were not holding up their end of the learning bargain. At some point, they reasoned, students needed to motivate themselves. The second meaning teachers offered placed the blame for lack of learning on families: All students can succeed but some don't because of their families. There was a variety of explanations for why the lack of family support could not be overcome from the proportion of time teachers spent with students being too short to counter balance home deficits to parents communicating their negative educational experiences to their children with that attitude turning students away from learning. But not all teachers were willing to lean on the ready crutches of families or student lack of interest. Indeed, there was a third group that believed that all students can learn and it was their job to make sure that it happened. How that stance manifests itself will be captured in the data sections below.

In the second year we wanted to learn more about what people meant by their qualifiers and what the implications might be for student learning. We

found some settings where teachers were unwilling to accept excuses (their own or others') for students not achieving, and they said, "It's my job" to make sure learning happened. In the final year we sought to identify whole schools that enacted that philosophy. Granite Junior High was one of two schools we encountered where that philosophy was embraced and enacted. The story of Granite is told through periodic observations and interviews over the course of the school year. We observed nearly every classroom and debriefed the teacher and several students after each lesson to better understand their interpretation of what was happening. We asked how typical the lesson was, what the purpose was, and how well that purpose had been achieved. We found uniformity in approach and philosophy ("It's my job to get students to learn and I won't accept any excuses for learning not taking place") that was missing in other buildings. The description offered below depicts both what was done and students' reaction to an environment that denied them the opportunity of not doing their work.

The fourth section of the chapter considers issues of educational reform policy more broadly, using students' perspectives in the first three sections as the springboard. The conclusion is that a much more simplified and potentially powerful set of policy goals might emanate from students' perspectives. Put simply, we argue that schools should be held accountable for three results:

1. Every child completes every assignment to an established level of quality.
2. Every assignment is worth doing.
3. Every adult in the building knows every child's name.

Students' Views of Good Teachers[i]

The kinds of students we have interviewed over the past decade have not performed well on traditional measures of success. Indeed, most of them read below grade level, perform poorly on basic mathematics tests, and write in an unskilled way. Yet, those failings should not be interpreted as indicating that the students do not care or that they do not understand what they need from their teachers to help them achieve. Students were adamant that teachers not be allowed to find excuses to not teach them, to leave a student alone just because he/she chose not to participate, or to let students decide on their own to work or not. They did not want teachers to give in to disruptions to the exclusion of instruction. They did not want teachers who failed to find the time to provide extra help. They did not want teachers to quit explaining something to someone just because the task or problem had already been explained several times before. They did not want teachers who ignored students' problems or who taught content devoid of meaning in students' daily

lives. They did not want teachers who expected little of them. The following comments dotted our conversations with these students and illustrate the key characteristics students valued in teachers:

If they don't keep after you, you'll slide and never do the work. You just won't learn nothing if they don't stay on you.

In a way, I do prefer strict teachers. Teachers that just let you do what you want, they don't get the point across. Strict teachers gets the point across.

S: I was getting Fs in September but I got my act together.

I: What did your teacher do?

S: She said she didn't want me to be left back.

I: What did she do to help?

S: She suggested that I get some tutoring and she did it. I come after school every Monday and Wednesday.

I: How does that help?

S: We get to do the work and learn how to study.

I: Why did your math grade go from a D last year to an A this year?

S: I didn't understand the teacher last year. This year's teacher explains it much better.

I: What do you mean?

S: She stays on a subject for two days or until we know it for the test.

S: I don't have no favorite class.

I: Why?

S: They boring.

I: What makes them boring?

S: 'Cause we don't do something that's fun.

I: What makes something fun?

S: Then you do different activities.

I like someone who puts themselves in our shoes . . . I guess a teacher don't got to be nice, but they got to be respectful.

Put succinctly, and in the words of adults, six characteristics summarize what students wanted to see in their classrooms:
- a teacher who "stayed on students" to complete assignments;
- a teacher who was able to control student behavior without ignoring the lesson;
- a teacher who went out of his/her way to provide help;
- a teacher who explained things until the "light bulb went on" for the whole class;
- a teacher who provided students with a variety of activities through which to learn; and
- a teacher who understood students' situations and factored that into their lessons.

When we say students wanted these qualities present in their classrooms, we mean that the overwhelming majority of students reiterated these characteristics at every opportunity in the interviews over the three-year period. These are not 'the survey says . . . ' kinds of answers. Offering the percentage of students who responded with these 'wants' is not very meaningful because the number of dissenters would be in the single digits, in absolute numbers, not percentages.

More important than the discrete elements in the list of desired qualities above is the sense that students were pointing to a more encompassing, holistic principle to which they wanted teachers to adhere. Essentially, we interpreted students to be saying that the effective teachers adhered to a 'no excuses' policy. That is, there were no acceptable reasons why every student eventually could not complete his/her work, and there were no acceptable reasons why a teacher would give up on a child. The premise was that every child should complete every assignment and that it was the teacher's job to ensure that this happened. Accepting this premise meant that the teacher would have to use a host of strategies, including the six listed above. But the particular strategies used were less important than the underlying belief they symbolized: that every child had to have the in-school support necessary for learning to occur. As one student concluded, after summarizing what his teacher had done to help him:

The whole point of it is to keep you from failing.

The strategies, then, were the means by which the teacher made sure that every child received this support.

This section lays out the six qualities bulleted above that students wanted their teachers to have—qualities that they believed would better enable them to learn and be successful in school. We caution against thinking of these as a simple checklist. While it was true that teachers using more of these were more valued by students, the real purpose of these qualities was to create a support net underneath student performance.

Good teachers pushed students to complete their assignments These low-income, low-achieving urban students of color admitted that they were used to not doing their work. In fact, this was their default response to most assignments and, undoubtedly, one of the building blocks in the adults' argument that students cared little about learning. Nevertheless, students were aware of this habit and liked teachers who successfully combated it. As two students explained (in their words and syntax):

It's not that I'm lazy, but I like a teacher that push me to learn. I might not be that confident at first, but then I'll get it.

I like the ones that don't allow excuses. It's my turn to get an education. I need to have someone to tell me when I'm tired and don't feel like doing the work that I should do it anyway.

Teachers "nagged" students in many ways, from always checking homework to offering quiet, individual reminders to giving rewards to calling parents. However, the underlying effect was the same. As one student boasted, "He keeps pressing me until I get it right."

Good teachers maintained order in the classroom   There was always an "edge" to these inner-city middle schools. At any moment, an altercation would erupt out of the constant chatter and shuffling of the classrooms and hallways. The frequency of these events became understandable to us after students shared the multitude of justifications for fighting someone: "he say, she say," "showing off," "trying to rule," "bullying," "bustin' on someone," "talking about they moms," "looking at people hard," "bumping into someone," "saying 'excuse me'," "not saying 'excuse me' " (the difference was all in the tone), "not having no manners," "trying to prove something," "owing money," "thinking they big," and, of course, "stealing someone's girlfriend" (or boyfriend).

    According to students, their teachers varied tremendously in how well they were able to control students, and the ones that could not bothered them a lot. As one student succinctly explained:

The kids don't do the work. The teacher is hollering and screaming, "Do your work and sit down!" This makes the ones that want to learn go slower. It makes your grade sink down. It just messes it up for you. The teacher is trying to handle everybody and can't.

Another compared the difference between strict and not-so-strict teachers:

Teachers that just let you do what you want, they don't get a point across. Strict teachers get the point across.

Recent research (Cothran, Kulinna & Garrahy, 2003) noted that effective classroom managers, across a wide range of school contexts, were skilled at setting consistent standards and at developing positive relationships with students. The same was true for the students we have talked to, but they added an important qualifier: the reason for sound management and a sense of order is to ensure that students learned:

I want a teacher strict enough for me to learn.

Good teachers were willing to help   Just as research has demonstrated that students have different intelligences and learning styles (Gardner, 1983; 1991), so too our interviews suggested that students needed different helping styles. Some wanted help after school, some during class, some individually, some via working with peers, some through whole class question-and-answer sessions, and some without ever having to acknowledge to anyone that they needed it.

Nevertheless, being omnisciently adept at knowing how and when to offer help was an indelible part of being good teacher.

A good teacher takes time out to see if all the kids have what they're talking about and cares about how they're doing and will see if they need help.

Help had benefits. For example, it hooked students who previously had been reluctant classroom participants into working. One student explains:

One boy in the class, he do all his work now. If it wasn't for my teacher, he wouldn't do nothing. At the beginning of the year, he don't do nothing; now he does. He wouldn't even take the SAT-9s. All he did was just bubbled in the answers. [It's] 'cause the teacher took time out to help him and talk to him.

Help also broke what we labeled 'the cycle of failure' that we heard about from so many students. One of them explained this phenomenon and the role of teacher assistance in ameliorating it much better than we ever could:

Say, for instance, I didn't come to school. The next day I came in, they went over something new. There wouldn't be like time to show me what they did [the previous day]. And the teacher wouldn't make sure I understood. So, I start moving with them, but I be behind. They should have given extra help. . . They could pull me to the side and ask me if I want to do it. Then it would be my choice.

Good teachers explained an assignment or a topic until everyone understood it. A common student complaint concerned teachers who moved too fast through material or explained it only once and in one way. They much preferred to have teachers who stayed on an assignment until everyone understood, who offered multiple and repeated explanations, and who, as one student said, "feed it into our head real good; they do it step by step and they break it down."

   Students seemed most disturbed by teachers who allowed discipline problems to affect the quality of their explanations. For example, numerous students referred to teachers who would say a variant of "I've already told you this; you should have listened the first time" in response to repeated requests for clarification. While the teachers were frequently and undoubtedly justified in being frustrated at the lack of attention that prompted the requests, to students this phrase meant "I refuse to teach you" and became symbolic of a teacher's lack of caring about student learning.

   On the other hand, students' faces brightened considerably when they were able to say something like the following about their teachers:

The teachers are real at ease. They take the time, you know, go step by step. We learn it more. It seems like they got the time to explain it all. We don't have to leave anyone behind.

Good teachers varied classroom activities. The student interviews cumulatively recapitulated the research on learning styles (Cassidy, 2004; Desmedt &

Valcke, 2004). That is, different activities appealed to different students. Working in groups, listening to the teacher talk, reading from a book, doing worksheets, participating in whole class discussions, and doing hands-on activities were all mentioned as students' preferences. However, they agreed that learning was the primary reason for liking a certain type of approach, as the following three statements illustrate:

I prefer working in groups. You have more fun and you learn at the same time. You learn quickly. So, you have fun and you do the work . . . but most of the time we be bored not in groups.

My favorite subject is math 'cause she made our work into a game and I caught on real fast doing it that way.

I prefer to work by myself 'cause most people don't read on the same level. I don't like to listen to others read. I might be ahead or behind where they are, whatever the case may be.

Good teachers tried to understand students   Students applauded teachers who did more than just teach content to them. They especially appreciated teachers who made the effort to see beyond students' behavior and understand who they really were. One student explained:

I heard teachers talking about people, saying "Those kids can't do nothing." Kids want teachers who believe in them.

Students particularly valued teachers who recognized the possibility that students' misbehaving was not automatically targeted at the teachers:

Sometimes a teacher don't understand what people go through. They need to have compassion. A teacher who can relate to students will know when something's going on with them. If like the student don't do work or don't understand, the teacher will spend a lot of time with them. Some teachers do the lesson one time and expect you to catch on.

Behind the six actions: The student-teacher relationship   Students seemed to equate the above teacher actions with "caring." That is, their quotes indicated to us that they were continually making inferences about where they stood with their teachers and whether teachers had students' best interests in mind, to use Noddings' (1992) definition of caring. Were they important enough to be pushed, disciplined, helped, taught, and respected? If so, then teachers valued them; if not, then teachers had given up on them.

The six qualities of teachers students wanted to have, therefore, took on an importance far beyond the specific instances in which they occurred. Their cumulative presence apparently led students to construct an image of certain teachers as truly interested and invested in enabling students to succeed. Students perceived that such teachers accepted no excuses for failure, that the teachers would go to any lengths to make success possible. Essentially, the

students naturally zeroed in on a phenomenon central to effective urban education that researchers have labored to depict for years—the quality of the relationship between inner-city students and their teachers (see Ladson-Billings, 1994; and Delpit, 1988). Student-teacher relationships are a means of underscoring the significance the students attached to teachers' preventing them from shrugging off work and, thereby, learning.

Three students of diverse performance levels from the same school illustrated the manner in which they invoked "caring" as the primary motivation behind a teacher's actions.

> I: Are you getting a good education?
>
> S: Yes, because my teachers this year say, "Pay attention; next year is going to be harder." They be like, "Come on, you can do good."
>
> I: Do you like for teachers to be like this?
>
> S: Yes, it tells me they care.
>
> I: What do you mean by "care"?
>
> S: Say if a teacher just sits down and says, "I don't gotta teach you." They just trying to get money. If they pat you on the back, that's a good teacher. It shows they want you to do good.
>
> I: Do you like for a teacher to push you to do your work?
>
> S: If you don't do your work, you ain't gonna get nowhere.
>
> I: So you like for them to nag you?
>
> S: Uh-huh.
>
> I: How does that make you feel?
>
> S: Better.
>
> I: Explain.
>
> S: I know [he or she] cares about me getting a good education.
>
> I: Do they all care?
>
> S: Some do.

One of my teachers really push kids to do work. She is the most caring teacher. She really want you to do work. Sometimes that make me mad but I still try to do the work. It nice to know you got a teacher who cares.

It appeared that believing a teacher cared about them did more than just make students feel good. Students in the school transformed teachers' caring enough to "teach" them into academic self-confidence. Five more of the students in the building offered comments on this development. One male explained: "[When they push me] it makes me think I can do the work; I'm glad they're trying to teach me instead of ignoring me, thinking I can't do it." Another male agreed that such actions "gives me confidence to do my work." In response to our query

about what it took to be a successful student, a third one stressed that "all students need people who are there for them." A female looked at this topic from the other side of the coin. She argued that with the students in her school, "The teachers have to push them or they will give up." A fifth student in the school went to some length to describe the effect that a particular "pushy" teacher had on him:

It made me feel more comfortable, knowing that I'd be able to know the work. See, at first, I didn't like her subject. At first, I didn't do no work. I thought it like any other class where the teacher would not make sure you know what you're doing. But my teacher was like, "You want a F, you want a F?" She kept getting on me. I like that.

As the above student claimed, a teacher who accepted no excuses often meant the difference between success and failure. When left to their own devices, some students worked hard to not do their work. They knew when they could cut class and still blend in with hall traffic to escape notice; and they would strategically calibrate their classroom effort to navigate the boundary between an F and a D. These actions were possible as long as there were cracks in the system through which students could slip.

The "no excuses" teacher closed the cracks. For example, one student discovered this late in his eighth-grade year when a teacher to whom the student had not been assigned essentially asked to have the young man moved to his class for all of his major subjects. The teacher had had the student two years earlier and was disturbed by the student's obvious efforts to avoid going to classes in eighth grade. The teacher explained to us that the student could do the work but was successfully managing to avoid doing so. Rather than complain about the teacher's close supervision, the student praised him.

I: What is the best thing about this school?

S: My teacher.

I: Why?

S: He teach and he don't play. Other teachers they play and let you play. My teacher tell you what you got to do. That is why I come to school now, to learn.

I: So, you're saying the teacher stays on students?

S: Yes. He stay on your back.

I: Do you prefer that?

S: Mmhmm.

I: Do you feel ready now for high school?

S: Mmhmm.

I: How do you know?

S: Cause I know how to do stuff now.

Students across most of the schools we have visited expressed this same line of reasoning—that "no excuses" equaled caring, which led to increased self-confidence in doing school work—equally adamantly and in similar proportions. It is important to point out, again, that students were able to separate qualities in a teacher that they just liked from those that helped them learn better. In other words, students could distinguish between a teacher's individual style or demeanor and a teacher's instructional style:

> S: My teacher is serious.
>
> I: What does that mean?
>
> S: It mean like he don't play around; he always have a straight face.
>
> I: Do you like that?
>
> S: I don't like it, but it is good that he that way. He teaches us about life that way.

In that classroom, we all say she was the meanest teacher; but I bet you, you will learn something in there. She will force you to learn. Even if I say to her, "Stop bothering me," I like it. I still want them to be nagging me.

She's mean out of the kindness of her heart. It's for a reason: so we can learn.

To us, examples such as the above ones clearly exemplified the depth of students' appreciation of the value of their relationships with their teachers. They were not so superficial as to only praise the "cool" teachers and to roundly ridicule the more stern members of a faculty. Instead, their reference point for judgments about teacher quality was whether they learned and whether the teacher ensured that they did. Good teachers would not give up on them for any reason. They felt that teachers who pushed them to work also believed they could complete the work.

The above quotations suggest that students began to believe in themselves as well. It was more than coincidental that students so often associated this approach with "caring" or, more tellingly, with simply "teaching." Teachers who continually pushed students to do their work became known as those that "cared," or who "actually taught," or "did their job."

Students eventually noted that the worth of the six good teacher characteristics was that they learned better. Understand that by "better" students sometimes meant that they learned "something." Unfortunately, it was not unusual for these students to spend a semester or an entire year in a major subject where they literally learned nothing, most often because they experienced a revolving door of substitutes or a new teacher who was not equipped to meet the challenge of an urban environment. (Indeed, one student's advice to an early-career teacher was, "She should quit this job; it's too hard for her.") Other times

students' use of learning "better" referred to "getting the work right," "understanding something that a teacher already tried to teach," and "getting stuff we haven't had before." Despite the lack of definitional sophistication and a confirming "objective" measure of what they had learned, students voiced no doubt about doing better in some teachers' classrooms than others. Unfortunately, for many of these students having a "good" teacher was often a matter of the luck of the scheduling draw.

<div align="center"><i>Good Instruction Trumps Personal Dislikes</i>[ii]</div>

We learned in the first section that learning better was inextricably connected to having a good teacher, in students' minds. The latter caused the former; and, so, it mattered greatly to students how often in their schedules they encountered good teachers. Nearly every student we have interviewed in the past decade could identify a teacher they had that they considered to be good; likewise, nearly every one could describe a classroom situation where little learning, if any, took place. Thus, changes that occurred in schools mattered most to students if they increased the number of good teachers.

   While the inner-city students we interviewed had little grasp of the adult frame regarding quality content (i.e., coherent, articulated curricula driven by consensually designed standards), they were keenly adept at evaluating the effects of significant instructional changes. They could clearly articulate whether changes promoted better teaching and, by extension, learning. In that respect, therefore, the students tended to adopt the kind of single-minded, uncomplicated focus on improved school and classroom practices that the experts frequently urge education stakeholders to use when making strategic decisions. An illustration of how students perceived the value of one such change occurred for some of the middle school students we interviewed in the previous section who were promoted to a couple of neighborhood high schools that had implemented a block schedule as part of its whole school reform efforts.

The block schedule   We asked these urban high school students what their apprehensions had been about moving to high school. They most frequently said that they had heard that, at their prospective high schools, students fought every day and that the teachers would not be holding their hands like their middle school teachers had. They would be on their own in the hallways and the classrooms, in other words.

   We then inquired if this proved to be true once the students got to their high schools. Almost 85 percent of the ninth graders who arrived at the schools

shook their heads in amazement. The rumors were wrong, they said, adding, the teachers are willing to go over it " 'til we understand it" and, the students said, "They explain it more than once and they ask you lots of questions." The students went on to reinforce the six characteristics described in the first section.

The students we had talked to in the middle school project were in the tenth grade when the schools adopted the reform. They—and others of their peers with whom we were speaking for the first time—concurred that the ninth graders' descriptions were also now accurate for them. Such had not been the case for them in ninth grade, and their comparisons contained a hint of the explanation for why.

Teachers last year wouldn't take as much time to help you.

Now the teachers take time with you, and let you know what's got to be done.

As we pushed them to explain what was different, time seemed to be the theme that ran through many of their comparisons. Not coincidentally, the schools had switched all of the grades from the traditional seven-period day to a block schedule in which students took four classes a semester, with 80–90 minutes devoted to each class.

Students predictably complained about the length of the classes with this new arrangement. It got boring, they said, and they had to sit too long and sometimes the teachers talked forever. However, when we got around to inquiring if they preferred seven periods to four, 107 out of the 148 ninth- and tenth-graders questioned in the first year of our interviews said they wanted the latter. Of the 41 who did not, six were neutral, and not a single student said that he or she learned better in the shorter classes. With rolled eyes about the tedium of having to be with one teacher for so long but in a convincing tone, students explained their almost reluctant endorsements of the block schedule:

Before there was not enough time to do everything we have to do. You can finish classwork.

There is more time for the teachers to help you. They can explain the work. We get to also work in groups and if I don't understand, someone else can help me.

You learn more with just four classes because the teacher has a longer time to explain it right.

You can build a relationship with the teacher. We can have more one-on-one interaction.

Students reiterated six benefits repeatedly, three of which were related to the quality teaching characteristics outlined in the previous section and three of which were related to improved learning. Students said that:
• teachers did a good job of explaining content and assignments;
• teachers used a variety of activities and ways of organizing students to work;

- teachers established relationships with students;
- students understood the work they were doing;
- students were able to finish their work; and
- students were able to keep track of their assignments and retain what they were learning.

These claims did not mean that students thought all of their classes were perfect. They understandably were pleased with some teachers more than others. What students were claiming was that the benefits occurred more often in the block classes than they had with schedules of seven or eight classes.

More time devoted to explanations   The value that students placed on a teacher's ability to explain what they were to learn and do well received considerable attention in the previous section. Students did not like being confused about what was going on in the classroom and stated quite aggressively that one of the major reasons why their classmates acted up in class and did not do their work was because they did not understand what they were supposed to do—either because they had not learned something that was a prerequisite to current work or because they had not grasped an explanation of current work the first, second, or third time it was given. The block had ameliorated this problem noticeably.

The teachers can explain things better. They don't have to cram it in.

You learn more with just four classes because the teacher has a longer time to explain it right.

The additional time meant that teachers could elaborate their explanations and respond to questions.

Classes is longer but we learn more. They go over assignments and have enough time to answer questions.

Variety of activities   A second benefit to the block that students noted was that teachers were able to inject variety into the activities students engaged in and to organize the class in different ways within the same lesson. Not surprisingly, students enjoyed variety in what they did in class. They did not mind teachers talking for a while, as long as it was not too lengthy and the content was interesting and understandable. However, students also pointed out that teachers could organize the students into small groups and work with them one on one each day. This work, they argued, greatly enhanced their ability to grasp material because they had multiple opportunities and multiple sources for explanations of the work. Over and over they talked about their classes following a routine of teacher talk, whole group practice or discussion, small group work, and individual work. They liked it.

We have more time for discussion. The teachers spend more time talking to us about the lesson. We have time to practice, and they teach it again.

We get to do more things. We get to work by ourselves, we get to work together, and we get to go over the work more.

Developing relationships   The third benefit that students saw was that the block enabled their teachers to develop relationships with them, to get to know them better, and to take a little more time with each one on one.

You can build a relationship with the teacher. We can have more one-on-one interaction.

It gives the teacher more time to explain and now the students weller.

We should emphasize that students primarily thought of this relationship in educational terms. That is, students felt that their teachers' willingness to help them often and whenever it was needed resulted in the teachers' knowing the students' abilities well and affirmed to the students that the teachers believed that they were capable of succeeding in that class and life. From this experience, students inferred that teachers cared about them. While several students also mentioned teachers who had helped them with personal problems, generally they were not claiming that the block put the teachers in a better position to counsel them. Rather, they indicated that the increased time for help deepened teachers' ability to connect their instruction to students' specific educational needs.

Better understanding of content   The remaining benefits accrued to students, and these were the ones they turned to in defense of the block, even when they had indicated that 90 minutes was sometimes too long—although it should be inserted here that no more than half of the students referred to their classes in this way. The other half argued that the school day actually went faster with the block and that even their classes seemed quick, especially when there was work to do the whole time. In any event, students said that they now understood the content and the work better than they had with shorter periods. As one student explained:

You have enough time to study, do the work, ask questions, and have the teacher explain the answers to you.

Thus, again, the way that increased time served as a lever to boost the amount of help available to students and consequently their understanding of what they were doing and learning cropped up in the interviews. Time made a difference. As another pointed out:

In math, I'm not that good. It gives me more time to ask the teacher how to do a problem.

Work completion   Students' understanding of a subject received decided help from simply being able to finish their work—the fifth benefit of the block. Students often described for us a 'cycle of failure' (our term, not theirs) in the classroom. In this cycle, students began a lesson, were unable to finish what they were doing in class, and were given the remainder as homework. They did not do the homework, either because of a lack of understanding or a lack of effort. Regardless, they came back the next day unsure of the previous day's content and, yet, launched right into new material. The cumulative effect of combining prior confusion with current work was profound befuddlement.

   Ninety minutes afforded teachers and students the opportunity to reach closure on a lesson. As the above students observed, they could listen to the teacher, try the work themselves (individually and in groups), ask questions, listen to additional explanations, and complete the work—all in the same time slot. This was a new, and welcome, experience for them.

When you have seven classes, it's only a short period of time, and you won't have time to finish work. If it's a workbook you couldn't take home, you had to do it the next day plus the new work. It was hard to keep up.

Keeping track of assignments   Finally, students expressed relief that they were now better able to "keep track" of their classes. They used this expression over and over. By it, they meant partly that they simply could stay on top of what they were supposed to do, such as with tests, homework, and class content.

There's not all that work at one time. If you got different homework from each class, it's too much. I had all those classes before. You might forget what you had to do. It's easier this way.

Before we were memorizing every day, doing class work. It was confusing with all the other work. The main thing now is less memorizing. I would have passed last year with less classes.

They also meant that they could learn the subject better. They said that they could "focus" on a class better and, thus, remember the content better.

You're more focused on one subject. I become more focused. With nine classes, oh God, it drove me crazy. I had to study all those things. Now I get most of my stuff done and when I go home, I can just study my stuff.

Four classes is better for my opinion. You know what you're doing more better. They leveled down to major subjects, and you can focus on classes.

Completed work. Focused attention. Readily available help. Good explanations. Variety. A relationship with a teacher. The block schedule, students felt, had almost single-handedly created a school full of good teachers! Apparently, being with students longer put the teachers in the position of having to come up with creative ways of using the time, and the most obvious solutions corresponded

well with students' notions of what good teachers should be doing. That consequence alone was enough reason for students to support a change that they might otherwise have been uncomfortable with for less educational reasons.

We found a consistent message among students of color who attend schools that have traditionally struggled to help them achieve at an acceptable level. They want teachers who insist they do their work. They praise teachers who manage student behavior without ignoring the important work of learning. They applaud teachers who go out of their way to help them. They support teachers who explain things until the whole class understands. They encourage teaching that offers a variety of activities. And, they respect teachers who respect them enough to learn more about their personal situations and incorporate that in their learning. We saw in this section how students were willing to adjust to a structural arrangement—the block schedule—that promoted these characteristics. But how might they respond to a whole school environment that places student learning and these characteristics at the core? In the next section we explore what just such a school looks like and how students react to having to do their class work with quality as the clear focus.

A WHOLE SCHOOL ORGANIZES AROUND STUDENTS' VIEWS OF QUALITY TEACHING[iii]

Early one morning as we were making the rounds of this seventh-through ninth-grade school of 325 students, trying to keep pace with the fast-moving but soon-to-be retiring principal, a young adolescent approached him.

"I understand you're leaving us," she said with a somewhat furtive tone.

"Oh, I'm not really leaving you, he replied, "I'm still going to be around; I'm just not going to be the principal."

With a little more anxiety, the thirteen-year-old African American exclaimed, "But what are we going to do?"

"Oh, the new principal will be fine," he assured the student.

"But, but, but what if he doesn't know the rules?" she cried.

There was much more to the student's question than whether the new principal would know about hall passes, detentions, and when to allow pizza parties. To be sure, Granite Junior High School had rules, but the ones to which the girl referred had more to do with academics than discipline, and they were not necessarily etched in stone. Rather, they were ingrained in the minds of the adults and young people. They were habits, customary ways of doing things, a set of beliefs—a list of do's and don'ts. Just what were those rules?

At Granite, it was all about class work, getting it done and getting it done with "quality"—the ultimate example of pushing students to complete their assignments. This was institutionalized through an A, B, I grading system. We found no misconceptions about this anywhere in the building. Everyone agreed that the driving motto of the school was that every student would complete every assignment at a level sufficient to get a B. Unfinished and unsatisfactory assignments would be worked on until they were complete and satisfactory, all the while keeping up with the new work. There were no zeros to serve as pardons, no detentions that would substitute time served for tasks undone; there were only "incompletes" and "not yets." Even the end of the school year offered no relief from the press of responsibility. There was summer school until that I (for "incomplete") became a B.

It sounded so intuitively simple to us to run a school based on the principle of completing work. If a task was worth giving, then it was worth doing; and if it was worth doing, then it was worth doing well. This refrain was not a mere slogan to motivate students to do their best. It was a rule that applied to everyone. There would be no Cs, Ds, or Fs; only As, Bs, and Is. Two teachers explained:

We work really, really hard to not let kids fall through the cracks. We want success for every student. We say to parents, "We'll guarantee success if you get them here." That is one of the strong things about this school, the fact that everyone works so hard to get the entire student population to be successful. We're on an "A, B, I" system. There is no failure. You have to really make an effort to fail. We tell them, "You will do your work." Sometimes that feels like to us, "Who is really doing the work here?" Us or them? That gets real frustrating, when a kid plain doesn't care. But we do work really, really hard; we pound away on that incomplete list.

If every assignment is valuable and meets my objective for what I'm teaching, then every assignment is worth doing. To let a child settle for not doing it then is out of the question. If they settle for what might be a D, then what objective isn't being met by letting them do that? If they are not in class, they don't get their work done, and they know we're gonna be on them.

To be sure, there were students who fell behind, especially students who procrastinated, and whose parents did little to check on their assignments. But the teachers at Granite rarely shrugged it off with a "What can you do—it's out of our hands." Instead, they looked inward, not allowing themselves any excuses for student inactivity.

If we give up on them, then everyone has given up on them. They are still children. A lot of our kids are without strong parenting. So, it's our responsibility. Who taught me? My parents. Who is teaching them? We form that connection with the students. When do you say enough is enough? You don't. How can you say that you've done all you can? It's up to you. If they have bad parents, we have to step in or we will be unleashing a really scary future. We can't do that.

Until they are responsible for their own education we are responsible for them. Letting them cop out? NO! We are the parents here, we have to be responsible! If I make being here worthwhile,

they're gonna be here. I don't think it's even the nature of the bird to be fired up about learning. Socializing is natural. If we can pique their interest, they will be. I go back to we're the adults' we know they need to be educated. Throw in some fun and let them trust me. Tell them: "We know how to teach you; the deal is you agree to do what I ask you to do; my deal is to ask you to do those things that will let you learn."

The teachers at Granite also looked at discipline in a slightly different way. A teacher offered some fairly irrefutable logic:

A student can't be sent out into the hall. If they are not in class, they will get behind. If they get behind, they don't complete their work. If they don't complete their work, they will have an incomplete.

So, the teacher continued, teachers could not afford to take student misbehavior personally and punish a student without thinking about the consequences of that punishment for completing assignments. Realistically, there were times when a student simply could not function in the group environment of the classroom. So there even a structured option—the Student Planning Center—for those rare situations. Of course, the focus remained on learning with the student doing an assignment on his own rather than with peers.

This approach meant that students were often working on different tasks and other provisions had to be made to avoid "down time" for the faster students (a variant on the theme of offering variety noted earlier by students). One way was to offer "sponge" activities that could "soak up" the time of students who had finished an assignment. The art was to create activities that extended the students' learning without appearing to be busy work. To lend substance to these extensions, teachers used these as the means by which students could transform their Bs into As. That is, a B indicated that the student had completed an assignment at a "quality" level; the A meant that the student had gone beyond the assignment and had completed other additional ones related to the same topic or skill.

A similar strategy was in place school wide. The last thirty minutes of the school day was called "R&E," for re-teaching and enrichment. During this time, students needing additional help with or time on a task went back to their teachers' classrooms' students who were "caught up"—that is, they had completed all of their assignments at the B level—could work on extensions to move up to the A level. The impressive part of all of this was that people regarded it as perfectly normal that some students might require re-teaching while others explored the enrichment options. It was a tangible acknowledgement that people learn at different speeds. And it offered a way for students to get extra help and stay on a task until it was understood—both characteristics students had voiced in the first section as central to quality teaching.

Classrooms were business-like to say the least. There was always work to done—either a current one, a past one, or an extension. If students lost track of where they were on what, every classroom had a version of an "Are you caught up?" chart on the wall. These varied from the pedestrian—crosshatched tables of names, assignments, and checks—to the artistic (e.g., fish nets with the names of those on top of their work inside the next and those needing to catch up floating somewhere else on the display).

Enacting the "rules" was a tough job for teachers. So what did they do to ease some of the burden of this extra work? They used a few "tricks of the trade." For one, most of them used groups in the classroom, mixing up the variety of activities. Some were quick to point out a distinction between having the students work in groups and doing cooperative learning. With respect to the latter, the school had invested heavily in having the teachers undergo formal training in cooperative learning. Indeed, a certified trainer was a member of the faculty. Cooperative learning followed a rather strict and consistent set of guidelines, including assigned student roles within the group, constructive contributions from all group members, and individual accountability.

They also structured the school day to increase the amount of time available to help students, a key characteristic of quality teaching noted by students in the first section. For several years, this structuring, essentially, was staying after school for an hour or more, well beyond what was called for in the teachers' contract. Burnout was on the horizon. The teachers and the principal therefore had recently instituted the "re-teaching and enrichment" period—the thirty minutes at the end of the day referred to earlier. Thus, re-teaching was formally acknowledged as inevitable and natural, and more importantly, the responsibility of the school rather than the child and/or parents at home.

Finally, the teachers worked in teams. Four or more of them had the same group of students for all their major subjects. The "or more" referred to special education teachers who joined the teachers in class as part of an inclusion effort in the school. This enabled them to apply a consistent set of expectations, to support one another's efforts, and to share ideas about working with students, particularly those that seemed to be having difficulty. This approach is a clear illustration of the student-generated characteristic of quality teachers knowing their students' situations. The teachers rarely acted on a student problem or considered a redirection in their lessons without consulting teammates. In fact, before we could begin an interview with one teacher, she let us know in no uncertain terms that everything was done from a team approach and that it made no sense to interview her without including the others, especially the special education teacher with whom she team taught the class.

All of this sounds like something that might work for dedicated adults, but how did students respond? We asked them about both having to complete their assignments and having to do them at an acceptable level of quality.

Students' Reactions to Having to Complete Their Assignments

Four students were decidedly unequivocal in discussing the school's orientation to getting work done. They had no choice in the matter; students could finish tasks either "now" or "later," but not "never."

If you don't get it done, you can do it later in class, you can do it during R&E, you can do it for homework, or you can come in after school.

My teacher is extremely crazy. You never know how she is going to act. You just know she won't let you say, "I can't do it."

In this class, you have to make up all your work. The teacher is always telling us what is missing and when we have to have it in by.

Some people let their work slide, about twenty-five percent; but they do it eventually or they have to come to summer school to do it.

Staying on students constantly did not seem far removed from old-fashioned nagging, an action that adolescents rarely greet with favor. So, we were extremely curious to see how students perceived this nagging—as a form of control or one of the "rules" about getting work done?

Some felt that without the teacher, they would lag behind in getting their work done:

I like teachers who keep after me, so I won't be behind. They want you to succeed.

What I like best is when we get lots of help, help on our work so we can get caught up. A good teacher keep on sticking with you so you can get caught up.

Others saw the prodding as making the difference between passing and failing:

If they didn't keep on top of me, I wouldn't be passing. I just wouldn't know the things I know.

Still others felt that the teachers' actions helped compensate for students' poor work habits:

I prefer a teacher who keeps after me to do my work. I misplace stuff. It is easier to pace yourself when a teacher is telling you what you need to do.

I tend to slip off and get off the edge. But the teachers here keep hounding us so that we can go to high school and college.

Ultimately, students argued, even though the teachers might have gotten on their nerves a bit, the expectations for students were quite clear:

Some of the teachers do push you a little bit too much, but it is good 'cause you can't quit. You got an assignment to do, you gotta do it.

Perhaps in the best position to appreciate the benefits of teachers' refusing to allow students to choose to not complete their work was a student who had transferred in from the other junior high in the district that was demographically comparable to Granite.

In the long term, this school is better. It be better. It'll pay off 'cause you always did your best. If you miss a question at the other school, they let it go. If you went to this school, you would have got it right.

Students' Reactions to "ABI"

Students appeared equally positive about the grading system. Indeed, the manner in which they talked about As, Bs, and Is suggested that backing up the teachers' constant reminders with the opportunity to get a B or A was a particularly powerful punch.

This time I am getting all Bs I used to get bad grades. With this grading system, they made me get all caught up.

Students continually referred to getting their work done "right," a phrase that, to us, reiterated the school's definition of success as requiring both effort and excellence. Students did not expect to get a good grade for trying. Instead, they kept trying in order to get a good grade, as illustrated by the following student:

If you get your work done to quality, you get a B. If it is not quality, you get to redo it. I like this system better because if you don't get it right you get it back. Not in [another school the student had attended], there you just get a grade.

Again, it sometimes took a student who had also attended another junior high in the system to appreciate how different Granite was. The following student not only valued the "rules" but also interpreted enforcement of the rules as a sign of the teachers' interest in the students' welfare:

If a teacher let a person get away with a D or E, they shouldn't be teaching. This school is not like that. When I first came here I didn't understand that. It takes some getting used to. I was like, "Oh man, I got to go." But my teacher was, like, "No, stay; you can do it." Now I stay caught up; I'm concerned about being caught up. I don't want my name not called when she say, "Who caught up?" That embarrass me, dude.

Several of them, however, were disgruntled about having to do extra work to get an A. These students felt that getting all of the answers correct on a paper, for example, should warrant an A rather than a B. But, in most of their classes, the only avenue to an A was to work on the extensions referred to earlier.

I like the fact that to get an A level, they make you do extra work and that makes you more ready for college. But I don't like the fact that even if you get all the answers right, you only get a B unless you do the extra work.

While the above student recognized that doing extra work might have some payoff in the future, there were some who saw no such redeeming qualities:

That's what I hate about here. At another school, if I stay caught up, I would get an A. Here, you do extra work to get an A.

In these last two sections we reviewed an organizational response to improving learning conditions—the block schedule—and a whole school restructuring initiative—an ABI approach to work completion—as illustrative of how quality teaching might manifest itself in practice. But what are the implications of these quality teaching characteristics for how adults reform schools? In the last section we suggest that the answers to three simple questions would give educators considerable insight into how likely it is that they are creating conditions under which student learning will flourish.

USING STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON GOOD TEACHING TO GUIDE ADULT REFORM BEHAVIOR

Students we have spent time with—those in low-income communities who attended schools that fit the profile of those failing to meet adequate yearly progress in the new federal accountability movement ushered in by No Child Left Behind legislation—offered a pretty straightforward and simple view of good teaching. Be strict. Help. Explain clearly. Provide variety. Understand students. Students held firmly to this perspective in assessing the value of a block schedule. An arrangement that required secondary students to stay in one class for what may have been an uncomfortably long time personally was nevertheless accepted because it better accommodated good teaching than did shorter class periods. Likewise, students supported changes to a school's grading system that made it difficult for them to avoid altogether or give short shrift to certain assignments. Not coincidentally the same change caused teachers to shift into full help-and-explain mode. Of course, students had no idea how these changes would manifest themselves on standardized test scores. All they knew was that in certain classes and schools they learned better than they did in other classes and schools. And they had a good idea about what the differences were—good teaching.

   The problem with using standardized tests scores as the bases for spurring adult action is that producing good results can be accomplished in ways that do not necessarily represent good instruction. Numerous educational experts have pointed this out. Popham (2004), for example, has argued that standardized tests (at least the ones currently in place around in our nation's schools) are "instructionally insensitive" since both good and bad instruction can lead

to increased test score. Likewise, Braun and Mislevy (2005) make the point that policy makers are developing accountability systems on an "intuitive test theory" that may look commonsensical but is in reality full of faulty assumptions. Standardized tests no doubt leverage action, but the actions may not be ones that are educationally sound.

So, does the preceding discussion offer any guidance as to what better levers for reform might be, if such advice were to derive from the experience of those who have the most extensive and intensive experience in education—students? Our answer is not surprisingly, "Yes," especially because attention would unequivocally be focused directly and almost exclusively on (1) classrooms and (2) aspects of classroom life over which participants have at least some control. We, in fact, envision three characteristics of schools that educators should be held accountable for if they take students seriously. The characteristics are phrased in the form of questions, thereby serving as a short, targeted accountability assessment that might, in fact, actually direct schools to providing good teaching to all. They are:

- Does every child complete every assignment at an acceptable level of quality?
- Is every assignment worth doing?
- Does every adult know the name of every child in the building, and is every child known well by at least several adults in the building?

It seems clear that assignments are the basic work of students, according to the students. If teachers care about them, students said, then teachers will make sure that they complete their work. If teachers do not care about them, then teachers will readily give the students zeroes or Fs. Unfortunately, most schools do exactly this. They leave doing assignments as a choice and at times make effort an acceptable proxy for excellence. This obviously shortchanges everyone but represents a negotiated compromise that allows students and teachers to make it through the day with less stress than otherwise might be generated (Cusick, 1973).

However, we saw earlier that at least one school was more effective where we heard students say that the best teachers were incessantly vigilant about whether they did their work or not. This school apparently solved the riddle about how to accomplish this vigilance. And we are currently in the middle of studying several others that recently have opted for this path (Corbett, Wilson, & Haring, 2005). In all these settings, educators have to reach consensus about what tasks are worth doing, devise numerous ways of keeping track of what students have done, communicate students' status to both the kids and their parents frequently, and establish interim interventions to prevent students from accumulating an inordinate number of incompletes. The first year of such an initiative, therefore,

generally proves to be quite frustrating for some students. But with the following year expectations are more widely known ahead of time and acceded to and, rather than bemoaning the changes, students begin to recognize the often unprecedented level of success they are enjoying. Thus, it would seem to make sense that completing assignments would be at the heart of what makes for a school in which all students learn well.

But the assignments need to be worth doing. This, then, would be a second accountability for a school to meet, and it is a topic about which students are mute. To be sure, they know if an assignment is engaging or boring, novel or redundant, easy or hard. But students know little about curriculum standards, learning theory, and the like. Indeed, students never questioned whether the work they were given was important. They simply trusted that their assignments represented what they needed to do to be ready for the next grade, or the next school level, or for life. This blind acceptance of teachers' competence to give them assignments that are worth doing, therefore, places a huge obligation on educators. It requires them to deeply and extensively collaborate on matters of educational content and the instructional process and, therefore, to engage in publicly sharing and critiquing their lessons to insure that the work they are asking students to do is the most salient for enabling students to be happy, healthy, and productive citizens.

In other words, schools should be under the accountability spotlight to create professional learning communities. The particulars of what these communities would look and sound like would undoubtedly vary. But the professionals would be responsible for collectively questioning their ineffective teaching practices, examining new pedagogical strategies, finding constructive ways to deal with difference and conflict, and supporting each others' professional growth (Little, 2003). Teachers would be in charge of making sure that they and their colleagues adhered to best practice. It makes sense for this responsibility to be in their province because they jointly would be accountable for offering students assignments whose completion was the schools' core activity. What such a process should do is make public and consensual classroom actions, rather than allowing each teacher to offer his/her own interpretation.

Thirdly, there is no escaping the conclusion that schooling is all about relationships. Try as we have to separate people in schools—by walled-in individual classrooms, by carefully delineated rows of desks, by rules that prevent talking with one another except at specified times—they keep bumping into each other. Students are tremendously keen on bumping into adults who care about them. Indeed, they lumped all the characteristics of good teaching under a single banner: Good teachers care. In fact, every time a teacher refused to let a student not do an assignment or came up with another way to help a

student or offered another explanation of an assignment was a time that students understood it mattered to the teacher whether a student learned or not. Students equated caring with teaching!

A first step, it would seem, in demonstrating a caring attitude would be for students to be known to adults and not just to those they happen to be with in a classroom. That is a good start to be sure, but for a school to become a community, there are connections that must occur outside the classroom. And students cannot be anonymous and have those connections made. Too often as we walked school hallways we would hear some adult ask roaming students where they were supposed to be. Equally too often the adults had no idea who the students were or where they should be. A quick lie coupled with an already overtaxed adult typically resulted in shooing the students out of sight—and out of mind. Anonymity creates opportunity to be sure, but in the long run it disintegrates the ability of schools to nurture relationships. Thus, every adult should know every student's name. That would be hard to accomplish in many of the huge schools that exist today. So meeting this accountability suggestion would put a premium on being "small." There is a movement in this direction currently (WestEd, 2005) and regardless of the rationales behind the various efforts, the outcome would be desirable: More people would know who most people are in the building. And, of course, there should be several people in the building who know each child's specific learning styles and needs intimately.

Students saw value in innovations if they were rooted in their ideas of good teaching/learning and if they were implemented so that the innovations increased their chances of success. Students' positive response to block scheduling and ABI examples reflected their sense that their teachers and schools were embarking on changes that better enabled teachers to be the kind of teachers that mattered most to them and were important to their learning. The simple answers of students then were their attempts to hold to basic principles of teaching and learning. Students held their teachers accountable for making sure children did what they were supposed to do, for insuring that what they were supposed to do was worth doing, and for caring about them. Educational reform could do much worse than to adhere to these "childish" principles.

NOTES

[i] This description of students' views of good teaching is a condensed version of chapter four in *Listening to Urban Kids* published by State University of New York Press (2001) and written by the chapter authors. A shortened version is also found in a special issue of *Educational Leadership* on "Do Students Care About Learning?" (Corbett & Wilson, 2002).

[ii] This accounting of students' views of high school block scheduling was first published in a special issue of *Educational Leadership* on "Do Students Care About Learning?" (Corbett & Wilson, 2002).

iii This account of a school reforming its approach to teaching young adolescents is a shortened version of a more detailed description found in chapter five of the Teachers College Press book by Corbett, Wilson, & Williams (2002) entitled, *Effort and Excellence in Urban Classrooms: Expecting—and Getting—Success with All Students*.

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SECTION TWO

WHO STUDENTS ARE AND HOW THEY DEVELOP
IN CLASSROOMS AND SCHOOLS

INTRODUCTION TO SECTION TWO

The nine chapters in this section focus on who students are and how they develop in classrooms and schools. Consisting of studies conducted by researchers in Canada, Ghana, Ireland, Pakistan, and the United States, this section includes chapters focused on the experiences of young people from 6 to 22 years of age. Some of the chapters aim to critically inquire into how the identities of an increasingly diverse group of students are influenced by what happens in classrooms and schools, and others probe how students in different locations adapt to the structures, expectations, and work of classrooms and schools.

Just as the phenomenon and implications of naming threaded its way through the chapters in Section One as a unifying theme, a unifying theme that threads its way through the chapters in Section Two is that identity must be understood as informed by multiple sources and is manifested in multiple ways. There are numerous dimensions of diversity that go into composing an identity, and while all these dimensions must be taken into account when a researcher aims to capture students' experience of developing their identities within school contexts, these chapters highlight the importance of accessing the perspective and experience of the young person claiming or being labeled with a particular identity. Within this overarching theme, some chapters focus on one identity but highlight others either to broaden the context or to acknowledge that other social forces are at play in their lives, and other chapters take up the interacting or defining force of multiple identities, and thus attempt to address the dynamic complexity of the many sides of students' identities and how schools play a part in their development.

The two chapters with which we open this section foreground one dimension of identity—that of gender—but address as well how this single dimension is informed by others. Paul Connolly, in "Boys Will Be Boys" . . . But in What Ways? Social Class and the Development of Young Boys' Schooling Identities," draws upon a comparative ethnographic study of two groups of 5- and 6-year-old boys living in Belfast, Northern Ireland; one from a school located in a poor, working-class neighborhood with a history of sectarian tensions

and violence and the other from a school situated in an affluent, middle-class suburb. In his discussion Connolly seeks "to move beyond traditional sex-role socialization models of gender acquisition to focus on the active role that these young boys' play in the negotiation, construction, and performance of their gender identities." In also emphasizing the importance of social context, Connolly's study demonstrates the diverse forms of masculinity that young boys develop and reproduce, reflecting the very different socio-economic contexts within which they live.

Wayne Martino and Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli, in "Schooling, Normalisation, and Gendered Bodies: Adolescent Boys' and Girls' Experiences of Gender and Schooling," report on research with 14- to 16-year-old boys and girls conducted in 6 Australian high schools (public and private; single-sex and co-educational; rural and urban). Over 900 students completed open-ended surveys that asked them to write about their experiences of gender and schooling. Martino and Pallotta-Chiarolli use the voices of students to explicate how issues of gender, sexuality, social class, ethnicity and the body are implicated and interweave in girls' and boys' social experiences of schooling and what the implications of this interweaving might be for addressing diversity in schools. Specifically, the authors draw on student voices to "interrupt the powerful normalizing tendency driving the positions taken up by those who advocate that boys are now being short changed."

The second two chapters we include in this section take up the interacting or defining force of multiple identities as they shape and influence students' lives at school in the United States and Canada. Beth Rubin, in "Differences in Transition: Diverse Students Navigating the First Year of High School," argues that various studies point to the ninth-grade year in high school (when students are generally 14 years old) as a critical "make or break" time for students, predictive of later school performance. She asserts that while a number of researchers have investigated aspects of the ninth-grade experience, her chapter "takes a sociocultural approach that foregrounds the perspectives of the students themselves." By providing case studies of five students, drawing extensively on interviews and observations to present the words, views, and daily experiences of those students, her chapter describes how these students navigated the academic and social complexities of their first year in a large, diverse, public, high school in the eastern United States. Through this case study approach, Rubin shows how each student is positioned differently in the school setting and thus must finds his or her own unique resolution to the academic and social challenges common for ninth-grade students.

The complex process of student identity formation, and the specific role students can take in clarifying that process, is illuminated from a different angle by

Kathleen Gallagher and Philip Lortie in their chapter, "Building Theories of Their Lives: Youth Engaged in Drama Research." Drawing on a larger ethnographic study of four public high schools (for students aged 14–18) in Toronto and New York City, Gallagher and Lortie argue that, "The fluid identity-play of dramatic improvisation as a research device offers a site for the critical interrogation of a context and what is learned there." In their chapter, they identify " 'conflict' as central to our understanding of, and indeed hope for, greater social cohesion and understanding of diversity among youth in schools." The questions they raise in their chapter build on the claim that youth are engaged in a process of theorizing or myth-debunking about their own lives; that they are both attracted to and repulsed by prevailing stereotypes and "theories" of themselves. Conflicts in drama, the authors explain, "become sites of struggle for divergent perspectives where notions of 'difference' are played out in complex ways in secondary school classrooms." Drawing on field notes and interviews, the authors illustrate how students negotiate these sites of struggle.

Two chapters that focus on identity formation in schools in Pakistan and Ghana, respectively, highlight how students in these countries must navigate not only social, academic, class, and racial complexities but also linguistic and religious differences. Nilofar Vazir in her chapter, "How Students Learn about Right and Wrong in the First Year of a Pakistani Private School," explores how three boys and one girl between five and six years of age develop social, academic, and moral perspectives on what is right or wrong during their first year of formal schooling in Pakistan. Vazir uses a qualitative case study method— data were collected over an eight-month period through observation of the participants' classes, structured and unstructured interviews, informal chats and conversations with the students and their teacher, students' drawings and stories, school literature, and general observation of the school and classroom lessons—to focus on situations in which each student addresses questions of right and wrong, especially during classroom instruction, in activities bound by particular routines or rules, or in less formal and more spontaneous incidents, with the teacher or other students. Drawing on these data, Vazir concludes that from a social perspective, students must learn to obey rules, follow routines, and comply with expectations concerning how they are supposed to relate to other students and teachers. From an academic perspective, they must learn how to appear clever or smart through getting the correct answers. From a moral perspective, they must demonstrate their understanding of the teachings of Islam and develop an awareness of principles such as respect, responsibility, obedience, kindness, fairness, and tolerance. The greatest challenge facing these young students, however, is how to balance these perspectives, which sometimes come into conflict with one another.

George J. Sefa Dei and Bathseba M. Opini, in "Schooling in the Context of Difference: The Challenge of Post-Colonial Education in Ghana," examine how issues of difference and diversity are dealt with in post-colonial African schooling contexts. The findings discussed are drawn from a case study of how Ghanaian schools, colleges, and universities respond to difference and diversity within local school populations. The chapter specifically deals with college (secondary school) and university students' as well as educators' perspectives on their schooling experiences and the role of these subjects in defining and changing present and future educational aspirations. The study utilized a qualitative approach to data collection: data were generated through semi-structured, face-to-face individual interviews, focus-group interviews, and classroom observations. Drawing on these data, Dei and Opini argue that there are significant lessons to be learned from a critical examination of how students and educators in Ghana understand difference and diversity. The chapter also shows that difference profoundly implicates current discussions of educational change, and that student voices relating to the intersections of gender, ethnicity, culture, language, religion, and class/minority issues in education offer useful insights into ways of enhancing the learning outcomes for students.

Students' processes of identity formation are further complicated when those students are immigrants and non-native speakers. Robert V. Bullough, Jr., in "Ali: Becoming a Student—A Life History," presents a life history of a 12-year-old Afghani immigrant, Ali, as he learns to be a student in a U.S. school. Bullough situates the challenges Ali faces in the story of Afghanistan and the world-view of Islam, Ali's family history (his father was murdered by the Taliban), and his life as a Shi'a Muslim and a Sayyed (a direct descendant of the Prophet). Drawing on interviews with Ali, his teachers, and some members of his family, as well as on observations of Ali in school, Bullough uses the challenges Ali faces "as the basis for considering the wider questions associated with helping immigrant children settle, adjust, and thrive in a new land and in what is often a new institutional role—that of student."

In "Portraits of Self and Identity Constructions: Three Chinese Girls' Trilingual Textual Powers," Xiao Lan Curdt-Christiansen and Mary H. Maguire share a slice of ongoing research that highlights the textual powers in three languages of three 11-year-old Chinese girls who attend school in Quebec. The authors focus on the girls' "distinct authorial signatures as writers" by examining texts they choose as representative of their writing in English, French, and Chinese. Addressing the questions, "How do they portray themselves in their texts?" and "How do they weave their socio-linguistic-cultural worlds into their writing?" Curdt-Christiansen and Maguire illustrate how "the girls construct their possibilities of selfhood and realize their textual powers by finding a third space from

within which to weave their cultural worlds into their texts and aesthetically express themselves in multiple languages." Drawing on interviews with the girls' families and the girls themselves, as well as on the girls' writing, the authors emphasize that the process of identity construction in which they girls engage is "a dynamic, ever-changing process of self definition."

In "Finding Their Way: ESL Immigrant and Refugee Students in a Toronto High School," Grace Feuerverger and Elisabeth Richards report a study into the lives of newly arrived students in a Toronto inner-city high school as they confront the process of immigration. In many cases, the authors suggest, this process is characterized by trauma, upheaval, and often despair. By listening to the voices of the students experiencing this process, and by opening a dialogue that was complex and multi-layered, achieved through open interviews, Feuerverger and Richards found that sometimes immigrant students feel that their identities are rejected by both Canadian and home communities, and other times they perceive their multiple identities to be well accepted. In some cases, "their own prior lived experiences of conflict and war create negative stereotypes about various cultural/linguistic groups, races and religions, which they bring into the Canadian classroom." Feuerverger and Richards suggest that all these factors affect how the students view their world. Therefore, the intention of their chapter is "to initiate a space for rethinking and reshaping an understanding of teaching and learning within culturally and linguistically diverse Canadian school populations as a social phenomenon that is fundamentally linked to the lived experiences of those who have fled war, violence, and economic instability in geo-political contexts throughout the world."

Through their explorations of students' various struggles, challenges, and accomplishments in relation to the complex process of identity formation, chapter authors in this section highlight the importance of attending to multiple dimensions of diversity, the often fraught interplay between identity and context, and the importance of schools, educators, and researchers finding ways to support students in their diversity such that they can thrive in school.

PAUL CONNOLLY

"BOYS WILL BE BOYS" . . . BUT IN WHAT WAYS? SOCIAL CLASS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG BOYS' SCHOOLING IDENTITIES

INTRODUCTION

Interviewer: Do you think it's important to go to school?

Cameron[1]: Nooo!

Davey: Nah!

Interviewer: Why? Does it not matter if you go to school or not?

Davey: No

Cameron: I hate it

Interviewer: In school what about sums, do you like doing sums?

Adrian: No

Tommy: No

Interviewer: Why?

Adrian: Because too boring

Interviewer: What makes it boring?

Adrian: Because you have to, like/

Tommy: /You have to, you have to think about it and write the number— a hundred plus a thousand and all

Adrian: I know

Interviewer: And do you find it hard or easy?

Adrian: Hard

Tommy: Hard

Interviewer: What about reading, do you like reading?

Jamie: No

Cameron: No

Interviewer: No? Why not?

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Cameron: I don't

Jamie: It's wick! It takes my memory away

The discourse on boys' underachievement is now pervasive in government and educational policy circles across much of the Western world (Office for Standards in Education [Ofsted], 1993; Johnson, 1996; Epstein, Elwood, Hey, & Maw, 1998a; Arnot, David, & Weiner, 1999; Martino & Berrill, 2003). Moreover it is a discourse that tends to be characterised by a crisis account with boys being seen to be falling ever further behind girls in public examinations (Gorard, Rees, & Salisbury, 1999, 2001; Connolly, 2006b). The types of perspectives introduced above, of boys being disillusioned with and alienated from schooling, are all too easy to find and help to shore up and feed the moral panics about boys and education that have been generated within many countries over the last decade. At the risk of fuelling such panics further it should also be noted that the boys above are not adolescent boys facing their final public exams before leaving school but 5- and 6-year-old boys just beginning their schooling careers.

However, there are other perspectives on education among boys that tend to receive far less attention, either within political or educational circles or even within academia, but are also as easy to find if one looks. Consider the following discussion among another group of 5- and 6-year-old boys:

Interviewer: Do you think it's important to go to school?

Stephen: Yeah, it's really important.

Interviewer: Why?

Stephen: Because if you didn't go to school you wouldn't learn anything.

Robert: And because you wouldn't even know what maths is!

Stephen: Yeah and you wouldn't even learn to read or anything/

Robert: /And you couldn't even say the alphabet

Stephen: No, or you couldn't say numbers.

Interviewer: Is that important? Why does it matter?

Stephen: Because it's very, very good to go to school because you learn a whole lot of things.

Robert: When you grew up you wouldn't be smart or anything.

Interviewer: What would happen then? If you didn't go to school at all what do you think would happen?

Robert: Well, you would get very, not smart and then you wouldn't know anything

The tendency for concerns over boys' underachievement to construct just two binary subject positions—that of 'failing boys' and 'succeeding girls'—leaves little room to appreciate and explore the fundamental differences in educational experiences and perspectives between differing groups of boys (and differing groups of girls) as highlighted here (Mac an Ghaill, 1996; Epstein et al., 1998b; Jackson, 1998; Lucey & Walkerdine, 2000; Connolly, 2006a). For these two groups of boys one of the factors that differentiates them is the imprint of social class on their lives. The former group of boys attend North Parade Primary School located in an economically deprived, working-class area while the latter attend South Park Primary School situated in an affluent, middle-class neighbourhood. As can be seen, this imprint of social class is clearly evident even at the beginning of the boys' schooling careers and is further illustrated in relation to their respective career aspirations as summarised in Table 1. The greater access to resources and diversity of experiences that characterise the lives of the middle-class boys at South Park is certainly evident in relation to the range of occupations they are already aspiring towards. In contrast, the constraints of working-class life, with its limited access to resources and opportunities, is quite noticeable in the responses of these particular working-class boys from North Parade, whose aspirations tend to be that much more immediate and reflective of the social realities within which they are located.

While "boys will be boys," therefore, it is clear from the above that there are very different ways that particular groups of boys have of being boys. The purpose of this chapter is to uncover some of the ways in which these two groups of boys have already come to assume very different schooling identities. By focusing on their respective experiences at home and within their local

TABLE 1 Answers that 5–6 year old boys gave when asked
what they would like to do when they grow up

Boys at South Park Primary School	Boys at North Parade Primary School
• 'Professional skateboarder'	• 'Build houses'
• 'Doctor'	• 'Fix cars'
• 'Jet pilot'	• 'Footballer'
• 'Footballer'	• 'Kill rats and get a gun'
• 'Racing car man'	• 'Work with my daddy'
• 'Scientist'	• 'Make stuff with wood'
• 'TV presenter'	• 'Join the army'
• 'Artist'	• 'Fireman'
• 'A person who finds dinosaur bones and fossils'	• 'Clean carpets'
• 'Sea-diver'	• 'Just go to work'
• 'Policeman'	

communities, the chapter will draw attention to some of the contexts within which they have come to develop particular forms of masculinity and how these, in turn, help partly to explain the differing experiences of and attitudes towards schooling as outlined above. Before doing this, however, the chapter will begin by introducing the two communities within which the boys live—North Parade and South Park—and will outline the methodology used for this present study.

North Parade and South Park

North Parade and South Park are two areas within Northern Ireland that are located just a few miles apart. However, while they may be close geographically, they represent two very different social worlds. North Parade is ranked within the bottom 20% of the most deprived wards in the region and in some ways is rather representative of many isolated, working-class areas that were decimated by economic recession in previous decades and have made little progress since. There are high levels of long-term unemployment in the area, and of the rest the majority are in low-paid, unskilled, and relatively insecure manual work. Overall levels of health in the area are low, and over two-thirds of pupils at North Parade Primary School are in receipt of free-school meals (an indicator of families in receipt of state welfare). The local housing estate that comprises North Parade is also physically isolated, cut off from its surrounding area with just one road into and out of the estate. The estate itself has a distinctly desolate feel to it with few shops and amenities and large areas of wasteland. Some of the housing stock is run-down and unoccupied, and there is graffiti and litter strewn across the area.

In addition, North Parade bears all the hallmarks of a community that has experienced high levels of sectarian conflict and violence over the last few decades. Since the late 1960s over 3,600 people have died and a further 40,000 people have been injured as a direct result of the deep divisions that exist between Protestants and Catholics within Northern Ireland (Morrissey & Smyth, 2002). North Parade itself is a distinctly Protestant and loyalist community that has felt the impact of this violence with 25 deaths being recorded on the estate itself over the years related directly to the conflict. While the levels of violence have reduced significantly since the paramilitary ceasefires of 1994, the residents of North Parade still live with relatively high levels of sectarian tensions and threat from the neighbouring Catholic communities. Loyalist paramilitary groups, especially the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), operate freely in the area and, in many cases, acts as the unofficial 'police force.' All of this, in turn, is reflected in the physical environment of the estate with kerbstones on the roadside painted in the colours of the British Union flag—red, white, and blue. There are also a number of British flags and also paramilitary flags (mainly in support of the loyalist paramilitary

group the Ulster Volunteer Force [UVF]) flying from lampposts and painted wall murals and graffiti in support of the UVF. On entering the estate along the only road into it there is no doubt that one is entering a staunchly loyalist area.

In stark contrast, South Park bears none of the trappings of the conflict at all. With its quiet, tree-lined streets and semi-detached and detached houses, most with substantial gardens, it is difficult to distinguish South Park from many other suburban, middle-class areas across the UK. While also an overwhelmingly Protestant area, there are no outward signs of this either in terms of painted kerbstones, the display of flags, or the appearance of any graffiti. More generally, South Parade is reflective of an affluent and relatively prosperous community. Over a third of its adult population is employed in professional and managerial occupations. Unemployment in the area is low and only a handful of children attending South Park Primary School are in receipt of free school meals. Moreover, there are many local amenities with a number of specialist shops and boutiques within walking distance.

The findings reported in this chapter are drawn from a larger comparative ethnographic study of 5- and 6-year-old boys in two P2 (Year One) classes, one in North Parade Primary School and the other in South Park Primary School respectively (see Connolly, 2004). The fieldwork took place between October 2001 and June 2002, during which time I spent one day per week in each of the schools on average as participant observer in the two classes. While I would occasionally help out in class (usually by listening to children read or sitting with a group of children at a table), the class teachers were happy for me to simply observe for most of the time. In addition to observing the boys during all aspects of their school day, I also conducted a large number of relatively unstructured interviews with small friendship groups of boys (typically three at a time). Written parental consent was gained for each boy before he was interviewed. The boys' own consent was also gained in that each boy was given a choice as to whether he would like to take part in an interview or not, although none of them indicated that he did not wish to be involved.

The interviews themselves took place in an adjacent room to the main classroom and usually involved the children bringing their class work with them and continuing to work on it around a table. My role was then simply to encourage discussion around a number of general themes (i.e., what they have been doing in school that day, what they were playing in the playground at lunchtime, what they do when they get home, whether they like school or not, and so on). On most occasions, the discussions would take on a logic of their own and my intervention then was restricted simply to seeking clarification and/or additional information on some of the things the children said. The methodology underlying this approach to interviewing young children is outlined and discussed in more detail

elsewhere (see Connolly, 1996, 1997). In addition to these interviews with the children, semi-structured interviews were also conducted with the respective class teachers and school principals and also with the parents of the children (mainly their mothers).

FAMILY LIFE AND EDUCATION IN SOUTH PARK

In discussing family life and education in South Park (and also, later, in North Parade) it is impossible to offer any type of definitive account. There is clearly a diversity of families with parents and carers from a range of differing backgrounds. Rather than attempting to claim that what follows is representative of all families in each of the two areas, the purpose of the description here is simply to draw attention to those aspects of family life found among some of the respondents that tend to lead to the types of schooling identities found among the young boys, as indicated above. Rather than generalisations, therefore, what will be offered here are more akin to ideal typical constructs that do not attempt to accurately portray reality but rather to draw out and accentuate some core features and processes that tend to differentiate the middle-class and working-class family lives of some of the children in this study (Weber, 1949). While these constructs are not meant to accurately describe reality, they can be used to compare against real-life situations. In reality, not all middle-class boys are succeeding educationally and not all working-class boys are underachieving. However, and as illustrated in the quotes above, tendencies do exist for middle-class boys to succeed and working-class boys to underachieve on average. It is some of the processes that underlie these tendencies that are to be discussed here.

In relation to South Park, it has already been noted that a significant proportion of adults work in professional and managerial occupations. Given this, some of the middle-class parents in the area will have therefore acquired certain dispositions or taken-for-granted ways of thinking and behaving that reflect their occupational lives (Ball, 2003). Part of this middle-class habitus, as it can be called, following the work of Bourdieu (1990), will include a high level of emphasis on personal organisation, time management, and self-discipline—skills that are routinely associated with many professional and managerial jobs. Such dispositions are translated most readily into middle-class family life by the emphasis on 'routines.' As one parent explained:

Children need routine—it's the one thing I have learnt. You only have to be on holiday for a good while and then they become, erm, cheeky and just the whole thing goes if their routine [goes]. [. . .] Routine and children is definitely the thing, no doubt about it. Even at their age. If they have too many late nights and just, you know, haphazard meals and things like that, they just love routine it just seems to work, in our house anyway.

Not only does this emphasis on routine and the close surveillance and control of children's day-to-day activities come to be a taken-for-granted aspect of the some middle-class young boys' lives, it also provides the vehicle through which these young boys often tend to internalise the routines and habits of learning and study. This can be seen in the description that another mother gave of the 'routine' her young boy follows each afternoon when he arrives home from school:

Well, he knows that I like to get homework done as soon as he comes home. Usually when he comes in he has a drink, some toast and a biscuit, watches Disney Channel for 10 or 15 minutes and then we start. It's just reading, spelling and his number work. I would always make him write the spellings down in a book, you know. And he does the reading with me—we do it page by page. Because he has the book for two or three days, you know, so I do one set and he does the other half and we change about the next day. It's never any problem. He's quite happy to do it because he loves to get out and he knows he can't get out until the homework's done. He's good about doing the homework. I wouldn't say he enjoys it but he knows if he wants to get out he has to do it!

This emphasis on education and achievement is, itself, another aspect of the middle-class habitus, reflecting, as it does, the clear association between educational qualifications and managerial/professional occupations (Ball, 2003; Power, Edwards, Whitty, &Wigfall, 2003). As Allatt (1993) has observed, for example, middle class happiness is often dependent upon academic success. It is in this sense that some middle-class parents have already acquired a desire for their children to succeed at school even before they have started. This, in turn, can sometimes lead to parents feeling anxious in the lead up to their child starting school and an obligation to ensure that they are adequately prepared and 'ready.' As one mother commented in relation to her own son:

I would have done extra bits and pieces with him before he went to school in terms of writing and showing him words and letters so he was familiar with them. Now, they tell you not to do that but then I found with Daniel that I was the only one that hadn't [*laughs*], you know, and you think well what is the point in them saying: "Oh, don't be showing them letters" or "Don't worry if they can't hold a pencil," and you go to school, your child goes to school, and they're the only idiot in there that doesn't know how to do it! [*laughs*] And I think that's unfair, that's bad advice and all teachers do it—all their children read and write before they go to school. They're very sly! [*laughs*]

Not only does this additional support for the children's education at home continue once they have started school, as indicated earlier in relation to one boys' after-school routines, it is also evident in the approach that some middle-class parents adopt with their children's school. In this sense, and reflecting the parents' professional and managerial backgrounds, the middle-class habitus also tends to incorporate a level of self-confidence and assurance and a taken-for-granted belief in the ability to approach and work with other professionals

(in this case teachers). As the following mother commented when she
was asked whether she found the teachers at South Park Primary School
approachable:

Yeah, very much so. [. . .] When I have been with Mrs. Summerbee it's been much more us work-
ing together to make sure we get the right thing for Matthew [her son] and also I've always felt
she's been very interested in him and so I've never gone with a complaint and I've never had a
complaint.

This is also the experience of the class teacher, Mrs. Summerbee, as she
explains:

The parents are very forward. They're in and out of the school all the time. And that's a good
thing. They know they can talk, they're not scared of the teacher, you know. They're very one-to-
one with the teacher. [. . .] They feel it's their right to come in and talk to you. Which it is of
course. Sometimes though it's respecting your space, you know, and they could be in all the time.
They're never nasty though. I've had one or two instances but generally speaking they're very
well behaved, they're very nice and supportive. [. . .] Yeah, you're doing the job with them but
they're professionals as well, they do other things that are similar, you know, it's "we're all one in
this together" sort of thing.

   Overall, it can be seen that the middle-class habitus in South Park tends to
prepare young boys and girls extremely effectively for the demands of formal
schooling. Not only is there a tendency for parents to attempt to prepare their
children to read and write before they even begin school but the routinisation
of homework encourages the internalization among the young children of an
acceptance and taken-for-granted valuing of education. Moreover, this empha-
sis on 'routine' within some homes also makes it relatively straightforward for
young middle-class boys to simply fall into the consequent routines and
demands of formal schooling. This relatively seamless transition from home to
school is further reinforced by the activities of some of the parents who
attempt to work closely with teachers in order to coordinate what they do at
home with their children with what they are doing at school. This, then, pro-
vides the necessary context for understanding the particular forms of mas-
culinity and consequent schooling identities developed by some of the young
boys at South Park.

Young Middle-class Masculinities and Schooling Identities

One useful way of understanding the nature of particular forms of masculinity
found among the young boys at South Park is simply to ask them whether they
would prefer to be boys or girls. As can be seen from the discussion with Adam,

Michael, and James below, while their initial reactions are predictable, the subsequent reasons they offer for why they prefer to be boys are illuminating:

Interviewer: If you had a choice would you want to be girls or boys?

Adam: Boys!

Michael: BOYS!

James: BOYS!

Interviewer: What's good about being boys?

[. . .]

James: Because boys get to do much better stuff than girls.

Interviewer: Like what?

James: Well, [*pause*] they get to go on rollercoasters and girls are scared of it.

[. . .]

Adam: Boys can do more funny things than girls.

Interviewer: Like what?

Adam: Being a clown. Being a magician.

James: And boys are better doing sports.

The true significance of these responses will only become apparent when compared with the answers that the working-class boys from North Parade gave to a similar question, to be outlined later. For now, however, it is interesting to note that for James, Adam, and Michael what distinguishes them from girls is what they would see as their greater sense of adventure and emphasis on fantasy play and specialist skills. This is partly evident above in terms of the references to roller coasters and wanting to be a clown and a magician. However, it was also found in relation to playing computer games—an activity that was felt to be only one that boys could be successfully at. As Keith and Nathan explain in a separate discussion:

Interviewer: If you were a girl could you do everything a boy can do?

Keith: No!

Nathan: Nooh!

Keith: My sister can't even play my Gameboy! She can't get past Level One! I can get past Level Nine!

Nathan: I've got a game where it goes up to Level 62 and I've got up to number 61!

Interviewer: But isn't there some boys that can't get past Level One?

Keith: Well, some. Babies can't.

Nathan: Babies can't even play Gameboy! [*laughs*]

Interviewer: Well could it be just that your sister's bad at it rather than that she's a girl?

Nathan: No! My mum can't even get past Level Nine. She can get to Level Nine but she can't complete it!

What can be seen emerging from these comments is that the dominant form of masculinity found among these particular middle-class boys tends to be associated with the successful acquisition of specialist knowledge and skills. The awareness of and ability to acquire such knowledge and skills are, themselves, a reflection of the boys' location in middle-class homes with the greater access to a wider range of resources. As Nathan, Keith, and Harry explained during another discussion:

Interviewer: And do any of you have a computer at home?

Nathan: Yeah.

Keith: Yes.

Harry: My dad's got a computer and my sister's got one and it has a printer with it.

Interviewer: And what do you do on the computer?

Harry: Play games.

Interviewer: What sort of games do you play on it?

Harry: An aeroplane game.

Keith: I play Star Wars and I can get up to Level 4 but I can't complete it because the gear stick's a little hard to move. If you press the top it shoots big bullets. If you press the button underneath it's small bullets. But you can run out from the big bullets but you can't run out the small bullets. And it shows you how many big bullets down here. And it shows, if there's red people shooting it's a goody and if its in green it's bad. And you have to complete it by shooting the ships and you have to shoot every one of them and I've completed it! But Level 2's a little tricky because there's these big, big, big black things that you can crash into and you have to have lots of big bullets, lots and lots of big bullets to blow it up but I've never blown it up.

[. . .]

Interviewer: Do you only just play games on the computer? Do you do anything else on the computer?

Keith: I go onto the internet for games/

Nathan: /So do I!/

Harry: /And me!/

Keith: /And I go on the website for Ice Hockey to see who's winning. My daddy and my mum does [goes onto the internet] every day after school. My dad does it at night and in the morning.

Harry: [I go to] Disney.

Nathan: I go into Disney too.

For these boys, therefore, the dominant form of masculinity is one that tends to be expressed internally, through the ability to successfully acquire and demonstrate specialist knowledge and (particularly computer) skills. As indicated above, all of this is, in turn, reflective of the middle-class home with its diverse range of resources and, as described earlier, its emphasis on education and achievement. It is not difficult to see, therefore, how this particular form of masculinity resonates so closely with the interests and demands of formal schooling. As the following discussion with Oliver and Jason illustrates, school knowledge (whether in the form of being able to 'do sums' or to acquire specialist knowledge about bugs, sharks, and volcanoes) simply provides an additional site over which these boys can compete in their attempts successfully to perform their masculinity:

Interviewer: What about at school, now, what you're doing now? Do you like writing?

Oliver: Yeah I like doing work.

Jason: I like doing sums.

Oliver: I like making things as well.

Jason: I know what a 100 plus a 100 is!

Interviewer: What is it?

Jason: 200!

Interviewer: Wow!

[. . .]

Interviewer: What stories do you like the best?

Oliver: Well, [*pause*]

Jason: I like ones about, like, not the ones over there about [. . .] but the ones over there about dinosaurs and stuff.

Oliver: About dinosaurs, bugs, sharks and volcanoes.

Interviewer: What are the books over there that you don't like then?

Oliver: Well, those/

Jason: /Well actually they aren't true.

Oliver: No, we like those ones that are true. But sometimes when we were in P1 we liked the story ones.

Jason: Yeah but now we don't!

[. . .]

Oliver: My favourite ones are dinosaurs because they're so cool because they lived a long time ago.

Jason: They actually lived before Jesus was born.

Oliver: I know!

Overall, it is clear that the enthusiastic approach to schooling found among some of the boys at South Park, illustrated by the quotes included in the introduction to this chapter as well as the diverse range of specialist careers that they aspired to as shown in Table 1, are all reflections of the dominant, internally expressed form of masculinity evident at South Park. As also shown, this form of masculinity, in turn, needs to be understood within the context of middle-class family life with its emphases on education, routines and achievement.

One final point to note, however, is that the correspondence between these dominant forms of masculinity among the boys and the demands of formal schooling is not a perfect one. One noticeable area where an element of incompatibility is currently evident is in relation to certain forms of literacy. This is illustrated in the following conversation with Keith and Harry, which follows on from the boys stating that they prefer maths to reading:

Interviewer: Why do you like maths better than reading?

Keith: Because you get the time to play.

Interviewer: Do you not play games when you're doing reading?

Keith: No!

Harry: Nooo!

Keith: That's why it's so rubbish!

Interviewer: Why? Is it not interesting?

Harry: No!

Keith: You say words and words and words, even if you don't know them you have to say them.

Interviewer: Don't you find some of the stories interesting? [. . .] What about if it was a story about Star Wars?

Harry: [*excitedly*] Yeah!

Keith: Yeah! Yeah!

Nathan: I'd be interested to that!

Interviewer: And would you like reading then?

Keith: Yeeaaahh!!

Interviewer: So what stories don't you like to read? [. . .] Do you like this one you're reading [in class] now?

Keith: No, because it's too long!

What is evident here is the current incompatibility of particular forms of literacy (i.e., fictional stories without an emphasis on action and/or fantasy) with the displays of masculinity found among these boys. In this sense, fictional stories that place an emphasis on relationships and emotions provide much less of an opportunity for these boys to successfully acquire and demonstrate specialist knowledge and technical skills in the same way that fantasy action stories might. Some of the implications of this for practice will be considered briefly in the concluding section of this chapter.

FAMILY LIFE AND EDUCATION IN NORTH PARADE

It has already been noted that North Parade is characterized by high levels of long-term unemployment with those that are in work tending to have unskilled and relatively insecure jobs. Given the limited resources available to them, there is a more immediate emphasis found among some of the working-class parents on (economic) survival and on dealing with the 'here and now.' While this is something the School Principal at North Parade recognizes, it can be seen from her comments below that there is also an element of blame assigned to the parents for being in the situation they are in. Here she is comparing the parents in North Parade with those from a neighbouring middle-class school:

The parents [at the other school] would have their lives better organised. [. . .] There'd be a group of parents here who would live a very hand-to-mouth existence. They stagger from one crisis to the next to the next. I can think of one or two who really, they cope with enormous difficulties, some

of their own making. And you think that, "I would have avoided that situation." But I don't know, they're sort of sucked into it. They don't have the mental energy to take stock of their lives and say, you know, "I'm in a mess, how can I get out of this? What strategies can I use?"

Given this context and especially the struggle simply to survive, the working-class habitus is, therefore, partly characterized by a desire on the part of parents simply to provide for their family, particularly their children. Within the context of high levels of economic and social deprivation that make it difficult simply to survive, a great deal of status can be gained among some working-class parents from being able to present their children in fashionable clothes and with the latest toys and games (Connolly, 1998). There was certainly a tendency for some of the children at North Parade Primary School to be sent to school dressed in expensive, designer clothes and wearing jewelry. This contrasted sharply with the children at South Parade whose parents appeared to adhere very strongly to the school code for wearing uniforms.

However, such efforts on the part of parents tended not to be understood by teachers at the school and were often re-defined as misguided and inappropriate. As the School Principal at North Parade commented, for example:

The vast majority, I would say, 99.999% of the parents here love their children. But that love can manifest itself in different ways. For example, here the love would be demonstrated in expensive toys. Quite often, quite inappropriate toys. For example a quad bike will be bought or a television and a video as well as, you know, and they put themselves in debt. Whereas in [a more middle-class area] that love would be thinking about a secure home background [about] the here and now and how that will affect the children in the future and their education prospects and all those sorts of things.

This misunderstanding of the realities of working-class life and the negative perspectives on how these parents care for their children is found in relation to more specific matters relating to the school itself. This can be seen, for example, in the following comments made by the School Principal later in the same interview:

There would be a sort of carelessness here that probably wouldn't be found in [a more middle-class school]. If they're sick and you ring [the parent] and say so-and-so's sick, er, [they may reply], "Just send them on up home." Now we have a policy that once a child is at school that unless it's the official home time a child must be collected by an adult known to them because obviously there are dangers with them wandering out of school in the day. Whereas in [a more middle-class school] if you phoned and said that the child was sick the vast majority of the parents would say, you know, they'll either have some arrangement for collecting the children or they'd arrive themselves for them. That would be an illustration of what I'd call carelessness.

The problem here is, in part, founded upon a lack of understanding of the local context within which the parents live. As has also been found elsewhere (see Connolly, 1998; Skelton, 2001), there is a need for some children living

in economically deprived areas to grow up quickly. Especially in areas such as North Parade that are characterized by relatively high levels of violence, some children need to learn from an early age how to look after themselves. In part this is evident through the importance of becoming 'streetwise' and to being able to protect oneself—elements that will be explored further in the next section when considering how the young boys in North Parade come to develop their own particular sense of masculinity. However, it is also demonstrated through the actions of parents, not just in relation to dressing their children in designer clothes and jewelry as mentioned earlier but also in the greater expectations and responsibilities placed upon their children. This in part can help to explain some of the parents' responses to being told by the school that their child is ill, as described by the School Principal in the quote above. Moreover, it is also to be found in the greater responsibility and freedom that some of the parents give to their children in relation to playing outside. Again, such an approach tends to be misinterpreted and labeled negatively by teachers in the school, as Mrs. Lee, the class teacher, commented:

It's a very difficult school. The area's very tough. A lot of children kind of run wild after school and at night time as well, especially coming into the summer term. Erm, and also by September as well a lot of them just run wild for two months over the holidays so we find it takes a long time for them to settle down, you know, and get them into the routines. . . . Last year it took them until about Halloween before they really calmed down. It's just getting them into the routine of work and, erm, school. . . . This year I think they were wilder [*laughs*], it seems, wilder at the beginning of September! By Halloween they did settle down. It is quite a large class and you just have to be on them the whole time. You can't relax really for a minute with them really, there is quite a lot of pressure that way I think.

The comments of the School Principal and of Mrs. Lee above certainly indicate some of the tensions that exist between parents and the school in North Parade. Clearly, the type of 'inter-professional' partnership that middle-class parents and the school tend to enjoy in South Parade is largely absent here. However, none of this is to suggest that the working-class parents do not have a desire for their children to do well at school. There is, as some of the parents commented in one interview, a deep frustration with what they see as their children not learning quickly enough:

Diane: Callum's homework when he gets it he does it like that [*click's finger*] it's too easy.

Joanne: Jason's is OK He's in red [group] I'm not sure what order it goes in.

Diane: I think it goes like that—red, green, yellow and blue.

Gillian: Adrian's in yellow same as Callum. They get two words/

Joanne: /And I think that's ridiculous

Gillian: The red group, they get four words

Joanne: He would have four spellings, reading and then either English or maths. If he went through it quickly and did it no problems I would write that Jason did this completely on his own, you know, that way.

However, while some of their middle-class counterparts felt confident and able to simply approach the class teacher to discuss any problems that they may have with their child's education, this sense of self-confidence and assurance tended to be lacking for many of the working-class parents. Many of these parents did not succeed at school themselves and thus tended to have acquired quite negative experiences of schooling (Mortimore & Blackstone, 1982; Moles, 1993; Brooker, 2002). Not only did some tend therefore to find the school intimidating, they were also acutely aware of the labels that had been attached to them. As the following parents explained, for example:

Diane: I was just told most of the parents here don't care anyway

Joanne: It's a deprived area

Diane: It's a deprived area and most of them don't care/

Joanne: /Don't care

[. . .]

Diane: I find if you disagree or speak up against the [school] that's it/

Joanne: /You've had it!

Diane: Because you live on this estate your children really aren't going to do very well. [You're told] "We're just here to do a job, we'll teach them the basics. And don't have any expectations, they're not going to"/

Interviewer: /You're actually told that?

Diane: Not in so many words but you know you live on an estate, you know what estates are like/

Joanne: /Well the exact words to me when I went to see the [teacher] I was told the parents don't care, I said, "Well I care, I'm here," and she said, "Well most of them don't. It's a cultural thing it's a North Parade thing," and that just makes you feel about that size.

For the most part, therefore, there was little meaningful communication between parents and the school in North Parade, leaving the parents with little

support in terms of how they can best help their children learn. This is something, interestingly, that teachers at the school appear to be well aware of, as Mrs. Lee commented:

The parents are keen. They'll attend meetings. Most of them—there were about five or six that didn't come to parent interviews—most of them are keen that their child will learn. They're very keen on the books and homeworks, you know. If you don't send the homework home you get a few of them coming in saying "There's been no homework! Why has there been no homework?" And I do find they're keen.

[However] a lot of them don't really know what to do. Even though they're keen they don't really have the background to know what to do. For example, I was talking to one parent about a little boy, saying, you know, he seemed to have an enjoyment of books. He likes reading books, does he read books at home? And dad turned round and said: "Well, yeah, he'll go upstairs and play on the Playstation all night!" And that's not really [*laughs*] what, you know, a Playstation is not any educational value at all really! But that's what they would do at home really, tend to play at home on the Playstation or videos, tend to watch a lot of videos. They don't really play any games like take turn games or board games. Even just general snap and that kind of thing they don't tend to play games like that.

One of the ways in which the school has responded to all of this has been to focus more on the pastoral role of the school rather than on academic achievement. This can be seen in relation to the greater emphasis placed upon the social and personal development of the children in North Parade in comparison to South Park. According to Mrs. Lee:

[Our aim] is to develop the children's ability to socialise and to, not to introduce them to formal education until they're ready. Not to force them into picking up a pencil and writing until they get the basics and the principles behind things. . . . What we're moving towards, especially in P1, is a lot of games to develop turn-taking and sharing. A lot of physical development to develop their gross and fine motor control before they even pick up a pencil. [. . .] And also in the afternoons then there's three days of PE—two days with equipment and one with the dance. I think it really helps, especially up here where they don't play games really at home and they're not used to sharing and taking turns and talking and they don't, you know, their oral language is very important and trying to get them to express themselves better.

Young Working-class Masculinities and Schooling Identities

This, then, is the context within which the young boys living in North Parade develop their masculine identities and thus their attitudes towards schooling. In understanding the dominant forms of masculinity that exist among these boys, it is useful to compare their responses to being asked whether they would prefer to be boys or girls to those of the South Park boys described earlier. Consider, for example, the responses of Davey and Martin:

Interviewer: Would either of you two like to be a girl?

Davey: [*laughs hysterically*] Nooo! No! No!

Martin: Nooooo!

Interviewer: Why not? Why do you like being boys?

Davey: Cos

Martin: Cos it's better

Interviewer: Why is it better?

Davey: You get to play wrestling

Martin: You get to go to BB [*Boys' Brigade*]

Davey: And you're allowed to fight! Remember when I punched you and you slammed on your knees and I hurt you? Remember once I bite you and you were bleeding! [*laughs*]

Martin: [No response]

Rather than a focus on adventure and fantasy play as found among the middle-class boys at South Park, the emphasis here is clearly upon being physically strong and able to fight. This, in turn, reflects the imperative on these young boys as mentioned earlier to grow up quickly and to be able to protect themselves. This sense of danger that provides the background to some of these boys' lives is clearly evident in the following comments from Martin about the loyalist paramilitary group operating in the local area, the UVF (Ulster Volunteer Force):

Martin: There's bad men up at that shop there! There's all UVF and 'all there.

Interviewer: What's the UVF?

Martin: Bad people! They've got guns and they shoot at people for nothin'

Interviewer: Do they?

Martin: They want to shoot people for fun. They kill people and then go running away. They shoot people. That's all the writing up there [*referring to the UVF graffiti on the shop walls*]

For some of the boys, they tend to be attracted by the paramilitary-style parades of the local flute band—the North Parade Defenders Flute Band—that is closely associated with the UVF. As the following discussion with Martin and Billy indicates, this attraction also sometimes reflects the existing involvements of their fathers or older brothers:

Interviewer: Somebody was talking about bands before. I've not seen a band—what are they?

Martin: I've seen a band!

Interviewer: Have you?

Martin: They play drums like that one there and they play whistles, they play flutes. And the leader goes like that there sometimes [*stands up and shows how the leader twirls and throws the baton*].

Interviewer: And why do they do that then?

Martin: It's a parade. They do it to make everyone happy, to watch it.

Interviewer: And do they do it round here?

Billy: Yeah. My daddy used to be in a band.

Martin: My daddy is in the North Parade Defenders. He's still there.

Interviewer: And would you both like to be in a band?

Martin: Yes.

Billy: Cos you get to play everything.

Such involvement, in turn, leads to some of the young boys identifying explicitly with and supporting the UVF, as the following discussion taken from a separate interview with Lee and Martin illustrates:

Interviewer: What do you want to do when you grow up?

Martin: Join the UVF!

Lee: [*laughs*].

Martin: UVF! [*chants*] U-V-U-V-F! U-V-U-V-F!

Interviewer: What's the UVF?

Martin: They fight! They shoot guns!

Interviewer: Do they?

Lee: They have big guns!

Overall, this emphasis on physical strength and fighting tends to lead to the emergence of a dominant form of masculinity that is externally expressed and demonstrated by the successful acquisition of a range of physical skills, as the following discussion with Cameron and Matty illustrates:

Interviewer: And what do you play in the playground? What games do you play?

Cameron: Wrestling.

Interviewer: Wrestling?

Cameron: Aye, but sometimes you get shouted at for it/

Matty: /I know all the moves

Interviewer: Do you? Tell me what moves you know

Matty: "Choke-slam!" "The last ride!"

Interviewer: What's that one?

Matty: It's where you go [*demonstrates*] – flick 'em up and then choke slam them

Cameron: Er, "people's elbow"!

Matty: "The rock bottom"!

Moreover, such displays of masculinity are not just limited to play-fighting but can, at times, manifest themselves through aggressive and intimidating themes, as found in the following discussion with Martin, Lee, and Billy:

Interviewer: What do you play in the playground?

Billy: Fight!

Martin: Steal money!

Interviewer: In the playground? No, what games do you play?

Billy: Power Rangers and Space.

Interviewer: Do you play with girls and boys?

Billy: [*laughs*]

Martin: We pull her trousers down! I know!

Interviewer: What?

Martin: We burn something! I know, pull her trousers down and burn her!

Lee: We pull her pants down and burn her!

All: [*hysterical laughter*].

Interviewer: You do what?

Lee: I know, get her later and burn her bum!

Billy: I got one—burn her arse!

It is within this context of externally expressed forms of masculinity that school work has much less meaning for some of these boys. As indicated by the quotes used in the introduction to this chapter, education has much less relevance to the lives of some of the young boys, which tend to be structured by much more immediate and physical concerns. This, in turn, is reflected in their much more specific and limited career aspirations, summarized earlier in

Table 1, and is also illustrated further in the following conversation with Adrian, Tommy, and Kurt:

Interviewer: When you grow up and you leave school what jobs would you get?

Adrian: I would get the best job—building houses.

Tommy: I'd get, I'd fix some cars!

Kurt: No, I wouldn't get a job. I would clean carpets with my daddy's carpet machine—my daddy cleans carpets.

Interviewer: And would you work with him?

Kurt: [*nods*].

Given the need to demonstrate and successfully express a dominant form of masculinity founded upon being strong and streetwise, some of the boys' discussions concerning future aspirations tended also to be characterized by a certain level of bravado. This is evident in the following comments from Lee, Billy, and Martin that, although they were clearly joking, is likely to reflect some of the realities of life in North Parade and what these particular boys have come to attach status to:

Interviewer: Have you got any ideas what you'd like to do when you grow up?

Lee: Aye—stay in the house! [*laughs*]

Interviewer: Stay in the house? What about you Billy?

Billy: I know—say bad words! [*laughs*]

Interviewer: Martin, what do you want to do when you grow up?

Martin: Steal trophies and money! And kill somebody and kill people!

Billy: I've got a real gun!

Martin: So do I!

Finally, while this emphasis on externally expressed forms of masculinity does tend to limit some of the boys' tendency to recognize and engage with more academic subjects, as illustrated by the quotes in the introduction to the chapter, this does not mean that they are completely disillusioned with school. However, and as the comments from Jamie, Campbell, and Lee illustrate, their interest tends to be confined to much more practically based activities within school:

Interviewer: Do you like school?

Jamie: Yeah.

Campbell: Yes.

Interviewer: What do you like about school?

Jamie: I like doing PE

Interviewer: What about you Dominic? What do you like about school?

Campbell: The computer.

Interviewer: What do you like doing on the computer?

Campbell: Printing!

Lee: I like art.

Interviewer: Is there anything else about school that you like the best?

Jamie: I like playing the honeycomb game.

Lee: I like making things.

Campbell: I like the blocks on the carpet. You can make a house and a car. You can make anything.

CONCLUSIONS

There are four key conclusions to draw from this brief comparative study of middle-class and working-class young boys. The first is that it is clearly meaningless to work with generalisations about 'all boys' or 'all girls' as if they are two homogenous categories (Mac an Ghail, 1996; Epstein et al., 1998a). As the two case studies above illustrate, the boys living in North Parade and South Park inhabit very different social worlds. While there may be some over-riding characteristics that they share and that allow for the use of the term "masculinity" to describe the dominant sub-cultures of both groups—most notably a sense of competitiveness—these can only ever be extremely vague and of little practical use. As has been shown, how these general characteristics are translated into practice differ enormously for particular groups of boys. For the middle-class boys in South Park, their dominant forms of masculinity tend to be internally expressed with an emphasis on the acquisition and competent display of specialist knowledge and technical skills. In comparison the dominant forms of masculinity among the working-class boys in North Parade tend to be more externally expressed through an emphasis on the successful demonstration of strength and physical skills. Moreover, it needs to be re-iterated that what has been offered here are simply two almost ideal typical accounts of the dominant forms of masculinity found among the two groups of boys. This should not be read as implying that all boys in these two areas valued and/or strived for these two forms of masculinity. While these may have been the dominant forms, there

were significant variations among both groups of boys in relation to the particular types of masculinity that they tended to adopt.

Second, it is evident from the two case studies that these particular forms of masculinity can only be understood in relation to the specific contexts within which these boys are located. As Connell (1995) has argued, therefore: "To understand gender . . . we need to constantly go beyond gender" (p. 76). In this case, the dominant forms of masculinity found among the two groups of boys can only be understood in relation to social class and also, for the working-class boys in this particular case, the effects of ethnic conflict. Going "beyond gender" in this way not only helps to explain the particular forms of masculinity found but also helps to guard against the development of pathological accounts of these. It may be tempting, for example, to simply label the boys' behaviour at North Parade as 'laddishness' and thus to naturalise it in some way. And yet there is nothing 'natural' about this form of behaviour, as there is equally nothing natural about the forms of masculinity found among the middle-class boys at South Park. Both are neither essential nor necessary, and thus both can only be understood within the specific social and economic contexts from which they derive.

Third, it is clear from these two case studies that children as young as 5 and 6 are actively involved in the negotiation, construction, and performance of their gender identities and thus, by implication, their schooling identities. This, in turn, requires us to reconsider traditional sex-role socialization models of gender acquisition that are still prevalent in the early years and that ascribe young children a passive and essentially uncritical role (MacNaughton, 2000; Connolly, 2004). Rather, and following on logically from the need to accept the diverse forms of masculinity and femininity that exist among young children and to locate these within the particular contexts within which they are generated, there is also a need to place much greater emphasis on the agency and competence of young children and the active role they play in making sense of their social worlds and responding accordingly (Davies, 1989; Connolly, 1998, 2004; MacNaughton, 2000; Brooker, 2002).

Fourth, and finally, these case studies do raise questions about educational practice and how best to work with young boys in schools. Unfortunately, a detailed exploration of these issues is beyond the scope of this present chapter but is engaged in elsewhere (see Connolly, 2004). However, there are three points worth noting briefly here. The first follows on from a recognition of the fact that the dominant forms of masculinity found among the two groups of boys reflects the complex articulation of social class and gender. These dominant forms, therefore, cannot simply be explained in terms of either gender or social class but are an irreducible product of both. This, in turn, suggests that it makes little sense to develop and attempt to implement general educational

initiatives aimed at raising boys' achievement. As the two case studies have demonstrated, boys are never just boys, they are also fundamentally influenced and shaped by a range of other factors including, in this instance, social class. To develop an educational initiative aimed at increasing the attainment of a particular group of boys it is therefore necessary to recognize and address their specific experiences and perspectives. For the working-class boys in this study, for example, any initiative will only be effective if it includes a focus on social class and the social and economic structures that tend to disenfranchise and marginalize working class families and their communities. As has been shown, these are the very structures that contribute to the production of the dominant form of masculinity based around physical strength and violence. Ultimately, therefore, any school-based initiatives aimed at increasing the value and significance of education in these boys lives are likely to only ever be partially effective unless they are complemented by wider area-based strategies aimed at raising employment levels, investment, and social capital in the local area and thus reducing social and economic disadvantage.

The second point about implications for practice relates to the temptation to adopt a 'quick-fix' solution to addressing the gender disparities between boys and girls in both schools by simply gearing more school activities and lesson content towards the existing interests of boys wherever possible. For the middle-class boys, this could involve, for example, the use of more action and fantasy adventure stories to help encourage their interest and skills in literacy. For the working-class boys, this could also involve a greater emphasis possibly on sports and practical activities. While this approach may well encourage a greater short-term engagement by the boys in education, and is indeed an approach to "masculinising the curriculum" that has been strongly advocated elsewhere (Pickering, 1997; Bleach, 1998; Hannan, 1999), it is not without its dangers. Most obviously, such an approach can be seen simply as 'pandering' to the existing behaviour of young boys, offering very little opportunity to further their academic and practical knowledge and skills more holistically. The emphasis on action and adventure stories, for example, will leave little opportunity for the middle-class boys to develop their skills of empathy and their understanding and appreciation of relationships and emotions more generally. For the working-class boys, a significant shift towards practical activities would limit their ability to develop their academic skills more generally. In both cases, therefore, such an approach would simply lead to the development of boys in very limited and restricted ways and thus limit their ability to develop and grow in a more balanced and holistic way.

The third point to note about implications for practice, following on from this last one, is that such approaches would not only leave unchallenged the

dominant forms of masculinity that exist but would in effect tend to encourage and reinforce them. What is needed is a more thorough-going programme of work that encourages young boys and girls to critically engage with the issue of gender and to reflect upon and deconstruct existing dominant forms of masculinity and femininity and thus begin to construct alternative and more holistic and inclusive ways of being boys and girls. While there is still much to be done in relation to translating this lofty aim into practice, there is now a growing body of work in this area that provides some very important starting points and ideas (see Davies, 1989, 1993; MacNaughton, 2000; Connolly, 2004). In all of this work, however, the starting point must be the need to break out of the binary trap, as Jackson (1998) has termed it, and for educators to begin to develop and work with much more nuanced accounts of gender identities within the early years. It is hoped that this present chapter can be seen as making some contribution to this project.

NOTE

[1] The names of all pupils, teachers and parents as well as of the schools and local areas described in this chapter are pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality.

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WAYNE MARTINO AND MARIA PALLOTTA-CHIAROLLI

SCHOOLING, NORMALISATION, AND GENDERED BODIES: ADOLESCENT BOYS' AND GIRLS' EXPERIENCES OF GENDER AND SCHOOLING

INTRODUCTION

Dominant discourses construct boys and girls as two homogenous groups in need of particular, and uniform, kinds of interventions (Martino, Mills, & Lingard, 2005, Mills, Martino, & Lingard, 2004; Jones & Myhill, 2004). The boys and girls themselves, however, tell a much more complex story and challenge us to consider very different implications for addressing gender conformity and, more broadly, diversity in schools. In this chapter, the voices of students are used as text to explicate, first, how issues of gender, sexuality, social class, ethnicity and the body are implicated and interweave in girls' and boys' social experiences of schooling; and second, what the implications of this interweaving might be for addressing diversity in schools (Connell, 1995; 2002; Martino, 1999, 2000; Pallotta-Chiarolli, 1995, 1998, 2000, 2005). This work draws on and elaborates further our previous published research that investigates issues of gender and schooling. It locates such research within the broader international context of studies conducted into issues of gender and schooling that document student perspectives and voice (Fine & Weiss, 2003; Ferguson, 2001; Renold, 2003; Mac an Ghaill, 1994; Lees, 1993; Ornstein, 1995; Thorne, 1993; Mills, 2001; Hey, 1997; Willis,1977; Walker, 1988). The use of student voice as text is considered within that broader context and highlights the significance of gender regimes and power relations in students' lives at school (Martino & Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2005; 2003; 2002; 2001; Pallotta-Chiarolli, 1998). We illustrate the extent to which the risky business of 'fitting in' involves negotiations around normative and transgressive masculinities and femininities and how such practices intersect with sexuality, race/culture, class, and geographical location (see James, 2003; Kumashiro, 2002).

The Context of 'Moral Panic' and the Boys' Education Debates

Through our open-ended questionnaire research, we provided young people with the opportunity to identify the issues that have an impact on them at

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school.[1] By documenting their perspectives we believe we can offer educators and policy makers deeper insights into young people's lives at school. In this sense, our research needs to be positioned and located as a response to a very specific and intensified context of *moral panic* and debates about under-achieving boys and failing masculinities where the voices of students are not heard (for a critique of the boys' education debates, see Arnot & Miles, 2005; Epstein et al., 1998; Lingard & Douglas, 1999; Martino & Kehler, 2006; Martino, 2004; Collins et al., 2000; Martino & Meyenn, 2001; Gilbert & Gilbert, 1998; Mahony, 2003; Weiner et al., 1997; Yates, 1997; Kenway, 1995).

In the Australian context, the Federal government has funded a parliamentary inquiry into boys' education and continues to allocate millions of dollars to address the educational needs of boys (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Training, 2002). The inquiry report has functioned to legitimate and authorise a particular knowledge about boys and how they learn. This knowledge relies on essentialist and biological determinist notions of gender. For instance, the essential differences between boys and girls are outlined and, the report argues, these differences require gender-specific pedagogical interventions and approaches to curriculum development. These interventions and approaches are based on problematic assumptions about naturalised gender differences that are apparently located in the sexed brain/body (see Fausto-Sterling, 2000 for a critique of the brain/sex research literature). Such an approach leads to advocating single-sex classes/schooling for boys, a boy-friendly curriculum that involves catering to boys' distinctive learning styles (more structured and quick-paced tasks as well as more activity-based or hands-on learning), and more male role models to counteract the "feminising" influences of schooling.

In both North America and the UK, the increasing "feminisation" of schooling and the curriculum has also been marked as causing boys' underachievement, and similar strategies to the Australian parliamentary inquiry have been proposed (Titus, 2004; Weaver-Hightower; 2003; Martino & Kehler, 2006; Kehler & Greig, in press, 2005; Martino, 2004). Arnot and Miles (2005) argue, in fact, that New Labour's educational and economic policy in the UK has led to a (re)masculinisation of schooling along these lines that has resulted in a reinstatement and institutionalisation of hegemonic masculinity. This (re)masculinisation, they add, has also led to a further intensified focus on boys as the new disadvantaged group while masking the inequalities that continue to impact the lives of certain groups of girls:

. . . While underachievement is defined as the problem of boys, the production of hierarchical masculinities and laddishness by marketised schools is ignored. The policy shift towards performativity also masks girls' exclusion and the disadvantages working-class girls face within the education system (p. 173).

The authorisation of such knowledge within a rhetorical framing of boys' underachievement, which is couched in terms dictated by a neo-liberal ethic (Apple, 2001), denies knowledge about other groups of boys and girls who are disadvantaged on the basis of socio-economic status, race, sexuality, geographical location, and how these influences intersect in the lives of minority students. Moreover, what is eclipsed is a more nuanced and sophisticated knowledge about the social dimensions of schooling and how these impact both boys and girls in very significant ways to determine the quality of their social interaction and learning in schools (Walker, 1988; Mac an Ghaill, 1994; Martino & Pallotta-Chiarolli, in press, 2005). In short, within the context of the boys' education debates, what is silenced or erased is important knowledge/ research that highlights the sex- and gender-based dimensions of harassment and hierarchical masculinities and femininities in boys' and girls' lives at school (Frank, 1993; Davison, 2000; Duncan, 1999; Alloway, 2000, Epstein, 1997; Nayak & Kehily, 1996). A certain body of knowledge about the way boys are and learn to relate gets legitimated within the context of a media driven *moral panic* about disadvantaged boys in school (Lingard, 2003; Mills, 2003; Lingard & Douglas, 1999). This legitimation results, as Titus (2004) argues, in certain beliefs that are grounded in a biological determinist or essentialist view of gender "becoming authorized as scientific knowledge while another is treated with suspicion and disqualified" (p. 146).

   This situation has arisen in the Australian context, particularly in relation to the parliamentary inquiry, which rejects the social construction of gender as a knowledge base for mobilising gender reform agendas in schools (see Martino, in press, 2006). In fact, the report is quite specific in its disqualification of such knowledge. This rejection emerges explicitly in the critique the House of Representatives Parliamentary Report (2002) offers of the Australian Education Union's position on the need to address the social construction of gender as it relates to quality teaching:

The Australian Education Union argued that excellent teaching style "is not dictated by gender" but a range of attitudes and abilities including an "understanding of gender construction and its impact on students and teachers." The Union also argued that effective male teachers "need to understand the construction of gender and motivations for violence, and be trained in ways to intervene to deal with inappropriate behaviour. Even if this is true it places too much emphasis on gender theory and too little on the importance of the relationship between teacher and the student which is the foundation of good teaching." (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Training, Parliamentary Report, 2002, p. 160)

Thus, gender theorising and an emphasis on quality teaching get positioned as mutually exclusive practices. This juxtaposition flies in the face of research literature that points to the very significant ways in which teacher threshold knowledges about gender impact pedagogical practices, perceptions of

students, and the implementation of curriculum in schools (Skelton, 1998; Francis, 2000; Mills, Martino, & Lingard, 2004; Martino & Meyenn, 2002; Gilbert & Gilbert, 1998; Bailey, 2002). Jones and Myhill (2004), for example, highlight the extent to which there was a tendency for teachers to cite many of the common gender stereotypes regarding boys' and girls' behaviours in the classroom. This tendency is further foregrounded by Allard (2004), where boys' misbehaviour tended to be attributed to external factors—medical reasons or too much physical energy—while girls were constructed by teachers as choosing to be disruptive. Thus, certain assumptions about boys' and girls' differential motivations and behaviours are grounded in teacher knowledges that support gender stereotypes and normalisation. The effect of this situation, as Allard rightly points out, is to foreclose any possibility of developing a deeper understanding of the investments that young people have in particular versions of femininity and masculinity. Moving beyond such stereotypes involves, she suggests, positioning students as agents through providing them with access to other discourses that offer more productive and satisfying ways of thinking about how they might do their gender.

In this sense, Lingard et al. (2003) argue for a gender and pedagogical reform agenda in schools that places teacher knowledge at the heart of developing professional learning communities in schools (Schulman, 1987). In drawing on Newman (1996) and Darling-Hammond (1997), they advocate an approach to boys' education that takes into consideration productive pedagogies as a framework for gender reform in schools (Lingard et al., 2003). Productive pedagogies are characterised by a commitment to developing:

1. an intellectually demanding curriculum;
2. a curriculum that is relevant to and has purchase in the everyday lives of students outside of school;
3. a safe classroom environment where students feel able to take risks in their learning;
4. a celebration and acknowledgement of difference as a resource for building a deep understanding about students' experiences of being in the world.

Such a pedagogical reform agenda requires deep knowledge about the range of social and educational issues that impact students' lives at school and speaks to the need to build teacher threshold knowledges about the heterosexualized, racialized, and classed dimensions of gender and power relations (Archer & Yamashita, 2003; Renold, 2003; Kumashiro, 2002). Thus, the normalising tendency to homogenise students on the basis of their gender can be interrupted. In this chapter, therefore, we highlight how the influences of gender conformity, sexuality, and other social factors impacted detrimentally many

boys' and girls' lives at school, thereby affecting their emotional, educational, and mental health and their well-being (Collins et al., 1996; Collins et al., 2000; Goldflam et al., 1999; McNinch & Cronin, 2004; Dorais, 2004). We use what students write to identify the issues related to the impact of schooling, normalisation, and gender regimes on their lives.

*Theorising Gender: Developing a Conceptual Framework
for Making Sense of Boys' and Girls' Lived Experience in Schools*

Our analysis of the students' responses is informed by the work of Foucault (1982, 1977, 1987) and Butler (1993) who highlight the significance of normalising regimes and practices of self-regulation in the production of subjectivity. Hence, the focus in this chapter is on the ways in which boys and girls come to understand and fashion themselves as particular kinds of gendered subjects, while drawing attention to their capacities to defy the categorisations and classifications that are inscribed through certain normalising tendencies and practices that govern peer group regulatory practices. The concern is to foreground the norms governing the practices of 'othering' and 'privileging' that are enacted by both boys and girls through focusing attention on the performative and self-fashioning practices of corporeal gendered subjectification. As Butler (1993) argues, "the boundaries of the body are the lived experience of differentiation, where that differentiation is never neutral to the question of gender difference or the heterosexual matrix" (p. 65).

Thus, what is significant are the meanings that are attached to the heterosexualized body and how the body is signified according to the norms that govern its materialisation and symbolic significance for boys and girls at school in terms of how they relate to the self and others. In this sense, we are interested in students' understandings of what constitutes "normal" or desirable masculinity and femininity and how they learn to fashion and embody such forms of gendered subjectivity in socially acceptable ways. Hence, attention is drawn to how particular power relations are played out in students' lives at school in relation to the performative dimensions of masculinities and femininities and how they intersect with sexuality, race/culture, class, and ethnicity.

This idea of performativity is also informed by Foucault's insights into the self-fashioning techniques and understandings of power involved in the production of the formation of identity or subjectivity (Foucault, 1978; 1980; 1982). Foucault is careful to situate this focus on "how the subject constitute[s] himself [sic]" within a field or game of truth/power relations. The formation of subjectivity or identity is understood in terms of the cultural

techniques for working on and fashioning the gendered self, which are made available within existing regimes of practice. In this chapter, we investigate what Foucault (1978) terms "polymorphous techniques of power" in relation to examining the self-fashioning practices of masculinity and femininity in various boys' and girls' lives at schools across a range of locations in the Australian context.

SOME METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

We draw on student responses to a survey distributed to over 1,000 students in Australian schools aged 15–16 years of age (see Note 1). There is a conscious attempt to avoid positioning ourselves as occupying some objective or neutral position as researchers who merely listen to and read what students have to say about their lives at schools, as if their texts somehow give us some unmediated access to their 'truths' (Lather, 1991; Britzman, 1995; Scheurich, 1995). However, at the same time, we are wary of appropriating student voice and simply using their texts as mouth-pieces for our own political purposes. As Trinh (1990) states:

. . . No need to hear your voice when I can talk about you better than you can speak about yourself. . . I want to know your story. And then I will tell it back to you in a new way. Tell it back to you in such a way that it has become mine, my own, my re-writing you. . . . I am still author, authority. I am still colonizer, the speaking subject and you are now at the center of my talk (p. 343).

In this sense we bring to our research both a politics that is motivated in response to a New Right agenda that has infiltrated the boys' education agenda in the Australian context (as well as in the UK and North America) and a commitment to providing students with the opportunity to speak their 'hearts and minds' (Martino & Berrill, 2003; Pallotta-Chiarolli, 1998, 2005; Martino & Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2001). Within the context of the public debates about boys' education, the students' perspectives have been remarkably absent. This absence has led to adult-centric constructions of youth that have resulted in the proliferation of generalizable claims about the nature of boys' and girls' learning styles and experiences of schooling. Thus, by asking students to write about what school is like for them, spaces can be created for producing a certain knowledge that is committed to documenting their construction of reality (Cushman, 2003; Fine & Weis, 2003). At the same time it also enables us to use their voices to challenge the 'common sense' claims that resort to reinforcing essentialized differences between the sexes at this particular historical point in time (Petersen, 1998; Fausto-Sterling, 2000).

Four themes emerged in our reading of the data that epitomize the struggle many students experienced in grappling with hierarchical power, both in terms of their relationships with teachers and with their peers:

1. students' critical interrogation of schooling in terms of institutionalized power embodied and exercised by teachers;
2. the impact of hierarchies or pecking orders of masculinity and femininity on the lives of both girls and boys at school;
3. the very significant ways in which sexuality and gender continue to have a detrimental impact on girls' lives at school;
4. the significance of racialized *othering* in visible minority students' lives.

Overall, what emerges as significant, as we will illustrate, is the capacity and willingness of many students to problematize the effects of gender and other influences in their lives at school.

STUDENTS' CRITICAL INTERROGATION OF SCHOOLING: REJECTING HIERARCHICAL AND IMPOSITIONAL AUTHORITY

Both girls and boys across all surveyed schools were very critical of hierarchical and institutional power embodied by teachers and principals. The following boys' responses capture the sentiments of many students we surveyed:

Teachers reckon they *deserve* respect without earning it. Good teachers are hard to come by — most of them are 'fuckheads' . . . They make up their own rules, constantly put students down, dish out punishments if they're having a bad day. (SSBS M 1/16)

School sucks and I think the teachers are up themselves and power freaks. . . Boys have to put up with macho dickhead teachers who think they rule the school. (CCHS M 40/16)

The school that I'm at was once a good school with no uniform, no 6 foot high fence with 4 rings of barbed wire around it which basically turned the school into a prison. When you go past the school you would think that it was a Detention Centre . . . Most of the teachers in the school try to play God with you. All the teachers have walkie talkies! What next? (GHS M 268/16)

Girls expressed similar views about school and teachers, often drawing attention to their uses and abuses of power. This similarity is very interesting in light of the literature, which has tended to highlight boys' resistance to schooling and institutional authority in schools that is often manifested as a form of 'protest masculinity' (Willis, 1977; Walker, 1988; Connell, 1989). Francis (2000) also explored students' perceptions of boys' laddish behaviour in school, which, she claims, often rests on a narrative about female passivity and

male activity as binary oppositional gendered behaviours (see also Jones & Myhill, 2004; Allard, 2004). However, Francis (2000) indicates that "the class-room observation did suggest that boys tended to be louder and more demand-ing than girls and use more physical forms of resistance in the classroom" (p. 115). Our research tends to support this finding with regards to the issue of student resistance to teachers and school-based power structures. We contend that the girls' rejection and critical appraisal of schooling, documented below, may be articulated in more tacit ways at school and not necessarily through the overt bodily enactment of disrupting classes and 'mucking around' that char-acterises boys' performance of protest masculinities (Martino, 2001; Gilbert & Gilbert, 1998).

School for me is a pain in the butt. I hate it. It can be fun sometimes but most of the time it's a bunch of loser teachers pushing you around because they like the power. (GHS F 92/15)

School sucks. I hate it. I hate the rules. I hate teachers. They think they are such higher people than us. We are treated like children when in actual fact we are young adults. (CCHS F 99/16)

Both boys and girls also commented on what they considered to be petty school rules and regulations designed to control and constrain their behaviour and expression of identity. In this sense, school was often constructed as an unnecessary imposition of power and control that had very little to do with creating the conditions for effective learning:

I hate the rules especially. I mean how does the number of earrings in your ears or whether or not you wear nail polish really affect your schoolwork/performance? (CCHS F 111/15)

There is no freedom and of course if we have strict regulations, we ARE going to rebel. They should be worrying about the drug problems and other harmful situations rather than worrying about if our hair is tied up or not. (CCHS M 94/14)

X is a single sex college. There are very strict regulations. Classes are very formal and everything 'is done by the book.' The college has a rich tradition which has set the standard for certain activi-ties in the school . . . More responsibility should be placed in the hands of the boys, allowing them to develop leadership and people skills . . . Tradition plays an important role in the uniform which is very uncomfortable. Long knee-high socks are a thing of the past. Get rid of them! (SSBS M 19/16)

These responses are consistent with what Ancess (2003) writes about creating communities of commitment in schools that are built around a "common ethos and vision, caring and caregiving . . ." and a striving for "mutual accountability among all community members" (p. 9). The building blocks for creating such school cultures and communities, she argues, are "trusting, horizontal relations, not formal externally imposed regulations and hierarchies" (p. 3). Developing such communities also means that certain conditions for communication need to be created and nurtured, which requires a commitment to involving students in the school's decision-making processes. Moreover, Ancess (2003) stipulates

that such forms of communication mean "individuals are in the habit of giving rise to their voice, expressing their ideas" (p. 4).

Martin (2002) also writes about school-based reform in relation to involving students in the decision-making processes alongside supporting them as autonomous learners who are able to take responsibility for their actions/learning. He claims that improving the quality of school life for both boys and girls at school needs to involve the following:

Assisting teachers in dealing with diversity, promoting active learning, developing students' higher order thinking, creating effective learning zones, providing effective feedback to students, developing good relationships with students, engaging in productive pedagogy, listening to and valuing student perspectives (p. 37)

Martin (2002) also states that students value school more when "they see its relevance to them and to the world more generally" (p. 37). This claim is consistent with the productive pedagogies model of leadership and effective schooling with its emphasis on teacher threshold knowledges (Lingard, Hayes, Mills, & Christie, 2003). Many students, however, reiterate that the focus in their schools appears to be on enforcing petty school rules as opposed to a commitment to creating the conditions for active listening, effective learning, and productive schooling.

HIERARCHIES OF MASCULINITIES AND FEMININITIES: THE IMPACT OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY ON STUDENTS' SOCIAL RELATIONS

The pecking order of peer social networks also loomed large in students' narratives about the impact and effects of schooling on their daily lives. There were particular gendered and heterosexualised dimensions to these hierarchical social relations (see also Chambers et al., 2004), as detailed by the following students:

Being a girl at school is very hard. Girls are the worst for social acceptance. To be in 'the popular group" you have to be very social, good looking, wear name brands and the 'in' clothes, be able to do basically whatever you want, i.e., go to parties, stay out late, etc. Girls are also very bitchy and nasty. If you get on the wrong side of someone (a girl) they can and do make your life miserable and even destroy your life by mentally breaking you down. . . . The problems I experience at school are social acceptance. I am in the 'popular' group at school and have to meet high expectations to stay in that group. (GHS F 115/15)

As a boy I feel there is more pressure placed on you by other members of the same sex to conform to their ideas and if you don't you shall be harassed both physically and mentally. I experience problems but so does everyone else. Even those who make other people's problems—i.e. bullies, because they feel they need to prove themselves. (CCHS M 34/15)

One of the other major issues is to be cool and macho in a world where those who play sport and are strong are supreme and those skinny, 'four-eyed nerds' are the 'underworld rats.' (SSBS M 3/16)

Only 'hot' girls will be invited to a party. I can see some of my friends seriously affected by this . . . One other problem I see at school is friends who need to smoke/drink to be cool. (SSGS 123/16)

For both boys and girls 'fitting in' and acquiring social status were central to establishing a position at the top of the hierarchy or pecking order of masculinities and femininities. Acquisition of social status was often related to 'acting cool,' as outlined by the above students, and involved wearing the right clothes and having a social life outside of school. 'Acting cool' entailed being desirable to the opposite sex, going to parties, and an investment in projecting a particular image through either transgressing traditional femininity or conforming to normative masculinity as dictated by the limits of the heterosexual matrix. Both boys and girls write about the pressure involved in maintaining such a 'cool' status, which often involved self-regulation and the policing of gendered identities through practices of labeling and 'othering.' These social practices, as will be illustrated further in the following sections, were imbricated in hierarchical power relationships and were often at the heart of sex- and gender-based harassment experienced by many students in the schools where we conducted our research.

Masculinities and Boys' Social Relations

I don't experience many problems at school. I just stick to what everyone else does, try not and stand out. That way you can't be criticized or hassled. (CCHS M 5/14)

Many boys wrote about the impact and effects of hierarchical masculinities at school. Those boys who conformed to normative or traditional masculinity, for example, were often perceived to be 'cool,' while those who transgressed normative masculinity were policed through discourses of 'othering' and derision:

At a boys' school, athletic ability and strength plays a large role in how many mates and how popular you are. So if you're fat and a spastic you're doomed to eternal rejection. (SSBS M 2/16)

Being a boy means that if you don't act macho you get given crap. Boys don't really have any ways to deal with problems because there is no outlet for emotions and no one to talk to about issues. I get depressed a lot and the only way to stop it is to get really angry which means I tend to offend other people a lot and be really mean to them. I can't really talk about problems and feel trapped a lot. (CCHS M 3/14)

CCHS 3's response is significant in that he associates 'acting macho' and, hence, the regime of gender-based policing and harassment, with not being able to deal with his emotions. He seems to be highlighting the need for emotional support, the lack of which is linked for him to depression and associated

practices of enforced normalisation through peer regulation of gendered heterosexualized identities (Chambers et al., 2004; Renold, 2003). SSBS 2 also highlights the role of sport and the body as a social practice through which many boys learn to validate their masculinities and to gain the status of being 'tough' or 'cool' through enforcing a distinction from those subordinated boys considered to be inferior.

Another student also highlights how boys undertake a kind of surveillance of their peers' masculinity, which involves a focus on the body, with particular attention being devoted to physical strength, penis size, and body weight:

An issue that boys have to deal with a lot is how strong they are. Often boys will just start pushing each other for no reason and if you show that you are hurt by what they have done then they will keep on doing it to you until you do something back to them. Also, if a boy looks weak but is actually strong but people don't know he is strong then they will call him lanky, weak, faggot and other abusive names. Also, if people hide in the change rooms to get changed and people begin to notice it then that person is called Pin Dick or is given crap if they are fat then people start talking about them having big tits and a fat ass (CCHS M 54/15).

The following boy mentions that teachers do not appear to be aware of the effects of such regulatory peer group practices of conformist masculinity and of how these practices impact the lives of students at school, particularly those boys who are positioned as transgressive and 'other':

Boys have to stand up for themselves and their friends to the people who feel they are cool. . . . Boys have to make themselves look either big or insignificant to avoid bullying and pressure. However, if people stick together then they are less likely to be the ones pressured. As this is an easy solution, groups begin to form in the school, which either help each other out or go in search of someone else to attack. Half of the teachers have no idea of what's going on and nothing is done about it (CCHS M 45/14).

For many of the boys there was a powerful awareness and insight into the policing of masculinities through homophobia (Martino, 2000; Chambers et al, 2004; Epstein, 1997; Nayak & Kehily, 1996; Mac an Ghaill, 1994; Plummer, 1999; Martino & Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2003). The following boys, for example, explicitly highlight the impact of *compulsory heterosexuality* on their lives and draw further attention to the inextricable gendered and sex-based dimensions of harassment (McNinch & Cronin, 2004; Dorais, 2004):

School can be a hassle to go to . . . Being a boy is just normal apart from not wanting to act or look like a faggot. You don't want to get crap from anyone . . . Issues are not wanting to be the target of a group who continually gives you crap. There aren't any other issues I know of unless you do something like cry or act gay, that can give you a reputation you can't live down. (CCHS M 1/15)

What issues do boys have to face . . . not looking like a fairy . . . No matter how hard you try and how much effort you put in you always end up back at the bottom . . . to fit in is the hardest thing of all. (CCHS M 24/16)

Some boys also mention the increasing pressure placed on boys to have sex with girls:

Girls are an interesting factor at school. Being a 'handsome' young man I pull chicks pretty easy. Some find it hard though, and are subjected to being called 'fags' simply because they are not as confident as others. Also, there has become increasing pressure to do more with a girl. For instance, 'kissing' is simply not enough, one is now expected at least to 'go down' or receive oral. Some are pressured into this when really they are not old enough or experienced in such sexual acts. (SSBS M 4/16)

What is emphasised once again is the effects of certain normalising tendencies that are built into how boys are expected to behave at school and the role of the peer group in these social practices of masculinity (Kehily & Nayak, 1996; Martino & Meyenn, 2001). As well as an emphasis on proving one's self through competitive sport and pressure to 'do drugs,' which appear to be requirements for successfully displaying proper masculinity, for many boys 'acting cool' is inevitably linked to regimes of compulsory heterosexuality (Rich, 1980) where failure to 'pull chicks' runs the risk of being subjected to homophobic harassment, thus highlighting the need many boys felt in our study of 'not wanting to act or look like a faggot.' In fact, Chambers et al. (2004) in their research found that peer regulation of boys' sexual identities often involved homophobia and misogyny as a means by which to police dominant heterosexual masculinity and that this "cut across class and ethnic differences" (p. 411; see also Martino, 1999; Martino & Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2003). Moreover, they identify verbal sexual harassment used by boys to assert such versions of heterosexual masculinity, with girls reporting that boys would ask them to 'give head' or a 'shag' as they passed one another in the corridors at school. This assertion of heterosexual masculinity also involved intensified policing of other boys, which is captured by the following boy through his use of the metaphor of a sniffer dog:

I get the occasional snigger, tease 'faggot, gay etc.' because I'm real expressive and very in touch with my feminine side. I'm not gay, but I have three sisters, and I can relate and understand them very well. I'm very sensitive too, and at school guys can be like dogs and sniff you out fast. If you stuff up in the sense of wearing the wrong shoes, clothes, friends, you can cop a whole heap of shit, but the action of those guys are out of fear of not conforming to the pathetic egoistic standards. Being a guy that isn't popular, if you don't fit in, then you're immediately labelled. What you usually find [is] that the way to harass a guy's dignity is to affect his sexuality. Common issues of insults could be 'faggot, gay, homo, sped [special education], etc.' really insulting names. For guys it's also an ego thing. Who's the most heroic, bravest, who can pick up the best chick, who can cop a root or a bit . . . first? The peer pressure is pretty strong. You will find that all of the guys are very afraid. You can get the strongest looking guy, but he's still afraid. Guys think that they have to fit in. I do, sometimes, but I guess I'm realising that it's not worth it, and plus I think, why would I want to be like them. (CCHS M 2/15).

One student also explicitly draws attention to the classed dimension of hierarchical peer group relations of masculinity amongst the boys attending the private, single-sex school:

Being in a private school there are many yuppy wankers who think they are hot shit! However in a school community, where only top blokes are accepted, most people are frowned upon because of their rich sheltered lives and the immature ways in which they socialize. Social outcasts (anyone who is not accepted by your group) keep out of the way in fear of being harassed! A very real pecking order is in place and to maintain respect people have to apply authority. (SSBS M 12/17)

Many of the boys in our research demonstrated the capacity to interrogate and interrupt hegemonic practices of masculinity. In fact, their critical commentaries highlight the extent to which practices of masculinity are governed by specific norms around negotiating and exercising power. Documenting these students' perspectives contributes to building a deep knowledge about masculinities that moves beyond essentialized conceptions of boys' behaviour as grounded in brain/sex/hormonal differences. The way that boys behave is not 'natural' and somehow outside of the influences of culture and historically specific social norms for understanding what is to count as acceptable expressions or definitions of masculinity (Connell, 1995; Petersen, 2000).

Femininities and Girls' Social Relations

Hierarchical power relations involving the policing of femininities and sexual identity also featured as significant in girls' peer group relations and impacted on the quality of their lives at school (Lees, 1993; Hey, 1997; Reay, 2001). Many of the girls tended to differentiate between traditional or normative femininity, based on sexual passivity and being a good girl, which was considered to be 'uncool' or 'loserish,' and transgressive femininity, which involved being sexually assertive and engaging in risk-taking behaviours. However, girls reiterated that a certain body image and appearance were prerequisites for acquiring the social status of 'being cool' or popular, which was policed by both other girls and the surveillance of boys. It needs to be stressed that despite one's positioning within the social hierarchy of femininities, the self-policing practices of the body with regards to appearance, weight, and image were implicated in most girls' lives, regardless of whether they subscribed to or performed traditional and/or transgressive femininities in schools:

Girls are expected to look pretty, be thin and have a large chest. (GHS F 51/14)

Girls are very sensitive about what others think of their weight. Some go anorexic over the issues of being told they're fat by peers. (CCHS F 90/14)

Thus, it appears that whether girls are classified and self-define as 'nice girl' or 'bad girl', 'frigid or slut,' the issues of body image and appearance impacted upon all girls.

Similarly, hierarchies and classifications related to body image and sexual expression for girls who subscribed to either traditional or transgressive femininities appear to be determined by boys or were linked to normative masculinity. As one girl in our research said, "Boys have a major role in determining the social status of a girl."

Being a girl in a school I guess is harder than being a boy because we have to be pretty and right to fit in. I think guys have the macho thing going on, so that's what they might find is hard, but girls have to be skinny and always look good. The things I have problems with at school is trying not to care when guys don't pay attention to me and focusing on school work which is more important. My friend is really gorgeous and it's hard having to see her get all the attention. (CCHS F 181/16)

For girls, the body, appearance, and sexuality emerged as major concerns in their lives, indicating the extent to which they had internalised an idealized image of embodied femininity. Thus, these girls highlight how being pretty and slim carries a particular social currency that confers a status femininity.

Girls are rewarded for conforming to this so-called 'successful' traditional femininity by being positioned as sexually desirable by boys:

The popular girls are often looked up to because they're gorgeous and they have the gorgeous boyfriends. (GHSV F 104/16)

Everybody tries to be the most popular and most beautiful and all the girls try to look good, lose weight (many girls diet) just so the boys like them and don't talk about them! Boys use the girls and make bets. Boys don't care about girls' personalities only the body and looks—and how loose they are. Girls go to school to impress boys. (CCHS F 173/15)

The issue of body image was often seen to be connected to the broader issues of gaining social acceptance and responding to the surveillance of girls by boys:

The pressures for girls to be pretty and slim is a big issue as girls fear what boys say about them behind their backs . . . Boys tend to be insincere to girls, as they like them for their looks and how far they'll go with them, but not caring about what's inside. (CCHS F 174/15)

Appearance is one of the major factors as prettier girls or the ones that boys consider worthy to go out with tend to be the popular ones. Nowadays boys have a major role in determining the social status of a girl. A girl a guy considers ugly would immediately be labelled "unpopular." (CCHS F 120/15)

Thus, body image and appearance, as determined by the norms governing desirable femininity, played a major role in determining a girl's position within the social hierarchy of peer group relations at school:

Girls have to keep their image up. If your skirt is too long, you get pity, which is absolutely stupid. If you're not very good looking, you get disdain. If you're a popular person, chances are you have to be a stereotypical superficial blonde bimbo . . . I myself am not a popular person by definition,

meaning I don't hang with the huge either-clever-or-really stupid, doing drugs, wild party-animal, shits-everyone-else crowd, and I am so happy about that, not because I'm bitter (about this issue anyway), but because I love my friends and I couldn't stand being around the majority of these people anyway which is not to say that guys haven't any issues or insecurities, but girls are pressured a lot about image. If you're overweight, you're insecure and you berate yourself everyday. If you're underweight, you worry about what other people think about your skinny arms etc. If you're too tall or short or hardworking or unattractive etc., it seems worse because of the other 200 people you see every day judging you on your appearance. Granted only a fraction of that amount actually think that way, but it still feels like it, and self-esteem is hard to gain in high school. (CCHS F 88/15)

While the boys tended to highlight the homophobic dimensions of hierarchical power, the girls wrote about the policing of their sexuality by other boys in terms of the madonna/whore binary:

Being a girl is pretty hard cause you always look great to impress the guy or you get called a 'dirty scrag' or you can be called a slut for having sex with a guy even if he was your boyfriend etc. (RGHS F 20/16)

I am a girl at a Government Co-Ed school and I have a lot of male friends. Immediately I am classed as a slut and this makes it hard for me to make friends because of this name . . . . People look at me weird and it makes me uneasy at school. Guys think, "Slut . . I'll get lucky tonight" so they immediately come to me. It's hard to deal with this because everyone finds out and hassles me at school. The hard thing for me to understand is that when girls have sex they are called a 'slut,' but when guys have sex everyone thinks they are a hero. This is wrong and it hurts me to think that the world is coming to this conclusion. (RGHS F 21/16)

These perspectives are consistent with that presented by Lees (1993) who argues that:

Girls walk a narrow line: they must not be seen as too tight, nor as too loose. Girls are preoccupied in their talk with sexuality, and in particular with the injustice of the way they are treated by boys. Defining girls in terms of sexuality rather than their attributes and potentialities is a crucial mechanism of ensuring their subordination to boys (p. 29).

This account is confirmed by what the following girl has to say about boys at school:

In my year especially, the boys are very persuasive when it comes to girls. They ALWAYS have the upper hand and congregate in groups to intimidate. Girls then feel they have to live up to the expectations and standards of the 'guys' and become fake. Their personality isn't their real personality and they do anything only for a guy's approval. Personally I find it PATHETIC! And I let them know it . . . Girls live up to the expectation of the 'boys group.' It's all about doing something only if it's cool and the others will approve of it and condone it. That's all that seems to matter! . . . . I also get sick of how guys talk about girls in sexual ways and judge their personality on their bra size! It's demeaning and it affects girls. They will do anything a guy says, just so they won't be thought of as a 'tight-ass.' That's what school life to me involves! (CCHS F 112/15)

The point made by CCHS 112 regarding boys' power to intimidate is also important because it relates to how boys establish certain power bases in peer

group situations and then use this power in intimidating ways to police girls' sexuality and femininities. The following girl actually highlights how boys' harassment of girls is linked to asserting their superiority, which is linked to fashioning a cool masculinity in peer group situations:

Most guys give the girls crap about how we as girls look because it's 'cool,' it's 'fun,' and it impresses their mates. If you were to be locked away with them in a room, they would be the sweetest, kindest person (creature?) you could ever have come across and I think it's really dumb (pathetic?) how they have to use these masks to keep their 'supreme' title and carry it out till the end . . . (CCHS F 96/15)

Many girls drew our attention to how the popular boys are the ones who do the teasing and suggested that this teasing is a means of subordinating those girls who do not measure up to their standards of acceptable femininity. Furthermore, what is highlighted by such a response is that boys' harassing behaviours are a means by which they are able to establish and maintain their powerful position at the top of the social ladder of peer group relations at school consisting of a pecking order of masculinities and femininities. In fact, many girls talked about how boys teased and ridiculed them on the basis of their appearance, which was once again seen as linked to boys asserting masculine power through sexist practices of denigrating girls:

Most of the boys at our school think they are superior to everyone else and they think they can have fixed images of what girls should look like and if you don't fit this image, then you get called moles and picked on for any physical appearance that is different. I think they are doing this to compensate for not being Gods themselves. The issues boys have to deal with are feeling they have to fit a certain image and if they don't they will be picked on. (CCHS F 159/15)

This denigration and policing of girls' femininities by boys also involved homophobic harassment, with the latter often involving labelling certain girls 'lesbian':

If you are a girl and have a lot of female friends, the guys will call you a lesbian. (CCHS F 92/15)

I am one of those eccentric people. I am an individual apparently. I dress how I feel and do much the same. Don't get me wrong, I don't bully and I am not a trouble maker in class, but somehow I threaten people, mainly guys. I get teased because I dress weird . . . I am teased because although I have my own self-confidence to do what I feel, I am still shy around people. I am also in all extended (smart) classes at school except one of which I am literally top of the class. That threatens them too. And I have friends that are also considered weird. They are my close group of friends. I get 'lesbian' a LOT I am not but I do have 2 friends that are, and what's the big deal! . . . The teasing is not stupid sing song rhymes or anything it's embarrassing questions asked loudly around a big group of people which made me shy and uncomfortable. 'Are you and your sister lesbians?' What's that? I don't ask them if they sleep with their sister let alone sibling of the same sex—how rude is that? (CCHS F 98/15)

The shit the guys used to hang on me in my younger years made being an outgoing and kind of out there chick fucking suck! I used to get called 'the dyke that lost her bike.' It wasn't any of their

business if I was a lesbian or not (though I'm not), but you know how boys are . . . I got away from the shit and my marks picked up. (GHSV F 211/16)

In Year 9 I got teased HEAPS and I was called a lesbian. Only heavily teased girls in our grade get stuff like that spread about them. I guess I got picked—lucky me! (CCHS F 119/15)

This girl's comment that "only heavily teased girls" are called lesbians highlights how, according to the dictates of compulsory heterosexuality governing these boys' behaviours, to be considered or labelled a lesbian is to position a girl at the lowest rung of the social ladder. Boys deploy this form of homophobia not only against marginalised boys to ensure their subordinated status but also against those girls who threaten to defy normative constructs of femininity.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GENDER-BASED HARASSMENT

Many female students repeatedly identified 'bitchiness' as a major problem in their lives at school. They talked at length about the social pressures that resulted from 'bitchiness' as a specific form of gender-based harassment amongst girls used to maintain and establish certain power relations (Lees, 1993; Hey, 1997; Pallotta-Chiarolli, 1998; Tanenbaum, 2002). The following girl, for example, highlights how bitchiness often occurs because of jealousy or rivalry in relation to boys:

Through bitchiness I have lost friends. (Other females or ex-friends have started trouble for me) . . . I have tried not to let the bitchiness bring my grades down but unfortunately for me my parents, teachers and I have all noticed that my grades have dropped and we all know that this has been caused by stress. I am in high classes but since I started to get hassled I have been dropped down two classes . . . I am hoping that soon the troublemakers will realize that they have made me suffer and hopefully they will realize that they had enough fun and are now bored with hassling me (hopefully). (RGHS F 28/14)

In fact, many students distinguished between boys' tendency to resort to physical fighting and girls' tendency to 'bitch' as means of dealing with conflict:

Boys get in fights and get called gay but girls get in bitch fights all the time and heaps of gossip goes around every day and girls get reputations as sluts, bitches that can stay with them until they leave school. (Girl CCHS 97/14)

Most girls don't bully other girls to their faces unless they are in a fight with that person. Boys, on the other hand, tend to bully each other constantly about the way they look etc. They are more open with their bullying and don't talk about people behind their back as much as girls do . . . There is not really a way to stop bullying because, wherever kids are, there are people of different races, weights and looks and so you always get a few people who will go out of their way to make those who are 'different' feel uncomfortable and unloved. (CCHS F 100/15)

CCHS 136 below draws attention to the norms of appearance and bodily comportment that appear to drive the bitching amongst girls, while boys, who are

also capable of such behaviour, are constructed as dealing with it in more physically aggressive ways. Her comment that boys tend to provoke "bitch fights" amongst girls, while the latter ignore boys' physical fights, suggests that boys derive a sense of pleasure and power from inciting girls to engage in such practices, but the reverse is not held to be true. Furthermore, she sees the whole issue of bullying as an inevitable part of school life and as the only way to solve the problems that arise. This perspective resonates with many students' assertions that bullying or teasing was a 'normal' or an expected part of school life:

School for me, being a girl, is difficult concerning bitchiness and fitting in. . . . Girls generally are very bitchy. They have set standards of what and how we should act and dress. This for some people it is hard as we all aren't as fortunate as others. Boys also at this school are just as bitchy as the girls but seem to handle it in different ways. They act physically, whereas girls just bitch and call names . . . When boys see girls having a bitch fight they find it pathetic but they also try to provoke it. But when boys have fights, girls see it as pathetic and don't see the point of it. In conclusion, I believe that most people probably see school life in the same way as I do—a whole lot of problems that can only be solved by fighting. (CCHS F 136/16)

And this is what another girl had to say about power, social hierarchies, competition, and bitchiness amongst girls:

It's like a silent war. Which group knows better guys? Which group goes to more parties? It can be really stressful sometimes. Eventually the competition turns into hostility . . . You just feel shit because you never wanted anyone to hate you, in fact the complete opposite (SSGS F 119/15).

Thus, bitchiness featured as a significant form of harassment in girls' lives and is linked to issues of 'coolness,' popularity, and competition amongst girls and often in relation to boys (Duncan, 1999).

I get left out a lot by my friends. Although I sit in a group, no one really talks to me. . . During class, when it's one on one with my friends, they are really nice and we talk for ages about everything you can possibly think of, but when we get back to the rest of the group they walk off, ignore me and talk about people I don't know or things they have done without me. I feel sad about being left out. If you don't have connections and don't work to act 'cool' no-one really wants to talk to you or know you . . . bitching and gossiping are the worst things in the world to have to deal with. (SSGS F 46/14)

Girls also used the terms "bitch Barbies" to define those who deliberately harass other girls based on their supposed superiority due to combinations of wealth, body image, Anglo-Australian backgrounds, and popularity with boys:

Girls worry more about physical appearance e.g., being fat, having the right shoes, hair, etc. If you do one thing wrong you'll end up getting backstabbed and then become a LOSER! (GHSV F 118/16)

The behaviour and practices of the popular girls who positioned themselves and were positioned at the top of the social hierarchy with the 'cool' boys were

rejected by many students. The following person refers to these girls as the "Britney Spears clones":

I'm proud to be a geek, free from petty bitching about boys and clothes . . . sometimes the Britney Spears clones really piss me off. (SSGS F 32/15)

Such an ascription, like the labels "bitch Barbies" and "the plastics,' functions as a means of retaliatory resistance against the commodification and marketization of certain versions of femininity that are actively appropriated by the 'cool' girls. Such rejection of hierarchical power and cultural capital accrued by the popular transgressive girls is also actively repudiated by the following girl:

Girls have to deal with growing up in front of everyone and have a lot of pressure to 'fit in' with other girls. A lot of boys have to deal with peer pressure and to face a lot of bullies and be a part of fights. It is more common for girls to be given a 'bad' name and to have rumours spread about them than boys. You have problems throughout high school with girls that think they're better than you and can push you around but you end up realising that you're the better person because they dropped out of school at Year 10 to work full time at [fast food takeaway]. (GHS F 114/15)

These 'sensible' girls (Hey, Creese, Daniels, Fielding, & Leonard, 2001), however, appear to be distancing themselves from both the 'immaturity' of the boys and the destructive 'bitchiness' of the girls in favour of investing in academic success at school, which they see as affording them greater post-school opportunities (Francis, 2000).

Listening to such voices produces a counter hegemonic discourse in their capacity to offer perspectives on schooling that draw attention to the impact and effects of the policing and surveillance of femininities and masculinities in boys' and girls' lives that are eclipsed by the master narrative governing the moral panic surrounding boys as the 'new disadvantaged.' In short, the words of boys and girls present a much more dynamic picture of the "complex messiness of gender relations" (Reay, 2001, p. 164). This picture is further complicated when taking into account the perspectives of visible minority groups.

RACIALIZED *OTHERING*

Racial discrimination was also mentioned by both girls and boys as a problem impacting their lives at school. A Chilean girl attending the rural school mentioned how her darker skin had led her to be targeted for racist abuse on the basis that it was a signifier of Aboriginality:

At school you may be treated different because you are weaker or because you look different. When I was in primary school I used to be bullied by older kids because I was darker than them. I was called ABC Aboriginal Bum Cleaner but I am not Aboriginal. (RGHS F 22/14)

A Fijian/Scottish girl also recounts a horrific story of racial and physical abuse at the hands of a boy when she first started school:

Around 10 years ago I started school. Everything up till then was good. I don't have good memories of starting off. All I can remember was me as a sacred little girl who thought school was like a prison and I was uncomfortable. In year 1 I had problems with a boy who was in year 6. He used to hit me and smack my head against bins because of my racial background, because I have a black mother. This was about the time I didn't trust anyone. I wondered why kids could be so cruel. Why they looked at skin colour and they couldn't look beyond it. (RGHS F 27/16)

Students from Asian backgrounds also mentioned racist behaviour directed toward them at school:

Racial problems are the most which influence me . . . This school has many problems . . . especially Asians tend to face the most problems. Many in this school are RACIST against Asians. (CCHS M 33/17 Japanese)

Well, problems that I experience at school are all racial. Some people seem to dislike Asians I mean. I got bullied because I have yellow skin and black hair. I mean, what's the difference? We are all humans but I haven't done anything to offend them, I get called "chink" and "gook" and people say, "Go back to where you came from." This shit sucks! If I had the choice I would go back. I don't want to take over anyone's land. Why don't they leave us alone and let us be happy. We work just as hard as everybody else. Please, why is it so racist. (CCHS F 106/16)

The racialized dimension of hegemonic Anglo-Australian masculinity was foregrounded by boys of diverse Asian backgrounds in our study, such as by the following Chinese Indonesian boy:

I came from Indonesia, and I was amazed (not surprised amazed, crappy amazed) how different life is. Where I come from, nobody gives people shit, teases or bullies them. Since I came here [to Australia] people have given me shit. Even some of my friends punch me. I'm not accustomed to punching. I'm just so different. Being at school is like going to the army because boys have been brought up to a custom. There are groups around the school—'surfers,' 'the wogs,' 'the nerds,' and 'the rejects,' I'm not saying that I am one of the rejects, no, it's because I feel like a reject. Being given shit all this time is not jolly. You feel left out . . . If you do something bad everybody gives you shit forever. They remember it . . . if you wear a surfie shirt, cargo pants. . . if you wear something different, they 'brand' you 'techno,' 'rapper.' What is this?!! This is bullshit!! Why do people brand you? Some of my friends want me to be something I'm not. That's why I feel bad all the time. I don't have good skill at sport. I play tennis well and I'm not very smart . . . If you're not smart or attractive or good at sport you're basically a reject, a piece of shit. This is basically old stereotyping. I can't believe it still exists today. (CCHS M 14/16)

The comment that this boy is not used to "punching" is significant and signals that he does his masculinity in ways that are differentiated from the Anglo-Australian boys. Moreover, he appears to be highlighting the extent to which bullying and harassment is about normalization—those who are considered not to fit the norm are harassed. One must also wear the 'right' clothes and play the

'right' sport. Tennis, for example, does not appear to carry any masculinity confirming status among the Anglo-Australian boys. CCHS 14 also seems to be highlighting that 'giving other people shit' plays a significant role in how the dominant boys fashion their masculinities in peer group situations. It is a means by which they can 'get a laugh' at the expense of someone else who becomes the butt of the put-downs (Kehily & Nayak, 1996; Martino, 1999). What also needs to be foregrounded here is how such normative constructions of a hegemonic heterosexual masculinity, read as Anglo-Australian, are identified as the benchmark against which the masculinities of those boys from culturally diverse backgrounds are measured and, hence, inferiorized (Martino & Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2003).

For students from culturally diverse backgrounds, the issue of whiteness (Aveling, 1998; Levine-Rasky, 1998) emerged as a significant influence driving the normalisation that they encountered from other students at school:

For someone coming from an Asian background studying here in Australia it is very troublesome. It began in Year 9 (aged 14). Black hair, small eyes and yellow skin is a description which is not difficult to miss and although it was only verbal abuse it has caused me to view the Australian society in a very different manner. I have learnt that how you look, how you talk and how you act reflects greatly which society you belong to. . . I am certainly not implying that all Australians are prejudiced. In fact, since my stay here I have met many decent and respectful Australians who are very down to earth. My message is that it has greatly affected my studies here in Australia. Who the fuck do the racists thinks they are!! We Asians have nothing against them. We have done nothing to hurt or harm them! (CCHS F 108/16)

People pick on you and are racist and sexist and think you're crap. I am not Aboriginal, but my sister is and she gets enough shit from everyone, including my step-dad. She doesn't need it any more. People need to grow up and respect each other a little more. (GHS F 70/15)

The following boy who identifies himself as "a white Australian" is also subjected to harassment because he chooses to befriend others from culturally diverse backgrounds:

I often see racist people at school who offend me and other people. Although I am a white Australian, I am friends with people from all over the world e.g. UK, Italy, Spain, Japan, SE Asia, America etc. I sometimes get shit because of it, but there is nothing I can do about it and I don't really care because despite threats I ignore them wholeheartedly and no malice has ever been directed against me. Bullies are everywhere at my school, but I have learned to accept it and they don't scare me. I have had threats but nothing has ever materialised. But some people live in fear. I find that disgusting that some people are too busy putting others down and some people are believing them. (CCHS M 4/15)

And so a racist white mentality is also identified as driving bullying practices at school with this boy indicating that some students live in fear of being targeted because of their cultural background. In fact, this interpretation is supported by the following girls who claim that being a "normal

Australian," which means being white, is a significant factor contributing to their avoidance of discrimination at school:

School is good for me because I hardly have any problems. Apart from the work, I often enjoy it because I can see my friends and socialize. I think since I have an Australian background, I'm not singled out as much as some for being different to others. (CCHS F 161/15)

For me, school is a very enjoyable place. I enjoy coming to it and I have no real problems with getting along with people or being discriminated against. But maybe that's just me, maybe I'm a lucky one who doesn't have to worry about those sort of things because I'm a normal Australian girl who is of above average intelligence—good at sport, therefore, no one really hassles me about anything and I have no real problems/issues. But I do realize that many other girls and boys face serious problems each time they enter the school grounds. Many are classified into the intelligent and not so intelligent groups, then into whether you're cool or uncool, then whether you are Australian or of other background. (CCHS F 142/16)

Both these girls are able to escape the forms of harassment documented by many other students in our research because they fit into the normalised category of being a privileged white Anglo Australian. CCHS 142, however, situates this issue of normality within broader frameworks of classification involving the requirement to act 'cool,' which ties in with maintaining a particular image or reputation.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Based on students' narratives about their experiences of normalisation in schools, we argue for the need to embrace a "pedagogy of difference" as a basis for building gender- and school-based reform agendas (Trifonas, 2002). Within the current context of the new right agenda that has hijacked the boys' education debates in Australia, the UK and, to a lesser extent, in Canada, this approach involves resisting the tendency to normalise students' experiences of schooling on the basis of their gender and rather considering the various ways in which gender intersects with class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, faith orientation, etc. The first step in this process, we argue, is to produce local knowledge about what a diverse range of students really think and feel about their lives at school. Student voice, as we have illustrated in this chapter, can be a rich source of knowledge about the impact and effects of power relations, normalisation, and difference on boys' and girls' engagement with schooling. This knowledge can then feed into building a teacher threshold knowledge about the range of influences impacting on the formation of students' gendered subjectivities in schools and how these relate to building a culture that is committed to embracing difference. Advocating a pedagogy of difference is consistent with approaches to school reform as elaborated by Newman

and Associates (1996), Darling-Hammond (1997), Lingard, Hayes, Mills, and Christie (2003), and Ancess (2003), all of whom emphasize the need to build teacher threshold knowledges about how best to improve the educational and social outcomes for all students in schools.

Interrogating normalisation is at the heart of enacting such a pedagogy of difference. As Ancess (2003) argues, listening to students is an important step in establishing more horizontal power relations in schools that involve a genuine willingness on behalf of educators to create communities of commitment and pastoral care. Such school cultures are the building blocks of professional learning communities in schools that are committed to pedagogies of difference as a countervailing force to normalisation. As is highlighted by the following students' survey responses, many young people in schools already engage in practices of self-problematisation and demonstrate the capacity and willingness to interrogate the extent to which normalisation, regulation, and surveillance impose limits on their freedom to choose less oppressive ways of being:

At school I just stick to what everyone else does and try not to stand out. That way you can't be criticised or hassled. (CCHS M 5/14)

School for me is like mass conformity in its greatest form. I frequently hear "freak" yelled at me as I walk down the hall and I feel proud. (GHS F 102/15)

A big issue between boys and girls is boys always get teased in year 8–10 about having a small penis or in a girls case small breasts. . . By people saying things like, "You're such a surfboard," it makes you think about it all the time. That's why so many girls want to get plastic surgery, and I happen to be one of them. (GHS F 74/15)

On the basis of these responses and of those we have drawn on in this chapter, we argue that there is an urgent need for educators in schools to address these dimensions of enforced normalisation that negatively impact the social, emotional, and intellectual well-being of both girls and boys. This task is not going to be an easy one, given, as Hey (1997) argues, that:

The formal pedagogy of schooling [is] about denying questions of difference to their subjects (Walkerdine, 1995) [and hence] there [is] little official encouragement to engage school students in discussions and relations of power (p. 129–130)

This argument has been supported by the above students, who highlight that schools are definitely in the business of enforcing conformity to institutional norms governing bodily and social comportment as opposed to actively encouraging them "to accept responsibility for their behaviour and to take initiatives for change" (Collins et al., 2000, p. 101). The latter dispositions are fostered when teachers are committed to building communities in their classrooms where students feel that they are listened to and understood within the

context of modelling more horizontal power relations. Such a commitment constitutes a threshold for developing a pedagogy of difference that starts with building knowledge about students' lives and incorporates this knowledge into developing an intellectually demanding and relevant curriculum where teachers feel a deep sense of responsibility for ensuring the safety and learning of all students. In short, such cultures are built on listening to students and acknowledging difference in their lives as opposed to enforcing normalisation and hierarchical power relations, which incite resistance to authority.

NOTE

[1] Students aged 14–16 (Year 10 and Year 11) from 6 Australian schools completed an extended response survey question. They were asked to write about what life at school as a boy or as a girl was like and to describe any problems they experienced. The following schools from various socio-economic locations were chosen: a single sex boys' school in a high socio-economic suburb in Perth, Western Australia (SSBS/ n = 69); a rural government high school in a low scoio-economic area in New South Wales (RGHS/ n = 40:22 boys/18 girls); a Catholic co-educational school in a middle-class suburb in Perth, Western Australia (CCHS/ n = 260:149 boys/111 girls); a government high school in a low socio-economic suburb in Perth, Western Australia (GHS/ n = 223:101 boys/122 girls); a single sex girls' school in a high socio-economic suburb in Melbourne (SSGS/ *n* = 171); a government high school in a middle socio-economic suburb in Melbourne, Victoria (GHSV) *n* = 221: 106 boys, 115 girls).

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DIFFERENCES IN TRANSITION: DIVERSE STUDENTS NAVIGATING THE FIRST YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL

"Ninth Grade: A School Year To Be Reckoned With," warns a newspaper headline, one of many proclaiming the difficulties of the first year of high school (Jonsson, 2004). The statistics are disturbing. In the United States, the rate at which students drop out of school after the first year of high school— ninth grade for most students in the U.S.—has tripled over the last 30 years, and students in schools serving poor communities are particularly affected (Haney, Madaus, Abrams, Wheelock, Miao, & Gruia, 2004; Letgers, & Kerr, 2001). Numerous studies point to students' ninth-grade year in high school as a critical time, predictive of later school performance.

What is it about ninth grade that makes enduring it, in the words of one research team, akin to navigating "treacherous waters" (Neild, Stoner-Eby, & Furstenberg, 2001, p. 29)? While previous research has substantiated a number of factors that contribute to students' difficulties in ninth grade, this chapter focuses on how five individual students managed some of the challenges, embedded in a particular school context, that they faced in their first year at large, diverse Cedar High. Foregrounding the perspectives of the students themselves, this chapter draws on ethnographic data and employs the concept of the ninth grade as a "figured world" to provide new insight into the transition to high school.

BACKGROUND: WHAT IS THE TROUBLE WITH THE NINTH GRADE?

The Extent of the Problem

Student difficulties in the ninth grade appear to be both pervasive and significant. Multiple studies document a consistently negative effect of the transition to high school on student academic achievement (French, Seidman, Allen & Aber, 2000; Reyes, Gillock, & Kobus, 1994; Roderick, 1995; Seidman, Chesir-Teran, Freidman, Yoshikawa, Allen, & Robers, 1996). One consequence is the loss of students from high school after ninth grade. Haney et al.'s (2004) recent study of high school enrollment and graduation rates over the past 30 years found that the rate at which students disappeared from high school rosters between ninth

and tenth grade had tripled over this time period. Nationally, 11.4% of the 440,000 ninth graders enrolled in 1998–1999 did not show up as enrolled in tenth grade in 1999–2000, a significant change from attrition rates as low as under 5% in the mid 1980's.

Beyond students who drop out immediately after ninth grade, research indicates that ninth graders who are retained are less likely to graduate high school at all (Neild et al., 2001). Roderick (1995) reports that the proportion of 12- to 14-year-old students who were overage for their grade rose from 20–32% from 1980 to 1993. These overage students encounter problems when they enter the credits-earned system of high school and can no longer be socially promoted from grade to grade, at times resulting in drop out. In their study of students in Philadelphia schools, Nield, Stoner-Eby, and Furstenberg (2001) found that a student's ninth grade outcome contributed significantly to the researchers' ability to predict high school completion. Even when controlling for "demographic and family background characteristics, previous school performance, and pre-high school attitudes and ambition" (p. 29), these researchers found that the experience of a rocky ninth-grade transition contributed substantially to students' probability of dropping out later in high school. They point to the ninth grade as a time in students' school careers when "degree completion hangs in the balance and educational trajectories are reshaped" (p. 29). Various studies argue that this phenomenon is particularly noticeable in urban contexts, as will be discussed later.

Reasons for the Problem

Existing research indicates that the first year of high school is a volatile period during which time students are at the confluence of a number of changes in their academic, social, and family lives. Adolescence involves physical and emotional changes, as well as changes in students' senses of themselves as members of particular racial, ethnic, and gender groups. There is general agreement in the research literature that the collision between this time of developmental change and the structures and practices of the typical comprehensive high school in the United States makes the ninth grade a difficult year for many students (Newman, Lohman, Newman, Myers, & Smith, 2000; Lounsbury & Johnston, 1985; Eccles, Lord, & Midgley, 1991).

There are a number of specific but interrelated aspects of this mismatch, all corroborated by numerous studies. Some ninth-grade students have difficulty adjusting to the shift in their relationships with teachers; in high school students spend less time with a greater number of teachers (Lounsbury & Johnston, 1985; Eccles et al., 1991; Kerr, 2002; Mizelle & Irvin, 2000). The new student-teacher relationship entails less interaction and academic guidance (Newman et al., 2000).

Academic demands shift as well. Students have more curricular choices but less guidance (Barone, Aguirre-Deandreis, & Trickett, 1991; Reyes, Gillock, & Kobus, 1994). They face the challenge of more difficult classes, more subjects at once, and more traditional teaching styles with less support than in earlier years of school (Eccles et al., 1991; Newman et al., 2000; Felner & Adan, 1989; Kerr, 2002; Mizelle & Irvin, 2000).

New relationships with peers in this new setting and at this point in students' development are at issue as well. At this age, students find themselves more in need of peer friendships as they separate from parents (Hertzog, Morgan, Diamond, & Walker, 1996). The larger environment of the typical U.S. high school creates new social demands, as students find themselves in a more complex social setting characterized by a greater number and diversity of peers and less adult supervision (Newman et al., 2000). These differences can result in feelings of isolation (Kerr, 2002; Mizelle & Irvin, 2000). Alongside these changes, some students may face or become aware of racial barriers and stereotypes at this time, affecting racial and ethnic identity development (Roderick, 2003).

Almost all of these factors are linked in some way to aspects of the high school context—the structures and practices of the typical U.S. comprehensive high school—that amplify the tension between the needs of adolescents and the institutional workings of the school. These include a generally 'hands off' approach to students' academic and social needs. This approach can be attributed, at least in part, to the comprehensive high school's complex and densely scheduled structure, which leaves little time for school adults to have extended contact with individual students. Related to this structural issue is the curricular fragmentation, amplified by tracking, that allows high schools to offer a plethora of options but that can be overwhelming and difficult to navigate for new students. The study school featured in this chapter, a large, urban school with an overwhelming array of choices and little adult intervention in students' social and academic worlds, exemplifies these aspects of context and provides an excellent opportunity to see how such factors shape students' lived experiences at the beginning of high school.

The Importance of Context

Consistent with other aspects of the educational experience in the U.S., poor, urban youth of color appear to struggle more in ninth grade. There are sharp differences between ninth grade attendance and promotion rates at rich and poor schools (Letgers & Kerr, 2001). Research indicates that the impact of a difficult ninth-grade experience disproportionately affects students attending urban schools in large cities; between 40 and 50 percent of students in 35 large city

schools drop out of high school, and students' ninth-grade experiences may be a key factor in their decisions to drop out of urban schools (Clowes, 2002).

Many of the problems encountered by ninth graders are amplified for students in urban schools, which are frequently "large, impersonal and deeply disorganized" (Neild, Stoner-Eby, & Furstenberg, 2001, p. 9). School turbulence at the beginning of the year (such as overcrowded classrooms, insufficient textbooks, and schedule changes), a particular problem in urban schools, is linked to students' academic difficulties in ninth grade (Weiss, 2001). While more students are in need of extra attention and help in urban schools, urban teachers are frequently less experienced and less well prepared than their counterparts in more affluent settings (Roderick & Camburn, 1999; Neild & Balfanz, 2001; Balfanz, McPartland, & Shaw, 2002). While all students face potential difficulties managing the transition to high school, urban schools seem to be structured in ways that are particularly difficult for students to navigate.

The Purpose of this Chapter: Examining the Figured World of Ninth Grade at a Diverse Urban High School and Students' Navigation of this World

There is a substantial body of work documenting the extent of, reasons for, and consequences of students' difficulties in the ninth grade. This chapter takes a unique slant on this topic, examining the first year of high school through the perspectives of the students themselves. Using the concept of "figured worlds"—"processes or traditions of apprehension which gather us up and give us form as our lives intersect them" (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998, p. 41)—the chapter identifies key aspects of the ninth-grade experience that were salient to students in a particular high school, exploring how five different students navigated these facets of the setting. A figured world can be understood as a largely conceptual yet materially consequential set of shared understandings through which individuals interpret and make sense of events in a particular setting. Understanding the ninth grade at Cedar High as a figured world is helpful in that it allows us to concurrently examine the processes that constituted the ninth grade at that school and the ways in which those processes interacted with and gave shape and meaning to students' lives.

The figured world of ninth grade at Cedar High had specific dimensions. This chapter focuses on three of these—social 'freedom,' academic 'freedom,' and racial polarization (all explained more fully below)—amid which each student had to manage his or her transition to ninth grade. These are "social worlds in which participants' positions matter" (Holland et al., 1998, p. 41), and as such, each of the five students profiled had different interpretations of, resources to bring to bear upon, and outcomes within the figured world of Cedar's ninth

grade. Schools and classrooms are embedded within larger social, political, and economic frameworks marked by race- and class-linked inequalities that put working-class students of color at a distinct disadvantage in their opportunities to access social capital and institutional support within them (Stanton-Salazar, 1997). This structuring of opportunity was salient to students' understanding and navigation of the figured world of the ninth grade at Cedar, and thus to students' ninth-grade transition experiences.

This approach to analyzing students' experiences at Cedar provides for attention to the multidimensional nature of those experiences. As Newman et al. (2000) note, most studies of students in the ninth grade do not consider the multiple changes in students' lives during this time period. Students belong to "multiple worlds," and "meanings and understandings derived from these worlds combine to affect students' engagement with schools and learning" (Phelan, Yu, & Davidson, 1994, p. 417). This study is designed to attend to these interwoven dimensions of students' experiences in the ninth grade. Although all of the students encountered and navigated challenges that were well documented in the literature, they did so within a particular context (the figured world of ninth grade at Cedar High), from varying vantage points, and in distinct ways. By conceptualizing ninth grade at Cedar as a figured world with particular dimensions, this chapter attends to the processes that give scope and meaning to students' lives during this transitional time.

METHODOLOGY

Theoretical Frame

To identify and explore the figured world of ninth grade at Cedar High School, this study used a method grounded in both the interpretive and the critical research paradigms, with particular emphasis on eliciting the perspectives of the students themselves. An interpretive research orientation highlights the socially constructed and locally negotiated nature of experience (Mehan, 1992), while a critical research paradigm attends to the ways in which larger structures of inequality frame the possibilities of individuals and groups with the least power (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999). This merger provides a framework from which to analyze students' experience in ninth grade, attending both to the meaning students made of their daily experiences and to the broader school and societal patterns of racial and socioeconomic inequality that framed them. The study's method allows for a consideration of how students' daily experiences in a society marked by racial and socioeconomic inequalities became part of their evolving understandings of themselves as high school students.

Recent literature points to the need for greater attention by educational researchers to students' school experiences (e.g. Cook-Sather, 2002; Rubin & Silva, 2003). As Phelan, Yu, and Davidson (1994) write, "Students' voices and concerns—their role as mediators of their own experiences—need to be taken into account as pedagogical strategies, programs and services are developed and implemented" (p. 443). This approach is particularly apt for a study hoping to shed light on how students navigate the difficulties of the first year of high school.

Context

The context for this study was Cedar High School, a large, urban high school serving over 3,000 students. Cedar High School is both racially and socio-economically diverse with a student population roughly 40% White, 40% African American, 10% Latino, and 10% Asian American. Race and class were closely linked, with White students tending to come from middle- and upper-middle-class families and African-American and Latino students mainly coming from working-class or poor backgrounds. At Cedar there was a striking disparity in grade-point average, graduation rates, number of advanced courses taken, and acceptance to four-year colleges between African-American and Latino students on the one hand, and White and Asian-American students on the other hand, with the latter groups doing much better in these regards than the former groups. Despite these patterns of inequality, however, there were many academically successful students from poor and working-class, immigrant, and minority backgrounds.

Data Collection

The data for this chapter is a subset of a larger data set from a study of de-tracking at Cedar High School. The portraits of five, ninth-grade students presented in the chapter are drawn from interviews conducted with each of the students at the beginning and end of the school year, observations of the students over the course of their ninth-grade year in their English and history classes, general observations conducted in the non-classroom spaces of the school, and notes from 'shadowing' of each of the students throughout an entire school day. Relevant documents, including school and community newspapers and school-generated documents, were examined as well.

For each of the hour-long student interviews I used a semi-structured protocol aimed at learning about their daily experiences of school. At the end of the year, each student was re-interviewed using a protocol generated through review of the data set up to that point. Classroom observations were conducted over the course of the school year, during which time I sat in the back of the

study classrooms three times each week and took fieldnotes, kept a running catalogue of talk and action in the classroom, drew a map indicating where students were sitting, collected all classroom handouts, and obtained copies of student work produced during that class period. Outside of the classroom, I watched the central plaza during lunch, hung out in the hallway during passing periods, read school and community newspapers, and frequented local shops and restaurants where students went after school. 'Shadowing' of the five focal students was guided by a semi-structured protocol in which I noted the racial/ethnic demographics of each class, observed for marked differences in student behavior and achievement in the different classes, catalogued student activities before school, between classes, at lunchtime and after school, and attempted to get a sense of the texture of each student's daily life.

Participants

Five focal students were chosen as key informants in the study, based on academic, racial, gender, and socioeconomic diversity and willingness to participate in reflective conversations. While these students were not selected to represent particular groups, in a study designed to investigate the ninth-grade experience from multiple perspectives, it was important to elicit the viewpoints of a diverse group of students. The five students had different achievement and skill levels, operationalized through math placement, grades, student self-reporting, and teacher input. They also reflected the racial and socioeconomic diversity of the school as a whole. These students will be introduced in greater detail in the next section.

FINDINGS: FIVE STUDENTS NAVIGATING THE CHALLENGES OF THE NINTH-GRADE YEAR

Cedar High School could be a vast and overpowering place for entering ninth-grade students. Large in size and impersonal in its treatment of the students, Cedar was a place where a ninth grader could easily feel lost. By the end of the year, however, most members of the freshman class appeared to be old hands at managing their daily lives at the school, although this management did not always entail academic success.

   This findings section begins by more fully describing three framing aspects of the school context—dimensions of the figured world of ninth grade at Cedar—that were embedded in the school's institutional structures and practices as experienced by students. The navigation of these dimensions will be the focus of this analysis of the experiences of ninth-grade students at the school. Next, three descriptive tables offer detailed information about each of the five,

focal students, familiarizing the reader with the particularities of each student's school schedule and peer contacts. Finally, the chapter presents portraits of each student that illustrate how he or she managed these key aspects of the figured world of ninth grade at Cedar and the school experience that resulted.

Key Aspects of the Figured World of the Ninth Grade at Cedar High School

This description of the figured world of the ninth grade at Cedar High School was developed through an analysis of student interviews, classroom observations, and relevant documents.

Social 'freedom.' Ninth graders entering Cedar from the various public and private feeder schools found themselves in a large and complex social setting with little adult guidance or interference in peer relations. The large, open plaza in the center of the high school campus was emblematic of the Cedar social scene. Before and after school and at lunch time, the plaza was awash with numerous, small groups of students supervised by a few security personnel. The school had myriad extracurricular activities, clubs, and teams available, filled haphazardly through unsystematic recruitment, and there were few structures (e.g. ninth-grade orientation programs, big brother or sister programs, teacher-led advisories) in place to ease ninth graders' social transition to high school. As the portraits that follow indicate, this social 'freedom' (written in quotes, because whether this dimension of the setting was experienced as freedom or not varied from student to student) was interpreted as exciting and growth-promoting by some, and as scary, overwhelming, and a sign of lack of caring by others.

Academic 'freedom.' Cedar school personnel offered little structured academic guidance to ninth-grade students. The large number of students and course offerings added up to a complex, master schedule that absorbed the time and energy of the school's guidance counselors. There were many options for students: different levels of courses, many electives, and many different ways to complete necessary requirements. The choices could be confusing and overwhelming without careful planning and guidance, and poor choices (classes that were too difficult or too easy, or that were not leading where the student wanted to go) were likely not to be corrected in a timely manner. Overwhelmed guidance counselors tended to quickly make decisions that had profound effects on students' academic trajectories. At Cedar, the 'squeaky wheel' tended to 'get the grease'; students' whose parents were their persistent advocates were more likely to get what they wanted or needed from the system. This academic 'freedom' was interpreted by some students as an example of adult trust and a vote of confidence in their new maturity, and by others it was experienced as confusing and neglectful.

Racial polarization. Cedar's students were polarized racially both in terms of their social worlds and in terms of their academic performance. As described earlier, there was a significant achievement gap between African-American and Latino students and their White and Asian-American peers, instantiated in differences in grade-point average, college readiness, and levels and quantity of courses taken. Outside of the classroom, students tended to socialize with same-race peers both on school grounds and beyond. Students' school days reflected both aspects of this racial polarization, as will be evident when examining the focal students' schedules below. White students tended to have more advanced classes that were predominantly White in population, and African-American and Latino students tended to take less advanced courses that were predominantly African American and Latino in composition. Some students barely seemed to notice this split, or noted it without duress, while others experienced it as a painful source of conflict.

The Students and Their Days

Tables 1, 2, and 3 summarize relevant information about each of the five focal students: Grant, Kiana, Mike, Sasha, and Tiffany. These tables, in conjunction with the narratives/portraits that follow, help us to understand both the Cedar context and each student's positioning within it. The data for these tables were drawn from interviews with students and the day spent shadowing each student in all of his or her classes.

Race/ethnicity. Table 1 lists how each student identifies him- or herself racially. At Cedar this was important, as racial identification was salient to students' social decision-making.

Daily schedule. Table 2 shows each student's ninth-grade academic schedule. The table indicates whether each class is untracked, remedial, entry level, intermediate, or advanced. Untracked classes are classes in which students are not grouped by perceived ability. Remedial courses are those that are below ninth-grade level. Entry-level courses represent the first year of study of a high school subject (i.e. Spanish I, Algebra I). Some ninth-grade students may enter school

TABLE 1 Focal Students

Focal Students	Race/Ethnicity (self-identified)
Kiana	Biracial: African American and White
Sasha	White
Mike	African American
Tiffany	African American
Grant	White

TABLE 2 Students' Daily Schedules

Period	Kiana	Sasha	Mike	Tiffany	Grant
1		Inter. Spanish 2	Science I 1		Inter. French 2
2	African Dance U	World History U	World History U	African Dance U	World History U
3	English U	English U	English U	English U	English U
4	World History U	Photography U	Begin. Spanish 1	World History U	Honors Geom. 3
5	Ethnic Studies U	Communications U	Ethnic Studies U	Ethnic Studies U	Ethnic Studies U
6	Begin. Spanish 1	Geometry 2	Algebra I 1	Integrated Sci. I 1	Physical Ed. U
7	Algebra I 1		Tutorial 0	Pre-Algebra 0	Computers 3

U = Untracked
0 = Remedial
1 = Entry level
2 = Intermediate
3 = Advanced

having already completed these first-year courses and move on to intermediate-level courses (i.e. Spanish II, Geometry). A smaller number of students will have either completed the intermediate-level courses or be judged to have particular aptitude and will be placed in an advanced-level course (i.e. Honors Geometry, Advanced Computers). This information is significant, as it indicates both the level of challenge encountered by each student and his/her trajectory on the road toward college. In the United States, students who begin high school having already completed entry-level courses, particularly in language, mathematics, and science, are better positioned to complete more advanced levels in these subjects by the end of high school. This positioning is significant in the college admissions process, when students' high school transcripts are evaluated with reference to the level of coursework they have completed.

Racial demographics of students' classes. Table 3 shows the racial mix of students in each student's classes, revealing the extent of racial integration in each student's day. In conjunction with Table 2, this table also illuminates the racialized dimension of ability grouping at Cedar by documenting the concentration of White students in higher-level courses and of students of color in lower-level courses. As the individual student cases will indicate, this distribution is a feature of the Cedar context that shapes students' opportunities to encounter same- and different-race peers in an academic context, providing varied tensions for students during their school days.

TABLE 3 A Demographic View of Students' Contact with Peers in Class, by Race

Period	Kiana	Sasha	Mike	Tiffany	Grant
1		Mixed	Mixed		Predom. White
2	Predom[1,2] Af Am	Predom. White	Predom. White	Predom. Af Am	Predom. White
3	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed
4	Mixed	Predom. White	Mixed	Mixed	Predom. White
5	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed	Mixed
6	Predom. Af Am/Lat.	Mixed	Predom. Af Am	Predom. Af Am	Mixed
7	Predom. Af Am		Predom. Af Am	Predom. Af Am	Predom. White

[1] A class is "predominantly" one group when that group makes up at least 70% of the students in that class.

[2] A class is "mixed" when no one group makes up 70% or more of the students in that class.

Students in Action: Portraits of Five Students Navigating the Transition to Ninth Grade

The following portraits illustrate how each student navigated the previously described aspects of the figured world of ninth grade at Cedar High School: academic 'freedom,' social 'freedom,' and racial polarization. The data for these portraits were drawn from interviews with students, classroom observations, and notes from the 'shadowing' of each student for a school day.

"It's not really me that's chosen, it's more society" Kiana: Complex navigations and a measure of success. At the beginning of her ninth-grade year, Kiana was full of excitement about being at Cedar. As an eighth grader, she had attended a small, private school with only 27 students. The few years prior to that had been rocky. Her family moved from Cedarville to a predominantly White suburb 60 miles north. For Kiana, whose mother was African American and father was White, the move had been difficult. "I went to several schools," she told me. "I had a lot of problems with racial issues. The diversity was horrible." At Cedar, Kiana felt more at home. "I feel like I've been going to small schools for a big portion of my life and this is like *finally*. I needed a bigger social environment," she told me as the year began.

Cedar, in Kiana's view, was much more fun than her previous schools. Rather than being overwhelmed by the huge throngs of people, she thrived on the large numbers. She got a hint of how she would do at Cedar when she visited Cedar summer school for a day before her ninth-grade year. "In just that one day I had so much fun, I was like 'Okay, I'm not nervous about Cedar at all.' Then the first day of school I came in and all my friends were like 'Aren't you nervous?' I'm like, '*No*. I know it's going to be so much fun.' "

Kiana's reinvigorated social life was tied to Cedar's diversity. At Cedar, Kiana felt that, for the first time, she could be wholly herself as a biracial person in her relationships with her peers.

I have never gone to a school that's so diverse . . . I had asked older students that had already attended Cedar High, "What's the diversity like?" and they're like, "It's the ordinary thing but the black kids hang out with the black kids, the white kids hang out with the white kids and all that." Well, I'm both. So I came here and to some extent that is true, but it's nothing like I thought it would be and I do have African-American friends and Caucasian friends. I think that's good.

In this racially diverse atmosphere, Kiana felt she could finally be "into the social thing" that she said she had been "missing for so long" while a student at predominantly White schools. About Cedar, she told me, ". . . you couldn't get any more [social] than this, I don't think."

As the year went on, however, Kiana's hope for building a social life with both African-American and White friends was made considerably more complex by the ways that race, class, gender, and students' social worlds intertwined in the Cedar context. By the end of the year, her close friends at Cedar were almost exclusively African American. What would happen if she identified more with her "white side," I asked her at the end of the year. "My friends would kick my butt," she said, laughing. "I get teased about that [being biracial] all the time. All the time. Like 'Kiana's light-skinned.' Constantly. The fact that I have good hair. Just ridiculous stuff." Kiana felt she needed to "choose" to be one race or the other, but she embedded this choice of racial identity in a larger context, noting, "It's not really me that's chosen, it's more society."

Doing well in school was very important to Kiana, who considered herself a high achiever. Grades were Kiana's measure of how well she was doing, and she was very concerned with her grade-point average. She ended the first semester with a 3.7, which did not meet her high standards. "I once had the best GPA," she told me. When I told her that I thought a 3.7 was quite a good average, she told me, "I'm not that proud of it. I expect a lot from myself." Kiana's mother reinforced these high standards. When Kiana came home with a 3.73, instead of congratulating her, her mother told her, "This is good, but I think you can do better." When she didn't do well, she got "put on punishment," restricted to her house during her free time.

Kiana's class schedule was relatively undemanding for her, made up, as it was, of several entry-level classes. In her Spanish I and Algebra I classes, Kiana stood out as a particularly successful student, and she found the work in these classes to be easy. The attitude of the other students in both of these entry-level classes was something of a shock to her. Her Spanish class, she told me, was filled with kids who "don't really want to learn." "People say the stupidest

things," she told me, but the teacher "keeps everyone in check." She started out the year in a higher level of Spanish but found that since she was on the tennis team she did not have time to do the homework in that class. When she tried to move down just one level (to Spanish II), she found that the class was filled up, so she went into Spanish I. It was OK, she told me, because "Hey, I'm getting A's." She excelled among her peers in Algebra I as well, and her math teacher told her she should apply to take Honors Geometry as a sophomore.

Kiana often found herself at odds with the academic orientation of her immediate peer group; her friends were not as academically diligent as was she, and they did not do very well in school. This was a source of disappointment, anger, and embarrassment for her, as she struggled to forge an identity as an academically successful African-American student. "The thing that really disappoints me," she told me, "is the statistics of the majority of black students at Cedar are failing and doing really poorly. I find that with my friends. My white friends, or the majority of them, do fairly well, whereas my African-American friends, my friends of color, they're just really doing real poorly."

At times this situation frustrated her to the point of anger. She told me heatedly:

There are times I just want to slap some of my friends . . . I'll be like, "Why do you act so ignorant? We are being oppressed because of the fact we're black and you're making us look bad." Because they'll just say stupid things, and I'm like, "Save that for when you're with your friends and you want to act stupid. Don't have me looking bad because of you."

She was embarrassed, feeling that her friends' behavior reflected poorly on her. "I hate that [her peers' behavior in class] so much because I feel like I'm so much more intelligent than some of these girls," she said. "They act so damned stupid! They make me so mad."

In the third quarter, despite the relative easiness of her courses, Kiana was overwhelmed by competing social and academic demands and her grade point average sunk to an unprecedented 2.66. This decline was acutely embarrassing for her, even though her friends thought she was crazy for being concerned about it. She told me, "I was like on the phone crying, 'Oh my God I need to get my grades fixed,' because it was a 2.66, and my friends are talking about 'I would kill for a 2.66.' I was like, 'What are you talking about? Oh my God!' " Her friends' opinions notwithstanding, Kiana blamed herself for not completing her work and vowed to do better. By the end of the year, her GPA had recovered and she seemed to have become proficient at the complex juggling act faced by high-achieving students of color at Cedar, maintaining reasonable levels of social and academic satisfaction.

The social 'freedom' of Cedar was fun and exciting for Kiana. She had the opportunity to socialize with a more diverse group of peers than had ever been

possible; this opportunity was significant for her as a biracial student who had previously experienced racism in all-White settings. In the racially polarized context of Cedar, however, Kiana was not quite as free as she had initially anticipated, and as the year went on, she felt increasing pressure to limit her peer group to African-American friends. This choice was salient academically, as it meant that many students in her immediate peer group had different academic orientations than she did. While Kiana, bolstered by her mother, persevered in her commitment to high academic achievement, this conflict may have served as a disincentive for her to take the more advanced classes that might have provided her with a more satisfying academic experience. But in the context of Cedar's academic 'freedom,' this decision was left in her hands. As the previous narrative illustrates, issues of race were particularly salient for Kiana in her ninth-grade year in the racially polarized figured world of Cedar High, weaving through multiple aspects of her experience and fundamentally shaping her transition to high school.

"Now . . . I'm outgoing and nobody can shut me up." Sasha: Freedom, support, and a chance for self-discovery. Like Kiana, at the beginning of the school year, Sasha was also excited to be at Cedar. The large size, the hubbub of people, the clutter of classes, the different types of kids—these were highlights of her experiences. "There's such a variety of people here," she told me, bubbling over with enthusiasm, "that I can find deep people where they actually have some insight into life and they actually know what they want to do other than go to the store and get new lipstick. It's about diversity. It makes it a lot more interesting to be here and find interesting people."

It was a refreshing change for her from her middle school, which was "a little teeny private school and just a bunch of teachers who really seemed to be focused on the math." As an "arts person," she had difficulty with this math focus. She did not like her peers in middle school either. "Lots of them were really preppy and concerned with how they look and that's about it. They were very surface people and I wasn't, so I didn't really get along with them."

True to her description of there being such a variety of people at Cedar, most of Sasha's classes were racially mixed. While in these classes, as she herself reported, she tended to socialize mainly with White peers. Her new friends at Cedar were mainly White like herself, she confided. They also did well in school. "I don't hang out with people that really don't care [about school]," she told me "because they're so different."

For Sasha, Cedar was academically much easier than her middle school, particularly in math, which had given her such trouble in middle school. " 'Oh, okay, I know how to do that,' " she said to herself in Geometry class at the

beginning of the year, a welcome change from the challenges of the previous year. In general, the pace of the schoolwork at Cedar was "right about the right speed," and if she had any trouble, there were "more people I can go to" than last year. She could ask friends for help, teachers, her parents, and, because math could still be tricky for her, she had "my little math tutor," a private tutor at home, she could rely on. Second-year Spanish and detracked English and World History rounded out her moderately challenging schedule, putting Sasha on track for a high school transcript that would appeal to first-tier colleges.

Sasha's parents took an active role in her schooling. Her mother had intervened on Sasha's behalf to try to improve conditions in Sasha's math class. She told me, describing the difficult and complex way that change took place at Cedar, "I actually had to have my mom help me because there were so many weird adults that talk to each other and talk to somebody else . . . So it's so complicated. I had to have some help." Her parents supported her through this difficult class, hiring a tutor for her and staying on top of the situation. "I'm about to kill my teacher," she told me. "But my parents have been very supportive of me. If I'm interested in something in general, they'll help me try to get started into it. If I'm having a problem, they'll help solve it if they can. They like me to do things by myself, but they help." In this way, Sasha's parents were able to turn a situation that could have been disastrous for another student—a difficult class, with an unresponsive teacher—into one in which she could be successful.

What Sasha liked most at Cedar was "the variety of classes and people." She experienced the wide choices available to her as exciting, a chance to prove her maturity. "I have so many choices," she told me enthusiastically, "that I feel they actually trust me enough to know what's right for me. They didn't before." Sasha used her choices to take advantage of the art facilities at Cedar, learning photography in the state-of-the-art darkroom and later enrolling in a painting class. Sasha navigated the 'freedoms' of Cedar in such way that her first year of high school became a journey of self-awareness. "Not long ago I was shy and quiet and not sure of what I wanted," she told me."Now it's changed a lot, and I'm outgoing and nobody can shut me up."

Like Kiana, Sasha was stimulated by and excited about the bustling Cedar social scene. Despite her enthusiasm about the school's diversity, however, her closest peers, like Kiana's (after she had "chosen" a racial affiliation), were same race. The variety of social groupings at Cedar allowed her to express herself more and, like Kiana, explore aspects of her identity that she had previously felt were under-supported, although the social 'freedom' of the setting constrained the diversity of her peer group. In the racially polarized figured world of Cedar, however, Sasha was barely aware of race as she considered her academic choices. Her friends were high achieving, and her social and academic worlds

blended together seamlessly, with social time spent on academic work and academic work with peers providing opportunities for social interaction. Her parents stepped in to make up for the lack of academic support offered to students at Cedar, providing a math tutor and acting as 'squeaky wheels' to resolve a difficult academic situation for her, both factors in allowing her to maintain an advanced schedule.

Sasha's position as a well-supported, White student enabled her to have a positive experience with the academic and social 'freedoms' of Cedar, exploring aspects of her emerging identity without negative consequences, making her an unwitting beneficiary of the racial polarization of the setting.

"My advantage is having all different kinds of friends" Mike: Avoiding perils, choosing wisely, staying afloat. Mike was a bit overwhelmed by Cedar at the beginning of the year. As a freshman boy, he was daunted by the "older people" surrounding him in high school. There was "a lot of fighting and like a lot of drugs around here," he told me, and he was determined to avoid them. Each day on campus he saw at least one fight and several marijuana sales. "That's hard, not getting into trouble," he told me.

This social 'freedom' made the figured world of ninth grade at Cedar different from Mike's previous school, one of the local, public, middle schools. Unlike Sasha, who saw the 'freedom' as a vote of confidence in her maturity, Mike saw it as a sign of a lack of caring. At the high school, he told me, ". . . they don't seem to care if you cut or not, and they're like more strict about that at middle school. They have people [at middle school] standing there and they won't let you go. But here you could just walk out anytime. I see people cut all the time."

In Mike's view, one's choice of friends was critical to one's ability to succeed in school. You needed to choose your friends carefully, because the wrong friends could take you down a bad path. Unlike Kiana, he knew his peers from middle school, and he was wary of affiliating with some of them. As he told me:

Just watch who you hang out with. There's certain groups of people you hang out with that you can get in trouble. Hang out with a group of people who care about [you] and everything's be fine . . . . people in junior high were hanging out with people like the good people and stuff and when they got here they wanted to hang out with people who would like cut and smoke and do all that stuff. So they started doing that and they messed up in school.

Mike saw some of his friends from middle school going in that "wrong direction" now that they were at Cedar. His step-sister, Denise, was one of these. She was a good student, he told me, but since they had arrived at Cedar, she had taken a downward turn, hanging out with people who "aren't really good friends" and getting "into cutting and stuff." He took his brother's experience

as a warning as well, telling me, ". . . my older brother, he went here and got all messed up. So I found out he was messing up for a long time and I didn't want that to happen to me . . . I wouldn't want to be in his position."

Mike's free time was defined for him, perhaps making it easier for him to avoid the temptations he described. "I'm in sports and I just go to practice. I try not to hang around because it's not the [best] environment. I just go to practice and then I go home and then when I'm not doing sports I might hang out for a little bit with my friends and then go home and do my homework." He had fifteen minutes of free time between the end of school and the beginning of football practice. Practice lasted until 6 p.m., and then he caught the bus home, did his homework, and went to bed, exhausted, by 10 p.m. "I don't have time to even have fun except on the weekend," he sighed.

Mike's friends, many of whom were on the football team with him, were a support to him as he struggled to do well in school. "I got six friends I hang out with every day and after school," he described, "and all of them care about school and that helps me care about school too. Because I wouldn't feel right if they were getting good grades and I wasn't." The members of his close friendship group, all boys, came from a variety of racial/ethnic backgrounds. He described the group as "white and black and some black and white [biracial]." As an African American, Mike received some criticism from other friends in the larger, African-American peer group, who questioned him, asking, " 'Why do you hang out with the white people?' " "I get that a lot," he told me, "but I don't really care. They're my friends so I don't think of them like, 'You're white and you're black.' " When I asked him how he dealt with such comments, he told me he "just ignore[s]" them.

Mike extrapolated from his experience with his mixed-race, friendship group to explain why it was that some students did better in school than others and why these patterns seemed to be racially associated. "Black people who hang out with just black people tend not to do as well as white people," he told me. "I don't know why. But that's just how it is. Since I hang out with both, I think I do better than most black people. So my advantage is having all different kinds of friends."

Like Kiana's, Mike's class schedule for the first semester contained entry-level courses in math, language, and science, setting him on an academic path that would allow him to reach the higher levels of coursework offered at Cedar by the very end of his high school career. Also like Kiana, Mike stood out from his peers in these classes. In science, he completed his assignments well before the rest of the class. In algebra, he turned in his homework and paid attention in class when almost none of the other students in the class did. As he told me, "Most people in my [Algebra] class, they don't really care. Like 'Sometimes

I'll come to class; sometimes I won't.' So most of my class doesn't really care. I'm like the only one to get good grades."

Mike's feelings about his academic performance during his ninth-grade year were mixed; his grades showed that he was doing well, but he did not feel challenged or that he was working up to his potential. When I congratulated him on his 3.0 average, he told me "I got to do better next year." Knowing that he had not done as well in middle school, I asked him how he explained his improved performance this year. Sounding somewhat befuddled, he told me, "I don't know. I just guess I was like more committed. I thought it was more important getting good grades." Did he spend more time doing homework and other assignments this year, I asked. "Yeah, a little," he replied. "A little bit more. I could have did better though. Sometimes you don't want to, but I could have. I think next year I might do better . . . It's a lot of reading and I don't like to do that that much. I guess I've got to learn how to do more reading." Although he had thought seriously about taking advanced placement chemistry as a sophomore, on the advice of school counselors, he had decided not to. "They said it's hard if you do sports and AP (Advanced Placement) chem., and that's a real big thing. I like to do sports, and I don't want to have all that homework and do sports."

Mike's parents kept a close eye on him, rewarding him monetarily for his academic achievement and punishing him for falling behind. ". . . I get a reward for getting good grades so that's a good thing, too," he told me. "They want me to get good grades so I could go to college. That's like their biggest concern for me. To do good in school. But they're not really worried about me messing up cause they've known my friends for years and years. They're not worried about that— getting in trouble and stuff." I wondered what kind of rewards he received. "Like fifty dollars. If I get above a 3.0, fifty dollars. If I get a 3.5, I get a hundred. If I get a 4.0, a lot. If I get a 3.5 for the rest of high school, they'll give me a car and stuff. So that means a lot to them." He was not motivated solely by monetary rewards, he wanted me to know. He told me, "I'm not really thinking about the material things, but I'm trying to get an education and stuff and go to college.

Mike's interpretation of the social 'freedom' of Cedar was somewhat different from those of Kiana and Sasha. He was wary of the lack of adult supervision, pointing to the cutting, drug use, and fighting that he saw as a result. Rather than seeing lack of guidance as a sign of trust in the students as young adults, Mike felt the adults in the high school cared less about students than had his middle school teachers. Mike structured his own social world, however. His participation in after-school sports created a tight schedule and an academically successful, mixed-race group of close, male friends that helped him to avoid "certain groups of people." He was aware that this was a unique choice for an African-American student, and he credited his academic success to his deviation from the all

African-American peer group that Kiana found to be a source of such conflict for her. Mike's parents were also a force in helping him to navigate the difficulties arising from Cedar's academic 'freedom,' offering him incentives that telegraphed clearly to him their desire for him to succeed academically, although, like Kiana's parent and unlike Sasha's parents, they did not intervene directly on his behalf.

Like Kiana, Mike was quite aware of Cedar's racially polarized, figured world, and he had his own analysis of its academic implications. Like Sasha, Mike's social and academic worlds merged in his close friendship group, supporting the construction of an identity as an academically successful student. Unlike Sasha, however, the participation in competitive sports that provided the context for this friendship group also entailed that Mike sacrifice his desire for more challenging academic work.

"I don't have time to do my homework" Tiffany: Bigger concerns and unforeseen consequences. For Tiffany, even at the beginning of the school year, Cedar was filled with familiar faces. As she moved through the hallways and courtyard of the high school, Tiffany went from friend to friend, slapping hands with one, pushing another playfully, taking another by the hand and running through the school gate. Some were friends from middle school, African-American students like herself, including "Freddie, Jocelyn, Kiara, Tory . . . There's a lot of them. Justine, Tonya . . ." Some were relatives, including her cousin and her brother. She quickly made new friends as well, people who "thought I was funny, I guess, and just started talking to me."

Tiffany felt that Cedar was "bigger" than her middle school, but "just a little bit harder." Her friends and relatives tended not to do well academically. Both her cousin and her brother, she told me, took pains to hide their intelligence in front of their friends. Her brother was smart, and even did his homework, but he did not want to turn it in in front of his friends. She told me:

He do his homework, like he does all his math homework and all that stuff. He does it but he don't ever turn it in. He has a whole binder of class work that he don't turn in . . . He don't want everybody to know that he can do his homework and stuff cause he don't want people to be like, "Oh *you* do your homework."

Some of Tiffany's classes did not hold her interest. History class, she told me, was "really, really boring, so I won't pay attention that much. I be trying to entertain myself . . . when Mr. James be giving us lectures, I do be feeling so sleepy because he just talks and talks and talks . . . I start drawing just to keep myself entertained so I don't fall asleep." Often she talked to her friend, Jocelyn, who "listens to me, and then she starts talking back and then we get in trouble . . . Oh man, I think I got like an F in participation for talking."

Tiffany had college aspirations and high career goals. She told me:

. . . Now I'm starting to think about college and stuff. That's the really main thing is college now. I never really thought of college. I want to go to Spelman, to study law. I want to be a Supreme Court judge. I want to go to law school and then after law school I want to be appointed a judge and then be appointed a Supreme Court judge.

Tiffany's high hopes for her future were far from the reality of her educational situation, however. By taking pre-Algebra rather than Algebra I and by not taking a language class in her ninth-grade year, Tiffany had precluded the possibility that she would be able to take higher-level math and language courses later on in her high school career. Although she had already taken and passed pre-Algebra while in middle school, she told me that she did not want to be in Algebra I because it was the class with the "big kids."

At the beginning of the year, Tiffany was an involved participant in her English and history classes, both of which were detracked. But by the end of the year, she had moved to the fringes, both literally and figuratively, and her teachers seemed to have stopped bothering to try to pull her in. She seemed more involved in her low-tracked math and science classes, but she was doing quite poorly in science. By the end of the year, she was completely frustrated with the class, and she told me, "I hate science. The teacher's like the worst teacher in the world. She always thinks we're supposed to get what she's saying but she don't explain it right." Tiffany had given up any hope of passing the class, telling me, "I'm just going take it in the summer . . . I want to get science over with."

Despite her disconnection from some of her classes and her poor grades in science, as mentioned earlier, Tiffany felt that she was doing well this year, especially when she compared her grades to those of her closest friends. "I think I'm doing better than some of my friends," she told me. "Some of them got a 1.83." None of her friends, she told me, were doing better than her academically, none of them had an "A" or a "B" average. Her grades were "way better" than her eighth-grade grades. She was proud of this achievement, telling me "I got a 2.0 now. That's better than usual. My mom's like, 'Oh you're doing good.' "

Tiffany's mother, who was seriously ill, wanted her to do well in school. She also depended on Tiffany to keep their complex household, which included two infants, functioning, and she needed her for moral support in her illness. In Tiffany's family, everyone had to pitch in for the household to stay financially solvent. Tiffany shouldered this responsibility without complaint, reassuring her mother and taking on adult responsibilities. She told me:

I don't want my mom to get scared or nothing. Like she gets scared when stuff happens to my brother and all that. I don't want my mom to do that so I get scared and my mom goes, "You can't

get scared. If you get scared then I get scared." We like pray and stuff and my mom's real sick. I'm like, "Momma, don't worry about nothing and I'll take care of everything."

Compared with a sick and needy mother, homework just did not seem as important. "I do my homework sometimes when I'm bored," she told me. "If I got a lot to do, like I have to take care of my mom and my niece and all that, I don't have time to do my homework." Tiffany's mother was proud of her for reaching a 2.0 GPA, her highest ever.

The social 'freedom' of the figured world of ninth grade at Cedar High allowed Tiffany to remain part of a comfortable peer group of friends and relatives she had known for a long time. In the racially polarized Cedar setting, this meant that Tiffany was in a group with peers who largely held similar academic expectations. Like Sasha, who did not "hang out with people that really don't care, because they're so different," Tiffany's peer group reinforced a particular set of academic expectations, but, unlike for Sasha, the consequence for Tiffany was low academic achievement. Without parents that actively intervened on her behalf, the academic 'freedom' of the Cedar's figured world set the stage for curricular choices that did not match Tiffany's aspirations and her need for targeted support was never addressed. She navigated the conflict between the need to care for family and the academic demands of school by choosing to do less school work, and no adult in the Cedar setting was available to provide support or alternatives. Like Sasha, and in contrast with Mike and Kiana, Tiffany was comfortably ensconced in a same-race peer group, and issues of race did not emerge as salient to her. While socially comfortable, however, Tiffany's academic path in ninth grade pointed her in a direction at odds with her hopes for the future. The academic and social 'freedom' of Cedar and its racial polarization normalized Tiffany's low achievement so it seemed scarcely noticeable to her, to her family and peers, and to school adults.

"Everybody hates me because I get over 100% on all the tests"   Grant: Going it alone, slacking off. Unlike the other four students, Grant had few friends at Cedar, and he did not say a great deal about the social world of the school. When asked about friends he told me that he talked "sometimes" with a boy he knew from third or fourth grade, but by December of his ninth-grade year, he had not really become friends with anyone. He did not have anyone's phone number, he told me, which annoyed him because he could not call anyone for homework assignments. While shadowing him, I saw him speak briefly with other students in class and help another student in Honors Geometry, but he mainly made his way through the day without peer contact. He was eager to eat lunch with me and to host me through the day. In his physical education

conditioning class, he explained the various machines to me, and he talked with me as we walked from class to class. This behavior was distinct from that of the other four focal students in my study, who usually ignored me as I followed them around, having other business with peers to attend to.

As unenthusiastic as Grant was about his peer relationships, he waxed eloquent about his computer and computer use. "I have a Pentium II 400 that I basically built," he told me in our first interview. "I didn't build each part, but I put it all together . . . it started out as an old 6 megahertz a couple of years ago, and I've gradually upgraded it." He played a game called EverQuest on his computer, and he told me that his parents set him on "new, strict hours which I can play per week." He got "ten hours per week, and if I go over they take it away for a week." He worked as a lab aide in a computer lab run by Ms. Jenkins. My jaw dropped on the day I shadowed him, as I watched him amble comfortably through the computer lab, moving from machine to machine, quickly diagnosing and remedying a wide variety of technical problems to the gratitude of the teacher.

Grant seemed disappointed with most of his classes at the beginning of his ninth-grade year. His previous school, the Preparatory Institute, was "*hard*," he told me. Cedar's academic standards paled in comparison to the expensive and private Preparatory Institute, where "they were already taking biology now." "I took a really hard algebra class," he told me, "and we'd be expected to set aside three hours a night just for math." His previous school had rigorous assessment and evaluation procedures, too; another area where Grant felt Cedar fell short. "I'm already used to finals that are longer than this school has," he said. "Mid-terms. I'm surprised this school doesn't have them."

When it came to comparing different schools, Grant had a lot of material to work with. "I've been everywhere," he told me, reeling off with practiced ease the names of the many schools he had attended.

Kindergarten and first grade I went to Regent Gardens [private elementary school]. . . . Second and third grade I went to Colfax. Fourth grade I went to Whitman, fifth grade I went to Cedarville Arts Magnet [all three are public schools]. . . . Sixth grade I went to a school in Mountaintop called Airbourne School then seventh and eighth I went to the Preparatory Institute, and now I'm here.

These frequent moves were the consequence of his parents' rising careers and their quest for the best education for Grant and his older sister. Grant's ability to connect socially with his peers, however, may not have been helped by these many switches.

Grant told me that the biggest difference between eighth grade and ninth grade for him was that ninth grade was "a lot easier." This lack of challenge presented its own problems, as he found himself less motivated to work hard

this year. "I know everything we're doing. It's tempting to just not do the homework," he told me. "I'm repeating some of the stuff I already did, or I'm learning stuff in a slower way that I'm having trouble adjusting to." He told me that he had read the books already for English class, did this math book last year, and already covered the material in his second year French class. The only challenging class in his Fall schedule was "C++," a computer class with material new to him. Even in this class he was ahead of his peers, he said, producing for a homework assignment "a program that was really advanced because my dad does a lot of programming and I can ask him if I need help."

In his classes at the beginning of the year, Grant felt like he was ahead of his peers, or rather, that some of his peers were less serious students. The English teacher "told us to read [*Lord of the Flies* and *The Tempest*] over the summer, so I did," he told me, his voice tinged with irony. He did not study for his math class, and he told me that "everybody hates me because I get over 100% on all the tests." He told me that he'd prefer a tracked system for English and social studies because "it gets annoying sometimes in class when somebody's completely off ball, not knowing what everybody's doing and then somebody moves ahead of the class."

Grant's parents, both highly educated professionals, were deeply involved in both his daily school life and his long-term academic aspirations. His mother had frequent contact with Grant's teachers and worked with him on every writing assignment. His father's math and science orientation was Grant's model, and his family's history in higher education seemed to be part of his identity. As a ninth grader he told me that he wanted to attend Uni, the competitive public university located in Cedarville, and that he had narrowed down his major to four options. He knew that Uni was "really good in those subjects" because "my dad went there and my mom went there." He also had plans for his graduate work. He was "probably going to go to Ivy [competitive private university] . . . afterwards because they make sure you get a job after you graduate. . . . My grandfather went there, too."

Grant's class schedule for the first semester reflected his academic aspirations. In taking advanced French and Honors Geometry, he was on a path that would lead to an impressive high school transcript. His math choices would allow him to take college-level courses by his junior year. Grant appreciated being able to follow his interests in computers by taking C++, an unusual course for a high school. However, although Grant was getting very good grades in Honors Geometry and in his computer class, his grades in English and history were faltering by the end of the year. In comparison with his classmates in English, Grant thought he would rank "probably middle to lower in terms of grades because I don't hand in all the essays."

He attributed his low grades to being bored by the work, telling me, "I don't do a lot of my homework . . . I don't like to do homework. A lot of it seems boring to me." I asked him if he felt like he had been "slacking off" all year, and he told me, "Pretty much all year. I think in the very beginning of the year I was really into it. [Then] I realized I didn't have to be in some of my classes and that sort of moved to all the classes."

Grant hoped to do better next year, but he did not sound too convinced that this would actually come to pass. When I asked him if he was going to follow the same pattern of not doing the work in classes that bored him next year, he told me, dispassionately, "Hopefully not . . . Hopefully I'll just do my homework. Find some motivation to just sit down and do it. It's not hard or anything. It's just time consuming." I asked him if he felt like he did not have enough time to do his homework, and he replied, "I have more than enough time. I'd just rather do something else." What did he usually end up doing instead of doing it? "Nothing . . . Sleeping or watching television."

Allowed to drift socially in the 'freedom' of Cedar, Grant was disconnected from his peers and socially isolated. Even with the help of supportive and school-savvy parents, Grant was not doing well in all of his classes and did not appear to be happy in school. His social isolation was, perhaps, exacerbated by the solitary nature of his favorite hobbies (computer games and computer technology) and was not countered by anything in the school setting. As a high-tracked, White male in the racially polarized figured world of Cedar's ninth grade, it seemed it would take a lot to dislodge Grant's reputation among his peers as an academically successful student; other students consistently commented on Grant's smartness, even in classes that he was doing poorly in, perhaps making it difficult for him to receive assistance when he needed it. At the end of ninth grade, Grant seemed neither academically or socially adjusted to high school life.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This consideration of five students moving amid the figured world of the ninth grade at Cedar High School reveals how the processes that constitute ninth grade in a particular setting give scope and meaning to students' lives, shaping their transition to high school. The three aspects of the figured world of Cedar's ninth grade that have been highlighted in this chapter—academic 'freedom,' social 'freedom,' and racial polarization—were experienced differently and navigated uniquely by each of the five students profiled in the chapter, with different consequences.

Amid the academic 'freedom' of Cedar, Grant and Sasha, the two White students in the study, were tracked high in their math and foreign language classes, thereby starting high school well positioned to build transcripts impressive to college admissions offices. Their high tracked classes were predominantly White in enrollment, while their detracked English and history classes were more racially integrated. After school, both Grant and Sasha participated in enrichment activities (i.e. computer classes, Geometry tutoring, animation studio internship). Sasha's ninth-grade transition was by far the more successful, however. Beyond finding a comfortable group of friends and achieving well academically, Sasha felt that ninth grade had allowed her to find voice ("now . . . nobody can shut me up") and reach new levels of self-development. Sasha's positioning enabled her to navigate the social 'freedom' of the setting in a way that supported her academic success, while Grant floundered in this respect.

The figured world of ninth grade was traversed differently by Kiana and Mike. Academic 'freedom' meant that no one at the school site explained to them the consequences of taking entry-level foreign language and math courses their first year in high school. While they would be able to fulfill college entrance requirements by the end of high school, they would not be able to reach the highest levels of math and foreign language and would not have room for many electives. Their math and foreign language classes were filled predominantly with students of color, and they had more White peers in their detracked classes than in any other setting. Mike participated in after-school sports, while Kiana reported that she spent much of her time at home completing her homework. It is possible that in her later years in high school she may have been presented by a stark choice between high-level classes and attending class with African-American peers. Mike, settled into a multiracial peer group, did not face this dilemma, but his commitment to after-school athletics, part of his strategy for navigating the social 'freedom' that was faced by Kiana with difficulty, worked to curtail his highest academic ambitions. Kiana, who had expected to find more choice given the social 'freedom' of Cedar, ended the year feeling constrained by the racial polarization of both school and society.

Tiffany managed the academic 'freedom' of Cedar's ninth grade as best she could without adult intervention, but her placement in pre-Algebra and non-enrollment in a foreign language class meant that she would not be able to fulfill the requirements for admission to the state's public colleges and universities by the end of high school. Her low-tracked math and science classes were filled almost entirely with African-American students, and her detracked classes were her only substantially integrated classes during her ninth-grade

year. Tiffany had many home responsibilities, including caring for a chroni-
cally ill parent and baby-sitting for her preschool-age cousin, and she reported
that she had little time after school for homework. She found social and aca-
demic comfort in her first year in high school, but she was unaware of what the
end results of her current choices would be.

Many of the supports that enabled the first three students profiled—Kiana,
Sasha and Mike—to navigate the figured world of ninth grade at Cedar High
and accomplish a generally successful transition are corroborated in the
research as helpful to ninth-grade students. Newman et al. (2000) note that
urban youth who perform well academically tend to receive support for their
academic goals from family, as did all three students, and also have friends
who support these goals (like Sasha and Mike). A number of studies also show
that parental monitoring of students' academic and social lives and student
involvement in school and community activities (like Sasha and Mike) help
them to make a good transition to high school (Catterall, 1998; Falbo, Lein, &
Amador, 2001; Hertzog & Morgan, 1999).

Previous research also sheds light on where the Cedar context fell short in
supporting its new students, structuring a more rather than less difficult transi-
tion for them. Roderick (2003) writes that urban schools ". . . can promote
high achievement and engagement of students when they provide students
with high expectations quality teaching, and approaches that are both highly
structured and personalized" (p. 580) (Lee & Bryk, 1989; Lee & Smith, 1995;
Lee, Smith, & Croninger, 1997). Cedar offered some of the first two attributes
but fell short on the last—a highly structured and personalized approach—that
might have made a difference for these students.

Lately, attention has been drawn to reform efforts that attempt to fundamen-
tally change the nature of students' ninth-grade experiences through the creation
of separate ninth-grade schools or ninth-grade 'houses' or 'academies' within
the larger high school. Ninth-grade-only schools have the potential to provide
the personalization that was so needed at Cedar and is pinpointed as critical
in the research literature. Rourke (2001) describes the creation of ninth-grade-
only settings by districts in Virginia, Texas, and Pennsylvania, reporting positive
results and highlighting the personalization possible in such settings. Letgers and
Kerr (2001) suggest that such approaches may be most effective at increasing
"students' sense of belonging to an educational community" (p. 20) and may
result in the most significant gains for students.

Other schools focus their attention on eighth and ninth graders within the
traditional middle and high school structures. The best of these programs aim
to create a 'web of support,' including individual attention, monitoring of stu-
dent progress, strong relationships with school adults, and a safe and orderly

environment, which Roderick (2003) argues will help students to successfully make the transition to high school. In general, school responsiveness and extensive transition programs at the school site seem to do much to improve students' experiences in ninth grade (Catterall, 1998; Falbo, Lein, & Amador, 2001; Hertzog & Morgan, 1999).

If there is anything to be learned from the experiences of these five students, it is that a hands-off approach to high school students' academic and social worlds creates a figured world with dimensions that are navigated differently (and with inequitable results) by the students, who are differently positioned to manage these difficulties. Whether part of a stand-alone, ninth-grade setting, or woven into the first year of the traditional comprehensive high school, support for ninth-grade students must occur on multiple levels and be structured in such a way that it is accessible to students facing varying challenges. If, as researchers claim, a successful transition to high school is critical to students' later school performance and persistence, then such efforts are essential.

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KATHLEEN GALLAGHER AND PHILIP LORTIE

BUILDING THEORIES OF THEIR LIVES: YOUTH ENGAGED IN DRAMA RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION: "STAY A LONG TIME" (DELIA, FALL 2003)

When we entered one of our school research sites for the very first time, three years ago, we asked the group of 35 grade-11 students whether they had any advice for us as we began our research. This is after we had taken some time to explain to them that we were interested in understanding better how students worked in a drama classroom, how they related to one another, to their teacher, and how they saw themselves in the larger world of the school. A lone hand rose:

"You'd better stay a long time."

"Excuse me?"

"You'd better stay a long time if you want to learn something about us or drama or school."

Versions of this same piece of advice were echoed in the three other school sites in which we would spend the next three years researching. On day one, there it was. Clear direction from our youth participants to draw no hasty conclusions about who they are, how they work, or the place called school. If we wanted to learn something about students, we had better be prepared for the long haul.

The qualitative study that will provide the backdrop for this chapter has aimed to examine the experiences of youth in urban drama classrooms in order to develop a theoretical and empirically grounded account of the dynamic social forces of inclusion and exclusion experienced by adolescents within their unique contexts of public, urban North American schooling. *Drama Education, Youth, and Social Cohesion: Re-constructing Identities in Urban Contexts* is an ethnography of four urban sites—two in Toronto, two in New York City—particularly concerned with investigating the extent to which drama education in classrooms illuminates the intersections of youth's personal/cultural lives with their school lives in the formation of their social, academic, and artistic identities.

Central to our understanding of, and indeed hope for, greater social cohesion and understanding of diversity among youth in schools is the notion of

conflict. Conflicts in drama become sites of struggle for divergent perspectives where notions of difference are played out in complex ways in secondary school classrooms. Students' understanding of a dramatic world that is based on their experience of an actual world and their personal criteria for making judgments can be poignantly challenged by dramatic role-play. Through drama's pedagogy, youth's relevant worlds are brought into sharp relief. In our research, we have been asking such questions as: To what extent do the arts, and the dramatic arts in particular, support young peoples' complex ways of becoming and belonging in school?; What relationship does 'inclusion' have with 'achievement'?; Are there common characteristics that help us understand the social function of arts practices in schools?; Can these practices produce policy guidelines that better recognize the interplay between identity, social activity, and academic achievement or attend to the range of meanings we find in the social world of students in school?

Schools are fascinating and complex places, especially in times of heightened security and surveillance in North America, heightened attention generally to issues of safety, of who belongs, and who does not, and what we mean by 'excellence' and 'global competitiveness.' In coding our fieldnotes and interviews from the first phase (year one) of our study, we identified a broad theme we termed 'Identity-Representation-Surveillance.' This was a cluster of responses that linked ideas about the Self and Other, social controls, and (in)justice, and it was most prevalent in youth stories about how they suffer the negative consequences of stereotyping. As a set of student responses, we also took note of the central place of conflict in students' stories about their social experiences in classrooms, with administration, and in schools generally. Moving into our second phase (year two), we were struck again by how impassioned the debate was around these issues for a new group of students—confirmation that it would be productive to look for a link between their concerns about how they are perceived, and treated accordingly, and the kind of experimentation with identity that drama education invites. The second phase of the study is, methodologically, rather distinct from the first phase as it allowed us to go back into our school sites with the original data from the first year of the study. With new groups of drama students, we attempted to corroborate and/or challenge our provisional analyses by inviting their explicit understanding and artistic interpretation through the use of data as dramatic text.

In this chapter, we will focus on the second phase of our research because it will allow us to examine in some detail what we mean by the claim that youth are engaged in a process of theorizing or myth-debunking about their own lives—that they are both attracted to and repulsed by prevailing stereotypes and theories of themselves. We accomplish this through a discussion of our

(dramatic) engagement with the youth in one of our Toronto schools that provided a window onto some of the concerns youth have regarding their school, their cultural lives, and their social relationships. Yon (2000), too, in his ethnography of youth in a Toronto high school, found portraits of youth identity that transgressed what we may expect as researchers in what he described as the "often troubled relationship between cultural and personal identity" (p. 21). What we especially hope to contribute, through this chapter, is an account of a rather innovative and certainly unconventional research approach that we risked in our research with youth. Not only were drama classrooms our destination, but drama, itself, soon became our primary research method. Convinced that working in improvised drama made available certain modes of communication, conduct, and embodiment, we were drawn toward this research approach for the quality of talk and interaction that we thought it would solicit and for the kind of new insight into students' worlds we might uncover. We further hope to demonstrate how this approach to research can make good on the desire, articulated by many school-based researchers, to give more authority to student voices in student research (see Fine & Weis, 2003; Weis & Fine, 2000; Yon, 2000; Lesko, 2001; Thompson, 2002). Unlike the more traditional methods of qualitative research, our analogous theatre world would open up, we hoped, the possibility for critical engagement among students themselves, a world that would make possible the generation of theory through spontaneous talk, critical watching, and engaged action. Students are always living by and challenging theories; our drama work provided a context in which their theories could be articulated, tested, and reformulated.

Before moving into the account of the drama methodology that allowed us to engage with students in challenging ways, we would like to identify a problem we have often found in the body of classroom-based empirical research with youth/children and one we were concerned not to reproduce here. In an effort to 'give voice' to young people, the data—young people's words—are often summoned as in a kind of 'show and tell' or a reality-test for those ideas or discoveries we might well already hold as truths. Empirical research, in our view, must hold itself to the rigorous intellectual inquiry so important to the theorizing of the everyday, to the conceptual or philosophical as well as the phenomenal realm. Too often, this 'reality syndrome' of empirical, classroom-based research is devoid of the imagination and theoretical probing necessary to produce new knowledge in the field. Often enough, the words themselves, the citations culled to illustrate findings, do not, alone, articulate the profound new ideas one would hope to bring to light. Too often, they are left to stand in for what it is we already know. 'Keeping it real,' in other words, often anchors researchers to only those things that can be or were

spoken in the given context. Seeing this as a caveat for ourselves, we will attempt in our recounting to resist this reductive form of reporting. We will aim to make theoretically and contextually rich the experiences we had with the youth in our study and to let their words not simply illustrate but also interact with the complexities of the research, the philosophical dimensions of our inquiry, and our own theoretical constructions as researchers.

METHODOLOGY REVISITED: "IF THEY KNEW WHAT THEY WANTED TO LEARN, THEY WOULDN'T NEED TO DO RESEARCH" (ALICIA, FALL 2003).[i]

When asked, by a student, what we were looking for in our research, Alicia replied even before we could ourselves. And it was brilliant. Naturally, if we knew what we wanted to find, we would not be doing research. What we knew, at this point, was that we needed to recapture the passion, the contradictions, the vehemence that we had witnessed on countless occasions in spontaneous classroom discussions when the students were not busy anticipating what we wanted to learn or being good research participants.

Drama as method requires that the researcher rethink the notion of observation in rather fundamental ways. This rethinking also privileges our sense of ethical responsiveness to the participants and the teachers of the classrooms in which we observe. In this way, we found it useful to shift from a concentration on observation as a method, per se, to a perspective that emphasizes, as Angrosino and de Perez (2000) describe it, "observation as a context for interaction among those involved in the research collaboration" (p. 676). The following sections will describe a process drama.[ii] We are using drama, as others have done (see Conrad, 2004; Norris, 2000), not only to present a research text in an endless variety of ways (see Gallagher, in press; Goldstein, 2003; Saldana, 1999; Donmoyer & Yennie-Donmoyer, 1995; Mienczakowski, 1995; Norris, 1997) but also to generate data and engage co-researchers in forms of analysis. The revelations unearthed by/about youth, through their engagement with these methods, will be illuminated in the following discussion.

Writing our Subjectivities, Beginning with our Hypotheses: Moving Toward the Drama

When we began our work with the transcripts of interviews with students from Phase One, it was our intention to work with the new students of Phase Two as co-researchers of their experience in Drama class. We told them that we hoped to check our analysis of Phase One by seeing what they made of the same materials upon which we were basing our understandings. Only we were not

going to sit around and discuss these ideas, rather, because this was a Drama class, we were going to treat these transcripts as pretexts for scenes they would create on a chosen topic.

Though the data the groups were given represented a range of possible themes, we noted that all three groups wound up creating scenes that dealt with stereotyping. Considering the circumambience of the rhetoric in schools about the injustice of stereotyping, we were hardly surprised to see the students reproduce these notions. We were, nonetheless, troubled by the extent to which their scenes reinscribed a liberal, hegemonic notion of stereotyping as anti-social behavior on the part of unfeeling individuals, rather than a systemic bias of a sort students in this mostly non-White class would have experienced first hand. Though not true in this particular instance, all too often in our experience as Drama educators we have seen such anti-stereotyping scenarios used as a not-terribly-sly excuse for the public enactment, usually for comic effect, of derogatory generalizations about marginalized groups. It was in the interest of moving beyond such simplistic treatment of the evils of stereotyping that we conjured up an exercise meant to personalize the phenomenon and, simultaneously, goad the students into widening the scope of their gaze to include an analysis of how societal pressures are made manifest in the creation and perception of their work.

Our strategy was to get them to ask, "Why do we stereotype?" and "What do stereotypes accomplish?" Rather than recapitulate the official line on stereotyping, our approach was to expose the dynamic interrelation between our sense of ourselves and what we think of others. Here we were consciously taking aboard feminist thinking with regard to how the Self/Other dialectic informs our idea of what is possible and limits, or regulates, personal freedom. The first step we took in this direction was to have the students write stream-of-consciousness for 12 minutes from one of three prompts:

Nobody knows I'm . . .

People think I'm . . .

Because I am . . ., people think I. . . .

From all appearances, both in observing them as they wrote in class and in reading their responses, the students had little difficulty identifying the ways in which perceptions do not match reality. Charlie, an Asian male, 19 years old, writes, "Many people think I'm passive and that I'm weak. On first impression people think I'm just like any other Asian so they look over me." The kind of double-consciousness evident in these lines represents a quality of introspection we did not see reflected in the students' interpretations of the previous year's transcripts. Charlie is aware of how his acquiescence conforms

to prejudicial ideas of Asian males as weak; he is somehow less masculine for his lack of bravado, and yet, because he understands this he is able to differentiate himself from that preconception. Later in his writing, he explains his quietness as "a trust issue that I have . . . it's a way for me to protect myself. I need to do this to feel secure. So in a way I am a very insecure person." While, or even through, comparing himself to the ideal of an outgoing persona, he has come to terms with how his relative quiet functions as a protective measure in relating to others. Without claiming that stereotypes are on the whole beneficial to an emerging sense of ourselves, we should acknowledge that—as intransigent as the practice of prejudice is—we would be better off finding what productive capacity lies within it. Admitting to ourselves that stereotyping is not ever and always malignant, but rather more a habit of mind, might interrupt the attendant discourse of taboo.

Anti-stereotyping campaigns shout the message "REMEMBER: NOT ALL_____s ARE_____." Ensconced within this upbeat notice, however, is the continued use of the very rubrics by which people have been traditionally grouped, and oppressed, along with its implicit assumption that we are one identifiable thing over time: a bully, a woman, elderly, smart, homosexual, etc. Furthermore, that under the skin we are all alike, more similar than different; that we are all individuals, not identifiable by other social characteristics, and no mention is made of the way in which these categories are socially derived. The process of becoming may be acknowledged as characteristic of the adolescent experience, but the ways in which we are all "human becomings" rather than "human beings" (Neelands, 2004) is not. One student's writing, a black female named Loralei, demonstrates a sensitivity to the importance others place on labels:

Nobody knows I'm not existent (*sic*). People can see me but they don't see the real me. (Not that I would want them to.) When I say I'm none existent (*sic*) it is because I'm not ready to define who or what I am in life. In society.

If you do not answer or aspire to an identifiable tag, you are then non-existent, which, given the consequences of being something which another, perhaps more powerful person or group despises, is not a bad choice. Like Ellison's (1995/1952) narrator in *The Invisible Man*, or de Beauvoir's (1989/1952) notion of the feminine as Other, Loralei's status as a non-being recognizes the threat implicit in choosing from among pre-assigned identities. She prefers to remain unknown, unseen, and therefore unnamed. She says she's not ready to define who or what she is in life, and suggests the corollary: that she is not ready, or willing, to be defined by others. Has her experience with the various identities she has considered left her feeling that none fits? If so, our project

for her and her cohort is not to help them search through the scrap heap until a more suitable one can be found but rather to encourage the active subversion of these labels and to heighten their awareness about the amorphous, phantasmal quality of identity.

In Loralei's strategic refusal to name what she is or even who she wants to become there is a sense of the tragic inevitable: she seems to accept that eventually she will have to pick an identity, swapping a sense of the infinite for a coherent social location. This strain of fatalism is echoed in the challenging questions Sanjeeta, a South-Asian female, wrote: "What makes people judge who I am? I judge them too. . . . But where in this judging do we find just what we want? Do we judge to isolate or to belong?" If we answer "Both," we move closer to an acceptance of the role stereotyping plays in the social dynamics not just in high school but also in most every subculture. As Gilman (1985) puts it, "[t]he anxiety present in the self concerning its control over the world directly engenders a need for a clear and hard line of difference between the self and the Other" (p. 79). Personal development and social cohesion are roughly analogous in this regard: the process of becoming aware of oneself involves first separating off those parts one cannot accept or acknowledge within oneself, and thus the anxiety of autonomous selfhood (viewing oneself as a distinct, unchanging entity, not dependent upon others) both mirrors and contributes to the social phenomenon of stereotyping and classifying people into corresponding ranks.

Sanjeeta's writing concludes with a resigned shrug, "I judge you, and you judge me because that's the way it has always been." Her understanding of the futility of making categorical statements about others seems to lead to a despair of the practice ever abating. The important distinction to be made here, however, is not whether people make judgments but rather how strong their belief in those judgments is. Educators are in a position to ask students to question their preconceived notions by presenting them with various conundrums in which they are required to test their assumptions against their values and the experiences of others. We would argue that Drama provides a robust environment for such *media res* questioning, as our work deals in metaphor, recreating real-life situations in which students are able to more freely experiment with alternate strategies and perspectives in testing the validity of their 'proven' theories.

PROCESS DRAMA OR EXTENDED IMPROVISATION AND PLAY

Impressed by the depth of insight found in their automatic writing compared to their short scenes based on the data from Phase I, we sought a way to engage the students' lived experiences of stereotypes through embodied dramatic work.

It was at this point that we devised a process drama, an extended improvisation activity, relating to our theme of Identity-Representation-Surveillance that, we hoped, would allow students to imaginatively enter into a created world that would ask them to both improvise and reflect upon their understandings of, and responses to, this imagined world. Henry (2000) persuasively argues that:

[t]he structures of qualitative research and of dramas take innovative forms in which means and ends, thought and action, intertwine in an unpremeditated, improvisational fashion. Both involve ways of knowing which people use in their everyday lives: existential knowledge. (p. 51)

In one sense, we were asking students to relocate their stereotypical views of themselves and others into a mutually constructed world where their latent 'theories' might come into play.

While we would never argue that process drama or any other way of working is capable of transcending the environment in which it takes place, there are important lessons here about using drama structures to, at least temporarily, invert established school and research cultures. For example, in our initial attempts to elicit from the students what they know about their experience as students of Drama, and as high school students more generally, there was a perceived reluctance on most of the students' part to volunteer too much information, lest they face the scrutiny of their peers or the further probing questions of researchers. In the imagined setting of the process drama that we created, however, the instinct is reversed: now the knowing student may find ample room to enact latent or uncomfortable truths. This might be because the nature of the information sharing is not explicit; the student is not required to raise her hand or shout, "I know, I know," she simply engages with her fellow improvisers and both learns and demonstrates that her knowledge is sufficient to navigate in this new space. In Henry's (2000) study of drama's ways of learning, she makes this point rather succinctly: "In drama, people use themselves as media, in a reality located between subjectivity and objectivity, improvising to find meaning. They become media for learning" (p. 57). Students arguably have more control over how their input is perceived and/or taken up. This is, after all, a dialogue in which, just as in life, the point is to communicate, a project at once larger and more immediate than an overtly pedagogic one.[iii]

One might reasonably ask—given what we have said about process drama being such a robust tool—why did we not incorporate it from the very start in our research design for Phase II. Though we do not remember discussing the possibility beforehand, we agree now that it was most likely because we were uncomfortable abandoning the research frame and moving into the process drama, the art frame, until we discovered that such a move would allow us to stay

true to our theory-building. When it became evident that the Phase II data we were collecting, interesting as it was, did not tell a story expressly about drama, we concluded that we had to dive in and lead students through a dramatic exploration based on the ideas brought forward in the classroom discussions. We prized their dynamic conversations about social justice, Black History month, and the problems with their school's security policy that we had been privy to, but dramas move differently than plain speech, and we now had an opportunity to gauge that difference by improvising around these very topics. Through a scenario suggested by our talks, we hoped to recreate how these ideas are lived, to, at least, tease out the paradoxes and ironies that lay between thought and action.

Our work in this process drama confirmed our belief that young people build theories of their own lives and, in our case, of their own dramatic art too; they do this through their relationship to a context, to others, and through narrative stories and discursive contradictions, through interpersonal norms, strategies of resistance and compliance, and group fidelity. Maxine Greene (2000) offers further support for the strengths of a research paradigm that makes central the story to be collaboratively told: "What may hold shared spaces together and bring them closer to a public space may be in part the phenomenon of storytelling" (p. 302). The students' fictional characters/stories helped us to better follow their meaning structures and, from time to time, enter into them.

Social Roles and Drama Roles: Entering the Fictional

Heading into the class, we knew this much of the fictional world we were inventing: the students were going to be processed (i.e., fingerprinted and located in "The System"—Dr. Gallagher's laptop), and interviewed as part of their 6-month probationary review at an unspecified workplace. Our goal was to place them in the sadly familiar situation of being subjected to an arbitrary bureaucratic system. Loralei readily recognized our intent:

it actually does happen all the time . . . You feel like . . . you feel like a number basically. You just go through it just to get it done, and then you just make a scene just because there's no other way to react. You just want some kind of justice, some kind of answers. So you flip out. Like, there's nothing else to do. It's not like you can leave, 'cause you need the money. And you're frustrated, and you get mad.

The only other element we pre-set was that afterwards the students would be asked to write in role to the Director of Personnel to register their thoughts about how they were treated in the course of their review. The students were given a faint outline of what was to transpire before entering into role. Somewhat cryptically, Dr. Gallagher asked that those who had a picture I.D. be prepared to present it when requested to. With that, we left the room.

Upon entering the classroom anew, this time in role as two professionals decidedly uninterested in any inconvenience this procedure might cause, we instructed the 'employees' to line up and remain quiet. They were then brought, one at a time, to be processed, that is, to be fingerprinted and to have their I.D. cards scanned into The System. The Processor, Dr. Gallagher, meted out an arbitrary justice, telling some whose names were not found in The System to go back in line, some to come back tomorrow, and others to go on through for an interview. Those employees who voiced disapproval or disbelief at the shoddiness of their treatment quickly learned that her decisions were final and not open to appeal. Those students lucky enough to make it through to the Interviewer, Mr. Lortie, were questioned on subjects both professional and personal. At the Interviewer's hands, the employees experienced inequitable treatment as well and were treated with suspicion whenever their responses did not accord with the facts found in their 'file'.

In what follows, we strive to bring you some flavor of the events in the classroom that day through snippets of interactions transcribed from a video recording. As faithful as we have been in setting this down, it would be impossible to accurately recreate what happened or to offer what we could plausibly call a full accounting of the process drama. For one, the video camera, modern-day marvel that it is, is ever a Cyclops, and it does not address the researcher's most persistent shortcoming: an inability to be in more than one place at one time. Two, as the grounds of the process drama were established through a few initial encounters, the students rather quickly abandoned the orderly discipline of a teacher-directed model and began to carry the drama into their encounters with each other. The reader should picture the energy generated by a successful classroom lesson, in which any prospect of the teacher controlling or tracking the students' participation is gleefully thrown over in favour of a shared sense of excitement about what will happen next. And, at the risk of repeating ourselves, we remind the reader of our caveat in the introduction, to wit, selecting these excerpts and not others necessarily distorts and biases this account of events. These quotes, therefore, should not be read as any more real or accurate than an account we could provide; rather, they are here as artifacts whose meanings are not settled upon but provide noteworthy details or stood out for us as moments in which more than the obvious was being communicated.

It did not take long for the student actors to pick up on the fecklessness with which we were conducting the processing and review procedures. Kevin, a confident performer, was pulled out by the Processor before his interview began and told to wait. Kayla, another strong performer, was told to go ahead of him for an interview, which itself was interrupted by the Processor asking the Interviewer whether a piece of identification from another student was valid and being told that it was not. Seeing this, Kevin engages Kayla.

Kevin: *(Black, Afro-Caribbean, male, student)* Excuse me Miss, you should go back to the end of the line. You are wasting everyone's time, you don't have proper identification.

Kayla: *(Black, Afro-Caribbean, female student)* Uh, they're talking about someone else.

Sabicca: *(Black, Afro-Caribbean, female student)* You better be quiet, because you never got fingerprinted.

Kevin: Yes I did.

Sabicca: No you didn't. You went right from the line to the chairs.

Though, admittedly, this encounter does not leap off the page, there are a number of significant dramatic elements at play here. First, Kevin improvises with Kayla around his character's impatience to be interviewed, a tremendously helpful move for the life of the drama as it provides continuity in action from his being plucked out of the interviewee's chair. We might ask, how much does Kevin's own eagerness to perform prompt this dialogue? Up to that point, Dr. Gallagher had been most often calling on the less active members of the class by selecting them for processing and interviewing ahead of the regular contributors, and this might have added to Kevin's frustration at being told to wait. If so, here is an example of how the real-life classroom dynamics facilitate the maintenance of a fictional world and are therefore open to being probed within the remove of pretense.

Witness to all this was Sabicca, a student who, because she lacked the correct identification, had been told by the Processor to leave the line-up and take a seat at a physical remove—behind the chairs in the 'waiting room.' Sitting outside the action she might have understood her role as audience and been content to passively watch the events unfold around her. Not Sabicca. She quickly took up the role of Chorus, loudly declaiming every injusice. Her above exchange (and the one following) show how fully engaged she was in the action even after being deliberately sent to the sidelines. The point here is that the action of a sustained drama is continuous and self-sustaining. Sabicca became a vital part of the drama because she quickly understood that the rigidity of roles normally associated with classrooms, even much of what goes on in Drama classrooms (e.g., Audience, Performer, Director, etc.) does not obtain within a whole-class improvisation. She vocalized her responses to what she was seeing, which in turn influenced the action and further defined our imagined space.

Adel: *(White, female eastern European)* Are we getting paid for this?

Doug: *(White, male, British descent)* Yeah, we're employees.

Adel: Because I am losing my hours. What is going on? What am I doing here? (Turns to Sabicca, who has been indicating her agreement.)

Sabicca: That's a good question. (To Processor) Are we getting paid for this? Because if we're not, I mean, I can go back to work.

Processor: This is part of your . . . Well, you may not have work to go back to.

Sabicca: Right, but are we getting paid right now?

Processor: No, no this is not part of your working hours.

Sabicca: It's not. (rising anger) So I'm not getting paid for this? Oh okay, thank you very much. (Starts to leave.)

Sabicca, as Chorus, echoes and amplifies Adel's concern about pay, bringing what is a valid and realistic question to the attention of the Processor and the entire group. Eventually, the student-actors will galvanize around this unpaid interruption in their workday and it will lead to a culminating conflict between the employees and their supervisors.

Meanwhile, Kayla's interview proceeds. She is immediately held to account, within the drama, and recovers nicely.

Interviewer: What department are you in?

Kayla: (Straining to hear over the noise) Excuse me?

Interviewer: What department are you in?

Kayla: I don't know . . . I just started, nobody told me anything.

Interviewer: Hah! (To Processor, loudly.) She doesn't know what department she's in! (Laughs, rest of class is momentarily quieted, then begin to react to Interviewer's display of contempt.)

Processor: (To everyone waiting in line for interview.) We're assuming everyone knows what department they're in. (To individual employee.) Do you know what department you're in?

Interviewer: You don't know what department you're in. Where do you go every day? (Pause.) This is a six-month review, you have been coming to work for six months and you don't know what department you're in?

Kayla: It's not my fault.

Interviewer: What do you mean it's not your fault?

Kayla: Because I am an employee, the employer is supposed to send me there.

Interviewer: Kayla Ford . . . now I have to look through the alphabetical list. (Pause, looking for her name on list.) Okay you're in Gardening, just for future reference, you're in Gardening. You know all those flowers and stuff? That's what you do.

Kayla's not knowing, or rather, not having prepared, the answer to the Interviewer's question spurs a dramatic encounter, which again develops the action in productive ways. Two lessons are taught here: one, if you don't know it, make it up; two, everything that happens, happens within the drama. More reluctant students may understand this to mean that there is 'no way out,' which is true to a degree, but, as Kayla's responses demonstrate, it also means that acting within a process drama turns on imagination rather than talent, listening rather than proclaiming. The interview concludes:

> Interviewer: (Looking over Manager's report.) Okay well this is fairly consistent . . . You are giving your manager Monique quite a bit of resistance. She says that you also, several times after work, have been seen loitering around the building.
>
> Kayla: (Very serious, surprised.) Loitering around? That's funny. Every time I'm here I am working.
>
> [Filming interrupted.]
>
> Kayla: If I am not shown respect, I will not give respect.
>
> Interviewer: Okay, well that attitude is going to be problematic in a place like this. The customer comes first. If you expect the customers to hold your hand, and bat their eyelashes at you, it's not going to happen.

The notion of respect that Kayla's character enunciates brings to mind difficulties today's high school teacher typically encounters when taking an authoritarian stance with regard to classroom conduct. Not shown in the above excerpt is a passage where the Interviewer presented Kayla's character with numerous complaints relating to her discourteous treatment of customers, most of which she did not dispute. In defending her actions by implying that she had not been shown the proper respect by customers, she (once again) flipped the situation around so that culpability lay elsewhere. Whether this is a character choice, or a reflexive one, it matters not: we arrived at a point in our exchange where the student was thrown into a complicated situation and needed to think her way out of it, fast. Not surprisingly, the heat of the moment swept us into ambiguous territory where our fabricated setting held real-world implications. Put another way, the dramatic crisis pushed Kayla to test out a notion of respect popular among her peers and allowed her to experience the outcome within the safety of a fictional setting. In this particular iteration, anyway, she may have learned that its power is not subtle: the interview concluded with her dismissal from the Company.

Kevin learns from Kayla's interview and comes prepared with more than just the name of his department; he embodies a character who, for a reason familiar only to him, is dissatisfied with his job.

Interviewer: How has it been going? Is everything okay?

Kevin: Yeah, I guess so. I mean, I work in kitchen appliances, so I guess it's alright.

Interviewer: It doesn't sound like you're very happy there.

Kevin: Well, it's not exactly what I saw myself doing.

Interviewer: And what is it that you would like to be doing?

Kevin: I want to be in entertainment, I'm an actor.

Interviewer: Well, would you like to sell televisions?

Kevin: That's not really a step towards making it in entertainment.

Interviewer: Well, I don't know about that, you get to sell TVs, videos, CDs . . . .

Kevin: I don't want to sell TVs, I want to be on TV. I don't want it to be in my face every day at work.

Interviewer: (Looking over his file.) Well what you're saying is consistent with what your managers have written here. When you care you do a great job, but a lot of the time you seem to be out of it—you're unprepared, apathetic. So they want to remind you that every day counts, this is real life. You have to come here ready to work. If you want to make it in entertainment, that's a very competitive area, you are going to have to get some discipline.

To pick up on our analysis of the previous interview with Kayla, we suggest that Kevin is also testing out a theory, that of himself as a frustrated performer, someone who must reconcile his dreams of stardom with the everyday reality of going to work selling kitchen appliances. What happens when you make this struggle known to your employer? To yourself? Remarkably, Kevin's character remains open to working for the Company, resisting any urge to vault the confines of the drama to declare that he is leaving today to make a brand new start of it.

Kevin: So . . . what is going to happen here?

Interviewer: If they see improvement, you're off probation, you'll be a full employee, get full benefits, but if the problems continue . . . (blows a 'raspberry').

Kevin: I thought I was off probation, I've been on probation for eight months.

Interviewer: Well, we have the right to keep you on probation for a year, so . . . it looks like that what's going to happen. Four more months of

probation. If you can show up every day, professional, smile on your face, you'll be a full-fledged member of this company.

(Kevin nods, they shake hands.)

Interviewer: Best of luck, Mr. Matthews.

A memorable, poignant interaction that transpired quietly within the escalating action of the drama. The Interviewer scoffs at this character's aspirations by suggesting a transfer to the Electronics department might fulfill them, and Kevin's restraint conveys, even on the page, an awareness of how vulnerable a dream makes you.

Finally, we conclude this section with a moment that signaled the end of our role-play. Loralei, tired and frustrated at having waited in line the entire time without ever being processed or interviewed, can no longer tolerate the injustice. She bellows out her objections, attracting the attention of everyone in the room, and is eventually backed by a semi-circle of employees as she leads the charge against the Processor and Interviewer.

Loralei *(Black, African, female student)*: (Loud and angry) It's not our fault that you do not know how to run your company, Sir! We have been standing here for two and a half hours!

Interviewer: If you don't have identification tomorrow, you won't be seen. We spent a lot of time today dealing with people who did not have I.D.

Classroom Teacher: Will we get our identification back?

Interviewer: We do have some I.D. that we have reason to believe is false identification, so if you need that I.D. back, come back at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow.

Huge outcry. The Processor and Interviewer pack up to leave. They inform everyone that they are now going to take lunch, so the employees can either wait here or leave and come back in 90 minutes. They exit the room, and the drama ends.

To the very last, our intent as Processor and Interviewer was to treat the employees with a disinterested discourtesy while forcing them to succumb to the privations of a badly-executed security and employment review. In doing so, we anticipated that we could shape events in such a way that it would be nearly impossible for the students to participate, at whatever level, without making sense of a) why they were here in the first place, b) their reaction to what was happening, and c) the implications (both personal and social) of going through such an experience. In retrospect, these dramatic goals neatly correspond to our goals as researchers inquiring into the knowledge students produce in drama class, an equivalence which, in our view, bolsters the argument for moving our research inside the art experience itself.

Shifting into role, we moved inside the questions; we went from asking, "How does it make you feel when . . .?" and "What would you do if . . .?" to the matter itself. Because we did so, the students were faced with choices not just about how to react but also about who they were enacting, obviously paying close attention to the "aesthetics of self and questions of self-stylization" (Peters, 2001, cited in Besley, 2003, p. 80). In this meta-context, they were, in effect, "living out the drama of the post," as Best and Kellner (2003) describe it, an era which has produced ". . . novel social conditions for today's youth who are engaging innovative and challenging cultural forms, and a dramatically worsening economic and political situation, and ever more complex and unpredictable life" (p. 80). By the rules of improvisation, however, their choices are responded to differently inside a drama than they would be outside. What is the quality of that difference? Simply put, it is the difference between an offer and a statement, a possibility and a position. Within the drama the students are thinking diligently about what, in their experience, is relevant to this scene and what responses they could have. This is entirely different from the conventional research interview process, including those that aim to address the unhealthy separation between those who know and those who do not (Kvale, 1996), in the interview exchange. 'Interviewing,' within a sustained improvisation, this analogous world, allows the researcher to consider carefully what 'listening to' might mean. For youth, story and story-telling become an especially powerful means of communicating. If narrative knowledge is embodied in story-telling (Lyotard, 1984), the better question to ask, perhaps, is how, as researchers, do we enter into young people's fictions and re-tellings? The sense of play and experimentation within the drama allows for much greater freedom, yes, but it would be a mistake to think of this solely in terms of a lack of seriousness. The energy in the room was unmistakable: it was the high you get doing something that feels simultaneously easy and real, completely made up and utterly familiar, strange and true.

THE WRAP-UP: WHAT YOUTH MADE OF THEIR WATCHING AND DOING

In this section, we look at the students' responses to the process drama, first by recounting moments from a whole-class discussion we had with them three weeks later (after viewing a videotape of the drama), and second, by excerpting letters they wrote, in role as employees, immediately after the drama ended. The quotes we have selected from the group interview may help elucidate how students build theories of their lives through the defining of a unique perspective, through establishing relationships as dictated by the terms of the drama, and in the myriad ways in which they perform their personae within

and outside the drama. Our first example illustrates how we can use dramatic structures to identify the various uses of stereotyping discussed earlier.

Mr. Lortie asks Kevin why he was giving Kayla a hard time after she was brought into the interview ahead of him.

> Kevin: I just wanted to get in and get out, I guess that was what my character was. Just get in and get out, you know? Had to do my stuff, kind of, and go back to work.
>
> Loralei: Yeah, he was a snobby guy, eh?
>
> Kevin: I had to take it out on you guys, because my life wasn't good, you know?
>
> Loralei: He was the 'rich guy,' but I was like if you're so damn rich, why do you work here?
>
> Kevin: I wasn't rich, I wasn't rich!
>
> Doug: Yeah that was so funny, it was made up in two seconds. You weren't actually the rich guy at the beginning, you just became that guy. And you guys (Loralei and Sabicca) didn't know he was that guy, you just assumed it.

First of all, we must make clear that this notion of Kevin's character being rich was new to us. This must have been the result of some byplay between the student-actors that we were not privy to. If we read this correctly, especially Doug's account, it seems that Loralei and Sabicca explained Kevin's haughtiness as an outgrowth of his wealth. Kevin protests, explaining that he was misconstrued; he was treating everyone so poorly because he was unhappy with his life (the reasons for which we learned in the interview). Here, the theory that someone who is wealthy can afford to treat others disrespectfully, or the converse, that the economically dependent lack the freedom of such expression, is being tested. This encounter gives us an entrée to question Kevin as to what it feels like to be (mis)labeled, as well as to ask Loralei and Sabicca to reflect on what drove them to assume that Kevin's character was rich. Finally, Doug's third-party account of what happened, testament to his close observation within the welter of events, suggests how easily students read into the events they are depicting and watching at the same time. The drama, lacking an author per se and an audience/performer duality, allows the participants ("spect-actors," in Boal's (1992) coinage, see Schutzman & Cohen Cruz, 1994) to devise their own readings and strategies. We discuss this facet of our work in greater detail below.

The following exchange stands out for us an example of how fluid the boundaries are between the social performance in the classroom and the performance

within the drama. After some indecipherable discussion, Mr. Lortie mentions that some employees were off to the side commenting on the action. Sabicca, our Chorus, picks up on this immediately.

Sabicca: I wanted to know what happened to him, I wanted to know what did he say to him.

Mr. Lortie: Yeah, you were the one who was like, "Now wait, there were three people, three people have been let through." Like you were keeping track of everything that was happening.

Sabicca: That's exactly what I do, I always keep track.

Mr. Lortie: Your whole thing was you were looking for justice.

Sabicca: Yes I was, there wasn't any though.

Mr. Lortie: You were saying this is unfair.

Sabicca: It was unfair. It was completely unfair. Because one guy didn't have I.D., and he got in before people with I.D. got in, and he got accepted for a job. And I was like, "What the Hell?!" And I was like, "I have been sitting here for how long?" And then Charlie went before me, I was the only one without I.D. that didn't go. And then that came at the end, and then you guys gave me a hassle. You said I have to go to Human Resources. I was like, "Oh what the Hell, Human Resources, where? I've been here for so long, they'll put me on hold again? No, I want the answer right now!"

Noisy reaction from several students.

Kevin: (Smiling mischievously. To Sabicca.) Coming unprepared, and always wanting to get in front, like, shut up.

Sabicca: Get in front?! See that's the attitude I'm talking about. (General laughter.) I didn't say I couldn't wait; I would wait, but the fact that people were going before me and I came before them and they didn't have I.D. either . . . that was unfair. So shut the hell up! (Everyone laughs.)

A fascinating shift occurs during Sabicca's recounting: she becomes upset all over again at the memory of being relegated to the back of the line time and again, and she seems to enter back into that context (as suggested by a shift from past to present tense). Kevin responds in kind by chastising her character for coming unprepared and expecting equitable treatment. He clearly does this to get a rise out of her, and Sabicca reciprocates with the same exaggerated venom she directed towards Kevin's character in the drama itself. Despite the levity, this is a picture of students taking their learning seriously. They are exploring the basis for claims of privilege, justice, the influence of perception on reality, and the meaning-making of individuals and the collective. And

although this dialogue involves one-upmanship, it is on its most basic level a collaboration, a tango in the space between two selves and their personae.

Some of the letters the students wrote to the Director of Personnel after the drama reflected the ways in which the students were free to experiment with the reality of what we did within the process drama, trying on new or only minutely altered versions of themselves in their response to the whole-class activity. But something else came through in the reading of these letters—how keenly the students had to watch what unfolded in order to find a role for themselves within the drama.

LETTER #1

This letter is to inform you of the awful treatment my co-workers and I were forced to endure simply to keep our positions within this organization. Now, two weeks after the so-called review, I have received a letter stating that I have been dismissed without an explanation. I've tried contacting the manager and even the store owner but neither one has gotten back to me so I took the next step by writing you this letter. It would be really appreciated if I could further discuss with you all of my complaints.

LETTER #2

I would like to address the employee review, which took place several weeks ago, as I have some concerns with the events that occurred. Employees were rounded up and taken to an interview, during which we were fingerprinted without consent. Every employee that was brought to the interview was not paid for the time we spent there. Many employees had identification that was seized.

LETTER #3

I've recently found a letter in my mail regarding my termination of employment. I am very confused to how this has happened. Over the past five months I have consistently showed up on time for work and I've reached all of my weekly sales goals.

LETTER #4

My name is Alicia G——, my worker number is 93210486. I've just been notified through the mail that I've been terminated. I've done nothing wrong that I'm aware of. I need this job, I have 2 kids and a new born baby to feed . . . Please don't do this to me. It's not right. I bust my ass from Monday to Friday 9 to 5 and sometimes I work overtime please don't do this to me.

Seamlessly woven into their accounts, the details they provide buttress their complaints about the ineffectiveness of the probationary review process and lend authenticity to their view of the fictive events. Such extension of the dramatic moment underscores claims regarding the rich potential of role play in the classroom, but, more importantly, clouds simplistic distinctions between active and passive, doing and watching, being and seeing that importantly nuance our observations as researchers of students in classrooms. Of particular interest to us were the ways in which the binaries, and the subversion of these familiar binaries, challenge the researcher/researched relationship in provocative ways.

These letters suggest the complexity of how observation can and might function in qualitative research. We would like to identify two possible research benefits of attending to how students observe each other. School-based researchers, in thinking about field observation, can refine their methods by asking such questions as: How will the students be viewing each other? Will their watching be active or passive? To what extent will their responses to what they see be taken up by the rest of the class? Is there fluidity in the activity between doing and watching? This last point can help establish whether traditional classroom regimens are being replicated in the research relationship and to what extent they may be determining the social relations in the room. Giving youth the opportunity to make their own meaning from what they see—and to have that meaning contribute to the group's collective efforts—counteracts, to some extent, traditionally hierarchical research relationships.

Research through theatre engagement offers another interesting insight into the research relationship. In a theatrical moment of pure improvisation, there transpires an existential moment in which I watch you become something different through the device of my watching. Neither of us initiates an action per se, both of us are merely *responding* to what the other is doing/seeing, and this is how we make something out of nothing. Working collectively within an imaginary context, all watchers are both a party and witness to a transformation. Of particular significance in this co-construction of meaning is the extent to which issues of identity and social groupings can be engaged not as static, categorical entities but rather as contingent, negotiated, and largely the product of the more ritualized, less examined performance of our everyday lives. For our purposes, therefore, the identity play we associate with adolescence becomes, in Drama class, a site for overt manipulation, contemplation, and discussion. The stereotypes we hold onto, furthermore, become inspiration for new modes of thinking and acting. Lather (1986) has suggested a different measurement for validity of research: "the degree to which the research process reorients, focuses, and energizes participants toward knowing reality in order to transform it" (p. 272). We found this particular criterion for validity to be rigorously met in the context of our drama engagement.

Interviewing: Reflection on a Shared Experience

We conducted a round of interviews with six students on March 29th 2004, after our classroom visits with this group had concluded. We grouped the questions we had into four categories: i) school, identity, and representation; ii) drama class; iii) process drama; and iv) thoughts on research. Interviewees were selected to represent diverse cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and sexual identities, plus one student who asked to be interviewed. Three

research assistants—Mr. Lortie among them—took turns asking questions, and the sessions were videotaped.

Of interest to us is the students' shared sense of Drama as a class in which typical school relations are suspended. We closely attended to this particular observation made by students, especially in light of Lesko's (2001) study of adolescence in which she posed the question, "Why are secondary schools such unpleasant, hostile, and humiliating places for so many students?" (p. 172). Certainly, the physical environment, with its open space, frequent use of student circles in which everybody sees, and is seen by, everyone else, and (in this instance) a 'no shoes on the carpet' policy interrupts normal school procedure, or, at least, hearkens back to the primary classroom. Due to the prevalence of the impression among students of Drama as a more casual, social setting within the school, we wanted to hear from them what effect they thought this had on their experience of school overall. Adel, a White, eastern-European, new immigrant, offers a rather typical response:

> Dominique (Black, female research assistant): Do you think that taking Drama has changed or affected the way you think about high school in general?
>
> Adel: Yeah, because normally sometimes in Drama you talk to people you would not normally talk to and you find out stuff about them. Maybe you had some kind of stereotype, too. You just get rid of stereotypes.
>
> Dominique: Right. Um, so do you think, have you ever felt that you have been stereotyped in school, or have you ever seen people behaving in a way that you think that they may be stereotyping some people in school?
>
> Adel: Yes, maybe sometimes.
>
> Dominique: Do you want to elaborate on that a little bit?
>
> Adel: Elaborate. (*Pause*.) They think that if you speak bad English that they . . . people just stereotype kind of what color you are, where you come from, if you are Russian they think some stuff about you, but they don't necessarily know you. It happens but not really a lot.

Adel's response makes explicit the connection some students draw between Drama and the school at large: if this kind of collaboration and relaxed social intercourse is possible here, why not elsewhere? The experience of being thrown together with others not of your choosing and being asked to create collaboratively intensifies the need to engage in a conversation –spoken or otherwise – about differences. Juni, an East Asian new immigrant male offers:

> Phil (White, male research assistant): Does the experience of taking Drama affect how you think about high school?
>
> Juni: For me it did, because before I took drama class, this year is the first time I ever took drama and before that I had little confidence. I don't dare to talk to anybody else in my class and because I don't know I might have this trauma I have to start over and nobody can talk to me and I can't talk to anybody, so I guess I have a little shadow there. But ever since I start taking drama, I build my confidence and people were kind to me and I guess I open up and accept more people . . . I guess it helped me a lot to understand that high school isn't this big jungle that you go in and you just make sure you come in the end that's it. But now I see it is more of a playground and anybody can be your friend.

Utopias aside, we assert that Juni has been provided with a new narrative, a new way to imagine himself as he walks through the halls and the students gathered in those halls. Drama did not do this; rather, its mediated, suspended quality made possible situations in which Juni's own capacity for self-representation (or self-deceit) was reflected back to him by his peers. That is, the drama room became the staging area for a host of explicit demonstrations of the elasticity and negotiated nature of social relations and of identity, a place to disprove 'proven' theories and debunk myths.

Given that Lesko (2001) argues convincingly in her study that there is increasingly less tolerance for a broad range of social roles for secondary students, and further that our very schooling practices might be largely to blame for this, we became especially interested in understanding how the students made sense of how their role playing affected their ideas of who they are and their perceptions of others. Again, Kayla, a Black female offered a familiar commentary:

> Dominique: We just wanted to know what if felt like to write in role to Betty, the Human Resources person, about that whole experience.
>
> Kayla: Um, I don't really remember what I wrote so I don't know.
>
> Dominique: That's okay.
>
> Kayla: But like I dunno, I like doing and being someone that I'm not. I dunno it gives me a chance to view things from a different perspective I guess.
>
> Dominique: So when you were in role in that Drama you were not being you, you were in role as someone else?
>
> Kayla: Yeah, I was kinda rude.

In taking on a role, students may give themselves permission to manifest parts of themselves they consider less attractive but more in keeping with their true reactions to the situation at hand. In this way, they are able to dissemble productively, not without consequences, but in the name of playing along, going with the flow. Respondents repeatedly stated that they took part in the drama when they saw others around them "getting into it." This leap of imagination has very real social aspects and responds to the dynamics of the classroom, even while it may appear to be transgressing them. It is the quality of interaction in the improvised moment of creation between actors that fosters a form of communication not typical of the regimented social roles allocated to high school students.

The Student Interview Protocol: 'Co-researcher' Revisited

Our persistent interests in engaging our students as co-investigators in this inquiry compelled us to invite them to devise their own final interview protocols, which they would then use to interview one another. They worked out three specific questions in pairs. We set the room up so that there were two long rows of chairs facing each other. The paired students would both ask, and respond to, the questions they had devised. We videotaped this session.

It goes without saying that they taught us a great deal by the mere questions that they deemed significant to ask as our research project with this group was coming to a close. We watched them take over the class and expertly interview each other. A few of the exchanges are cited here at some length:

> Adel (White, female, European descent) to Annie (Black, female, Afro-Caribbean descent): Did drama show you how different everyone's perspectives on life are, and why?

> Annie: Yeah, it did. Through our discussions and acting stuff out, I sort of realized where people's priorities were, what was important to them and, which was, in some cases, a lot different than me.

> Misha (White, eastern-European, male, new immigrant) to Juni (East Asian, male, new immigrant): Do you get anything from this experience?

> Juni (quite emotional): Well, I got a *lot* from this experience: for instance, I learn to better communicate and I learn to listen better and uh, also I gained a lot of experience, a lot of *valuable* experience (chokes up a little). I don't think I'll ever forget it . . ., yeah.

> Juni (to Misha): So, have you enjoyed this whole experience?

> Misha: I actually did, I . . . came really open, like you know, when people like, because I came here, I'm kind of new here to Canada, I'm kind of scared, like, sometimes to speak, like, cause when I talk, because, you

know, like, sometimes people can make fun of my language, and, like, but here, I, like, feel, like, so *open*, and, like, we have a lot of fun, like, and play, like, a lot of games, and, like, I, like, to, like, learn a lot of things, that's all.

Greta (White, female, British descent) to Doug (White, male, British descent): How do you feel about the interacting between you and your peers in the class?

Doug: I feel good. But, like, it's like . . . it's like a chilling class.

Greta: Can you elaborate on that?

Doug: I look forward to this class more than I do other classes because of the interaction with my peers . . . I don't know, I act so much I can't even tell anymore, it's always there. I'm always personally gratified.

Doug: Ok, well, uh, what kind of personal gratification do you get from acting?

Greta: Well, I don't know. My personal gratification is, it's kind of like . . . a moment, it's just like a moment where you get to pretend to be someone else, you get to take on a character, someone who you normally wouldn't take on, or someone you don't agree with, or someone whose values aren't the same as yours, but you get to become that person and try to make them seem as real as possible, and I think, if that works out, it's very gratifying.

Doug: Hmmm . . . That was great, that's cool.

Loralei *(Black, female, African)* to Sabicca (Black, female, Afro-Caribbean): What is it about drama class that gives students their self-esteem?

Sabicca: Oh yeah, that's my question and I can't even answer it! (laughs) Wow. So, . . . you want to take this one, Dr. Phil? (looks at Phil, laughing, everyone laughs) . . . self-esteem, . . . wow . . . You know what it is? I think this class builds character and character kind of, you know, I took this class, first, to, uh, kind of build my character. I took on the play, just to build my character, right? (Doug laughs and mutters, "Upgrading?" to her. Sabicca turns towards Doug, nods, and continues). Yeah, you know? Just to upgrade myself, but then I started liking the play and enjoying it you see . . . I got a whole new, I got to a whole different level of self-esteem after doing the play, so, . . . I don't know what it is...you know? I don't know . . . it's something that's unexplainable. It's kind of like faith [pronounces it as "fate"]: you know it's there but you can't see it. I don't know what it is. I can't explain it. It's just there and you know it.

Loralei: Wow.

Sabicca: Ok Loralei, when students walk out of this class, why is it that it's a different story when you walk out of here? When you walk out through those doors right there, why is it different? Why do things change? Can you explain that to me?

Loralei: Um, I have to keep my focus here, but it's really hard, um . . .

Sabicca: Yeah, try to keep your focus, focus on the question.

Loralei: Ok. Um, I think that . . . it's a different story because it truly is a different world out there. It's a different world out there even though it's the same exact building, you know, there's other classes, but, it really is, like, a different world out there. Everything is, like . . . In other classes, especially compared to drama, everything is pre-organized, like, the teacher has a lesson plan for you; you have to do this; you have to do that; yeah, they know you know to copy notes from the board, whatever, but, like, in drama, when you come in, like, even the teacher might not know what she's going to do (Teacher and everyone laughs), you know what I mean? No offense or anything to you Miss! (laughs, others too). I think it really helps that, you know, like here you're really able to be like, in the spur-of-the-moment, you know? You're able to make spontaneous decisions as opposed to other classes, where it's organized, you *do* it, it's *given* to you, you know? It's kind of like the cafeteria menu. You go to the cafeteria, like, that's all the food that there is, if you don't like any-thing, you don't have a choice, that's what they're going to serve, you know what I mean? So . . .

Sabicca: You feel restricted.

Loralei: Exactly, right. It's *very* restrictive, so that's why I like drama. It's actually a freer environment, so, that's what makes it different when you walk out those doors.

Sabicca: Ok, so, a freer environment.

Loralei: Yes.

Sanjeet (South-Asian, female from India): Can I add to that?

Sabicca: Ok, go ahead.

Sanjeet: I don't think it's necessarily that drama teachers don't plan, I just think it's that they're more open than other teachers to . . .

Loralei (interrupting): That's what I was saying, that it's a freer environment.

Doug: Not all the time.

Loralei: No.

Sabicca (addressed to all her classmates): Can we stay focused here? This is my interview. Oh yeah, this is the Sabicca Show now, forget Oprah! (laughs).

Students start shouting: "Sa-bi-cca!, Sa-bi-cca! Sa-bi-cca!" (as talk-show audiences do when they're welcoming their host).

Sabicca: (laughs) See? That's the freeness I'm talking about! And now, can I get some quiet please? What is it about drama class that gives students their self-esteem?

Loralei: Ok. Gives students their self-esteem . . . I'm not a cocky person but I am confident. There's a lot of people who get the two mixed up.

Sabicca: Right.

Kevin (Black, male, Afro-Caribbean) (interrupting): Thank you, thank you, I appreciate it!

Loralei: Just because you've got confidence doesn't mean that you're cocky, you know what I mean? And, um, for me, already . . . I don't know where I get it from, I really don't, but, like, um, ok.

Bell rings.

Teacher: Please stay 5 minutes extra.

Loralei (resuming): What also helps build other people's self-esteem in drama class is when they, cause, like, when you're a teenager, it's really hard to trust other people, especially adults, and especially people with authority because they also take advantage of you, so, and it's just as hard to trust your peers as it is to trust those people, so drama class, I find, because this is, like, my second year—I took it in grade 11 and this is grade 12—um, I notice that, like, it's really important to trust your peers, and once you can do that, I think that you're much more prone to have confidence, because people are egging you on, they're supporting you, do you know what I mean? So, it helps you build your confidence. It helps you to build your self-esteem and confidence in that way, and because you have to perform, you have to be in that situation, it helps you because once you're up there, you know, it's your time, it's your show, it's your time to shine, do you know what I mean? And you don't get a lot of opportunities to do that, so I think that helps you to build your self-esteem.

Sabicca: Thank you, have a good day, (said in the manner of a talk-show hostess, ending the show. Doug leads the same "Sa-bi-cca!" chant as before).

There were many extraordinary exchanges between students as we looked on. Our more passive roles and our plan were soon interrupted, however, by a few students who decided they would like to direct their questions to us, the researchers. Kevin was the first to suddenly break with our instructions to interview a peer, turning to the three of us (Kathleen, Philip, and Dominique):

Kevin (to Kathleen, Phil, and Dominique): Are you satisfied with the research you did at Middleview and other places you've been to?

Kathleen to Kevin, (confirming): Is that for the researchers? (Kevin nods).

Phil: Can you repeat the question?

Kevin: Are you satisfied with the research you did at Middleview, and other places you've been to?

Kathleen: More than satisfied is my answer. It's been bigger and more interesting than I ever imagined when I dreamt up the project, so, "satisfied," for me, is not even an adequate word. I learned more . . . I knew I would learn a lot, but I had no idea that it would be, uh, this kind of experience: so complex, so interesting, so full of meaning . . . amazing people, and also working with an incredible team.

Philip: Ditto.

Dominque: What she said.

Philip: I don't have anything to add to that.

Kevin: (laughs) Ditto, ditto, ditto . . . Do I ask my next question?

Kathleen (nodding): Your 2nd question.

Kevin: Do you think we stayed on track with the research, or do you think a lot of the time was wasted and we could have done more?

Philip: I will take that. To say, in every activity whether that's teaching or acting or living, there's 'wasted time'; we have this idea of wasted time, and I think, in a creative project especially, you need wasted time: you need time where things may not be working right or it's not coming together. My feeling is that if there was wasted time, the only time when there was wasted time is, on my part, if I didn't respond to what I was seeing well enough, like maybe I didn't pick up on some things and maybe let other things go, but in terms of the class as a whole, what we did? I don't think any time was wasted. I think we did some really great stuff, and, who knows? Maybe we needed it to be that way to do what we did.

Kathleen: I'd just like to add another thing. Sometimes, it's hard for teachers (turns towards the Teacher and smiles) and other people when they really like a class or a group of students, it's sometimes hard to be a disciplinarian, and to point out the things that you would . . . You want everybody to be there every day; you want everyone to be on time. And you want everybody's input. But you don't always get that, and, in fact, you rarely get that in a class. Sometimes, as researchers, and as teachers I would say as well, your affection gets in the way a little bit and you are unable to structure it completely the way you'd like to.

Misha: Ok, I have a question for you guys (looks up to Kathleen, Phil, and Dominique). What is the . . . what was the best idea that you guys got from us so far?

Dominique: The best idea . . . They've all been really good ideas. I don't know that there's one that I can sort of say, "That's it, that's the best thing." I think, um, what I particularly like about this class—and, maybe, it's the school in general—is the way that the plans that we have for you don't always work out according to our plan but what you do with it is way better than anything we could have come up with anyway, so, it's really good that way. The spontaneous discussions that we've had, the way you engage with the work that we give you, there's no way we could have planned or imagined that, so, I say that's what would be the best thing about this class, about this research.

Kathleen: One of the best things that has been confirmed for me, is that I think a lot of the current media depictions and a lot of government reform and policy is not supportive of youth. I think that's a fairly straight-forward observation to make. And when you're someone who doesn't see teenagers or youth or urban schools that way and you think that they're different, and better and richer, it's really affirming to come into a place and to be convinced again that you're right and they're wrong.

Philip: For me, I would say that the best idea I had was how to work dramatically . . . It's far easier to set up something, an activity where the students are able to demonstrate what they know actively rather than sitting in a circle and raising their hands, or writing a test, but rather, just being who they are in a real situation, you know? I'm thinking of the process drama that we did, and I saw such involvement and I saw such different characters, and some of them, yeah, were very much like the people that were embodying them, but some of them took very big risks and I think there was so much that was created in that moment that we wouldn't have gotten in any other way. So I think the best idea that I've gotten is the strength of working in drama . . . maybe specifically process drama.

Near the conclusion of the interview session, one more student, Alicia, decided that she would like to direct a question to us. That we had not anticipated their interest in questioning us is not surprising. So many times, in high school classrooms, adults beseech students to speak, to question; so often these invitations are met with silence. This was not the case on this day for the power was with them. They were the interviewers. They were feeding off each other and running with their own questions:

> Alicia (Bi-racial [Afro-Caribbean and French Canadian], female): This is a question for an adult, so whoever wants to answer . . . Um, as a teenager, you must have felt lost and hoped that you'd find your way when you reached adulthood. But now that you're an adult, do you feel as sure of yourself and the point of life?

> Phil: I don't think there's much difference. But just one of the differences though, between high school life compared to my life now, is that I answer to myself. In high school, I'd get frustrated with how many people I'd have to answer to: my parents, the teachers, and blah, blah, blah, blah. Now, I find it harder in a way, because I have high expectations for myself and when I don't meet those expectations, it's very hard to cope with that. If you let somebody else down, you can kind of go, "Oh, they're a jerk!", but if it's you that you're letting down, it's kind of harder to live with and that gives you a feeling of being lost, because, well, you wonder, "Are my standards too high, or am I just not measuring up?"

> Kathleen: I think I would say that when I was a teenager, I spent a lot of time . . . I liked being a teenager, but I also spent a lot of time thinking that I'd be this really different person when I was old and things would be just so. I'm really happy with my life but I realize now that the seeds of who I am were present then. So I didn't morph into this different person, but who I was then—with all my insecurities, and worries and concerns—they're still with me, except I feel that the ground beneath my feet is a little bit more solid.

CONCLUSIONS

In our view, this was a project about how to "work the hyphen," as Fine (1994) describes it. What was the nature of the hyphen between us and them? How were our histories/presents bound together? Saying our research was for and with them does not get us off the ethical hook. So, what was the thread between us in this project since we were, decidedly, not interested in reproducing what Haraway (1988, see Fine 1994) describes as the "god trick": depicting them from

nowhere while sheltering ourselves. We were, in fact, interested in making possible, if we could, Spivak's (1988) notion of listening to the plural voices of those normally Othered and hearing them as constructors, agents, and disseminators of knowledge.

Some reflections here on the apparent folly of (two White) university researchers positioning themselves as co-researchers with a diverse roomful of high school Drama students. We never lost sight of the power dynamics at work in presenting ourselves in this way: Because of our elevated professional status and access to cultural capital (relative to the teacher and the students) we had the luxury of conferring whatever title we wished on ourselves and on our students. In other words, simply calling ourselves co-researchers did not make it so. From several casual asides uttered by the students, we were aware that their conception of a researcher was of someone who experiments, uses trial and error; we were thought of as impartial observers, appraisers, highly educated people conducting tests to generate data, with the results and conclusions to be published in a scientific journal they would never read. Given their preconceptions and our desire to establish a trusting relationship with the class, it was a daunting task to i) genuinely collaborate with them on this research, ii) explicate the subtleties of our critical ethnographic methodology, iii) overturn a built-in self-consciousness that obtains whenever visitors from outside the classroom come to observe, and iv) remain ever vigilant about our raced, classed, gendered translations of their ideas. Fine's (1994) caveats about ethics, praxis, and qualitative research rang in our ears: "Domination and distance get sanitized inside science. Portraits of disdain, pity, need, strength, or all of the above are delivered for public consumption" (p.79).

We do not delude ourselves into thinking that we could ever fully disrupt the power relations from which we gained our elevated status, nor was this our goal. And certainly the framework within which our research was conducted would never dissolve so completely that we could fail to notice that these students still occupied their roles as students who were obligated to humor (even please?) their important guests, ". . . researcher[s] doused quite evidently in status and privilege as the Other sits domesticated" (Fine, 1994, p. 80). It has become a special interest to us in our research, the reasons why stereotypes might have such a powerful stranglehold on youth. So powerful, that our research can sometimes fail to interrogate the ubiquity of these assigned social roles. We thought, through laboring with them, that youth might—given the chance—want to disprove existing theories about themselves. We learned that teenagers both live by and have disdain for the pervasive codes of stereotyping prevalent in high schools.

At the conclusion of Lesko's (2001) study, she calls for a re-theorizing of adolescence, one in which, for instance, such contradictory notions of old and young, mature and immature, traditional and innovative are held simultaneously:

> Rather than the assumption of cumulative and one-way development that is now in place in both science and popular culture, a recursive view of growth and change directs us to look at local contexts and specific actions of young people, without the inherent evaluation of steps, stages, and socialization (p.197).

In this new theoretical terrain, we are arguing for new methodological risks, where drama methods, like extended improvisations, act as recursive strategies that cause us (researchers) to productively lose our confidence in those common characteristics of youth. These common characteristics can fix us, often unwittingly, in developmental theories that mitigate against the co-construction of knowledge. *Theoria*, the form of knowledge that is called theory, comes from the same root as does the word "theatre" (Lyman & Scott, 1975). New theories become imaginable in the moment of dramatic improvisation, the moment when our latent, embodied, and experiential knowledge is called on, when our actions become the fodder for the creative responses of others, and when the quality of our communication depends on our ability to take others in.

Three years later, we have "stayed a long time," but have only begun to scratch the surface of the social roles, narratives, and performances of youth identities in and beyond their drama roles. If Weis & Fine (2000) are right when they charge schools with maintaining and separating student identities along gender and race lines and further that schools, to their peril, stress the form of schooling rather than the substance of learning, we would like to bravely argue that drama research, which generates data from the very substance of learning, achieves the opposite. The fluid identity-play of dramatic improvisation as a research device offers a site for the critical interrogation of a context and what is learned there. We hope to have also demonstrated how drama might productively interrupt traditional hierarchical research arrangements, especially for those of us who spend our (research) days in schools with young people.

NOTES

[i] All names of students and schools are pseudonyms.

[ii] "Process drama" is a general term used to describe a method of drama instruction in which, typically, the teacher and the whole class enter into an imaginary context, often based on source material gathered by the teacher or students. The goal is to investigate any of a number of possible themes through sustained improvisation, during which students and teacher might take on a variety of roles and relationships through various theatrical conventions.

iii In *The Art and Politics of Qualitative Research: Creating Culture, Representing 'Reality,'* Gallagher (2004) argues that research, like drama, is both a process and a product and that improvisation—as the life-blood of drama activity—becomes a particularly apt metaphor for understanding the conditional ways in which to work through the problematics of the researcher-subject (and teacher-student) relationship.

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NILOFAR VAZIR

HOW STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT RIGHT AND WRONG IN THE FIRST YEAR OF A PAKISTANI PRIVATE SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION

Many children begin their school career with a clear sense of what it means to do what is right at home, within the family, and in the community. However, little do they know that in this place called school, they will confront a wide array of sometimes baffling, often new, and certainly crucial ways of understanding the right or wrong way to do things. In fact, much of their first year at school will be spent making sense of and coping with the right way to think or act in various situations that occur during assembly, on the playground, in the classroom, near the canteen, or perhaps in the washrooms. This study explores how students come to understand what right and wrong mean at school.

The study was conducted in a community-based, private, English medium school in Karachi, Pakistan. The students in this school come from low- to middle-income families and are followers of the Shiite sect of Islam. To capture the experience of learning what is right or wrong from the children's viewpoint, a qualitative case study method was used. The participants were three boys (Amar, Samir, and Masood) and one girl (Sehar) who were between five and six years of age and in Class 1, the first year of formal schooling in Pakistan. Data were collected over an eight-month period through observation of the participants' classes, structured and unstructured interviews, informal chats and conversations with the students and their teacher, students' drawings and stories, school documents, and general observation of the school and classroom lessons. The data collection focused on situations in which each student addresses questions of right and wrong, especially during classroom instruction, in activities bound by particular routines or rules, or in less formal and more spontaneous incidents, with the teacher or other students. In general, the study documents the considerable time these students devote to learning how to be good students. While they quickly learn that good students do what is right and avoid what is wrong, it takes much longer for them to understand that doing what is right requires them to acquire three distinct yet interrelated perspectives on how to think and act in school.

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Much of the students' first year at school is spent in sorting out academic, social, and moral perspectives on doing what is right or wrong. While each perspective has quite distinct elements, it is often the case that in particular situations, two and sometimes all three perspectives are needed to fully appreciate the right thing to do.

From an *academic perspective*, doing the right thing in school is primarily about learning how to be clever or smart. The academic meaning of "right" for the students is primarily about getting the correct answers. In addition to getting correct answers, they also learn where to find them and how and when to express them.

From a *social perspective*, doing the right thing is about obeying rules, following routines, and complying with expectations concerning how they are supposed to relate to other students and teachers, particularly in the classroom and also generally at school. They learn that those among them who are well behaved, obey the teacher's rules and instructions, and come to school with their lessons well-prepared, earn the title of good students from the teacher.

From a *moral perspective*, what is morally right for the four students is deeply rooted in what is religiously acceptable, as reflective of their understanding of the teaching of Islam. They learn these teachings at home, through the religious classes at school, and through student-teacher exchanges and discussions about such moral principles as respect, responsibility, obedience, kindness, fairness, and tolerance.

Before elaborating upon how the four focal students learn about what is right or wrong within each of the three perspectives, I review those studies that most inform my research in this area.

RELATED RESEARCH

To date, there have been no studies in Pakistan that provide a detailed look at how children experience and make sense of school. Educational research in Pakistan concentrates more on evaluation studies, capacity-building, school systems, and teacher training issues. Generally, the only references to students in these studies focus on student performance and achievement or on their responses to instruction. Most of these studies have been sponsored by international donor agencies as part of their efforts either to assist the consultants in educational reforms and organizational change or to assess the projects and programs they had initiated (e.g., Ali, Farah, & Ostberg, 1998; Nauman, 1990; Shamim, Allen, Gagne, & Farah, 2000; Simkins, Garrett, Memon, & Nazir Ali, 1998; Warwick & Reimers, 1995). A smaller number of studies emphasizes models of change in curriculum, subject matter, and teaching approaches (e.g

Ali, 2000; Bashiruddin, 2003 Halai, 2002; Kanu, 1996, 1998; Memon, 1997). Still others have assessed the role of head teachers (principals), teachers' pedagogical knowledge, and, in a few instances, children's understanding in certain subject disciplines. This latter group of studies has mostly involved classroom-based research (e.g., Dean, 2002; Halai, 2001; Shafa, 2003). In short, educational research in Pakistan has not explored the students' understanding of their life at school, nor it has used more in-depth and extended qualitative designs to document student's experiences in classrooms and schools, probed the specific world of students in their first year at school, or inquired into how students learn to be students, good students, or students who differentiate right from wrong.

Outside Pakistan, there has been an increase in the number of studies about student's experiences in classrooms and schools, though few have explored how students learn about right and wrong in the beginning of their school careers. Though not always focused on how young students make sense of what they ought to do at school, the following studies provide insights into some of the issues or questions relevant to how students learn to do what is right.

Wragg (1994) conducted a study of how students between the ages of five and twelve years come to know what is required of them in school. A majority of the students, even the younger ones, seemed to have a clear sense of the teacher's expectations and classroom rules. The students were not allowed to "scream and shout, be silly and mess about, fight, throw things, and run" (p. 271) in the classroom. Moreover, they were not allowed to copy; rather, the teacher preferred that they do their own work. If it was incomplete, they were required to do their work during the recess, after the school day, or at home. Talking was considered to be positive, provided it helped them to do their work, did not lead to boredom, or encouraged them to check their answers, and it was considered negative if it interfered with or interrupted their work, or if it made them unable to hear or listen to the teacher. The students also had a clear view about the consequences of being naughty. The younger students viewed being naughty as not being on task, throwing around such things as erasers or pencils, or talking. For them, adhering to the teacher's expectations and rules, playing softly both indoors and outdoors, not fighting, and, in general, avoiding punishment were important. They also had a clear understanding of the consequences of misbehavior and were able to clearly distinguish between acceptable and deviant behaviors. Wragg found little ambiguity in the students' understanding of what was expected of them and what ensued if they transgressed the schools' rules and policy.

Pollard and Triggs with Broadfoot, McNess, and Osborn (2000) studied how four- to seven-year-old students experience different reforms in education and

how these reforms affect their life at school. The study documents the complex relationships that students form with their teachers. The students judged their teacher as good and, most times, fair; they considered the teacher to be unfair if she got angry, was strict, or shouted at those who submitted poor work. For the most part, the students accepted the teacher's authority, recognized that the teacher is in charge, and showed respect for the role the teacher plays in their learning.

Pollard et al. (2000) found that many students, especially the younger ones, recognize that everyone is expected to do assigned work; they have little choice—they are required to learn and to finish their work because it is regularly assessed. Students, however, feel worried about the teacher finding them doing something wrong. They are nervous or guilty if they get something incorrect; they are scared if they have to show their work to the teacher or others. They do not want to incur the teacher's disappointment or wrath. They develop a sense that they have failed in the teacher's eyes, or have failed to meet their teachers' expectations, if they get things wrong at school. They become upset and blame themselves for not making an extra effort, thereby ensuring that their work is right. Many are uncertain about what they have done and what is expected of them because of their unfamiliarity with the assessment criteria. In terms of achievement, the students realize that they have to demonstrate academic competence in academic matters and acceptable behavior in social matters. The students' understandings of the term "ideal" student cover a wide variety of characteristics, including "hardworking, obedient, well-behaved, not naughty, quiet, doesn't talk, nice, helpful, caring, pleasant, good at work, able, polite, doesn't answer back, sensible, responsible, sociable, mixes well, good in groups, and listens" (Pollard et al., 2000, p.125). Students, in their efforts to live by this ideal, are pleased with their work if they are able to do it correctly, neatly, and on time. Such work brings the desired result of rewards for them, namely the teacher's oral proclamation of "excellent" or the teacher's assessment of an "A" or "very good" on their work. The findings of Pollard et al. indicate that the students spend much time learning how to comply with how the teacher expects them to socially and academically engage in the work of school.

Jackson, Boostrom, and Hansen's (1993) Moral Life Project set out to document the moral significance of what occurs in the everyday life of two public, two independent, and two parochial schools. Their study rests on the belief that schools do much to help shape students' opinions, habits, and character, though they are only partially aware that they are contributing to their students' moral upbringing. They found that schools can inculcate valued and sought-after habits of thought and action, influence likes and aversions, shape

opinions and develop tastes, contribute to growth in character, and impose daily governance that characterizes implicit moral assumptions.

Jackson et al. (1993) found that students do not often learn moral lessons from formal moral instruction as a recurrent and identifiable piece of curriculum, even in religious schools. In these schools, there neither are courses in Civics or Ethics as values education, or discussions on morality, nor are there any forms of moral instruction as part of a separate curriculum offered to them in either of the two kinds of schools. In the religious (Catholic) schools, students learn moral content from religious instruction and from texts in courses dealing with social issues. They also listen to stories from their primary religious text and to discussions framed around lessons of moral significance, combined with information about the stories' historical place within the religious tradition. Students draw upon their own experiences and relate them to the moral message conveyed in the text and offer moral choices based on different situations. Observations in religious classes differ little from those in other classrooms. The teachers show the same degree of involvement and the students display a similar range of enthusiasm for religious instructions (and moral lessons) as they do in other subjects.

Students in the Jackson et al. study (1993) also acquire character education through English and Social Studies classes dealing with morally oriented parts of the curriculum (e.g., issues in social injustice, plight of the homeless, displacement of people). When called upon to relate their experiences, to give their opinions, and to imagine themselves in similar situations, students say they are not really interested in and concerned about these issues. During these lessons, students understand many kinds of classroom moral judgments as obvious, although the teachers seldom consider them as moral lessons. These incidents then are not experienced as opportunities to explore a moral attitude or habit within themselves.

Some moral lessons occur during such rituals and ceremonies as commemorative services and the pledge of allegiance to historic and religious celebrations. These events engender a certain mood and attitude, a "feeling of pride, loyalty, inspiration, reverence, piety, sorrow, prudence, thankfulness, and dedication . . . students identified themselves with causes, social missions, and social and political entities" (Jackson, Boostrom, & Hansen, 1993, p.7). Moral messages are also conveyed on visual displays, such as posters, frequently with lists of or exhortations about good academic performance, good behaviors, and positive attitudes. Jackson and his colleagues argue that schools seek to influence their students morally in a variety of ways, some more obvious than others. Teachers' moral influence is persuasive, often implicit, and inherent in practices that are not always designed to evoke moral responses on the part of students, but they nevertheless do.

Teachers' stories have also become valuable sources of insights into children from a moral perspective. One of the better-known series of autobiographical accounts is by Vivian Paley, a classroom teacher of young children. For her, the classroom is the crucible within which young children discover themselves and learn to confront new problems in their daily life experiences. Paley (1986a, 1986b, 1990) weaves moral and social lessons into her classes with humility, kindness, and affection. She listens to children as they narrate their stories, and, as a storyteller herself, she appreciatively and willingly remains open to the thoughts and ideas that arise in her class. Through vivid narration of the social relations among children, Paley (1992) both captures and learns from the deeply moral encounters students experience every day in their classrooms.

McCadden's (1999) moral examination of a kindergarten school setting is especially illuminating for this study because he explores how students in their first year of school take up the complex challenge of learning to be good. The study is based on the belief that children are wise and have conceptions of morality of which adults often remain unaware. It establishes that children "do not develop into progressively 'better' moral beings . . . Rather, they are moral beings from a very young age that develop over time . . . [They have the] ability to understand and navigate the codes and 'recipe knowledge'. . . of moral interaction" (p.10, 11). McCadden argues that morality is learned not only through teacher-student interactions rather, students' moral learning also is a social and cultural phenomenon that includes the classroom, the halls, and the playground. His findings illuminate two kinds of morality that are constructed in school: organizational morality, the inside morality of the classroom, which is constructed by the teacher; and relational morality, the outside morality of the playground, which the students construct for themselves. By separating the two constructions of morality, the teacher inadvertently constructs the inside morality as the one that should be important in the children's real lives, because it is practiced under the teacher's authority. The outside morality remains officially unimportant, because the teacher or authority figure is absent; the outside morality is largely left free for the children to construct on their own terms. Students develop their outside morality through their own mechanisms of building friendships, being accepted, and playing games. In the classroom, most children are more interested in their relations than in adherence to organizational morality, although over the course of time they learn to accommodate the organizational norms expected by the teacher. Yet even in the classroom, the children still can exert their moral agency, if they do not agree with the organizational morality, if it does not make sense to them, or if the timing of a particular organizational rule clashes with their relational concerns.

The above studies provide valuable insights into how students come to understand and cope with the demands of school. Though not always framed in terms of how students learn right and wrong, these studies nonetheless illuminate how students respond to and sometimes confront the academic and social routines, rules, and organizational norms that teachers and the schools expect them to follow. Furthermore, this research shows that in the course of making sense of these requirements, students still find opportunities or ways to live by rules of their own making, to create their own interpersonal norms with peers, or even to have some influence on what teachers ask of them. Despite the effort to document the lives of students at school, the above studies are not, however, equally attentive to the students' perspectives on the expectations of teachers and the school. Most of these studies are also focused on the broader question of what it is like to be and become a student, and not on the particular question of how, in the process of becoming a student, students at the beginning of their school careers also learn to do what is right in the many classroom situations and school contexts, in which matters of right and wrong emerge.

THREE WAYS OF LEARNING ABOUT RIGHT AND WRONG

Academic Perspective

The focal students in this study quickly learn that success in school means proving themselves to be smart and clever, which, in turn, brings them both recognition from and a sense of pride before peers, parents, and teachers. While good students provide correct answers, the four students discover that different subjects and different teachers often have different ways to determine and represent these correct answers. Doing what is academically right, then, includes finding out what the important questions are, what constitutes correct answer to these questions, how to differentiate a correct from an incorrect answer, and how and when to express a correct answer. If they get all of these things right, they will gain recognition and reward for their cleverness.

One lesson these students learn is that the sources of all correct answers are the textbook and their teacher. The teacher relies on the textbook to transmit what students are required to learn. The textbook is thus perceived as a legitimate source of knowledge. In contrast, the knowledge that they have gained from their home and personal experience is not always acceptable. Sometimes when students respond based on their daily experiences or what they have learned from family members and elders, these answers can be unwittingly derogated if these sources do not lead to the same answers that are in the

textbook. For example, in one of their Social Studies classes on "Homes," the teacher discussed only those rooms whose pictures were in the textbook. She neither acknowledged nor was open to any discussion about the fact that the textbook displayed a home in a western society. Instead, she asked students to name only those objects from each type of room that appeared in the textbook. She totally ignored the fact that the students' own homes might have a different set of rooms or have different arrangements in these rooms.

There are obvious cultural difference between Western notions of homes and those of students in Pakistan. The students were quick to see these distinctions. For example, the students were not familiar with such terms as "living room," "sitting room," and "hall." In the Pakistani context, a sitting room is called a "drawing room." Samir understood "living room" as a "place to live in," so he wrote "drawing room," which the teacher erased and replaced with "sitting room." The students' responses, according to their understanding, did not comply with what was in the textbook and consequently, the teacher labeled their answers as incorrect. When Amar said, "Flower pots are not in the bathroom, they are found in the garden," he was told that his response was not what was in the textbook, and therefore, was wrong. The students have little choice but to accept that they have to learn what is in the textbook, even though the information from the text has no relevance for them. To do otherwise would be seen as incorrect and thus would diminish their reputation as clever or smart students.

When not relying on the textbook, the other primary source of correct answers is the teacher. In the exchange of knowledge, the teacher is the "giver" and the students are the "receivers." They learn that the teacher has the power and authority to deliver knowledge. Through repetition and rote-learning strategies, the teacher reinforces what the students need to learn. The teacher also implicitly teaches the curriculum through various cues about what matters. For example, as she pats a student's shoulder, she says, "Well done," or she simply smiles when a correct answer is given. Or she gazes with a fixed stare, a look of annoyance, or a glare of anger when the answer displeases her. The students are able to discern from these subtle messages whether the teacher finds their answer correct or not.

Very early in their schooling, the students learn that all real knowledge is tested, and therefore, has to be learnt with care. They understand that the knowledge that they themselves have is not acceptable for examinations, and hence, is not important. It becomes clear to them that they can only succeed if they are able to learn the required subject matter for their examinations. The students also memorize the layout of the worksheet that is given as a revision exercise. They know that this is important along with memorizing the answers

for easy recall during the tests. Students learn that the rote memorization of both content and layout is the basis of "doing well," "being right," and getting "good grades" at school.

The teacher expects the students to convey the correct answer in a particular manner in order for their responses to be considered correct. The importance of presenting answers in an appropriate manner was clearly illustrated in one of their mathematics lesson. The class was instructed to leave two lines at the top of the page and then write the topic, to leave two squares for the margin (the pages of a mathematics notebook has squares in place of lines), to write the date on the top right-hand corner, and to allow two squares after each addition sum. Masood meticulously and quietly worked at each sum, counted on his fingers, and placed the answer in the space designated for the total. He used two pages, doing three sums on each page. He was the first one in the class to finish. The teacher looked at his work and marked it wrong. She asked him to do the sums again. Masood returned to his seat in confusion. By now, Amar and a few others at his table had finished. Masood leaned over to see Amar's work and checked his answers and those of Amar. He found that all of his answers were correct. He was further confused. Amar encouraged Masood to go ask the teacher. The teacher took an eraser and erased the whole page, telling him that he must follow her instructions, that is, he must learn to save his pages by solving six sums on one page as per her instructions about spacing. Masood feebly argued that his mother had shown him how to work in ways that would show his correct sums neatly in two pages. The teacher was adamant and clearly indicated that Masood's decision not to organize the work as she had instructed was unacceptable.

The school is strict about promoting English as a medium of instruction and as a means of communication. An answer not given in English, even if it is correct, is not acceptable. In the class where "Homes" was discussed by the teacher, Amar said correctly in Urdu that there were no flowers in his bathroom. The teacher asked him to respond in English. At first, Amar thought he had given an incorrect answer. When he realized that he had given a correct answer, he argued that he could only think and understand in Urdu. Moreover, he felt that his attempt to translate in English, "Bathroom no phool, Miss" ("Bathroom no flowers, Miss") was also an attempt to prove that he had learnt his work and must not be counted among children labeled as "failures" by the teacher. He was confused about whether the teacher was looking for the correct answer or for English language competence. In the end, the students learned that responses in Urdu are unacceptable, and therefore, incorrect.

The students also learn that if they are having some difficulty with a task, they can neither be helped, nor can they help each other. Only the teacher has

the authority and the right to assist students who need extra help; only she can ask a clever student who knows the right answer to help them. In such situations, the students attempt to help each other by creating their own norms, such as giving cues in a soft voice, or writing the correct word on the table and quickly erasing it.

Once students learn how to locate and present answers correctly, recognition and rewards can quickly follow. Their teachers and peers judge their competence levels according to the correct answers that they give in class. These correct answers lead to their recognition as successful and clever students, raise their self-esteem, build their confidence, earn them respect in the eyes of the teacher, and elevate their status to the point that they are allowed to take responsibility and handle matters that adults generally handle.

The teacher calls the clever students "good" and "excellent" during oral questioning and lesson discussion. In written work, the teacher writes remarks such as, "Good work," "Keep it up," or "Well done," and she often draws a happy face to show her approval of what has been done. Public awards for cleverness given by the teacher, like stars, are openly exhibited and displayed by the clever ones for other students to see. The not-so-clever students get sad faces, black stars, "Poor work," "Improve your work," and lots of red Xs (to indicate where they have gone wrong). No one wants to be the friend of a not-so-clever student. The students had the following comments about these experiences:

> Sehar: Everyone will say "Shame, shame," if I don't know my work. Then I will feel very bad. Miss will not like me if I give wrong answers. Miss asks me to help others, because she knows I learn my work.

> Samir: I know the answers, so everyone likes me, even the teacher. She makes me the monitor.

> Amar: We get lots of stars and happy faces if we do correct work in class. Miss writes our names under "Happy Face."

In the process of schooling, students also learn that not having correct answers has many implications. For Sehar, making a mistake becomes a shameful act. It deprives her of the perks she can get as a good student in class because she loses credibility in the eyes of the teacher. It is important for all four students to be clever, because being labeled "clever" brings rewards, a good reputation, and other opportunities. For Samir, correctness enhances his popularity with others. It leads to increased relations and tighter bonds of friendship because everyone wants to be friends with a popular student. He knows that the teacher is happy with correct answers, because she places her trust in students who answer correctly by appointing them as monitors. Amar see correct answers as a status

symbol. Correct answers are applauded and celebrated by being displayed for all to see through stars and happy faces.

When the students are academically recognized, they are often called upon by the teacher to assist others in their tasks. For example, Samir gets to mind the class in the teacher's absence; becoming a monitor elevates his position and leads to power. Sehar carries the teacher's pile of books. The clever students also realize that they are the ones who get some leeway and some even become teacher's pets. At times, the teacher turns a deaf ear or a blind eye to their inappropriate behavior or action in the classroom. Students and teachers alike know the clever students. Such recognition fulfills the numerous obligations and expectations that their school, teacher, parents, and God have of them.

Though Amar, Samir, Masood, and Sehar bring to school some understanding of what it means to do what is morally and socially right, they have little appreciation of what the (academic) work of school entails or what is required to be successful at this work. They quickly learn that being clever is highly valued and that getting the right (correct) answer is the basis on which the teacher determines whether or not they are clever. However, getting correct answers includes more demands than they anticipated. For example, the teacher expects them to give correct answers in English; Urdu will not be accepted. They have to provide answers that are consistent with their textbooks, even if these answers are at odds with what they know from experiences outside school. In addition, in any assignments or examinations, they have to frame their answers according to accepted conventions, which can include specifications about spacing, lines, margins, and underlines; without close adherence to such guidelines, even correct answers are judged to be "wrong." Doing what is academically right, then, involves students both learning how to do the work of school and applying this process, so that they get correct answers. The recognition and rewards given to the good student follow from their academic success.

Social Perspective

In the social world of school, the students discover that there is a kind of code of behaviour that governs how they should relate to their teachers and to their classmates. From this code-like perspective, a good student is one who obeys instructions, respects and abides by the classroom and school routines and rules, and, in general, consistently does what the teacher expects. By contrast, the bad student is disobedient and disrespectful, misbehaves, and does not do the work well, on time, or in compliance with what is required. As Sehar says, very seriously, about the consequences of being bad, "We have to be good or else it will be written in our report cards, in red, that we are bad. Miss (teacher) will know, and she will tell Madam (principal) and then Madam will call our parents." Doing what is

right from a social perspective, then, is, for the most part, about compliance with how the teachers and the school want the students to act and interact.

In the dynamic complexity of school life, the degree of compliance can and does vary. For some expectations, the students are in full compliance. Certain rules, in their views, cannot be broken. For other expectations, the students find some room for adaptation. The students "strategically comply" (Lacey, 1977) by overtly going along with the teacher's rules but covertly creating their own norms regarding the right way to do things in ways that neither conflict with nor necessarily contradict the teacher's rules (at least they think there is no contradiction). When the rules or expectations are not that specific or enforceable, the students invent their own rules. These invented rules are particularly evident on the playground, in the canteen, or in small groups, where the students develop their own preferred rules of interaction often based on existing friendship patterns and on the norms of sharing, loyalty, and enjoyment.

From the school's viewpoint, doing what is socially right is largely about compliance with rules and routines and about obedience to those in authority. The students learn that classrooms and schools are regulated and bounded by specific, teacher- and administration-driven rules and that rules are for everyone, students and teachers alike. In time, they learn what types of rules there are, who follows these rules, and which rules apply to which situations, places, or people.

The students understand that the school expects discipline from them; therefore, they have to obey various kinds of organizational and managerial rules and routines, so that discipline is maintained and academic tasks are completed. In formal school matters, they unquestioningly accept the standards of those in authority. They follow and comply with the rules, so that the Senior Mistress (head teacher), their teachers, and their parents will not reprimand them. It is clear to them that there are rules that one follows, and that no one breaks these rules without getting into trouble. For instance, they learn that one does not loiter at assembly time. Samir said, "When I hear the bell, I quickly throw aside my bag and bottle, I do not even wait to pick it up if it falls. I run down the stairs. I slide down the corridors, and I am there like this" [snapping his finger to indicate the speed]. Sehar said, "We must get in rows and stand straight without any movement, especially when in PE (physical education), Miss says: 'Attention.' It is like when you play Simon says, 'Attention' and you all stand like statues." Amar stated, "I do not even move if an airplane flies over my head or if a fly sits on my nose." Masood elaborated, "I do not talk because my eyes are shut. I know Madam Auntie is watching me from the stairs [pause] all the time and then she will complain to my mother. I pray and sing but do not smile when I clap because I am feeling so hot." They believe that such obedience will please their parents, teachers, school, and Allah.

In due course, the students are able to identify the supreme rule-maker, the person with the highest authority—the Principal, Senior Mistress, or "Madam Auntie" as they call her. Sehar said: "Madam Auntie writes the names of all the students who have been bad in her big book. They come late; they even talk and do not listen. They do all wrong things and Madam Auntie is watching. She shows the book on Parents' Day. Ooh, so they get a scolding."

Students soon learn that in the school certain general rules are mandatory, such as those related to the library. The library has clear guidelines for how they must behave, such as maintaining total silence at all times, waiting for one's turn to borrow a book, one book on loan per person, fines for late returns, and not damaging the book. The students have no problems with following library rules; they only look for flexibility, such as being able to talk about the books because they want to enjoy reading. Masood and Amar, although aware of the strict rules, nevertheless seek to bend some of them: "Amar and I want to read the book together. We read *Cinderella*. Amar could not read so many words, and I helped him with my inside voice [i.e., Masood whispered the answers to Amar]. I enjoyed it."

Some students strictly follow the teacher's rules and act like the teacher. For instance, when put in charge of watching the class while the teacher is out of the room, Samir ensures that a rule, such as that of not talking, is not broken. When given the same responsibility, Sehar adapts the rule in such a manner so as to not offend her peers—she uses her ingenuity by bending the rule of "no talking" to "talking softly in whispers" in a way that minimizes the risks to her. Thus, she maneuvers the situation to get on the right side of both her teacher and her classmates.

The students also learn to invent rules especially when the expectations are somewhat open or not strictly enforced. For example, the school rules about behaviour on the playground allow for a certain amount of student discretion, as long as general discipline is maintained. On the playground, students are expected to adhere to the following rules: no running, no pushing or screaming, use soft voices, no rough play, no playing with tennis balls, no fighting, and no littering. Some of these rules are manipulated or circumvented by such means as bringing plastic balls from home or buying them from the canteen (because tennis balls are confiscated by the duty teacher). They also play with prefects (an older student designated to help with discipline and order in the halls and on the playground) or older students to ensure that problems can easily be solved; for example, sending the prefect to fetch the ball from outside the schoolyard reduces the chance of punishment. In the canteen, the rules state: no eating junk food; no spending more than ten rupees, standing in a queue to buy lunch, counting one's change; no pushing, giving turns to

younger students first, sitting while eating; and no walking around with food. The students learn to work around these rules by various means, such as nego- tiating with one another to stand first in line, borrowing snacks, and lending money. The students quietly find moments or make opportunities where they can act or interact in their preferred ways and without teacher reprimands.

When it comes to relationships with other students, Amar, Samir, Masood, and Sehar are somewhat less concerned about complying with what the school expects. Doing what is right in terms of one's classmates—helping and sharing with them—makes one a good friend and a good playmate. In class, they pre- fer to make time for talking with each other, standing to chat at other tables, and sharing resources, snacks, ideas, and work. It is in these social moments in the classroom that the students build both work-related and play-related rela- tionships that often extend to their lives outside school. They recognize the classroom as a place of interdependency and reciprocity into which they have to fit in order to create a place for themselves. The students learn that they need "good" friends to survive at school.

While doing what is socially right is broadly about learning to comply with how teachers expect them to interact in various situations at school, the stu- dents also learn to be somewhat measured about when to follow their teacher's expectations, to what degree strict adherence to rules is necessary, and what form this compliance should take. They recognize that they have to comply with rules, routines, and social norms, if they want to be accepted by the teacher as well-behaved children. Yet they eventually learn ways to bend and sometimes to circumvent certain rules (e.g., no talking) either with the appear- ance of full compliance or without the notice of the teacher. In times when the students feel pretty much on their own (e.g., on the playground, working in small groups), they rely less on how the teacher or school defines acceptable behaviour and more on their emerging friendship codes to determine how best to play or work with their peers. Doing what is right, then, includes both the acclaim that comes from complying with their teacher's expectation and the need for security and the joy of fitting that comes from making friends. Their desire to be a good student from a social perspective involves learning how to work with these sometimes competing needs.

Moral Perspective

In addition to learning about academic and social perspectives of right and wrong, students also come to appreciate that being a good student involves doing what is morally right during their daily lives at school. For the four stu- dents, morality is primarily rooted in their religious beliefs. This is apparent in the stories they tell and in the beliefs that inform the lessons they draw from

these stories. Doing what is right from a moral perspective, then, is primarily about fidelity to their Islamic faith.

Most students initially receive their moral education from elders in their homes. Their elders speak the truth, keep their promises, and have both knowledge and wisdom to share. The teacher in the classroom reinforces this attitude: "We must respect and love older people; care and look after them, especially our parents and grandparents. We must respect and take responsibility for our teachers . . . All this will make Allah (God) very happy. He will reward you." Thus respect and obedience for all elders, including the teacher, and compliance with their rules and authority, are deeply embedded in the students as a part of their religious view of the world.

Daily rituals, such as the morning recitation of the school pledge, further remind students of their religion-based moral obligations. The pledge directs them to serve Allah, the family, the country, and other fellow beings, to be honest and sincere, to seek knowledge, to uphold right, to be respectful, to guide the misguided, to assist the weak and oppressed, and to defend Islam. The pledge reinforces the desired moral acts and defines what it takes to become a good student in moral terms. While they may not always understand the full meaning and concept behind the pledge, they do believe that "it is very important for us to say this [pledge] because it teaches us to be good children. Even when we leave the school, Miss (teacher) says, we have to remember the promise we made to the school."

In the classroom, the students' moral lessons can occur through the formal religious curriculum and through moral lessons in other subject classes. The students also engage in and learn from moral acts that they initiate on their own and independent of specific guidance or interventions of teachers. "Islamiat" (religious education) is taught through a strictly formal approach that is based on content from a prescribed textbook and on instruction that emphasizes repetition, memorization, recall, and regurgitation. There is no deviation from the textbook. Unlike what happens from time to time in other subjects, neither teachers nor students challenge the content or the approach towards learning and teaching in "Islamiat." Students learn that the "Islamiat" course is based on content approved and taught by the wise, old (experienced) teacher and comes from their religious textbook. "Auntie (a term of respect for their teacher) is old; she knows everything." Lack of factual religious knowledge and rote memorization of religious texts are considered as something to be ashamed of —"How will I say my prayers?" An inability to recite the correct words with the proper intonation, inflection, tone, and cadence is considered a disgraceful act, a breach in their learning of religious practice, and a lapse in their moral behaviour. Hence, they soon learn to give correct answers,

because wrong information in "Islamiat" is not simply a matter of inaccurate or unacceptable response; indeed, it borders on sin. Mistakes in reading and reciting are sinful and punishable acts.

Through this formal teaching, the students are explicitly taught which behaviours are considered right and thus rewarded by teachers and which behaviours are considered wrong and thus lead to some form of punishment. The following list includes some to the areas of reward and punishment that are taught to the students:

Reward	Punishment
Does good work	Work is not completed or learned
Listens to elders and teachers	Disobeys or misbehaves
Avoids the use of dirty language	Talks ill about others and hurts their feelings
Helps teachers and parents in their work	Behaves carelessly and irresponsibly
Helps the needy and the poor	Is mean to others, does not share things
Reads the Quran and says daily prayers	Does not show fear of God
Uses proper table manners	Throws food or wastes food and water
Never tells lies or steals	Lies, cheats, or harms other

Some of these moral principles become classroom rules and expectations that the students both pledge to uphold and formally post on the board: "I must do good work, listen to my elders and my teachers, help the needy and the poor . . ."

Stories are another approach used in "Islamiat" to teach about what is morally expected. The students learn both from stories passed on from generation to generation and from stories they create that parallel or supplement these traditional stories. From these stories, students learn religious principles, which they connect to moral principles, like truth and justice. Sehar summarized a story based on religious principles, a belief in God, and their prayers:

In the days of the Prophet Abraham, people worshipped idols. He made them understand, many, many times, that it is wrong thing to do. One day all the people went to a fair. Meanwhile, Prophet Abraham went to the house of God and destroyed all the idols. When the people returned, they were angry, and asked him, "Why have you destroyed all our idols?" He asked them to question the biggest idol that still stood, standing by, looking at all the broken idols. The people went to the idol and demanded an answer. There was none. So Prophet Abraham said, "If your God cannot even speak or walk—just stands there doing nothing—how can he protect you? You should worship God, who can do everything for you." The people believed in him and became Muslims.

In our post-class conversation about the above story, Sehar made the following comment:

These people did not even know that idols cannot speak to people so how can they be gods? We have only one God, did no one teach them? Our God also cannot speak, Auntie, but He knows everything. That is why, as Rabiyah Auntie says, we must not forget God. The only way to thank God is by remembering Him in our Prayers. He has made the sun, moon and sky, and the birds and

animals. He has given us water to drink and food to eat, our parents and our school. He has even given us Rabiyah Auntie to teach us. We learn at school that God is watching over us, so we must always listen to Auntie and be good.

The students also learn about moral principles as part of their curriculum in other courses. The course teachers either create opportunities to introduce moral topics or take advantage of situations where moral issues arise. For example, in their Urdu class, the story of "Grandmother's Spectacles" lead to a discussion about how students should respect their grandparents and about how to take responsibility for their mistakes. The teacher encouraged students to talk about good and kind people, and about loving and giving. She took advantage of and appealed to the children's moral sense of doing what is right. In the follow-up discussion of "Grandmother's Spectacles," the students demonstrate their understanding about care, respect, and responsibility for elders:

Masood: Poor people live on the sidewalk.

Samir: If we don't want old things, we throw them away or put them away.

Teacher: But our grandparents are old.

[Answers become spontaneous. There is more student involvement.]

Masood: We keep them.

Teacher: Why?

Masood: Because they are old, and we need to love them and work for them.

Samir: We will also be old some time. [Imitates an old man. Everyone laughs.]

Amar: [Angrily]. There is nothing to laugh about. [Facing the class]. Why are you stupid children laughing?

Samir: [Quickly]. Sorry, I was only joking. [Soberly] We keep them because they pray for us.

Sehar: We should respect them and be kind to them; they are older than us.

Ahtib: Not leave them alone at home. If they are tired, who will look after them?

Teacher: How do they live together with you?

Asiya: With our love and care.

There are also instances when the students sort through what is morally right to do with very little direct guidance from teachers and without explicit reference to religious moral principles. For example, Sehar helps other younger

children on the playground, as the following vignette illustrates: While playing in the sandpit, a child is hurt very badly; his hands are bleeding. The culprits are the rough and jagged rocks hidden in the sand. The child comes crying to Sehar, who immediately takes command of the situation. She takes the boy to "Doctor Auntie," then she collects a group of girls from the class, and together they hunt through the sandpit and remove all the rocks.

When Samir observes that Alim, one of his classmates, is always without his snacks, he approaches Alim and asks, "Does your mother not love you?" Alim replies, "I don't have a mother. [His biological mother is dead. His father has remarried, but he does not accept his father's new wife as his mother]. Nowadays, my father leaves early for the office, so he forgets to give me money for my snacks." Samir insists that Alim take his entire snack. He pushes the offer to such an extent that other students think that Samir is forcing his food on Alim deliberately, because he does not want to eat it himself. When asked about this gesture, the reasons Samir gives for his actions are based on kindness and empathy for Alim's plight and not on an expressed desire to do what God expects of him.

The students experience numerous situations each day in which doing what is right is very much a matter of adhering to moral principles that are deeply embedded in their religious and cultural lives more generally. From their family and community, they bring to school an awareness of and a commitment to moral principles that will also govern their expectations at school. Though they are familiar with the primarily Islamic-based moral principles endorsed by the school, the students take some time to adjust to the school's application of these principles. They need to learn how these principles are respected and enacted in a school context. Doing what is morally right involves learning how to participate in school rituals, to follow classroom rules, to adhere to the highly structured instructional regime of "Islamiat," and to adapt to the moral lessons taught through other subject courses. In situations where they are largely without the supervision or direction of teachers, the students face the challenge of learning to do what is morally right on their own. While they likely draw on the same Islamic principles taught in the home and school to guide their moral actions in these unsupervised or non-directed incidents, the students also rely on their sense of what is socially right to do when friendships are at stake. Their goal of being a good student from a moral perspective, then, is informed by their religious and cultural teachings from the home but are developed further to respond to the particular conditions of school.

Intersection of the Academic, Social, and Moral Perspectives

Though each perspective provides a distinct vantage point for learning about right and wrong in school, there are numerous instances where the four students

draw on their emerging understanding of two if not all three perspectives to make sense of what they should do. For example, in learning how to express correct answers, the students often have to comply with whatever socially appropriate rules are required by the teacher. The following social reminders are also guidelines for them to how to present academically correct answers: do not answer the teacher together; take turns; give complete answers; raise your hand; stand and answer; remain standing for an incorrect answer; no talking; do not leave your seat; no loitering in the classroom; listen attentively; work quietly; and only those who finish their lesson quickly can play. Breaking any of these rules results in no opportunity to answer, an expulsion from the class or school, a meeting with one's parents, or a visit to the Head's office. Such punishments bring shame, guilt, embarrassment, and concerns about what the other students will say. They also will mean much unhappiness for parents. In such situations, the academic and social perspectives of learning to do right and avoid wrong intersect; success in one is dependent on success in the other.

In the teacher's desire to encourage socially responsible behaviour, she can also reinforce the moral foundation for these acts. She frequently exhorts the students to do the following: take responsibility for your own learning; do your homework and prepare for lessons; pack your own bags for school; help your mother with housework; conserve water so that everyone gets an equal share; learn to play and work with others; and share your lessons, resources, and snacks with everyone. The students understand these exhortations as both habits or rules to follow (social perspective) and virtues to uphold (moral perspective).

At other times, two perspectives about what is right can clash and create confusion or tension in the classroom, especially when a moral issue arises. For example, the teacher praised a student by displaying her artwork in front of the whole class. Some were aware that the student whose art was displayed and praised had not done her own artwork. In their comments to me, they complained: "Why should she get the applause?" It is not honest." The students ask if the teacher teaches them to speak the truth, then how can she accept something that is not the truth? On another occasion, the teacher banished a student from the classroom because she felt he was responsible for the disorder that erupted when she was out of the room. The students asked: "How can the teacher punish students when she has not seen the wrong act, and, especially when the windows are closed?" Their sense of injustice led them to approach the teacher on behalf of the banished student. They convinced the teacher to revoke her decision and to allow the student back in class.

Incidents where all three perspectives are at play are particularly challenging for the students. As friends and classmates, the students support each other in academic matters during daily class work and assessment. In spite of most

teachers' warnings to do individual work, the students see opportunities to help or assist each other. In their view, collaboration both improves the quality of their work and supports and extends their network of friends. At the same time, the students are wary of their teachers' concerns about sharing work and thus are careful not to get caught doing wrong. In such situations, their social and moral selves collide with academic aspirations. The students are torn between listening to the teacher and doing what their hearts tell them to do. After all, the teacher also says to help others and, in some circumstances, encourages them to share their work, so how can it be wrong? They learn how difficult it is to do what is right and to please both the teacher and their peers, but they would like to be able to do so.

Students recall many occasions when their elders, including their teachers, espouse the importance of helping others in times of need. Unable to decipher such contradictory teachings, many of the students see the teacher's rules as situational and thus open to some variation if circumstances are different. They argue that copying from or quietly helping each other is acceptable in the day-to-day lessons, especially if one of them is having some difficulty with the topic or if their help is extended to a slow learner. As a means of support, friendship, and learning through each other, sharing work is understood as right. This confusion is shown in the quotes below:

Amar: I cheated from Masood, with his help . . . First he got angry and said, "Don't cheat". . . He began to hide his work . . . I reminded him that during exams, I had shown him. I did not even tell the teacher about it.

> Q: Just suppose the teacher would have seen, what would you have done?
>
> Amar: But she did not; even if she does, so what? I did not turn my pages to look. She only says share your work with others.
>
> Q: So if she did not, does that mean you can copy?
>
> Amar: No, God is looking.
>
> Q: You feel it was something that did not make you feel nice?
>
> Amar: No . . . Masood cheats my Urdu and English, and I cheat his work in Mathematics and Science. We show each other.
>
> Q: Do you think it's the way to do it?
>
> Amar: Yes, Miss says to share and help each other. And we help each other. We are friends, you know.

Sharing answers is a particularly troublesome topic for the students when they take examinations. Any attempt to consult with one another while writing a test is seen as cheating, an unacceptable and a dishonest act that can result in

punishments or sanctions. Such cheating is both a violation of a teacher's rule and an immoral act. God is watching and will punish them.

Amar, Samir, Masood, and Sehar begin their school careers with the urgings from both parents and teachers to be good students. As their first year of school unfolds, the students discover that to become good students, they need to learn what is right, a goal made all the more complicated by their realization that there are three interrelated ways of understanding what right and wrong actually mean. Each day, they learn what is right or wrong both through situations dominated by one perspective and through situations either mutually supported or complicated by two and often all three perspectives. Admonitions or advice to "Be good" or questions like, "Did you have a good day?" then, can refer to their success with the work (academic perspective), to the extent to which they behave (social perspective), or to their commitment to living by the principles of Islam (moral perspective). Learning at the intersection of moral, social, and academic demands to do what is right creates a challenging path to a life as a good student.

CONCLUSION

Becoming a good student involves learning to do what is right in three realms of activity, each with a particular perspective and a set of expectations for Amar, Samir, Masood, and Sehar to understand and address. While the academic realm presents the students with a perspective and a range of expectations that the students have not experienced before, the more familiar social and moral realms also require some adjustments by the students. They have prior knowledge about how to interact with others and how to live a life based on Islamic principles from the experiences in their families and communities. This prior knowledge does not, however, always travel well into the school setting. The students need to further develop their social and moral perspectives, so that their views and actions respond to the unique interpersonal and ethical situations of classrooms and school. Thus, learning about right and wrong is a multi-perspectival and predominantly new challenge for the students in their first year of school.

As they make sense of and cope with their complex and changing world of school, the students face the ongoing need to embrace, adapt to, and, in some sense combine, quite different perspectives on what is right. Masood captures the tensions that can arise from working through these different views of what is expected:

I have to be able to give the correct answer. That is what Miss wants me to do. But Miss also wants me to raise my hand, if I know the correct answer, or else she will not ask me to give it. If I have the correct answer, Miss is pleased with me. I am happy that she is pleased with me. But I also

want my friend to be able to give the correct answer. But he doesn't quite know the answer so
I have to show or tell him.

In this comment, Masood conveys the importance of doing what is academi-
cally right (give the correct answer) in a manner that is consistent with both
academic and social norms (raise his hand to give the correct answer). He also
suggests beliefs that are consonant with his commitment to the principles of
Islam (pleasing the teacher, respect for elders, and helping others). In the last
two sentences, he points to a dilemma that arises when different perspectives
appear to be in conflict (doing academic work on one's own, following the
teacher's [social] rule of not sharing work with others unless explicitly given
permission to do so, and the moral obligation to help others in need). The stu-
dents valiantly strive to sort through these sometimes confusing and contradic-
tory messages about what is right and wrong in pursuit of their goal to become
good students.

The teacher does much to inform and direct the students towards an under-
standing of and a compliance with what the school expects of them. For the
most part, the students recognize that their status as good students depends on
their ability to fit in to what the school requires. Amar, Samir, Masood, and
Sehar do well at sorting out and complying with the various and varied direc-
tions they receive and, as a result, achieve their goal of becoming good stu-
dents and the many benefits that this status in the classroom and school
affords. At the same time, their stories of doing what is right are not only about
compliance.

As their first year progresses, the students find ways to carve out their own
path through the maze of expectations. They make the occasional moral
choices (e.g., see the earlier account of Samir giving a snack to Alim) without
explicit reference to Allah or Islamic principles or to guidance from their
teachers. As with the students in McCadden's (1999) study, Amar, Samir,
Masood, and Sehar build a relatively independent social space, especially on
the playground or during their times in the canteen, where they create their
own unofficial code to govern play time and friendship making. Even in the
more academic realm of the classroom, the students quietly negotiate or bend
some rules to establish more favourable working relationships, especially with
peers. Though rarely openly defiant or uncooperative, the students nonetheless
put their own stamp on what is right regarding some of their moral, social, and
academic experiences.

For classrooms and schools in general, the study confirms yet again the
significance of understanding how students make sense of and cope with
the varied challenges of their first year at school (Paley, 1981, 1986a, 1992;
Pollard & Filer, 1996). It recognizes that children are knowledgeable beings,

capable of articulating their understandings and of expressing their views about what right and wrong means for them. Their voices provide insights into the complex and changing demands of learning how to become good students, a process that requires ongoing negotiation and synthesis within and across three different perspectives about doing what is right.

For classrooms and schools in Pakistan, the study serves as a reminder that understanding the lives and careers of students illuminates both the problems and possibilities of current and future educational reforms. In any reform agenda, it is critical to begin with the "way things are." The reforms of the day do not always emerge from a deep understanding of what occurs in classrooms and schools. Furthermore, the reforms designed and endorsed by policy makers and enacted by school administrators and teachers are not always the reforms understood and experienced by students. How students come to appreciate and engage with the everyday world of school is the foundation to build a more defensible and justifiable school system. Coming to know how students in their first year of school learn to become good students is the start of getting the reform agenda on the right path.

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GEORGE J. SEFA DEI AND BATHSEBA M. OPINI

SCHOOLING IN THE CONTEXT OF DIFFERENCE: THE CHALLENGE OF POST-COLONIAL EDUCATION IN GHANA

INTRODUCTION

How do we respond to the challenge of difference in post-colonial education in Africa? This chapter is an attempt to answer this question. Using a Ghanaian case study of how local colleges (secondary schools) and universities address difference and diversity within the school population, we present research findings on students' and educators' perspectives of their schooling experiences, as well as how the participants understand and articulate their present educational experiences and future aspirations. We argue that there is much to be learned from an examination of how secondary and university students and their educators understand difference and diversity and for the relevance for engaging schooling and education in the African context. We also show that difference has profound implications for ongoing discussions of educational change and that students' voices relating to difference and the intersections of gender, ethnicity, culture, language, religion, and class/minority issues in education offer useful insights for enhancing the learning environment for all students. Finally, in understanding the politics of schooling in the Ghanaian context, we pinpoint the implications of difference for inclusive schooling and democratic citizenship participation in Ghana.

In contemporary contexts, difference often encompasses the multiple subjectivities and social relations of gender, race, class, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, ability, and linguistic diversity. It also includes more subtle characteristics, such as family or occupational background, social experience, or place of dwelling (Dei, 2004a; Young, 2002). These aspects define people's lived experiences and social realities. Difference is not a fictional but rather a real account of everyday experience that speaks about identities and the ways individuals know themselves and understand the world and act within it. Difference evokes relations of power and the connections among multiple subjects (Dei, 2004a). Diversity, on the other hand, is about acknowledging the existence of difference and knowing how to relate with individuals who have qualities and conditions

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that are different from our own. We argue that in the school system, the multiple identities and social differences that exist among the school population ought to be acknowledged and acted upon. Since identities are linked with schooling and with knowledge production (Dei, 2004a), pedagogy should help learners realize the range of possibilities they have, irrespective of their differences. Unfortunately, in post-colonial Africa, not much attention has been paid to the relationship between education and identity in comparison with issues of access (Hagberg, 2002). As a result, an increasing number of students are excluded from meaningful participation in schooling systems, making schools less responsive to difference and diversity. Stefanos (1997) has suggested that acts of exclusion and marginalization in African schooling ought to be understood as integral parts of the social structure, social order and a politics of maintaining the status quo. With this in mind, we argue that in contemporary African schooling there is a need to move beyond questions of access (i.e. opportunity) to paying attention to difference and diversity.

Current educational reforms in Ghana have dealt with transforming the educational cycle into shorter terms of school completion and ensuring that education is geared towards providing technical and vocational skills for students who cannot enter the university system (Dei, 2004a). However, Ghanaian schools, colleges, and universities have to deal with pressing problems of physical infrastructure; material and human resources, including professional training for teachers; provision of adequate financial and logistical support for schools; and issues on enrolments and curricular reforms. As Dei (2004b, 2004c) argues, post-colonial education has largely been approached in terms of its assumed contributions to national development, yet the human aspects and dimensions of education have neither been fully grasped nor understood. Moreover, in debates about school reforms and educational change, broader questions of equity and social justice have been acknowledged at the rhetorical level, but they have not been concretely addressed to make a difference in the lives of learners. As a result, education has undoubtedly created and maintained glaring disparities and inequities, structured along lines of ethnicity, culture, language, religion, gender, and class. This pattern has fostered discrepancies in educational opportunities and outcomes for students from diverse backgrounds, not to mention sectoral and regional imbalances in the provision of educational resources.

The findings reported in this chapter are part of a larger three-year Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) of Canada study (2000–1 to 2002–3) that sought to investigate how Ghanaian schools, colleges, and universities address difference among the student population. The goals of the study were to: a) obtain in-depth, site-specific information on how schools

promote educational equity and academic excellence for all students from the vantage points of the students themselves as well as their parents, educators, and school administrators; b) conduct a critical examination of innovative practices of inclusive education that specifically address the educational needs of ethnic, cultural, linguistic, religious minorities, working-class individuals, and women; and c) make relevant connections between patterns in African educational reform and the implications for educating particularly (but not exclusively) African and minority youth in North American contexts. In this discussion, we focus only on findings relating to the first goal of the study. This chapter considers voices of both secondary school students and their educators. Voices of university students are also included to supplement what secondary students said.

FRAMING POST-COLONIAL EDUCATION IN AFRICA

This chapter adopts a critical, anti-colonial discursive framework to understand the issues of culture, social difference, identity, and representation in schooling and to discuss the implications for genuine educational options in an African context. This framework allows for interrogation of configurations of power embedded in the ideas, cultures, and histories of knowledge production and use (Dei, 2004a; Fanon, 1963; Memmi, 1965; Foucault, 1980). An anti-colonial framework draws on the decolonizing movements of colonial states that fought for independence from Europeans at the end of the Second World War. In the case of Africa, the ideas of Frantz Fanon, Albert Memmi, Aime Cesaire, Amilcar Cabral, and Kwame Nkrumah, to name a few, were instrumental in shaping the nature of the anti-colonial struggles. In particular, Fanon's (1967) and Cabral's (1970) writings on the violence of colonialism and the necessity for open resistance along with Memmi's (1965) discursive work on the relations between the colonized and the colonizer helped instill in the minds of colonized people the importance of engaging in acts of resistance against the violence of colonialism.

The main insight embedded in the anti-colonial framework is the recognition of locally produced knowledge emanating from cultural history and daily human experiences and social interactions. 'Colonial' is conceptualized not simply as 'foreign' or 'alien' but rather as 'imposed and dominating' economic, political, and social ideas and systems. Colonizing practices have sought to create hierarchical relations while espousing a universality and superiority of certain knowledge systems and experiences (Dei, 2004a; Evans, Barer, & Marmor, 1994). An anti-colonial prism argues that it is important to examine how these relations are refracted through differences and their implications for

knowledge production. From a perspective of superiority, the colonizers believed that they could evaluate and assign values to perceived differences (Memmi, 1965). Through this power of dominance, hierarchies were established and maintained. Unwittingly, post-colonial African schooling practices have continued to play into these politics of hierarchization, as evidenced through contestations of ethnicity, gender, class, age, disability, language, culture, and religion as sites of difference and power. Conventional processes of schooling that embrace a politics of domination and further construct dominant images as the norm for students from particular ethnic, gender, religious, cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic groups must thus be considered as colonizing. Such domination, however, can be subverted by an approach to schooling that acknowledges and values difference as sites of multiple knowings, experiences, and contributions to knowledge.

An anti-colonial lens, therefore, helps challenge relations of schooling that sustain hierarchies and systems of power and shape or inform identities by creating colonial ideologies and mythologies of the 'Other' through the maintenance of difference. In order to change dominant relations of schooling, educators need to acknowledge difference and address the marginalization and misrepresentations of ethnic, gender, class, linguistic, and religious minorities' knowledges and experiences. There is also a need to interrogate the privileged and the subordinate positions of our locations and political practices. Dismantling colonial relations and practices of schooling has as much to do with studying dominance as the marginalized positions of resistance. Given the possibility for dominant bodies to maintain a 'blind spot' on their sites of oppression, we also need the input of the marginalized in order to understand the colonial relations of schooling. Collectively, there is a need to find ways to acknowledge, discuss, and respond to difference and do so in a way that shows the interconnections of our histories and identities. An anti-colonial framework allows for this understanding.

The narrative responses reported in this chapter show how power relations of schooling play out differently for diverse learners. The narratives reflect the participants' worldviews and conceptions of everyday lived experiences and practices. The reality of the learners is reflected in how they see the world around them, including interactions with peers and associates. Those minoritized have an understanding of their world, and even from the 'subaltern' place (see Bhabha, 1994; Spivak, 1988), the voice of difference can be articulated to emphasize the power of knowing about social reality and what it means to engage in a resistant voice for change. Study participants speak on the issues of schooling and difference from their respective vantage points. Through the contested politics of representation and the narratives of the

study, participants bring to the fore key questions of identity and difference. An understanding of these workings of identity, difference, and the cultural politics of schooling holds the key to bringing about social and educational change. Moreover, an emerging trend in understanding the possibilities of schooling and education for diverse communities is to focus on the interplay and exchange among and between individuals and groups as they negotiate the tensions of educational delivery. Students, in particular, are apt to speak about their daily experiences at school and how these experiences make for engagement with or disengagement from the school system. Students' voices may also point to some contradictions and ambiguities in claiming a community of learners, especially when differences of culture, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic class background, language, and religion are swept under the carpet in the race for 'sameness,' 'normality,' and/or 'normalcy.' The narrative voices unearth the challenges and possibilities of inclusivity and inclusive schooling in pluralistic contexts.

STUDY APPROACH

As already noted, this chapter is informed by the findings of a longitudinal study conducted in Ghana by one of the authors (George Dei, as Principal Investigator) with assistance from graduate research assistants at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto and local Ghanaian undergraduate students. The study utilized a qualitative approach to data collection. Data were generated through semi-structured, face-to-face individual interviews, focus-group interviews, and classroom observations.[1] There were three main research phases with Ghanaian and Canadian components. In Phase One (2000–2001), 20 interviews were conducted with Ghanaian-born educators now residing in Canada, some of whom currently work as school or college teachers or social workers. In the course of field work in Ghana, in the summer of 2000, interviews were conducted with 32 Ghanaian education officers at the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service, as well as college teachers at two senior secondary schools (SSSs), prominent Ghanaian educators noted for their contributions to the field of education, and some international students studying at the University of Ghana, Legon. In Phase Two (2001–2002), in-depth individual interviews and focus group discussions were carried out with 20 Ghanaian-born students now living in Canada and attending Canadian universities and 37 Ghanaian students attending local universities in Ghana. There were also ethnographic observations of summer classes at two university campuses in Ghana. In the third and final phase of field research activity (2002–2003),

a total of 35 in-depth individual interviews and focus-group discussions were held focusing on the junior secondary school (JSS), SSS and university levels. The participants included: five Ghanaian-born high school students in Canada, four junior and senior secondary school teachers, seven teachers, four focus group discussions with JSS students, 10 focus group discussions with SSS students and five focus group discussions with university students. The focus on Ghanaian-born educators, students, and parents in Canada was to allow participants to reflect on and describe schooling in Ghana using a knowledge base informed by their experiences in the Canadian setting.

The selection of interview participants reflected differences in ethnic, cultural, linguistic, religious, gender, and class backgrounds. The study participants were recruited through school administrators, personal contacts, and also the study participants themselves (snowballing). The interviews were organized around aspects of difference and specifically the extent to which schools took into account students' ethnicities, cultures, histories, religions, gender, and socio-economic backgrounds in their daily instructional and organizational practices. Using gender, ethnicity, class, religion, and language as important markers of difference, the researchers asked respondents about how these issues refracted on their schooling experiences. The individual interviews therefore started with some broad questions about schooling after which the focus progressed to more specific issues that took into account questions of difference (ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, class, etc.). With the participants' consent, the interviews were audiotaped to allow the feelings of the participants to come across. Since tape recordings only captured the participant's mood or strength of feeling on issues raised, the researchers made notes on points where nonverbal cues, behaviour, and communication were strong. These notes were useful when it came to transcribing the data for they emphasized the substantial points and reinforced the feelings of the participants (see Breakwell, 1990).

After the individual interviews, focus groups were organized to allow participants to discuss and comment, from their own perspectives, and engage each other's responses regarding schooling and difference (Kreuger, 1994). The individual and focus-group interviews were supplemented with ethnographic observations of summer classes at two university campuses. The field observations were a means of verifying and/or nullifying information provided during the face-to-face interviews. During the observations, the researchers kept field notes on daily interactions on campuses and student-peer as well as student-teacher interactions in classrooms. Researchers also took notes on the physical and visual representations at school, classroom, and college residences. The goal was to get a deep sense of people, situation,

and socio-environmental nexus to provide a context for data gathering and interpretation. All this information was buttressed with analysis of Ghanaian Ministry of Education policy documents as well as the various mission statements of the different schools, colleges, and universities. These documents were analyzed so as to gain an understanding of the Ministry's and the schools' commitment to dealing with difference and diversity, establish the key goals (if any) in dealing with difference and diversity, and establish ways of achieving those goals.

NARRATIVES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND EDUCATORS

Africa remains one of the world's economically disadvantaged continents. There are several reasons for this, among them being colonial violence and the failure of Africa's post-colonial education systems to address adequately the needs of the society. At independence, most African countries inherited colonial education structures, which had significant pitfalls (e.g. limited opportunities for all Africans). Many countries have since failed to alter these exclusive colonial paradigms and inequities (see also Sifuna, 2001; Bassy, 1999). Even though education was given priority in most post-independent African nations, and even though governments officially embarked on national policies rich in the social, economic, and political symbolism of equality in an effort to promote education, not all these policies have actually been implemented. In Ghana, there is evidence of persistent inequalities in education based on ethnicity, class, gender, class, religion, ability, and the north-south dichotomy in development. This, among other factors, indicates limitations in the government's inclusion agenda (Fentiman, Hall, & Bundy, 1999; Logan & Beoku-Betts, 1998).

In what follows, we report on some of the participants' responses to questions relating to ethnicity, class, gender, language, and religion, which indicate the relevance of acknowledging difference in Ghanaian schooling.

Ethnicity

The participants' narratives showed that ethnicity could act either individually or interactively with other aspects of difference to impact students' schooling. Alwy and Schech (2004), discussing ethnic difference in the context of Kenya, revealed that ethnic fragmentations have served to increase disparities in educational opportunities and resources in Kenya. In Ghana, the intensification of ethnic differences has seen poor people continue to be disadvantaged and less engaged with schooling. In one of the focus-group discussions with five

students from the University of Cape Coast and University of Science and Technology, Pato,[2] a male student from Cape Coast, affirmed the ethnic differences in school engagement:

But I think sometimes it is not their fault. It is the inequality, the unequal distribution of educational structure. The north has been neglected for a very long time. That is why many people criticize the old government. You see, someone like me, I attended this public school, Sayto. I came from Sykodia. You see, we learned in school the hard way, compared to someone who studies in Madonna. So because of that, our brains arrange things differently. When you go to senior secondary school, you have to compete with those who come from these big time schools. Because they had the best facilities at their disposal we can't compete with them.

Pato notices that the differentials in ethnic participation in schooling are hinged on the already existing regional and ethnic discrepancies in education access, which predate the colonial period when authorities concentrated schools in certain parts of the country and particularly in the south (Dei, 2004a). Since schooling came with power and prestige, the differential power relations among groups were deeply entrenched by colonial encounters. Therefore, education, rather than being a key to equalization, became a significant determinant of inequality and continued to play a key role in intergenerational transmission of inequalities. Although the government has attempted to bridge the existing gaps between the north and south, there remain discrepancies that have enormous impact on education.

The other important factor that the study participants attributed to ethnicity was that of role models as a point of identification in the school system. Role models provide students with a sense of identity. Carlson, Uppal, and Prosser (2000) reported that a strong sense of belonging, or connection, is important to students during adolescence. For many adolescents, the school environment is the primary place for connection wherein feelings of membership develop. An increased sense of belonging to the school environment by way of positive and encouraging interactions with peers and teachers is particularly important for ethnic minority students. Kumsa, an elementary and secondary school teacher from the Ewe ethnic community, works among predominantly Akan people. He currently teaches geography. Kumsa commented on the notion of ethnicity and role models:

Yes, it is important in the sense that there are times when they relate with you better if you speak their mother tongue, especially when they have a problem and they know when they come to you . . . if you are elderly . . . they are coming to you as their father, otherwise . . . coming to a friend, somebody who will understand them better . . .

Kumsa recognizes ethnicity as an important aspect of identity. He notes that students relate better to teachers who speak their local language because of the

shared sense of identity. Students tend to approach teachers with whom they share a common language because they believe that these teachers will better understand them. This shared sense of identity is critical to enhancing the students' self-esteem and attachment to school. It is also significant to students' learning and thus has implications for school outcomes (Purdi, Tripcony, Boulton-Lewis, Fanshawe, & Gunstone, 2000).

Participants also linked ethnic identity to knowledge production in terms of 'covert' learning. When asked whether it is important to have teachers from various ethnic groups, Asha, a female student in the focus group with secondary school students from the Accra region, commented: "Yes, because we need to learn from each other . . . we have to learn many things from them not only subjects . . . they come with many things [knowledge]. . . ." A diverse teaching force is critical in providing multiple perspectives and viewpoints for students. Students benefit from both formal and informal knowledge of their teachers. A diverse teaching body means diverse pedagogical practices, which is essential in meeting students' diverse needs. The essence of diversity, therefore, also applies to the student body. When further asked what difference it would make if her school were made up of students from the Asanti ethnic community, Asha responded:

One aim of education is to promote intercultural relationships among people. So various groups should be at this school for the sake of promoting understanding.

Interviewer: What can Asanti students learn from the Ga students?

Asha: their culture, the way they live and other things. The way they dress, languages, food and many more.

A diverse student population is vital because students learn to understand and appreciate people whose ideas and cultural perspectives are different from their own. Students also experience different ways of thinking about and approaching problems, and this experience enhances positive relationships and national unity.

Related to this, Frema, a Social Studies teacher currently doing national service work in a local secondary school, acknowledges that ethnic diversity is good for pedagogical diversity:

. . . With regard to ethnicity, I believe if there are teachers from different ethnic groups, it will help. For example, there are certain topics that I teach in social studies where I really know the theory aspect, without knowing what is going on in the practical aspects. If I had colleagues, say from Ewe, I can really go to them for ideas.

Having teachers from different ethnic groups helps bring different instructional practices and experiences. This creates a positive learning environment.

Diversity in teaching staff benefits not only students of one ethnic group but also all other students (see Solomon, 1997, in another context). It also brings the much-needed positive role modelling in schooling contexts.

Class

One of the major obstacles students in many developing nations face is poverty. The 2002 United Nations Population Fund report revealed an intrinsic link between social class and school enrolment and attainment in virtually all developed and developing countries. In Ghana, as in most African countries, parents' economic power has implications for students' learning because it constructs, defines and also shapes students' experiences in their educational pursuits. Kum teaches English language and literature in one Ghanaian secondary school that is predominantly Christian. He explains the advantages his wealthier students have:

I want to look at the social/economic ladder. People from rich families have advantages over people from poorer families. The richer students can afford to buy food at the school. The others can't. The richer student has a definite advantage. She is better equipped to study. She is able to buy all the books. She is able to pay extra tuition to study better and pass.

Poor and working-class students face challenges adjusting in school due to a lack of financial support, inadequate diet, and limited access to educational resources. Students from privileged backgrounds are able to get various forms of support from their parents, such as fees for 'tuition classes'.[3] Mensah is a form two (equivalent of grade 8 in Canada) female student at Winnona secondary school, where a majority of the students are females. She attests to the ways in which class impacts students' education:

Yes, they [the students from wealthy families] get school fees on time and they get permits to go to the dining rooms. They settle down quickly. But the poor would have to come to school and later go home to find school fees. Sometimes they go home to find food and the wealthy students are more comfortable than the poor ones.

These shortfalls have varied implications for poor students' academic performance. Poor students spend less time in school due to financial constraints—they are often sent home for school fees and, hence, have reduced ability to participate in the learning process. As some studies have revealed (Abidoye & Eze, 2000; Bogden, 2000; Parker, 1989), many students from poor backgrounds lack sufficient diet and, therefore, concentrate less in their learning because of hunger. Good nutrition influences students' cognitive functioning, which, in turn, is tied to increased participation in school.

A more complex understanding of class differentials in Ghana emerges among the participants with regard to the prevailing spatial inequalities in the

country and their impact on education access. In a focus-group interview with eight high school students (two females and six males), most of them from Accra region, Mita, a male student, had this to say:

No rich people live in the north. There are no private schools and no facilities for public schools [in the north]. In private schools, we have libraries, computers, and laboratories. These things do not exist in public libraries . . . even teachers do not want to go to the north because there are no facilities. Those who go there teach about five courses, and what kind of quality will you expect from such burden?

An expanding literature on education in Ghana shows that spatial inequities between northern and southern Ghana and between rural and urban areas inhibit people in certain locations from accessing education (Shabaya & Konadu-Agyemang, 2004). Fentiman, Hall, and Bundy (1999) confirm the existing disparities in school enrolment between the north and the south. A much higher proportion of school-age children in the south attend and complete school compared to children in the north. These inequalities are largely due to poverty. Northern Ghana is considerably poorer than southern Ghana and, therefore, lacks adequate schooling facilities. This lack has considerable effect on the stability of student enrolment and the teacher population in the region. Public schools in the north are poorly equipped and have fewer teachers who often have to deal with heavy workloads, a condition that impacts on their quality of teaching (Fentiman, Hall, & Bundy, 1999).

Of concern is the extent to which the geographic inequalities noted above are being addressed. What strategies has the government put in place to resolve the problem? As the study participants indicated, questions of difference are far from being resolved. The government and other education stakeholders continue to replicate the same systems, problems of power imbalances, and unequal distribution of resources that characterized colonialism (see Fanon, 1963). These practices have negative effects on poor students. When Asha was asked whether there were students who could not be admitted to school because they could not pay fees, she gave the following example of the consequence of lack of government support for a poor student's education:

I had a friend who did well . . . her father died immediately after the examination. She was left with her mum along with five children and her mum could not finance her schooling, and so she stayed home. She could not come to school.

Limited government assistance for poor students may partially explain why Asha's friend failed to attend school. In Ghana, parental income and the costs of schooling are important determinants of school enrolment (Lavy, 1996). If the parents' income or educational level is high, it is more likely that their children will enroll in school.

The respondents also indicated that the impact of class is to be understood from the existing differences between the kinds of schools to which poor and privileged parents choose to send their children. Mana is a teacher at Ghana secondary school. He comes from upper west Ghana, belongs to the Enzalas ethnic group, and had this to say:

So that is taken care of . . . there are ways around this if you are not all very rich . . . I was not very poor because if you are very poor, forget about your children going to senior school . . . now, if you are not all that rich, the best thing is to look for the nearest school around so you can walk to school and then come back home. That's a day student-they go to study and come back . . . in that case whatever you have at home, you share together, so you do not have to spend so much . . .

Mana reveals that class defines the kind of senior school one's children attend. Most parents from low socio-economic backgrounds opt to send their children to neighboring day schools where they do not have to pay for boarding facilities. Moreover, these children do not have to spend any money on bus fare because they walk to school. Unfortunately, the majority of these day schools are community-sponsored and often poorly equipped with learning resources. The result is lack of uniformity in the content and standard of education children of poor parents receive compared to those of rich parents. Children from poor backgrounds cannot, therefore, compete very well with those from privileged backgrounds when it comes to academic outcomes.

A significant finding from this study has also to do with the intensification of the consequences of class as one moves up the education ladder. Joyce, a Bachelor of Arts student at the University of Ghana, painted a vivid picture of how this phenomenon plays out: "University education is somehow being reserved to rich families. It is constantly increasing user's fees and tuition and doesn't take into account the fact that not everybody earns the same income." Joyce underscores the intersections between class and access to higher education. Recurrent increases in tuition and user fees keep poor students out of university. As noted earlier, the educational reforms that accompanied the adoption of structural adjustment programs in the 1980s saw most African governments introduce user fees in education and other social services (see also Dei, 2004a). These reforms saw parents pay for public education and, hence, disadvantaged parents from low socio-economic backgrounds. Poor parents continue to experience difficulties in providing education for their children. Children from wealthy households, meanwhile, have access to education because their parents can afford to pay. Government measures to ease the cost of schooling and financial assistance would help improve access for poor students.

Gender

Concerns over gender disparities in African education are not new. Gender inequality predates direct colonialism. Shabaya and Konadu-Agyemang (2004), in their examination of gender disparities in education access in Africa, noted that in pre-colonial Africa, women had submissive roles in society, whereas the African man was declared the major provider for the family. These notions were buttressed by the colonialists whose Victorian-era values about girls further reinforced the subordination of women. Colonial schools in Africa taught skills that were exclusive of women, while workplaces were male-dominated and hence helped to create superior and inferior roles in society (see Mwiria, 1991). This gender-based role creation had implications on girls' education as it reinforced biased perceptions that educating girls was a waste of time and resources (Shabaya & Konadu-Agyemang, 2004). At independence, African countries inherited the biased colonial education ideals incorporated in existing education policies. These practices have continued to impact negatively women's education.

In the 1990s, a significant number of studies on gender and education in Africa showed that girls are disadvantaged in education compared to boys (Hertz, Subbarao, Habi, & Raney, 1991; Hartnett & Heneveld, 1993; King & Hill, 1993; Odaga & Heneveld, 1995). In Ghana, one problem area highlighted by Fentiman, Hall, and Bundy (1999) is the enrolment and retention of girls in school. Fentiman et al. (1999) attributed this problem to a combination of factors, including economic, cultural, and societal norms as well as stereotypes of gender roles (see also Logan & Beoku-Betts, 1998). In response to these obstacles, the government undertook positive steps to encourage and facilitate female students' enrolment in both primary and higher levels of education. This effort was especially evidenced through the involvement of government bodies and the media in gender awareness campaigns against the exclusions of females from the learning processes (see Bendera, 1999; Logan & Beoku-Betts, 1998). Even so, there exist gaps relating to equal access, representation, culture, and poverty that need to be addressed.

In terms of culture, Mensah, the Form-Two student, explained some of the ways cultural beliefs limit girls' participation in schooling:

In traditional society, women stayed at home with their children. To become a mother, women did not have to go to school. . . . But in modern Ghana this system is gradually changing, although not completely. More attention is paid to the girls now.

The practice of hiring out young females as mothers and carers of younger children limits women's access to and participation in education in Ghana.

Another striking finding relating to gender was the participants' different understandings and interpretations of equal opportunities and/or treatment in schooling. In one focus-group session with 10 JSS students, Rosa gave the following responses to questions about gender equality:

Interviewer: Is there a way in which female and male students are treated differently?

Rosa: No, we are treated equally.

Interviewer: What do you mean by treated equally?

Rosa: We are given equal chances of functioning in school.

Interviewer: Are there things that girls take into account?

Rosa: Sometimes.

Interviewer: Like what?

Rosa: Our disciplines are different.

Rosa observes that girls are treated equally, but when it comes to disciplines, she acknowledges that there are differences between boys and girls. Her response illustrates the ambiguities in students' understanding of difference. Rosa takes the notion of equal rights at face value, yet when she further examines the real practices, she notes a difference in disciplines (see also Dei, 2004a). Such ambiguities show how difference is reduced to a matter of context and/or circumstance and therefore normalized instead of interrogated. Although Rosa is not explicit about the challenges female students face, Ohemaa, a female high school teacher, shed light on the issues females face while reflecting on her high school experiences:

. . . When I was in secondary school, my geography master discouraged me to take this subject, because at the time it was believed that geography was a male thing. So, as a female, I didn't take much interest in this area. But when I graduated in the social sciences, I realized that geography was very central to my field. . . .

When male teachers discourage female students from taking some subjects, female students tend to lose interest in those subjects. This disinterest in turn reduces the chances that they will participate in careers related to those subjects.

Mensah noted another gender-related problem in the absence of female teachers in her school: "In this school, female [students] are the majority. Their number is higher than that of males . . . . we have more male teachers . . . . I think that females do not go into teaching like the males do . . ." In spite of

the predominance of girls in Mensah's school, the number of female teachers is low. Mensah attributes the underrepresentation of female teachers in her school to notions of career choice; that is, fewer women than men may be choosing teaching. Another participant, Boti, a final-year male student in Foundations (Business Management option) at the University of Cape Coast, attributed female underrepresentation in teaching to social and cultural factors that shape female students' views that professional jobs are reserved for males. Boti observed: "Some people in our culture see women's education as wasted. They have bought into that stereotypical image that females are less professional and less knowledgeable. And they play into that role."

Some participants spoke about what must change in order to address gender inequalities in Ghanaian schools. Asima, who is from the Ewe ethnic community and is also a fourth-year male student at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, articulated the need for affirmative action in hiring female teachers for pedagogical inclusivity and also to serve as role models for female students:

Let me put it this way. It is not just lowering the grade for female students. You see, when you always have male teachers teaching you, they teach you from a male perspective. They give you male examples. And maybe female students cannot relate to the way they teach. And maybe that is why they don't find it very attractive to be in the school or university.

Female teachers would enhance diversity of perspectives and teaching styles in school. Some male teachers' instructional approaches make it hard for female students to relate to the material being delivered and thus may restrict female students' academic performance and career aspirations.

Language

The question of language and linguistic differences has been a thorny and complex issue in virtually all African countries. The official language in most African nations is that of the former colonial master. Although people have kept their mother tongues, these languages, if they are not dying, have not grown. In Ghana, English language has cultural capital; it is the official language of instruction. In recent years, there have been calls from parents and community leaders to deal with language and linguistic differences. Nonetheless, there remain incongruities in the ways schools respond to the linguistic differences that exist within a diverse student population. These incongruities mainly stem from the existing contestations and criticisms around the choice of one ethnic language over all others as the medium of instruction in schools. Moreover, some ethnic groups in Ghana presume that their language is better

and should therefore be used. Adoh, a male student from the University of Ghana, Legon noted:

You see, most of the Akans, we think our language is superior. When I want to learn Ewe, because I am in love with them, and someone who tries to learn Ewe, we tend to laugh at him. Because we think our language is the best.

Adoh is talking about linguistic and ethnic discrimination and how minorities have to contend with the false sense of superiority that certain dominant group members may feel. When those from the dominant group try to learn the language of the minority group, they are often ridiculed and looked at as trying to lower the dominant group's sense of self-esteem. Adji, a male social worker and sociology graduate from the University of Ghana, Legon, who currently does service work for the University of Ghana, Eastern Region, also pointed to this sense of language superiority in his comments about how the dominant group (Akan) look down upon minority languages:

They [Akans] are always ready to look down on an Ewe student when he [she] uses Ewe language. But also the use of Ga language has been some kind of fashion. I remember in our secondary school, those students who couldn't speak the Ga language, they were somewhat disappointed. So those from different ethnic groups were forced to learn their language, because it was considered to have some sort of prestige. But at the university level, they are not ready to entertain the Ewe language, and especially the Northerners' language. They don't want to entertain those languages. Therefore, the Akan and the Ga, they are willing to assert it [dominance].

There is social prestige and cultural capital in speaking certain languages. Ga is valued; but some dominant group members denigrate Ewe and languages of ethnic minorities from the Northern part of the country. Such denigration contributes to the existing contestations and criticisms around choice of one ethnic language for instruction in schools. Mensah, the Form-Two student, also added:

I would like it if the Ghanaian language is to be introduced to the school. The language would be composed of Akan. If that happens, the Ewes who do not know how to speak the language will suffer. So, I do not think that the Ghanaian language should be introduced to school.

Uncertainties about using local language as a medium of instruction in African schools are due to the fear of cultural assimilation, ethnocultural domination, and subjugation of other languages (Bamgbose, 1991; Bunyi, 1999; Oha, 1999). In view of these tensions, many Ghanaians see English as the neutral language that should be used as the medium of instruction in schools. Ayi, a fourth-year male student in Agricultural studies at the University of Science and Technology is one of them: "We have to have a neutral language because if you decide to choose any one Ghanaian language,

we'll have lots of problems." It is assumed that using English would minimize power struggles and privilege in Ghanaian society. This assumption, however, downplays the need to choose a language that reflect the people's culture (wa Thiong'o, 1986). Ghanaians who favour the use of English fail to recognize that privileging a 'foreign language' reinforces cultural imperialism and neo-colonialism, which many Africans have worked against. Privileging English robs students of their cultural heritage and renews contact with colonial practices and ideologies, making efforts of recovering self-identity and national unity self-defeating endeavors (Fanon, 1963). Sowah is a male agricultural science teacher in one University primary school. He is from the Ashanti group and opposes the privileging of the English language in schools:

> Because every nation is supposed to have its own language . . . maybe we can study English as a second language. So we need to use one local language as our official language and use English as a second language. Even in school, for children can explain themselves well, they need to be able to participate in their own languages. I don't not agree that we should use English as an official language . . . . I think that Ghanaian language should be given more space because when you look at advanced countries, they use their own languages. But we in Africa, especially Ghana, we depend and add one or two languages to ours. We should not make ours second class and other languages first class.

Ironically, English has been privileged as the language that depicts academic excellence in many African countries. Critical scholars see such privileging as a form of colonial discrimination (Adegbija, 1994; Minh-Ha, 1991) and also as a way of establishing claims of superiority over local languages (Dei, 2004a; wa Thiong'o, 1986; Willinsky, 1998). Local languages play a significant role in the education and identity of young children.

Margo, a former teacher in an urban Methodist school and a mother of two daughters, observes that language relates to culture and, is therefore important to the development of one's identity:

> I don't want my child to forget my language, because no matter what, she is still Ghanaian . . . so at home, I would speak my [language] with her. And if she comes, because she is in school, the TV and everything around her is English.

Margo is cognizant of the dangers of her children losing indigenous languages and views the failure to use local languages as compromising one's identity. She sees local languages as a key factor in the promotion of national culture and identity. Margo's observations illustrate ways of reinforcing and enhancing future generations' sense of Ghanaian identity. For Margo, upholding the learning and use of indigenous languages is one way of resisting foreign domination and preserving national identity.

Religion

Ghana is a pluralistic society constituted by different religious, ethnic, and cultural groups. Considering such diversity, it is imperative that all institutions, and especially schools, respect the various forms of this plurality. While issues of difference are gradually being seen as central to schooling in Africa, religious identity has often received limited attention. A salient factor in the discussions around religious identity has to do with understanding students' beliefs and practices and promoting harmonious co-existence in a world of diversity. Yet in some schools, the beliefs and practices of one religion can be privileged while those of other religions are marginalized or ignored. Mati, the senior housemistress at one of Ghana's training colleges, is concerned about religious monopoly in schools and its implications for individual freedom of choice. She is especially critical of missionary schools where students are expected to worship and organize according to the school's religious principles even when those students do not profess that particular religion. Mati argues that students should not be forced to conform to the precepts of a particular religion; rather, schools ought to be respectful and tolerant of religious differences.

For some parents, and especially Muslim parents with children in Christian schools, religious monopoly arouses fear of indoctrination into Christianity. In an effort to resist indoctrination, some Muslim parents choose not to send their children to school. Hassan, who is the national coordinator of the Whole School Development Project, described this resistance:

. . . The Muslim communities do not send their children to school and there are two reasons for this: One, they fear that once their children attend the Christian or secular schools, they might end up converting into Christianity, and the second one is that these Islamic groups form the minority group, therefore, they lack funds and are unable to send children to school.

Hassan acknowledges ways in which religious differences can complicate schooling. These complexities compel some parents to develop resistance strategies in an effort to preserve their religious identity and values. Hassan's views also speak to the intersections between class and religious identity.

The other example of resistance that emerged from the interviews was that of Muslim students' reactions to preferential actions manifested through differential treatment of religious groups in schools. Delia, a third-year female student in Art Education at the University College of Education, commented that:

The Muslims used to complain that they are not recognized. In our college, we have a chaplain who organizes students' religious activities. But this year's elections, a Imam for the Muslims was also elected as well as their chaplain. So maybe next year they'll get a Traditionalist priest for the Traditionalists.

Delia considers Christian students privileged because they have opportunities to organize for various programs. Unlike the Muslims and Traditionalists, Christian students also have institutionally appointed religious leaders and a designated place for worship. These acts point to some of the ways schools fail to achieve the goal of social integration. This is not, however, to imply that all schools are exclusive. Some participants also acknowledged experiences of religious inclusivity in their schools. For example, Mita explained that her Methodist school allows those of other faiths to congregate:

Okay, this is a Christian school. It belongs to a Methodist denomination. Since we are from different religions, we have allowed everyone to function. For example, the Muslims are allowed to meet and the Christians too. Among the Christians, we have Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Catholics and others. They all meet according to their denomination.

In Mita's school, students from various religious groups understand each other and co-exist harmoniously. Ayi, the male Agricultural Studies student at the University of Science and technology, added:

In the university, the Christians dominate over the other religious groups. When it comes to university, there is cordiality. Nobody really steps on the other's toes. So, personally we had a Muslim roommate. Aside from religious difference, we got along together very well . . . we ate together; we studied together.

Ayi's experience demonstrates students' socialization trends. An individual's choice of friends and/peers is not only restricted to his/her own religious group but also transcends barriers of religious differences. Ayi further notes that university students are able to get along because they are respectful of each other's religious beliefs and values.

DISCUSSION

This study sought to examine ways difference and diversity are dealt with in African schooling. The findings show that although the issue of inclusive education is increasingly receiving attention in Ghanaian, and for that matter African, schooling (Dei, Asgharzadeh, Shahjahan, & Eblaghie-Bahador, in press), questions of difference, as they relate to knowledge production, remain largely unresolved (Dei, 2004a, b). Significantly, the participants' accounts demonstrated that difference is silenced and many students continue to be marginalized and disenfranchised, at least in terms of the failure to work with their lived experiences and social realities in everyday schooling practices. This silencing is connected to and ought to be understood in relationship to the politics of post-colonial education where at one time the emphasis was on

creating a common citizen in the spirit of nation building, with the view that drawing attention to difference could only foster conflict and division. This recognition is particularly pertinent in targeting and tailoring interventions to address difference in Ghana.

The study's findings revealed variability and interconnections in the ways students experience and understand difference and its implications for schooling in Ghana. With regard to ethnicity, the study participants alluded to the essence of ethnic diversity within both the teaching force and the student population. Having teachers that represent students' ethnic background helps enhance students' self-esteem and attachment to their school. This finding supports the view that teachers as role models influence students' self-concepts in relation to the school and education (Gordon, 1995a). Moreover, it has been established that the quality of the school context or environment has implications for students' academic achievement (Codjoe, 2001). If students feel alienated and cannot see their worldview represented in the school experience, it is unlikely that there will be equality of educational outcome (Maharah-Sandhu, 1995; Sleeter, 1991). Participants also viewed ethnicity positively as a source of cultural enrichment and learning. They posited that an ethnically diverse student population is significant for promoting intercultural relationships, which in turn advances national unity. It should be noted, however, that many African countries reject ethnicity as an organizing concept in nation building. As a result, there is limited effort to pursue and address ethnicity as a site of strength. It is important to re-think the longstanding concerns about the perceived problems of ethnic diversity and instead to recognize how their diversity is an indispensable resource for national integration.

As for class, participants observed that poverty limits students from accessing quality education. Students from the northern parts of Ghana are especially disadvantaged because of the existing disparities in resource distribution in the country. As a consequence, students from southern schools outperform those from the north because they have good facilities and educational foundations. Moreover, students from wealthy backgrounds adjust more easily in school and spend more time learning compared to those from poor backgrounds who have to deal with the challenges of rising school fees and also accessing basic necessities, such as food, books, and other learning materials.

The study findings also revealed concerns about the underrepresentation of females in Ghanaian schools as teachers and as students in science and math courses. Logan and Beoku-Betts (1998) explain this underrepresentation in terms of gender stereotypes and gender socialization roles in many African societies, which continue to disadvantage girls and women (see also Bendera,

1999; Shabaya & Konadu-Agyemang, 2004). When asked whether males and females are treated equally in schools, some participants demonstrated a few of the ways marginalization of girls occurs in school. They noted that there are teachers who still believe that female students' limited participation in schooling and in science and math subjects are justified because, culturally, women are to be socialized as caregivers and not professionals. Such notions that allege the societal inferiority of women have been used historically to support decisions that emphasize art-based subjects and vocational education for women at the expense of providing them with 'professional' education (Shabaya & Konadu-Agyemang, 2004). This stereotyping has created a situation in which girls internalize a sense of inferiority in school and perceive any differential treatment with boys as 'normal treatment' because it is justified culturally. As a result, girls rarely challenge the marginalizing school system that has failed to respond to their needs. Considering these challenges, participants emphasized three issues in an effort to address gender issues in the Ghanaian educational system: (i) the need for individuals (especially parents and teachers), and society as a whole, to take pride in educating girls and therefore shed their prejudiced attitudes; (ii) the need for affirmative action in hiring teachers; and (iii) an increase in financial support from the government to expand the opportunities for girls' education across many fields.

In terms of language, the study found that debates on the use of local languages as a medium of instruction in schools persist. It was clear that there are uncertainties about which local language should be used. Politics and fears of ethnic domination did influence the participants' arguments for or against choice of one local language over another. Those who opposed the idea of promoting the use of local languages worried that the dominant ethnic groups would look down upon minority groups and therefore subjugate minority languages (see Oha, 1999). However, for those who supported the use of local languages, the idea of preserving individual, community, and national identity proved critical.

Religious orientation is another important marker of social difference that impacts students' schooling experiences. Study participants talked about different ways in which schools dealt with religious differences. Some schools were more accommodating than others. Students who had experiences of religious inclusion in their schools observed that such schools allowed for freedom of worship regardless of one's religious backgrounds. Conversely, students who experienced religious exclusion indicated that students belonging to certain religious denominations, particularly Christianity, were privileged and accorded preferential treatment. Such privileging caused some parents to withdraw their children from such schools as a sign of resistance to religious

indoctrination. This form of resistance is an example of how individuals strive to preserve their religious identity and challenge the narrow reading of national 'unity' and 'cohesiveness.'

<div align="center">ADDRESSING DIFFERENCE</div>

Considering the study participants' narratives, it is clear that appropriate intervention strategies are required to move the project of inclusive education forward, not only in Ghana but also in Africa as a whole. The questions that remain include: How are issues of difference and diversity to be addressed in the broader context of African schooling? Whose responsibility is it to ensure that schools are inclusive of the many issues raised in this discussion? How can schools achieve effective acknowledgement of difference in the growing diversity of the student population?

In recent years, African governments have recognized that there is a need to respond to difference in education. Issues of class, gender, ethnicity, language, and religious difference are gradually emerging in discourses about education and educational politics. Nations and states are acknowledging the importance of responding to difference in the project of inclusive schooling and developing a sense of togetherness amongst a citizenry. Kelly (2000) conceptualizes inclusive schooling as the ideal of including a wide variety of students, particularly those who have been traditionally excluded, either formally or informally. Inclusive schooling means ensuring representation of a multiplicity of perspectives in academic discourse, knowledge, and texts. This implies developing and adapting pedagogies that respond to the social construction of difference in the school system. It also means providing spaces for alternative and sometimes oppositional paradigms to flourish in the schools and understanding the connections between physical bodies (representation) and people's ways of knowing. Kelly's (2000) conceptualization of 'inclusivity' identifies the many ways various aspects of difference and diversity relate to knowledge production. It also illustrates the need to regard these aspects of difference as complementary rather than discrete.

In responding to the question of responsibility, we argue that achieving inclusivity is a collaborative endeavor that requires altering the discriminatory attitudes, practices, policies, and institutional structures where marginalization takes place. It is about a willingness to take on fundamental social, political, and economic transformations of the existing exclusionary power relations (see Brock-Utne & Holmardottir, 2001; Bunyi, 1999; Harber, 1998; Stefanos, 1997). While the majority of the participants in this study acknowledged that difference has implications for schooling, only a few provided solutions

to questions of agency and resistance. Many pointed to what the school administration and government could do while negating individual responsibility. The participants felt that the onus was on the government and the schools to change things. This perceived behaviour of passing responsibility to others and pointing fingers with the notion of 'them' in mind reinforces students' limited understanding of difference (taking difference at face value without thinking more deeply about its implications) and lack of desire to address questions of difference. Taking individual responsibility will help address this perception in attending to difference. Students, teachers, parents, schools, government, and all other education stakeholders, therefore, ought to take responsibility in addressing difference.

Students

Students should be involved in addressing difference both inside and outside of school. Because of misconstrued assumptions, individuals and groups often form biased and stereotyped attitudes about particular groups of people. A concrete way of getting students to understand such misperceptions is to draw upon differences as they are embodied in students (hooks, 1994). Students should therefore be provided with space for experiential understanding and appreciation of otherness. Such spaces—in the form of clubs, art, music, poetry, and other activities—can initiate educational dialogues that can foster understanding and acceptance of various identities and differences among students. Students must recognize the need to work toward inclusivity. Promoting inclusion is something that is done with the students, rather than to them or for them. It is a shared responsibility in which each student has a contribution to make and each contribution is valued. This realization is crucial if students are to respect and value each other as human beings. In addition, students should be encouraged to identify factors that restrict inclusion. Students should and have open communication with relevant stakeholders and engage in advocacy activities that contribute bridging differences.

Institutions, Teachers, and School Administration

At institutional levels, and particularly in teacher education programs, there is a need to increase diversity training. Such programs ought to address issues of diversity and difference and thereby prepare teachers to deal with inclusivity. This means producing educators who will be role models and are willing to live beyond social fragmentation and personal separation. Having teachers who recognize and value diverse cultural perspectives and heritages will help students acknowledge difference and diversity. Teachers who recognize difference are also likely to translate theory into practice by integrating issues of

inclusion into their course content and also develop pedagogical strategies that acknowledge and accommodate their students. In addition to training, school administrators can make a positive change by addressing questions of difference within their schools. If schools are to prepare youths to live harmoniously in a diverse world, they must be prepared for the same. Proactive leadership in the form of instituting support structures, such as conflict resolution programs, mentoring programs, and human relations programs, are some of the ways through which youths can be prepared to co-exist peacefully within diverse school settings. Encouraging leadership among students from various ethnic, religious, and social backgrounds are other ways of creating and enhancing equitable and respectful schooling environments.

Parents

Parents and the wider community are also implicated in addressing issues of difference and diversity. Strong community relationships and parental support are key in promoting students' increased participation in schooling. Schools should acknowledge the significance of parents and ensure that all parents regardless of gender, class, ethnicity, or age are encouraged to participate in their children's lives at school. However, the findings from this study showed that some parents felt that schools failed to accommodate religious identity and therefore decided not to send their children to school. Moreover, the study participants indicated that some parents still play into the rational choice and opportunity costs module (see Scott, 2000) because of economic strains and, hence, deny girls opportunities to participate in schooling (Bloch, Beoku-Betts, & Tabachnick, 1998; Wilson, 1991). Increased cooperation between parents and schools would ensure that parents treat and involve both girls and boys equally in their efforts to facilitate educational opportunities for their children.

Government

While many African governments are beginning to acknowledge difference, educational institutions, education officers, policymakers, and individuals need to be held accountable for their actions. At the state level, the governments have responsibility to ensure that policies are enforced to address existing gender, class, language, ethnic, and religious differences and gaps in schooling. For example, considering that educational development initiatives in Ghana continue to operate within stretching and constrained educational costs, the government should give priority to equality in resource distribution. The participants in this study highlighted the endemic economic disparities between northern and southern Ghana. The existing model of resource distribution has increasingly

stratified schools by region, thereby intensifying class and ethnic differences (see also Fentiman, Hall, & Bundy, 1999; Bening, 1990; Foster, 1965). It is imperative that the Ghanaian government make informed decisions that address questions of unequal educational access, participation, and completion for all Ghanaians. One way of enhancing this participation and completion is to establish scholarship and/or bursary programs to aid students from low socio-economic backgrounds.

CONCLUSIONS

From this study we can draw some general comparative insights toward the creation of greater inclusive practices in schooling within African contexts. As noted earlier, dialogue, activism, negotiation, and research must not be taken for granted. Their significance within pluralist African schooling contexts is considerable. It has been argued that creating inclusive schools is not about equipment and fancy facilities but creating communities that recognize differences and support learning (UNESCO, 1999). Therefore, we cannot overemphasize the need for African governments to take a lead role in respecting diversity and encouraging schools, institutions, and citizens to engage equally in social, political, economic, and cultural development processes. Democratic participation requires transparency in resource distribution and economic and social transactions. This means upgrading institutions, rules and procedures, and human resources to meet the needs of all citizens.

Furthermore, in as much as African countries regard education as a nation-building tool, there is a need to rethink the narrow understanding of national integration invoked through the discourse of 'neutral language' or 'monolingualism.' Having a neutral language or advocating a monolingual world is not a panacea to peace or unity. Indigenous languages can equally contribute to building a unified state. If students are grounded in their indigenous language from an early age, they are more likely to value and acknowledge their culture and that of other people, as well as the way they view the world. As for gender differences, African nations need to forge more informed awareness-raising dialogues around cultural myths abounding in girls' education. Such dialogues would enable teachers, students, parents, professionals, and other members of the community and government to respond to, critique, and develop understandings of the gendered regimes and practices that exist in the education system.

The other fundamental finding has to do with recognizing the intersections between the various aspects of difference and their implications in schooling. The study participants alluded to the interrelationships between class and

religion, class and ethnicity, and gender and school completion (there are many girls at elementary school but few in secondary and college/university levels). These issues need to be tackled at local, regional, and national levels using a holistic approach. Governments should allocate funds for diverse regional and national research projects that take up issues of difference and its implications for educational practice/knowledge production. Findings from such research would inform policy and also shed light on what is actually happening in schools.

This chapter has pointed to ways difference is dealt with in Ghanaian schooling. The accounts of students and educators in this study demonstrate the pervasive presence of difference as a source of inequitable access to education in Ghana. It is important that these inequities be illuminated so as to inform the initiatives necessary to make African schools truly inclusive and equitable. The study's findings also demonstrate the need to open further lines of inquiry and research that will contribute to and shape the existing debates, policies, and discussions on inclusive schooling in Africa. Such studies must provide opportunity for students', parents', teachers' and other community members' voices and ideas to enter the official/government dialogues on school policy and reform. Moreover, the findings show that addressing questions of difference and diversity requiress constant examination of ways in which processes of exclusion and discrimination are sustained in schooling and creating spaces for students to articulate their diverse and different identities. This means interrogating the patriarchal and authoritative curriculum and pedagogical approaches that silence female students. It also means holding government, educators, parents, other individuals, and whole communities accountable for acts that negate difference (see Battiste, 2005; 1998; Luke, 2001; Vavrus, 2005).

NOTES

[1] Detailed discussion of research methodology is found in Dei et al. (in press).

[2] All the study participants' names used in this chapter are pseudonyms.

[3] The term "tuition" is used to reference the practice where wealthy parents hire private tutors (often teachers) to offer extra support to their children after the regular school hours, on weekends and/or holidays.

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ROBERT V. BULLOUGH, JR.

ALI: BECOMING A STUDENT—A LIFE HISTORY

INTRODUCTION

Paris and Cunningham (1996) observe that in industrialized countries the transition for children from home to school is not usually experienced as abrupt. "As 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds encounter school or school-like experiences, adults introduce them to learning environments with culturally specified procedures, resources, and expectations that allow children to participate in school-like activities as apprentices" (p. 123). For many children, and in increasing numbers, however, the transition from home to school is difficult, particularly for poor, non-mainstream, immigrant, and non-English speaking children, many of whom have limited school experience in their native lands. Ali is such a child. It is for the purpose of better understanding the process of becoming a student for Ali and students like him that this chapter is written.

Olneck (2004) sets a context for the study by outlining the nature and scope of the challenge such children face in becoming students:

For immigrant groups, schools present challenges to valued ways and inherited meanings. For immigrant students, schools are one among the multiple, incongruent, and non-complementary worlds they must negotiate each day. Not merely behavioral patterns are at issue. Rather, concepts of God, personhood, family, community, and society responsibilities and futures; models of success, right, and wrong; and gender identities and roles are at stake. These challenges have had profound consequences for the experiences of immigrant youth, for rending relationships between the generations, and for transforming immigrant culture and identities. (p. 388)

Situating Ali

Ali is 12 years old, a sixth grader. He is also a Farsi speaking Afghani, a Shi'a Muslim, a Sayyed, and a resident of the United States of a little less than two years. These elements of Ali's facticity, his experience and background, make him distinctly 'the other,' an identity intensified (or magnified or exacerbated) by recent treatments of Islam in the Western press. Thus, his life history provides an especially rich opportunity for exploring non-mainstream children's experience of becoming a student and experiencing schooling in America. Making sense of Ali's experience of schooling requires making sense of Ali's world view: "The role of values, perspectives, dispositions, orientations, and

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practices originating in a group's pre-immigration history and culture cannot be discounted in accounting to some extent for immigrant education behavior and outcomes in the United States" (Olneck, 2004, p. 395). Islam provides the central entry point for understanding Ali's world view, for it grounds his conception of his place in the world, his vision for his future, and his comprehension of his responsibilities and obligations to others. For Ali and others like him for whom religion is the central category for making meaning—life's axis—the common talk of North American social theorists about class and race mostly misses the point. The troubled history of Afghanistan, with its effect on Ali's family, is a second entry point. The rise of the *Taliban* (a word derived from the Arabic term for "seeker" or "student") looms darkly over Ali's life experience and worldview.

The section that follows provides a brief description of life history research methods. A quick and admittedly broad sweep of recent Afghan history is then provided, which includes essential background information on both Islam and Afghanistan as they touch Ali's life. The task is daunting: to situate Ali in a very few words without doing injustice to the culture or the child. To facilitate understanding, key words are italicized and immediately defined. Only those concepts, details, and events that are essential to grounding and ultimately furthering the narrative of Ali's life history have been included. With this background information in place, Ali's story then begins.

Life History as a Study

Life history provides a meeting point for biography and history. It is here, as Mills (1959) wrote, that "the life of the individual and the making of societies occur" (p. 226). The purpose of life history research is nicely captured by Goodson and Sikes (2001): "Life history data disrupts the normal assumptions of what is 'known' by intellectuals in general, and sociologists in particular. Conducted successfully, the life history forces a confrontation with other people's subjective perceptions" (p. 7). For Goodson and Sikes, this confrontation with human subjectivity should form the "heartland of the sociological enterprise" (p. 8), and it should be grounded in the argument made in the Thomas' famous assertion: "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (Thomas & Thomas, 1928, p. 572). The promise of life-history research, as Dollard (1935) argued, is that in it "the individual appears as a person, as a microcosm of the group features of his culture [and for this reason] detailed studies of the lives of individuals will reveal new perspectives on the culture as a whole which are not accessible when one remains on the formal cross-sectional plane of observation" (p. 4).

Data of various kinds were gathered for this study. Four extensive interviews were conducted with Ali, and the tapes were transcribed. In addition, Ali's sister, Fatima, was interviewed by Ali's sixth-grade teacher and friend, Mrs. B., using a Farsi-speaking interpreter, who was also briefly interviewed since she had tutored Ali as a volunteer during his fifth-grade school year. The interview with Fatima was extremely important since some of Ali's recollections were factually distorted, as would be expected given his young age. Both his fifth- and sixth-grade teachers were interviewed, as was his English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher from fifth grade. Ali's fifth-grade ESL teacher and his sixth-grade teacher were intimately involved in the lives of Ali and his family, which was composed of Ali; his sister, Fatima, who is 15 years older; and her two small children, a boy, now age 8, and a girl, age 5. In addition, over a three-month period 15 formal observations were made of Ali in his sixth-grade class, and selected materials were gathered representing a range of his school work. Over time I have come to know Ali well. My family and his have shared meals and attended some school activities together. Ali has worked at my home and participated in various family activities as his sister has allowed.

Like all research, the quality of a life history depends on the quality of the data gathered and the sensitivity with which interpretations are made. Given Ali's immigrant status, the historical materials available have been limited, but I believe they are sufficient to tell a compelling and faithful story of his life. My relationship with Ali is a caring one, and I have every confidence that he spoke openly and honestly about the events of his life, even as I reminded him that he did not need to answer any question that I asked if he chose not to, a right he exercised on but one occasion. I assured him that if he did not wish to discuss any particular topic, that was fine; I would not in any way be disappointed in him.

A HERITAGE, A COMMUNITY, AND A WORLDVIEW

Remarkably, Afghanistan is little known to North Americans and of little interest even to most Middle-Eastern scholars and policy makers. It is a nation crushed by war. Over one million civilians died in the war with the Soviet Union; the countryside was left covered with land mines. The citizenry are heavily armed; "Everyone," Ali said, "has a gun." The cities are severely damaged, and a third of the population has fled the nation. When the Soviets withdrew in February, 1989, ethnic and personal rivalries that had been set aside in facing a common enemy soon re-emerged, and the nation teetered on the brink of civil war even as an interim government was formed. A month

after the withdrawal, the situation for the central government in Kabul looked bleak when 15,000 guerrillas attacked Jalalabad, but the attack failed and the government maintained control of the city. Near year's end a "pattern emerged, with the *mujahedin* [a general term used to describe the Jihad fighters against the Soviet Union] in control of 'liberated' areas, the government still holding out in the main towns and scattered garrisons and an increasing number of tribal leaders and military warlords colluding with the government or maintaining their independence of both parties" (Ewans, 2002, p. 242). In May of 1991, the United Nations set out a plan for peace that included, along with a cease-fire, cessation of arms supplies, provision for self-determination, and establishment of a broad-based government following free and open elections. Little happened to realize the plan, but in September, the Americans who armed the mujahedin and the Russians who faced serious domestic problems agreed to cease supplying weapons to the warring factions by January 1, 1992. The Russians also stopped supplying the capital, Kabul, which was under frequent attack, with food and fuel. Kabul was home to Ali's family.

A decisive shift in power took place in the north when Abdul Rashid Dostum and his Uzbek militia joined forces with another warlord, Ahmed Shah Massoud, to take Mazar-i-Sharif, a major northern trading center. Following victory, the mujahedin concluded there was no reason to cooperate with the government of President Mohammed Najibullah in Kabul. With mounting pressure from the Russians and the United Nations, Najibullah agreed to step down, and negotiations began for a transition government, with the United Nations seeking to broker a deal. As negotiations proceeded, on April 15th Najibullah tried to leave Kabul but was blocked, and he sought asylum in the UN compound. With Najibullah effectively removed, the mujahedin, under the leadership of Dostrum and Massoud, joined by defecting Afghan army units, advanced on Kabul from the north, while a third group moved from the south. Throughout the country government military units were surrendering peacefully, but in Kabul the advancing armies met, and a battle ensued for control of the city. Kabul formally surrendered on April 28th, 1992.

Ali was born in Kabul December 31, 1992, during a bitter winter. Kabul had earlier been a city of roughly 2 million people, but its population had dramatically diminished, and much of the city lay in ruin. The fifth and youngest child in his family, Ali has four much older siblings: two brothers and two sisters. He is a *Sayyed*, by tradition a direct descendent of the Prophet Muhammad (born in 570 C.E. in Mecca) through the Prophet's beloved daughter, Fatima, and her husband (the Prophet's cousin), Ali, young Ali's namesake. Physically, young Ali looks Mongolian, which suggests that part of his ancestry is probably *Hazaras*, a tribe that has lived in relative isolation in the mountainous center of the nation and

is said to descend from the invading army of Ghengis Khan. When asked, Ali is quick to protest that he is not Hazaras, a tribe scorned by some groups and publicly humiliated with taunts, "mice eaters," "flat-nose," "load-carrying donkeys" (see Farr, 2002). But intermarriage is relatively common: A Sayyed man may marry a Hazaras woman, but a Hazaras man may not marry a Sayyed woman, since status and social position follow the man.

Ali is also a Farsi speaking *Shi'a*, a group that represents about 10 to 15 percent of all Muslims; and of the Shi'a he is part of the *Imami* tribe (Twelve Imam Shi'ism that dominates Iran). Sunni apologists argue that differences between the dominant Sunni form of Islam and the Shi'a form are political, not religious, yet the line between politics and theology blurs and is intertwined with deep-seeded and ancient ethnic and tribal distinctions and resentments, each of which has an important place in Ali's sense of self. The Shi'a worldview formed long ago in opposition and in struggle; as a long-oppressed minority desiring justice, they nevertheless believe they are the elect or chosen followers of the Prophet—and his heirs. Theirs is the persistent challenge to right a wrong and to establish the rightful rule of God on earth.

The Shi'a (a word derived from "partisan," meaning supporter of Ali) originated with the split of Muhammad's followers after his death, when he left no male heir and the question of succession arose. The Shi'a believe that the Prophet chose his son-in-law, Ali, to be his successor, and that Ali should have been the first *Caliph* (head of the Islamic community) and, further, that only descendants of the Prophet should have held the Caliphate. However, because shortly before his death the Prophet appointed another to lead the community in prayer, Ali was not chosen as Caliph. Although Ali was highly regarded for his wisdom and personal charisma, three caliphs were chosen before him. Of Ali, the Prophet said, "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate" (Ahmed, 2002, p. 43). Had Ali been chosen to be the first caliph, then his sons would have followed as rulers. Instead, after the assassination of Ali and his eldest son, Hassan, Hussain, the second son, led a group of about 70 family members and followers into battle and martyrdom at Karbala in 680 against an army of Caliph Yazid numbering in the thousands. Karbala is a defining moment for Shiites and represents a model of service and sacrifice to God through martyrdom. Young Ali tells the story of Karbala as though he had been present when Hussain fell. In contrast to the Sunni, the Shi'a believe that each Imam should choose his successor; had this been done, Hussain would have been Caliph rather than Yazid, who ordered his death. For the Sunni, the caliph is primarily a political and military leader. In contrast, for the Shi'a the Imam is a "divinely inspired, sinless, infallible, religio-political leader" (Ahmed, 2002, p. 45) and, of course, a direct descendent of the Prophet through the union of Ali and Fatima, a Sayyed, like young Ali.

These are not the only differences separating the Shi'a and the Sunni that are of importance to Ali's life. The Sunni reject the Shi'a broad interpretation of the Quran, preferring a literal interpretation not open to disputation or speculation (see Molavi, 2003). 'Twelver' Shi'ism, of which young Ali and his family are a part, does not recognize the Sunni caliphs, except for the Prophet's son-in-law, as speaking for the community; this faction reverences the 12 Imams (leaders) who followed the Prophet. The Sunni consider this blasphemy, for only God and his prophet should be revered. In a millennial anticipation, the 'Twelvers' are awaiting the return of the 12th Imam, who disappeared in 874 but, it is said, is present in Allah. The tensions between the Shi'a and the Sunni run deep and are played out world wide and, as it turns out, in the classroom.

Early Memories: Images of the Taliban

Political chaos surrounded Ali's family when he was born: Shi'a against Sunni, war lord against war lord. For a short time it seemed the situation would improve with the rise and success of the Taliban, but these hopes were short lived. The Taliban, whose origins are wrapped in myth, have been important to Ali's life history. Briefly, the genesis story the Taliban tell is as follows: In July 1994, a guerrilla leader in the area of Kandahar raped and killed three women. An appeal was made to Mullah Omar for justice. In response he recruited a group of religious students (Talib) who, despite their youth and inexperience, captured and executed the offending commander and disbursed his militia. Other appeals followed, and the group began to gain a reputation for swift justice. Additional members were recruited to conduct a *jihad*, or holy war, against those who were thought to have betrayed the country and Islam. By the winter of 1994–1995, the Taliban force that marched through Afghanistan had swelled to roughly 20,000 men, many of whom were young Pakistanis from the *madrassahs*, conservative Islamic religious schools where Ali would have his first experience of schooling. Soon the mujahedin found themselves confronting a formidable and unexpected foe. After prolonged fighting, the Taliban entered the capital city in September 1996. Ali was nearly 4 years old.

Once in power, the Taliban dismantled what was left of the government bureaucracy, replacing senior leaders with ethnic *Pashtuns*, whether qualified or not. Government ministries ceased to function. The city was overrun by religious police, serving under the direction of the Department for the Propagation of Virtue and the Suppression of Vice, who enforced an ever-lengthening list of rules and regulations—with vengeance. Women were banned from wearing highheeled shoes, making noise while walking, or wearing make up, and they were ordered to wear *burkhas*, which covered them from head to toe. Fatima,

Ali's sister, was once beaten for revealing a wrist. Women were not allowed to go outside of the home unless accompanied by a close male relative. A man might be killed if he allowed his wife to work outside the home (Sulima & Hala, 2002). This decree profoundly affected Ali's educational opportunities and, for a time, narrowed his ambitions. Men were not allowed to shave or trim their beards, which had to be long enough to protrude from a fist clasped at the end of the chin. No pictures were allowed in books or in homes. No kite flying was allowed. Non-Muslims had to wear yellow cloth stitched on their clothing to set them apart from the faithful. No cheering was allowed at sporting events. (Executions became a major form of entertainment). In some areas speaking Farsi was forbidden, and early curfews were strictly enforced. (For a list of rules relating to both men and women, see Lamb, 2002, pp. 16–17; see also Appendix 1, Rashid, 2001, pp. 217–219).

Ali's father was, as Ali proudly reported, a "blacksmith"—actually, more a mechanic than a person who shoes horses. He made tools and worked with metal and was, Ali said, very skilled. He also worked a second job, selling food in a small shop. He had promised to buy Ali a horse, and Ali and his brother dreamt of playing *buzkashi*: a traditional Afghan sport, a sort of rough polo played with a goat's carcass or an enemy's head for a ball, with brute strength and fearless cunning as celebrated virtues. Everything changed one evening. For reasons unknown to Fatima, the Taliban shot and killed her father on his way home from work. Ali believes his father was executed "like a dog." Fatima thinks her father simply was in the wrong place at the wrong time. Suddenly, the family was fatherless and without income. Fatima said that after their father's death, Ali could not be consoled, and he thought every man who approached the house was his returning father.

A year later a second disaster struck: Without warning one night a group of Taliban broke into Fatima's home, smashed her husband in the head with the butt of a rifle, and dragged him away because, they claimed, he was not supportive of the Taliban. "Blood," she said, was "all over, all over the walls." When she located her husband, he had been so severely beaten he was completely black; like the tape recorder being used in the interview, she said. Some days later she was told that he had been shot dead. From then on, Fatima remarked, Taliban came to the house and dug up the floor looking for guns and in other ways harassed the family. She and her small son were terrified. Finally, with her son, one-month-old baby, and father-in-law, who had been living with the family and was likely to be a target himself, she slipped away and fled to her mother's home, where she stayed for two months while making arrangements to leave the country to live with her sister-in-law in Pakistan. Later, for his safety, Ali would join her in exile.

The situation in Kabul remained precarious, deteriorating as Ahmed Shah Massoud battled the Taliban for control of the north. Finally, Ali, a brother, and his mother fled the capitol. Ali remembers the day well:

It was a horrible day, jets come in, they bomb. . . . People were running, some people were carrying people who can't walk . . . They shot very, very huge like cannons . . . I saw people get killed in front of me, so people didn't even care about anything. They just left their house behind. They just run away.

UNICEF estimates that two-thirds of Afghani children have seen someone killed (Lamb, 2004); Ali is among them. Ali and his mother settled with family in Mazar-i-Sharif, where his mother still lives, shortly after one of the most violent chapters in recent Afghan history took place in the city. At least 4,000 people were murdered, mostly indiscriminately. Many were seized in house-to-house searches by the Taliban, who were anxious to retaliate for a lost battle. Some were even loaded into container trucks and driven to the desert to die. The primary targets for the predominantly Sunni and Pashtun Taliban were Persian-speaking Shi'a Hazaras, along with some ethnic Tajik and Uzbek men.

After her husband's death, given the prohibitions against women working outside of the home, Ali's mother had to rely on her sons for support. Among Ali's earliest memories is selling food cooked by his mother to passers-by and tea to their neighbors. He recalls getting up very early in the morning, building a fire to heat water, and then making tea. Since most teachers were women, schools were closed (Rashid, 2001), and the only schooling available to Ali was in a madrassah, a school where he along with other boys memorized and recited the Quran in Arabic and were taught the form of Islam embraced by the Taliban. Ali's mother wanted Ali educated. At the madrassah, Ali was respectful of his male teachers, obedient, and studious. Misbehavior and disrespect were unthinkable; discipline was swift and sure. Ali says he enjoyed studying the Quran, although it is difficult to tell how well he learned to read Arabic, if at all, and whether or not he understood the meaning of any of the words he recited over and over. Fatima says that their mother taught Ali to read Farsi, but he left Afghanistan before his skills were more than rudimentary, and studying Farsi was not part of the school curriculum. Neither was science, mathematics, or literature other than the Quran. Attending the madrassah with other boys and working to help support the family occupied most of Ali's time.

Ali's father was an honorable man, highly respected and kind, but a stern disciplinarian who expected much of his beloved sons. Ali recalls occasionally being whipped with a stick or cord by his father, who did not tolerate disobedience. Ali remarked, "He whip me and then later he teaches me the thing I did was wrong and [says] don't do that again. He was saying you have to learn stuff about this world." Ali is grateful for his father's efforts to correct and to

teach him. "He doesn't want me to be a bad person when I grow up. He wants me to be a good person, yeah. That's good."

But following his father's murder, Ali went through a difficult period that troubled his mother, who, Ali said, whipped him "a lot." Ali began running away from his mother rather than face the switch. Since there were no men in the house, she went to the madrassah and spoke with Ali's teacher, asking him to help her with Ali. For her, there was no separation between the values taught in the home and in the school. "I didn't listen to my mom once, and then my mom went to my teacher and then she said, 'He doesn't listen to me, he fights with kids and stuff.' My teacher (Ali laughed as he described the scene) told two kids [to hold me] and [my teacher] got the whip and he whipped me." After the whipping, the teacher explained to Ali why he had been whipped. "Were you angry [with your teacher]?" "No, I was happy. I knew that day that I did wrong things . . . I will be good." "Did you start listening to your mom?" "Yeah!"

Whipping is a punishment that still makes sense to Ali: bad students, children who disobey adults or refuse to study, should be whipped for their own good. To better understand his thinking, I mentioned the names of several children in Ali's sixth-grade class and asked him if any of them deserved to be whipped. "No," he said, after each name, until we came to the name of an African-American boy, who, despite Mrs. B's best efforts, refuses to complete assignments and is often disrespectful to her and other teachers. "He needs to get whipped," Ali said, firmly. He recalled a time when this boy "flipped the finger" to a teacher. Another time this boy, who Ali describes as a "friend,' said that their teacher "sucks." This upset Ali. "I says [to him], 'No, she's just trying to help you. She knows what's good for you . . . He doesn't do his works and then Mrs. B. yells at him and then he doesn't likes Mrs. B, yeah." Then Ali said, "I don't think he's a good person . . . [He's] like a kind of gangster, he wants to be like that . . . I don't like those things." Ali finished discussing the situation with his friend by saying, "If he would be in Afghanistan, he would learn his lessons," then he laughed. Students learn from punishment and, according to Ali, they should be grateful to be punished, for punishment is a sign of genuine teacher concern. Mrs. Z., Ali's fifth grade teacher, reported a time when a child got "in her face," yelled, and was insulting. Ali was so upset by this child's behavior that he rushed from the room in tears, and Mrs. Z. found herself needing to comfort him and explain the situation, that she was not in danger and that the child was deeply disturbed. This was another child who Ali thought needed a whipping, and he said he would have given it himself.

Ali's mother feared for his safety, so she sent him to Pakistan to live with his sister. Ali understands his mother's motivation for sending him away quite differently. He said she wanted him to go to Pakistan to live with Fatima so he could

"be a man for my sister. I could take care of her." "But," I said, "You were a little boy, Ali." "Well," he responded, "I was a little boy but I can work very good and my mom knew that." As a Muslim, Ali takes being a man and caring for those he loves very seriously. He explained: "If my brother's not in my house, I'm the man of the house, I'm the biggest one if my big brother isn't with my mom. It's like that." A family friend took Ali by car to Kandahar, and from Kandahar Ali was put on a train and sent to Quetta, in western Pakistan, where his sister lived. The trip took three days, and along the way they were frequently searched by Taliban and fearful they would be robbed. A city of over half a million people not far from the border with Afghanistan, Quetta has a large Afghani refugee population. Ali was eight years old, and, in his eyes, he was a man with a responsibility to face each life situation fearlessly and to care for his family.

Life and Work in Pakistan

In Quetta, Ali lived with Fatima and her two children in a square compound composed of several rooms with doors opening on a shared courtyard where children played and women cooked and chatted. While safer than Afghanistan, according to Fatima, life in Quetta was very difficult and still very dangerous. About seven large families shared the compound. To support her family Fatima made rugs, and for a short time Ali joined her, but he detested the tedium. Eventually, Fatima found him a job making leather tennis shoes. As far as Ali knew, his school days were over, even though he saw "lots of kids" going to school and he longed to join them. But school cost money, and there was no money to spare.

For his work at the shop, Ali was paid slightly less than a dollar a week. His work day began at 7:00 a.m. and ended at 9:00 p.m., six days a week.

We had these tracing things for shoes. We had the fabric things and then we cut them, first we trace and then cut them. Then glue and sew them . . . I was like doing almost everything. In the night, I bring leathers and the tracing thingys and then I trace them in the night and then in the morning I take them back to the shop and then I cut them with the other kids. . . . Sometimes [the owner] lets me sew stuff.

Ali's one break during the week came Wednesdays, when he attended the mosque and was taught from the Quran. Work in the shop was hard, but Ali learned quickly; was given increasing responsibilities, including opening the shop in the morning; and felt a deep sense of accomplishment by helping to provide for the family. The same qualities that made him a valued worker—his eagerness to learn, desire to be obedient, industriousness, helpfulness, and commitment to his family's well being—are qualities that later made him a promising student once he arrived in the United States. These qualities have been identified as among the reasons for the school success of some groups of immigrant children (Centrie, 2000).

Fatima and Ali did not intend to emigrate to the United States. But for Ali the story of his emigrating to the US is a story of Allah's love and concern for the faithful. While they were living in Quetta, a neighbor mentioned a United Nations program that offered assistance to widowed refugees, like Fatima. Expecting to be given food or perhaps financial assistance, Fatima applied for the program, was interviewed, and then, to her astonishment, was asked if she would "like to go to America." This had not been her intention; she had merely wanted a little help. The prospect of going to America was at once thrilling and terrifying: "If I live in Pakistan for years I would not be able to provide for my kids or go to school; we have to pay for school. Even if I work hard, I won't go anywhere. I thought, if I come to America my children can study, and they would have a better life." However, the thought of leaving behind family and friends was distressing to Fatima.

Ali was overjoyed. He badly wanted to leave Pakistan, which he described as a "horrible place." He explained, "In Pakistan, [people] don't care for each other. If you are hungry, starving to death, you're like dying, they don't care. They just walk away from you. They have lots of robbers; it's a very dirty place." Coming to America also meant Ali would be able, once again, to go to school, a prospect that delighted him, that had been for so long only a dream. Later, thinking about how his life has changed by coming to America, Ali mused: "America is a wonderful place for me. In Pakistan, I couldn't go to school. [In America] I don't [have] to work, I go to school to learn. It's time for me to learn." In fact, Fatima said, Ali's choice was simple and straightforward— leave for America or return to Afghanistan and live with his mother and be "killed by the Taliban."

Ali, Fatima, and her two children traveled to Islamabad where they were given, Ali said, "lots of stuff, a book for us [that had] all the rules from America, it was in Farsi, so I could read some of them." Ali wanted to make certain he understood the "rules." This represented a first step in what Suarez-Orozco (2000) aptly describes as the "process whereby individuals learn and come to terms with the new cultural 'rules of engagement'" (p. 197). Intuitively, Ali expected the rules to be quite different from those he was familiar with, which they were, and learning them would be a means of fitting in and avoiding unwanted attention. One of his worries was that he would be ridiculed for wearing traditional Afghani clothing. He also anticipated difficulty getting along with Americans, believing they were an aggressive and unforgiving people: "[I thought] if you talk to them, they'll, yeah, knock you down." In Pakistan, he said, the people were unfriendly and not to be trusted, and he had no reason to believe Americans would be any different. Drawing on his only source of knowledge about the United States and its citizens, dubbed motion picture

videotapes, Ali thought that Americans were physically large and that every-
one would know karate and be aggressive, selfish, and demanding. Ironically,
his American models included the Belgium-born actor Jean-Claude van
Damme and Austrian-born Arnold Schwarzenegger of *Terminator,* and now
political, fame.

Five Afghani families shared the flight to New York, the one American city
Ali knew by name, having watched in horror the collapse of the World Trade
Center towers on television at a neighbor's home in Quetta. After landing they
were taken to a hotel to rest, eat, and clean up. Fatima was afraid to eat, fearing
that wine had been used in cooking the large bowls of chicken and rice. Ali and
his cousins had no such qualms. The food "was good!" and New York, Ali said,
is "Awesome!" The tunnels, bridges, freeways, and buildings astonished him,
as did the "electronic stairs" (airport escalator) which, to Ali's great embar-
rassment, some of the children of the other Afghani families (but not his
nephew or niece) decided was an amusement park ride. He had never flown
before nor stayed in a hotel, so each experience was new and exciting. In the
morning, a bus came and took the five families to the airport, where each was
sent to a different location. Ali and his family were flown to Utah, a place he
had never heard of before. Leaving the other Afghanis in the airport was upset-
ting and disorienting: "We didn't even have to say goodbye with them. They
just disappeared . . . We thought they would be with us."

In June, 2002, Fatima, Ali, and the children arrived in Salt Lake City, four
more people in an exodus that has brought 25,000 Muslims to Utah in the last
decade (Madigan & Sanford, 2004). Soon they were settled into a public housing
unit where, to their delight, another Afghani family lived, including a boy Ali's
age who became his best friend. "That was a happy day." With the help of their
case worker from Catholic Social Services, they settled in, and it was not long
before Ali was registered for school.

THE CHALLENGE OF BECOMING A STUDENT IN AMERICA

Gee (1996) offers a helpful point of orientation for making sense of Ali's school
experience. Gee argues that enculturation involves a mixture of *acquisition* and
learning. In acquisition, individuals experience a kind of informal apprentice-
ship, where they begin to internalize rules and practices by observing how
others behave and mimicking their behavior. In contrast, learning, which was
the focus of the rule book Ali was given about America prior to his arrival, is
more formal, involving systematic attempts to instruct and to build conscious
systems of meaning. Mastery of a Discourse requires *acquisition*; the meta-
knowledge needed to make sense of what is going on and to refine and improve

one's social practice comes by *learning*. Imitation with correction by those who have mastered a Discourse is central to becoming and being recognized as a member of a community of practice (Wenger, 1999).

The challenge for Ali was to become and be recognized by others as a student, as effective in carrying out the established practices of schooling, not to stand out as different from other students except in a few desired ways. Being limited in his experience as a student to a short time in a madrassah, Ali had comparatively few resources as he entered the practice of schooling. What he did have were the personal qualities that made him a trusted worker in the shoe shop, along with a deep belief in the value of persistence and hard work in achieving desired aims. These qualities, enhanced by the expectation that he would succeed through hard work, have been noted by researchers as important to school success (Stevenson & Stigler, 1992). In addition, Ali brought with him the pride of being a Sayyed: one who has special responsibilities and a destiny set by God. To his mind, luck would have nothing to do with his success, although unwittingly Ali was to be very lucky.

Ali was enrolled in Lowell Elementary School. Olneck (2004) has observed that "differences among schools may be highly consequential for the ways in which boundaries between immigrant and native students are either transcended or solidified" (p. 386). In contrast to the experiences of many immigrants (Suarez-Orozco, 2000), Ali was fortunate in that Lowell was accustomed to welcoming children from diverse backgrounds, yet the school also had a relatively stable core of students whose families lived in the area in part because they valued cultural diversity and urban life (Bullough, 2001). In fact, many students came to the school from outside of the neighborhood because of the school's reputation for being welcoming and accepting and for achieving academic success, goals that the faculty consistently worked to achieve. On the day he registered for school Ali met Mrs. Z., who would be his fifth-grade teacher, and Mrs. B., who would be his sixth-grade teacher. Ali was, Mrs. B. recalls, "very happy, positive, upbeat," and, to her surprise, "speaking English very well for a child who had just been in this country for two months. He was studying English with a Farsi/English dictionary and working with [a man] who lived in his building who reads Farsi."

Ali was placed in a regular fifth-grade class with children his same age. The only special provision made by the school district for immigrant children was to provide a part-time English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher, Mrs. T., who pulled the children out of class four times a week for about an hour a day. The Farsi translator and tutor remarked that the children were "dropped in" to school and "if it weren't for the teachers, the kids would be lost." In addition to teaching ESL, Mrs. T. served as a "Project Link" coordinator, with the responsibility of

connecting children and their families to needed social services. Both roles got
her intimately involved with Ali and his family. Within the classroom, Mrs. Z.
worked to adjust her curriculum to make certain Ali could and would be involved.
Computer programs and taped books were provided to help Ali learn English.
Around February, Mrs. Z. said, Ali felt confident enough to join a reading group,
the lowest of five ability groups, one she worked with extensively and consis-
tently each day except Friday. Ali's peers willingly worked with and tutored him,
and members of his reading group celebrated his accomplishments, a condition
that appears to be relatively rare in schools (Olneck, 2004, p. 387). "Ali knows
this stuff. He knows all this!"—and in helping Ali, Mrs. Z. said, the confidence
and competence of other children in the class grew.

Ali was, Mrs. Z. remarked, "hungry to learn" and desirous of pleasing his
teachers. He formed close and caring relationships with the adults in the school.
He charmed and befriended them, and as he did so they became important
means for accumulating social capital, the knowledge of how to make his way
effectively through the layered systems of schooling. Remarkably, he succeeded
in building an adult support system, which is crucially important in adjusting to
new and unfamiliar environments—a source of considerable difficulty for
many immigrants (Miller, 1997; Suarez-Orozco, 2000). The principal became
one of his champions. Mrs. Z. discovered from the music specialist that Ali has
a beautiful, pure, singing voice, and she found opportunities for him to share his
talent by singing. One day he visited the principal's office and sang for her. She
was moved to tears. When Ali stumbled, adults were anxious to assist him, to
explain what needed to be done, why and how to do it. Such relationships have
a profound positive effect on school success (Stanton-Salazar, 2001).

Ali was not shy in asking for help, not only in negotiating schooling but in
handling academics as well. As Paris and Cunningham (1996) assert, "Students
who are competent and confident know how to seek help in classrooms. They
know who can provide useful help and under what conditions help can be
sought" (p. 138). Ali quickly learned how to recognize effective helpers. During
the observations conducted for this study, Ali often sought help from Anna, a
quiet, unassuming girl who patiently explained to Ali in ways he understood
what needed to be done to solve a particular problem in mathematics. She gave
assistance without even hinting that his requests might be bothersome or
distracting. Anna was a model for Ali of a good student whose guidance and
generosity were much appreciated. With the help of his teachers and fellow
students, Ali, who had never studied mathematics, quickly mastered number
facts and began to find pleasure in problem solving.

Ali made friends easily and quickly, but outside of the regular classroom, on
the playground and in the ESL class, difficulties arose. He loved basketball,

but he played it a bit like his brother played *buzkashi*—for keeps. The aim of the game was to make baskets, and Ali pursued this goal single-mindedly and with great intensity. He did not think of basketball as a team sport. Mrs. T. remarked:

The Ali train would be driving down the middle and boom! You know, the kids fly every which way, and he'd go in for a lay up. The kids would be furious. He fouled! He knocked me over! They'd go into [the building] and say he pushed them down. Well, he didn't push them down, he was playing basketball to win, you know, and they were in his way. He just went up and made the shot.

Despite his efforts to fit in and to follow the rules, there were other complaints about Ali's behavior as well. In particular, trouble came from a group of girls, led by a girl Mrs. Z. described as a "cute little blonde girl that could be a bossy cow." "She had her little problems," the teacher explained, "she's not a nasty girl, it's just that what the little kid had to deal with every day was amazing, it was amazing that she came to school and functioned [at all]." She was an angry child who lived with her mother in a battered women's shelter. "Ali," Mrs. Z. concluded, was someone "she could pick on." One day during recess the girls ran to a teacher to report that Ali had hit another boy and told a fantastic story. When queried about what had happened, Ali said that a boy asked him if he wanted a "Hawaiian punch." Ali said, "Yes." Then the boy punched him. Ali thought this was funny and did the same thing to another boy, which he readily admitted. Wondering what he had done wrong, Ali was upset and in tears. He apologized, saying, "I am sorry. I didn't know that it was the wrong thing to do. I know that punching you should be suspended for, so you can suspend me. I am sorry."

This same little girl told a teacher, "Ali wants to kiss me!" This upset Ali: "Yeah, I never! I don't know why she hated me. She went to the teacher and with her best friend, her best friend agreed with her that she's telling the truth. Ali was doing that. That was a bad day." "He was," Mrs. T. recalled, "genuinely hurt, not that he was in trouble but that someone was lying about him." For Ali, this was a question of honor. Little wonder Ali thinks educating boys and girls separately is a very good idea! When boys and girls are together, he believes, trouble follows, as he wrote in a class assignment:

I think this is a good idea to separate boys and girls. In [the] Muslim religion, the teachers separate boys and girls because we want them to stay morally clean until they are old enough to get involved with each other. If the boys and girls are in the same class, it will distract them of learning.

These events prompted the teachers to watch Ali with the other children on the playground more closely, to move beyond acquisition to providing means for helping Ali learn appropriate playground behaviors. When issues arose, they addressed them with Ali, making certain that the "bossy cow" and her friends

were not making trouble. Once told that something was inappropriate, Ali did not need to be told again; he did not wish to disappoint, and especially he did not want to shame himself or his family. Unfortunately, he was not always wise in those he chose to imitate, but he became progressively more discriminating in his choices.

Mrs. Z. described Ali as a "little man." "He took everything seriously," she said. Immigrant children often have heavy home responsibilities. Ali's duties included cleaning the house and watching his young niece and nephew while Fatima attended school to learn English two evenings a week and, after a time, while she worked in a local supermarket. Because Fatima's shift began early in the morning, he fed the children and helped them dress, and together they walked to Lowell. As when living in Pakistan with his sister, Ali continued to see himself as a protector, a role men of his culture assume for those they love and for those who need protecting.

After Lowell was closed at the end of Ali's fifth-grade year, the children had to ride a bus to a more distant school. Ali often got into trouble on the bus, sometimes for doing things the other children did. Mrs. T.'s son, his close friend, recognized and was disturbed by the inconsistency. He said the bus driver was "mean" to Ali. Mrs. T. concluded the driver was a "racist." The situation exploded one afternoon when a boy Ali's age shoved Ali's niece, a kindergartner, as she was stepping off the bus, and hurt her. Ali exploded, grabbed the boy by the collar, and slammed him up against the side of the bus, shouting angrily. The boy's head was cut and required stitches. The bus driver was very angry and urged that the police be called. The father of the boy who was hurt did phone the police, but he had to admit that his son had provoked Ali. The boy readily admitted what he had done to the little girl, but still an investigation followed, which revealed that the bus driver was, as the children told Mrs. B., "always on Ali's case." It was apparent that Ali got into trouble with the bus driver for doing what other children did, which made no sense to Ali or to his friends. Why did Ali get into trouble and they did not? Ultimately, a resolution was achieved within the school's policies: Letters of apology were written, and Ali was not suspended, nor was the boy with whom Ali had fought. Moreover, the principal and Mrs. B., two of Ali's adult protectors, questioned the bus driver, telling him there were concerns about his treatment of Ali.

Ali's adult supporters made efforts to help him understand the importance of controlling his temper and resolving issues in ways other than striking out. Ali said he understood, even as he recognized he had, after all, solved the problem. To avoid conflict is important for many children (Stanton-Salazar, 2001). Ali stopped riding the bus. He helped his nephew and niece get on the bus in the morning and in the afternoon, and then he ran to school or home. Realizing what he was doing, after a time Mrs. T. began taking the children to and from school.

This was not the only time when Ali experienced serious conflict between his roles as student and as uncle and protector: differences between being a child and being a man. Immigrant children often experience conflicts of this type (Suarez-Orozco, 2000). One afternoon during his sixth-grade year, Ali could not find his niece and nephew to put them on the bus to go home from school. After the bell they had dawdled and only slowly worked their way to Mrs. B.'s room to meet Ali, who had left the room to find them. Around and around they went until Mrs. B. told the two small children to stay in her room and wait for Ali, which they did. Ali returned. He was furious, an emotion he thought entirely appropriate to the situation, and he angrily scolded the children in Farsi. When Mrs. B. and the librarian, whom he referred to on happier occasions as his "favorite auntie," tried to calm him, he stormed away, down the hall and out of the building. They called to him, but he refused to turn around and return. Both were shocked. "He'd never treated us that way. It was very disrespectful." As he stomped out of the school, the two little children scurried along behind, knowing they were in serious trouble.

The next day Mrs. B. told Ali he could not enter the classroom until she and the librarian chatted with him. They shared their feelings, reminding him of their genuine concern for and love of him. Ali knows they love him. Mrs. B. brought gifts for the family, including art supplies for Ali, who loves to draw, to celebrate *Eid al-Fitr* in late December, the feast that breaks the Ramadan fast. She also made arrangements for Ali to participate in scouting, took him every week to the meetings, and purchased for him his own copy of the Quran, which he cherishes. Ali began to cry and apologized for behaving badly. But his apology was the apology of a student to a teacher. As a student, he expects better of himself. Later Mrs. B. reflected on his behavior: "You can see when you watch him with those children how much he loves them and cares about them." She did not realize that his anger arose from Ali the uncle trying as best as he could to carry out his responsibilities to care for the children and feeling that burden a bit heavier than usual.

Classroom Challenges and Progress

During fifth grade, Ali attended his ESL class with five other Afghani children. Mrs. T. began the class at the first of the year anticipating that the Afghani children would assist one another to learn, a practice common in the regular classrooms at Lowell. A Farsi-speaking parent of one of the children in the school often volunteered to help in the classroom, so Mrs. T. had every reason to be optimistic. But to her amazement, once class began the five children often bickered, and, she discovered, two of the children called Ali denigrating names, like "dirty face." The children kicked one another under the table, sneered, and made

taunting faces. When one of the children gave an incorrect answer to a question, others would ridicule the child mercilessly. None of this behavior made any sense to Mrs. T., although she sensed tension among the Afghani mothers, who were very gossipy and extremely competitive. In desperation, Mrs. T. prohibited speaking Farsi in the classroom, and for a time she separated the children, even though she knew they desperately needed one another's help to learn. Mrs. T. did not realize that the tensions she was confronting originated in the historic animosities of Afghanistan: Sunni and Shi'a animosity and ethnic rivalries, including hatred of the Pashtuns and resentment of their long dominance in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and of the Pashtuns' disdain for other tribes and groups. The children may have been Afghani, but they had little if any sense of national identity. Hatreds were transplanted, moving from parent to child and into the classroom. For Ali, this meant that friendships had to be made elsewhere, and they were.

In class, Ali encountered a variety of new and unfamiliar subjects, and his world began to open in new ways. In the madrassah, he had never heard of social studies. He had never studied science or read story books with pictures. From his teachers' perspectives, he brought little background knowledge that could be tapped to assist his learning. "It's hard for him to make a connection if he's never heard of the story *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* [or] *Jack and the Beanstalk* or *Jack and the Giant Killer*, Mrs. B. said. Moreover, Ali had difficulty estimating how long tasks would take to complete, he had no concept of 'due date,' and he did not know where to go or how to obtain information he needed. Good students know when they can be off task with impunity, but not Ali. Learning self-management skills and building up background knowledge required to make sense of a lesson take time, but Ali was eager to learn and responded positively to suggestions and corrections. Mrs. B. and Ali's other teachers knew they could not take too much for granted, and patiently they helped Ali make cognitive connections and coached him. Also, they encouraged him to share his background when it was appropriate, as when the class was discussing current events in the world, letting him know that his experience and knowledge were valued and valuable.

Ali's is a rich imaginative life, filled with epic religious tales of heroic acts, magnificent and gory battles, and miracles; it is a world peopled with Imams, religious leaders, who shine like the sun ("They're like, they have lights around them"), and trees that move about to shade an Imam as witness of the Imam's power to a Sunni rival. "It was a miracle. It was like unbelievable—all those stories happen in the books we read." Many of the stories Ali relishes sharing were taught to him by his mother, part of a rich oral tradition, and by local mullahs. He feels keenly the spiritual power and wonder of these stories, and he

argues against what he believes to be Sunni distortions and intentional omissions and falsehoods. "The Shi'as are telling the truth. The [Sunni] are jealous about us. They are wrong!" For Ali, Christianity is simply outside of his experience—no cause for concern or interest.

In contrast to Ali's world of certainty and wonder, Western schooling is radically demythologized (see May, 1991), secular, and tentative, and a certain conceptual and axiological flexibility and tolerance must be required of students. For immigrant and other non-mainstream children, these two worlds often clash, and Ali found himself needing resolution and reassurance from time to time from trusted adults. Mrs. B. had the children memorize "Jabberwocky" from Lewis Carroll's *Alice Through the Looking Glass*, reciting as a group and punctuating the poem's rhythm with clackers, whistles, and noise makers. The children loved the language and relished its powerful imagery and rhythm. In anticipation of a unit on the Middle Ages and as part of a three-dimensional art project, Mrs. B. and the children made Jabberwockies out of aluminum foil or wire. Ali made his out of foil, with bright red beads for eyes and large extended wings. Mrs. B. displayed Ali's dragon prominently from the classroom ceiling along with the other children's creations in a fanciful fly-over of mythological creatures. The challenge came when Ali approached Mrs. B., and out of hearing of the other children, quietly and sincerely asked, "Are dragons real?" Later, he posed a similar question about unicorns and received the same answer: "No, Ali, they are made up." "Oh," he said and went back to work, taking with him one less fancy and perhaps a feeling of loss.

The study of science was also new to Ali. He likes it. "I like science. We do fun things. We dissect things, and then we learn about them. Last week we dissect a shark. And a sheep heart. Those are fun things to see inside, yeah." Dissecting the shark, a small Dog Fish shark, was amazing to Ali. "I'd never, I'd never saw in my life a shark. I saw the teeth right inside, with my eyes in front of me!" The shark innards were "gross," he said, but he was fascinated by them. "You loved it?" "Yeah, it was gross. The thing was amazing. It had oil inside its stomach. It was some kind of oil." Ali's views of life were broadening and changing.

As much as he likes science, math is Ali's favorite subject, and his computational and conceptual skills are rapidly improving. In spring of his sixth-grade year Ali scored an 82% on the district math competency test. He was disappointed, until Mrs. B. explained that an 82 meant that he was performing above some of his classmates and was showing real growth over a short period of time. Yet like Ali himself, she expects him to continue to improve. Ali thinks math is "cool," and he is fascinated by the process of reducing fractions, among other operations. He also seems to take pleasure in the apparent certainty of mathematics: there are right and wrong answers, even while there

are multiple means to achieving them. Math is so important to Ali that he insisted that he wanted to discontinue his ESL class because it cut into his study of mathematics. Besides, Ali believes that good students do not attend ESL classes. When Mrs. B. showed the ESL teacher that Ali had made sufficient progress in reading and writing, that he was able to do regular school work, the ESL teacher excused him from class: "Okay, if he really doesn't want to come to class, he doesn't have to attend." Ali was very pleased, and this change signaled a transformation in his place within the classroom. Ali was like any regular student.

In class, Ali's hand is frequently in the air, either to ask for help or to answer a question. This is what good students do. His arm shoots up—reaching, extending—hoping to be called on even before Mrs. B. finishes her question. In mathematics Ali sometimes discovers that he does not really know the answer to the question, and he pleads, "Oh! Wait! Wait!" and works quickly to get and give a correct response. He is still learning how to be a student, and at times he needs reassurance from Mrs. B. that what he is doing is what he needs to be doing. Mrs. B. worries about creating dependency, so as the children are working at their tables, she sometimes delays ever so slightly responding to Ali's upraised hand. "Mrs. B. Will you help me? I'm in trouble." Other times, she has no choice but to delay; there are simply too many children needing help for her to rapidly respond to Ali's requests. With each child she stoops down, often lowers herself to eye level, and patiently reasons with the child, not giving answers but offering guidance and direction. When Mrs. B. is delayed, Ali often goes to another student for help, and he has improved at knowing who is most capable and most willing to give good advice. Occasionally, other children ask Ali for assistance, as when Ryan needed help computing the surface area of a cube.

Being helpful is important to Ali, part of his developing sense of the student role and also consistent with his sense of himself. One of the children he has reached out to help is Abraham (fictitious name), a recent immigrant from Liberia. Ali recognizes that Abraham is having a difficult time adjusting to life in his new land, and, as Ali remarks, matters are made worse because "Abraham is slow" and struggles to learn, especially English. Mrs. B. remarked that Ali "understands where Abraham is coming from. There's a tremendous amount of compassion. I've watched him time and again reach out to this kid. He watches out for him." Observations of Ali show that he often helped Abraham, offering a "thumbs up" when he did something well: "That's good, that's good," he would say.

There was one day when Ali's treatment of Abraham amazed Mrs. B. The event took place as the class was getting ready for one of the first practices of the annual Shakespearean play put on by sixth graders. Abraham was missing,

and no one seemed to know where he had gone. Mrs. B. sent Ali to the rest room to see if Abraham was there, and he was. Ali returned and whispered to Mrs. B. that Abraham "had had an accident" and he did not want to leave the bathroom. Mrs. B. had a pair of warm ups that were part of one of the costumes, and she gave them to Ali to give to Abraham. Ali helped Abraham get cleaned up, which was, Mrs. B. said, all done "very quietly."

Ali was gentle and kind with him. They were able to clean him up enough that he was able to keep his [original] clothes on, [although the warm-ups got messy]. Ali brought me the warm ups, barely holding them by a little teeny tiny corner and hand[ed] them to me, and says, "You might want to put these in a bag, and wash your hands."

Other times Ali would make a point of playing with Abraham on the play ground and would watch out for him. Ali did this without being asked. He sensed Abraham needed a friend.

When Mrs. B. wants someone to read out loud, Ali frequently volunteers and reads with remarkable clarity and few errors. He read a definition for the class: "A pyramid is a solid with one base. All the other faces are triangles. Both prisms and pyramids can be named by the shapes of their bases." In addition to planned silent reading, when he is able he fills spaces in the lessons with his own reading. It took him all year, but he finished the Harry Potter book *Prisoner of Azkaban*. As I was walking by his desk one morning in May, he looked up, smiled brightly, and whispered, "I have one page left."

In March the class was heavily involved in practicing *Twelfth Night*. Ali played the part of Sebastian. During practices, as other children did their parts, Ali and two other boys intently practiced their lines in the back of the room huddled in a corner. "Scene six," Mrs. B. called out. Ali jumped up, ran behind the screens that served as 'off stage,' and when signaled came forward. Mrs. B. stopped him: "Ali, you can't use your script." Looking forlorn, he set it down but then proceeded to do his part—all 24 lines, nearly error free. Once finished, he moved a chair next to Mrs. B. and sat down and began studying his script. When she said, "Scene 12," Ali arose prepared for his part, and he actually acted the part. Ali was on stage, very pleased with himself and his performance. As the practice ended, Mrs. B. exclaimed with delight, "It's coming together!" And it was. In the performances that followed, Ali brought the same intensity to the role of Sebastian as he did to his roles in life as uncle and protector, at home or at the bus stop, strong and fearless.

Yet something had changed in recent months: the serious "little man" was becoming more of a small boy. Mrs. B. noted the change. She was thrilled with his academic progress over the year. "It tickled me watching him learn," she said. She had worried about him, with the problem of changing schools, the pressures

he faced at home, and the pressure he put on himself to succeed. She had made certain he would be in her sixth-grade class at the new school so he and others of the immigrant children she knew would not "get lost in the shuffle." Ali had a very good sixth-grade year. He was maturing and maintaining his deep sense of honor. He performed the student role increasingly well and with relative ease. He says that he fits in and belongs—two very important desires of immigrant children. But perhaps more than anything else, Mrs. B has been pleased to see more and more of the child in Ali emerge despite his considerable burdens as a care giver and the "tremendous pressure [he is under] to really perform and do well." More and more, she said, he got to be "just a kid," something he had never been allowed before to be. She went on to say that "he's seen enough crummy stuff in his life but I don't hear him complain. He worked. He made money. They lived, survived." He is mischievous, playful, and "fun to watch"—showing signs of becoming a teenager, but a teenager who deeply misses and worries about his mother far away in a different world, whose sister will choose him a bride one day, and who soon will need to find spaces in his school day for daily prayers. He is also a boy whose sister worries, like many immigrant parents, that he will become too much like American children and lose his way and perhaps his faith.

CONCLUSION

In their study of resilience in mathematics among poor and minority students, Borman and Overman (2004) argue, "Attentiveness to the psychosocial adjustment and school engagement of academically at-risk students are the keys to academic resilience" (p. 193). The question they pose, indirectly, is this: "How do some children become skilled students?" What is it about some children, some teachers, and some schools that lead to school success? They go on to argue that there are "large differences between resilient and non-resilient children [in] individual characteristics" (Ibid, p. 193). In addition, they conclude: "School effects that foster students' resiliency often depend on strong, supportive relationships with . . . teachers" (p. 181).

Ali shows many of the qualities identified by research as contributing to resilience. He has good intellectual and interpersonal skills, as well as special talents and abilities in singing, art, and athletics. He is engaged in learning; in fact, he is hungry to learn and recognizes the importance of schooling to realizing his ambitions. He has high self-efficacy and self-esteem, in part because of being a Sayyed, a strong will, and high and healthy expectations. He likes himself and is well liked by others, including many adults, which serves as a buffer during difficult times. He also has a profound and deep religious faith that sustains him, lending him perspective on events out of his control and offering explanations for the

inexplicable events of life. Ali feels a deep responsibility to honor his family, not only his parents but also his ancestors and the Prophet, and to be an instrument in the cause of justice, especially for the Shi'a.

For such a small boy, the burdens Ali carries are heavy, but he does not complain, nor is he alone. In addition to his sister, he has other adults who care deeply about him, like his teachers and the school librarian. One day Ali was very upset, feeling frustrated, unappreciated at home, and worried about his sister. Mrs. B. sensed something was wrong, and they spoke. Near the end of the conversation, she said, "Ali, you know that if you ever have a problem, you know you have a place where you can come where you know that someone will watch out for you." "Yeah, I know," he said. "Where is that?," Mrs. B. asked. She explained his answer: "He said he knew that he could come to me, to [my] family, and that we would always help him, that he would always have a place. That he wouldn't be alone out there." He knew she meant it. She is one of those adults who make and keep promises and thereby help others cope in uncertain times (Arendt, 1958).

When asked, "How is school going?", Ali smiles broadly and gives a confident "thumbs up." It is "fun. There is no war. People are real nice." He is, he says, a "good student, most of the time." Then laughing, he reports that sometimes he is "naughty." Naughty means mischievous and playful, small boy qualities that delight Mrs. B. School is a place where Ali finds security, love, respect, success, and a community of children and adults who support and sustain his growth and development. The result, in part, is a boy who, despite having witnessed horrific events, is happy, healing, and optimistic about the future—a future that he sees as heavily dependent on how well he does in school, on his success learning to be a student, and on what his teachers think of him.

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XIAO LAN CURDT-CHRISTIANSEN AND MARY H. MAGUIRE

PORTRAITS OF SELF AND IDENTITY CONSTRUCTIONS: THREE CHINESE GIRLS' TRILINGUAL TEXTUAL POWERS

MY EVERYDAY SCHOOL AND EVERY-SATURDAY SCHOOL

I have two schools, one is a French and English everyday school, Hillrose Academy, and the other school is an every-Saturday Chinese school, Zhonguo School. At my everyday school a boy and I are the only Asian-looking people. The rest of them are mainly from Italy or Greece. They look different from me; they look like Canadians. There are Greek, Italian, Hebrew, and English language classes in the school, but no Chinese or Japanese classes. I do not like my school very much because people make fun of me and call me "Chinese girl" instead of my name. I try to ignore them. I do not make fun of Italian people because Chloë is my best friend and she is Italian.

I don't have as many friends in Zhonguo as in Hillrose, but they are very nice to me. Everybody is Chinese-looking with brown eyes and black hair except Xiao An. She is totally blond with very blue eyes. My parents say that they can't believe she is half Chinese. Anyway, she is my best friend at Zhonguo School.

This text, written by nine-year-old Beebee, emerges from an ethnographic inquiry into multilingual children's identity constructions, cultural positionings, and presentations of selves as writers. Writing is an essential resource for bringing experiences into conscious awareness. How multilingual children use their textual powers in multiple languages is complex but ultimately related both to the learning environments, broadly defined, in which they find themselves and to their own positionings. Textual powers refer to a writer's agency in using text as a resource to select and represent certain aspects of human experience, self, and identity. We distinguish between "self"—aspects of identity associated with an individual's feelings—and "identity"—socially constructed forms of complex interweaving of positionings (Ivanič, 1998; Davies & Harré, 1990; Gee, 2001). Positioning can occur when one person positions another (e.g., "*They* call *me* 'Chinese girl' ") or can be reflexive, when one positions oneself (e.g., "*I* ignore *them*"). Like many Quebec Allophone children (i.e., children of immigrants whose first language is neither English nor French), Beebee attends an "every-Saturday" heritage language school on Saturdays and a regular "everyday" school during the

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week. These Allophone children are obliged to attend French school by Quebec language legislation, Bill 101, passed in 1977. As a result, these "Bill 101" children who grow up learning multiple languages have different "ways of taking" from literacy traditions and different "ways of being" in diverse contexts (Maguire et al., 2005, p.148). The need to share multilingual children's perceptions and representations of their identities in texts is vital because, as Cummins (1996) points out, "One set of voices conspicuously absent from the educational reform debates are the voices of students" (p. 171). When children write in multiple languages, they engage in dialogues with self and others in diverse learning contexts. They explicitly or implicitly signal their awareness of power relations and evaluative orientations embedded in these contexts by leaving traces of their positionings and intentionalities in their written texts.

This chapter shares a slice of ongoing research that highlights the textual powers in three languages of three eleven-year-old Chinese girls, Xiao An, Yida, and Lingling. We focus on their distinct authorial signatures as writers by examining texts they chose as representative of their writing in English, French, and Chinese. These texts offer interesting insights into two questions about their constructions of self as writers and envisioned possibilities of selfhood: How do they portray themselves in their texts? and, How do they weave their socio-linguistic-cultural worlds into their writing? We reflect on how their discursive learning environments interact with how the girls see and position themselves—both the dominant selves they claim, reveal, or even conceal and the discursive identities that emerge in their written texts.

Theories of discursive identity emphasize the role of language in constructing the self and others in particular contexts (Bakhtin, 1981; Ivanič, 1998; Holland et al., 1998). "Discursive" refers to particular ways of talking and writing that are regarded as valued in contexts. "Discursive/identity positioning" refers to how writers positively or negatively align themselves within discursive meaning structures (e.g., "I do not like *my school* very much because people make fun of me and call me 'Chinese girl' "). Discursive/identity positioning may be distinct from or overlap with existing identity categories (the socio-cultural attributed identities writers may draw upon in their self presentations, such as "Chinese girl") or self narratives (accounts or references to some autobiographical aspect of self, such as, "At my everyday school, a boy and I are the only Asian-looking people").

POLITICAL, GEOGRAPHICAL, AND SOCIOLINGUISTIC CONTEXTS

Children's literate actions reflect multiple, interacting spheres of influence—the socio-historical, interpersonal, and individual—that connect to complex politics of recognition between majority and minority groups (Maguire, 1999;

Dyson, 1993). The girls' identity politics are located within the nested contexts of Quebec, a unilingual French province, and Canada, a country with a policy and an action plan for two official languages based on the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Official Languages Act*. Canadian political discourses center on majority/minority language contexts within an English and French discourse of linguistic and cultural duality. A rhetoric of multicultural-ism and heritage languages is embedded in a broad framework of laws and policies that support Canada's approach to diversity and embracing of cultural pluralism. Quebec's political discourse emphasizes French as the official language, based on Bill 101, the *Charter of the French Language*. Quebec school boards are linguistically organized as either English or French. Thus, Quebec children may attend either a French or an English school during the week, depending on their immigration status and parental intent to stay in the province.

Three language groups are labelled as Francophones, Anglophones, and Allophones, the latter being those whose home language is neither English nor French. Parents may apply for a Certificate of Eligibility to access English schools. The girls' parents see the learning of multiple languages as the acqui-sition of socio-cultural-linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1990) necessary to move across and within more than one language, culture, and imagined community of practice (Anderson, 1993; Wenger, 1998). An ironic result of the Bill 101 language legislation is the emergence of trilinguals like Xiao An, Yida, and Lingling, who are comfortably border-crossing within multiple language com-munities. Recognized in public and school documents as Allophone children, Yida and Lingling must attend French school. Because Xiao An's father was educated in English in British Columbia, she can attend an English school. Although the girls are positioned as Allophones, they do not position themselves according to this legislated, public identity nor do they refer to themselves by this institutional label.

Learning environments such as home and school influence the emergence of self and identity. For example, children's identity constructions may be con-strained or enabled by their access to literacy practices. In most French schools in Quebec, children's formal access to English literacy practices normally begins at grade four at age nine or ten. Xiao An's mainstream school, located in a suburban neighbourhood, offers an enriched English as a Second Language Arts program (ESLA) for English-proficient children. Yida's multi-cultural school, situated in downtown Montreal, follows the Quebec Ministry of Education English as a Second Language program (ESL) that emphasizes oral language. Lingling's school, located in a linguistically and culturally diverse urban area, provides few opportunities for students to write in English

or French in the primary grades. Although the girls attend different schools during the week, they all attend the same Saturday heritage language Zhonguo School (pseudonym). Founded in 1994 as a private Saturday school, it is autonomous, receives no government grants, and has no formal connections to Quebec school boards. Its purpose is to create a school for maintaining Chinese culture and teaching Mandarin by using pinyin, a Chinese phonetic script, and simplified Chinese characters, the standard script of China. School officials rent the building of a postsecondary institution in urban Montreal for weekend classes. 80% of the students come from Mainland China, 10% from Hong Kong and 10% from Taiwan. Many children speak one of the Chinese dialects. The language arts textbooks emphasize Confucian values of persistence, loyalty, and diligence. Chinese literacy practices include memorization, copying characters, and dictation. The girls' texts are located within two political discourses—the Quebec/Canada political discourse of linguistic duality and the Confucian discourse, embedded in the ideology of Chinese Saturday schools—and three languages: English, French, and Chinese.

IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION AND VOICE: REFLEXIVE PROJECT OF SELFHOOD

To understand the girls' identity constructions and presentations of selves as writers, we use Bakhtin's (1981) dialogic theory of emerging selfhood and Ivanič's (1998) reflexive project of selfhood as conceptual frames. Bakhtin's dialogic theory assumes a fusion of languages and social worlds in human consciousness, "which finds itself inevitably facing the necessity of having to choose a language" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 295). Ivanič argues that, "writing is an act of identity in which people align themselves with socioculturally shaped possibilities of selfhood, playing their part in reproducing or challenging dominant practices and discourses, and the values, beliefs and interests which they embody" (Ivanič, 1998, p. 31). Ivanič includes three aspects of the identity of actual writers in her concept of selfhood possibility: an "autobiographical self," a "discoursal self," and a "self as author."

The "autobiographical self" emerges out of the life experiences that writers bring to any act of writing and is associated with their sense of their past and present. An autobiographical identity is socially constructed and everchanging through individual acts of imagining, narrating, sharing, or interpreting. A "discoursal self" is "constructed through the discourse characteristics of a text which relate to values, discourses and power relations in the social context in which it was written" (p. 25). A writer's discoursal self is the intentional impression conveyed, either consciously or unconsciously, in a

written text. The "self as author" refers to the writer's voice as revealed in stance, opinions, and beliefs. As child authors authentically and volitionally participate in socio-cultural practices, they do so from a particular physical, social location and trajectory and choose or resist the mediational means accessible to them. Their sense of agency emerges through social interactions with responsive interlocutors (McKay & Wong, 1996). Voice emerges as "the speaking personality" claimed and owned by the speaker (Maguire & Graves, 2001). Although the girls' texts reveal multiple interacting selves, a dominant self emerges in their selected texts. Their portraits (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997) as writers illustrate the complexity of their identity constructions and positionings that may be visible or invisible and even chameleon (Maguire et al., 2005).

THE GIRLS' CONTEXTS

Xiao An, Yida, and Lingling come from families with highly educated parents, with grandparents who provide Chinese language resources, and strong cultural traditions of valuing education. Home visits with their families over time enabled close connections to these girls, confirming their self reports about what they do, their Chinese grandparents' direct involvement in their Chinese learning, and their parents' attitudes towards written resources. The girls' parents are university graduates who grew up in China during the Cultural Revolution. In interviews conducted in Mandarin, they confirmed that their own parents taught them to study diligently, even though books were destroyed during this period, thus limiting their access to written materials. Although Yida's mother recalls seeing books around in her home, Lingling's grandmother recalls that only Mao's little red book was on the bookshelf. Unlike their parents, the girls have access to many English, French, and Chinese print and video resources in their homes.

Xiao An was born in Canada. Her Chinese mother is an accountant employed by a major accounting company. Her father, a white Anglophone Canadian from British Columbia, works for a major, private engineering company. Her maternal grandparents were medical doctors before they came to Canada from Changsha. They speak Xiang, a Hunan dialect, which Xiao An understands but cannot speak. They live with the family in a detached house in a predominantly middleclass, residential, Anglophone area. Her mother explains their deliberate choice of a French public school: "We could of course send her to an English school. But this is an opportunity not to be missed. In other places or cities, there is not always a French school available. Why not take the chance when you have it?"

Observational data in home contexts and Xiao An's own self accounts confirm that she frequently code switches when interacting with her parents and grandparents. She explains: "In my home, we speak two languages, English and Chinese (Mandarin), because my grandpa and grandma can only speak Chinese." Her grandparents cooperate closely with the Chinese teachers at the Zhonguo School, strictly supervise her Chinese homework, and provide her with Chinese literacy and cultural activities (i.e. Chinese games, customs). They cook for the family, do other house chores, prepare Xiao An's lunch box, and pick her up from school every day. This daily contact with her grandparents has been a rich resource for supporting her Chinese language development and providing a Chinese home learning environment. Xiao An's attitudes towards homework, school, and authority figures are strongly influenced by her grandparents.

Yida lives with her parents and four-year-old sister in a single dwelling in the West End of the city. Yida's father, a scientist trained in physics, works as a computer engineer. He supports Yida's Chinese studies but emphasizes "understanding rather than high marks." Her mother is in an advanced computer diploma programme at a local university. She expressed that she loves music and always wanted to be a musician. She believes that "every child should have the opportunity to play a musical instrument." Home visits reveal that she strictly monitors Yida's violin practicing. Yida, born in Germany where her father was doing a post-doctoral study, was twenty months old when the family moved to the United States. Her mother reports that Yida was "an early talker at ten months." Until she was two, she "spoke only Mandarin but learned English in no time." When she was four and half years old, the family moved to Canada and became landed immigrants in Quebec.

Yida's maternal grandparents are university professors; her grandmother teaches fine arts, drawing, and painting, and her grandfather teaches mathematics. They are from Nanjing and speak a Wuhan dialect. Almost every second year they come to live with Yida and her family for extended periods of time during which Mandarin, Wuhan, and English are spoken in the home. They teach her to recognize characters, create rich opportunities for daily dialogue in Chinese, and provide her with poems from the T'ang and Song dynasties to read and recite. They supervise her Chinese school work but do not strictly adhere to the Zhonguo School curriculum, and they encourage other creative cultural activities. At home, Yida speaks mostly Mandarin but also code switches to English with her little sister, Linlin. At the Chinese School, she speaks Chinese, English, and French with her friends depending on their language backgrounds. At her French school, she speaks Chinese with her Chinese classmates, English with her best friends, who mainly come from

Anglophone families, and French with her other classmates, who are French native speakers.

When this study began, Lingling was seven years old and lived with her grandparents, parents, and little sister, Meimei, in a semi-detached house in a very multilingual neighbourhood. The family speaks Mandarin at home. Her parents are from Guangxi province in southern China. They received their higher education in China and post-graduate training in North America. Her mother, a university professor, explicitly stated that she does not believe close supervision of children is beneficial as it may constrain children's development in creativity, imagination, and critical thinking. She encourages her children to "observe, explore, and study" and creates opportunities for them to learn in a play mode. She "leaves their school work to the school." Lingling's father, a researcher for a pharmaceutical company, believes in "a structured learning environment." He embraces Confucian beliefs, such as *persistence*, which he believes is "something children must learn." He plays the flute and supervises Lingling's and Meimei's music education.

Lingling's paternal grandparents were high school teachers and translators (Russian & Chinese) in China prior to their retirement and move to Quebec, where they became landed immigrants. Their use of English is limited. Her parents and grandparents cannot communicate in French. At her French school, Lingling speaks French with her friends and teachers. At Zhonguo, she speaks Chinese with adults, French with most of her friends, and English with a few classmates who attend English schools. Observations of this linguistic dancing in three languages are documented elsewhere (Curdt-Christiansen, 2004). Mrs. Lin argues that for her daughters "to learn Chinese is very simple, because they are Chinese. They need roots. Only when they know their roots can they understand themselves and have a sense of who they are." The grandparents help the girls with Chinese activities, such as writing journals, doing math exercises, and playing Chinese chess. They encourage them to create their own rhymes, read fairy tales aloud, and role play different characters in stories.

We now focus on what we learned from the three girls about how writing as a site for constructing self is accomplished discursively and relationally. Xiao An, Yida, and Lingling are proud of their linguistic capital as trilinguals. For several reasons, we examine only the texts that they considered as representative of their writing in English, French, and Chinese. First, the girls volunteered to share their writing and to talk about their self-positionings in the three languages. These texts are local moments in their triliteracy histories that reveal their individual identities and selves as writers. Secondly, their collections include diverse texts that range from personal journals, stories, and

family letters to school assignments. Thirdly, since the girls easily move between and among the languages in the linguistic market places in which they write, their texts reveal the different positions they take up in each learning environment and language.

Their self-selected written texts do not include all the writing they accomplished in the three languages or in every context. Additional data sets include participant observations of literacy practices in home and school contexts, videotapes of classroom interactions, interviews with children, their parents, and their teachers, and analysis of material culture and resources in the classrooms and schools. Analysis of their portfolios indicates that they either reveal or conceal themselves in their written texts in the three languages in different ways. Drawing on our analysis of the 110 texts they selected, we examine texts that serve as key exemplars of the girls' efforts to use their triliteracy textual powers to present a particular kind of self and identity. Xiao An selected 19 Chinese texts, 11 French texts and 10 English texts. Yida chose 18 French texts, 11 English and 8 Chinese texts. Lingling included 12 English, 10 French and 11 Chinese. We examine how the girls draw on existing genres and discursive literacy practices and respond to particular learning environments that include themselves and others.

Xiao An—An Autobiographical Self—A Chinese Canadian

Xiao An, a very comfortable border-crosser between and among the languages, reads and writes in the three languages. During a home visit, she reported that she likes "to read books in Chinese", which can be adventures or classical Chinese literature, such as the children's version of *The Red Chamber*. She also enjoys "writing, drawing, and horseback riding lessons." In addition to her regular homework in the languages, she writes diaries, poems, and letters to her friends and family in China. Her general writing strategy for all three languages is to recount ordinary personal experiences and/or describe events related to her daily living. These autobiographical accounts appear more frequently in French and Chinese than in English. Her themes include swimming events at the community pool, strawberry picking, raking leaves, horseback riding and eating in a Chinese restaurant with her family, family outings, and visits to her paternal grandparents in British Columbia.

Although Xiao An has more exposure to English than French or Chinese, her real autobiographical self seldom emerges as explicitly in her English texts compared to her French and Chinese texts. She selected an eclectic mix of teacher-assigned genres, such as short fictional pieces, poems, descriptions, and letters, as representative of her English writing. This selection was initially surprising, as she is in the advanced English class (ESLA) where students do

more writing than in a regular ESL class. Her teacher's genre approach, which is recommended by the Ministry of Education, may explain the eclecticism in these texts. Xiao An is clearly able to perform in the various genres requested by her teacher, who frequently responds to her texts with stickers stating, "Keep up the good work A" or with comments like, "Excellent descriptions." Xiao An is also capable of integrating a narrative self into her writing if required to do so. This style is illustrated in an excerpt from a fictional piece entitled, "Cave of the Dragons," for which she received an 'A' grade:

> The big rocky shelter looked invitingly out at me from the thick dark woods. It was a cave. I decided to explore it and see if I could spend the night there, then find my way back to the village in the morning. I walked toward it. Huge pine trees and thorny bushes surrounded it, making it almost impassable. . . . .

Seeing her hybrid identity as a Chinese and white Canadian, Xiao An appears to comfortably position herself within the two cultures and languages in many of her texts in the three languages. However, the next two written texts are atypical of her English writing and reveal a more expressive self. Two autobiographical selves actually emerge. In a short, spontaneously written text, "Best Grandmother in the World," she expresses her appreciation and love for her grandmother and demonstrates that her English ability is well ahead of that of her classmates learning English as a second language. She explains that she entitles her certificate of appreciation in both English and Chinese "because my grandmother does not read English." Home visits confirm that her mother encourages the values of filial piety and respect for elders that Xiao An explicitly conveys in this text (see fig. 1).

Children's texts can reveal subtle slides of meaning in which a different self can emerge (Maguire, 1999). Recall Beebee's description of her best friend, Xiao An: "She is totally blond with very blue eyes." Xiao An alludes to conflicting emotions about her hybrid identity in a text she entitles "Chopsticks." She recounts a lived moment of tension in which her lunch, prepared by her grandparents, influences her presentation of self to her classmates and teachers in her mainstream, suburban school.

<div align="center">筷子</div>

> One day, while I was in 5th grade, I brought chopsticks to school because I had noodles. I found out that the microwave we had in our class was in another class, so I had to go to the other class to warm up my noodles. It made me feel weird to walk into a 4th grade class to warm up noodles. I had to go get their lunch teacher and that meant walking around the class a lot. I hated doing that. When I went back to class and started eating noodles with my chopsticks, seven to ten people crowded around my desk looking at me or saying I was weird and asking if I was Chinese. I felt like yelling at them and telling them to mind their own beeswax, but I didn't say anything, I just kept feeling angry until the teacher came and shooed them away.
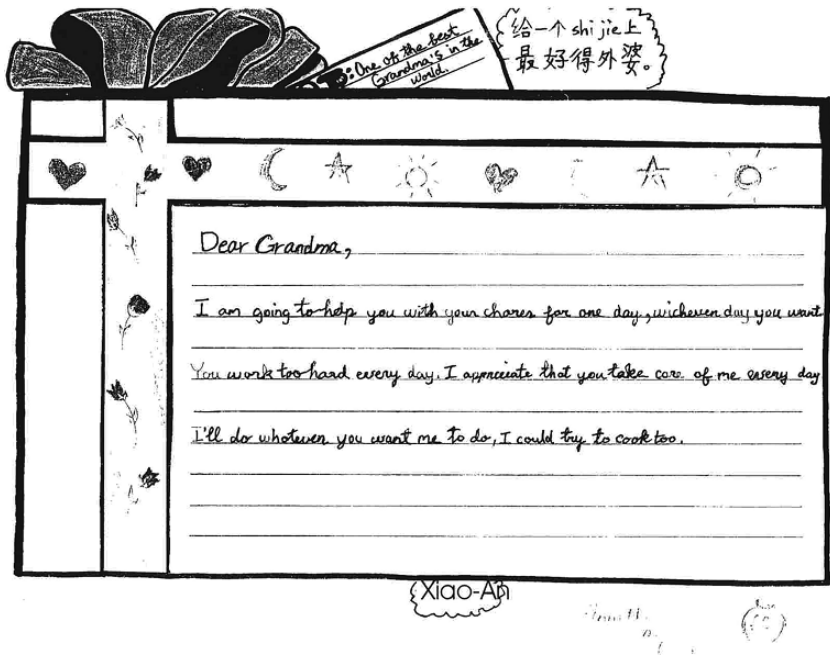
Figure 1. Dear Grandma

By deliberately writing the title "chopsticks" in Chinese characters, she signals her knowledge of Chinese and her attachment to her Chinese background. She begins her account with a declarative statement about bringing chopsticks to school. Her blond hair, blue eyes, and Caucasian appearance contrast with her explicit reference to Chinese chopsticks and not-so-ordinary lunch of noodles. To her schoolmates, eating noodles with chopsticks is "weird" or unusual behaviour that justifies special attention and generates comments about her Chinese identity. When surrounded and feeling ridiculed by a group of students, she reports that she did not confront them and reveals how angry she felt. Her reaction points to possible dilemmas multilingual children face in their presentation of self to others and how others may position them in mainstream schools. This conflictual sense of self does not appear in any of her other texts in the three languages. In this autobiographical account, she interweaves her autobiographical self, her hybrid identity, and her strong voice in her text: "I felt like yelling at them and telling them to mind their own beeswax."

On some occasions, Xiao An appears self-assured, assertive, and outspoken with adults, including her teachers. On other occasions, she presents an image of an obedient, respectful child. This latter self tends to emerge in her Chinese texts in which she records situated activities that convey a reflective focus on her involvement in ordinary community and family-related events and practices. These texts range from descriptions of family trips and receiving guests at the cottage to special holidays, such as Thanksgiving. She frequently refers to her Chinese grandparents, extended family, and her upbringing in two cultures. For example, in an entry from her Chinese diary, "Raking Fallen Leaves Together," she leaves traces of her cultural home environment with its Confucian ideology and demonstrates her Chinese textual powers. At first glance, this seems like an ordinary text in which she locates herself in a typical Canadian late autumn task raking leaves in the front garden of her family home and describes how the "leaves are turning yellow" and "are just like big yellow raindrops." However, upon closer analysis, two cultural frames of reference emerge.
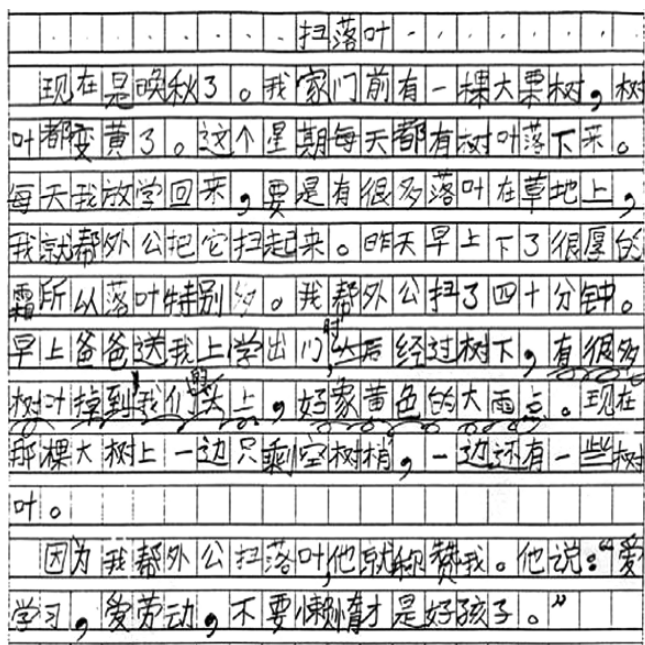
Figure 2. Raking Fallen Leaves Together

Translation

It is late in the autumn now. There is a big chestnut tree in front of our house, and all the leaves are turning yellow now. This week, leaves are falling every day. If there are many leaves on the lawn when I come home from school, I'll help my grandfather rake them together. Yesterday morning the ground was covered in thick frost and many more leaves had fallen. I helped my grandfather for 40 minutes clean them up. When Daddy saw me off to school in the morning, there were lots of leaves falling on our heads when we passed under the tree. They are just like big yellow raindrops. Now one side of the tree has naked branches, the other side still has some leaves left.

Because I have helped my grandfather rake the leaves together, he has praised me: "A child is a good child if she loves to learn and loves to work and is never lazy."

For example, she presents an image of a close relationship and mutual respect between herself and her grandfather: "when I come home from school, I'll help my grandfather rake them [leaves] together." She conveys her sense of duty towards her elders and explicitly states that her grandfather praises her for being a good child who "loves to learn and loves to work and is never lazy." Into her text she weaves a Confucian value system that acts as "funds of knowledge" (Moll, 1992) and "cultural capital" (Bourdieu, 1990) out of which to construct her hybrid identity as a Chinese and white Canadian.

Although her Chinese texts are autobiographical, they are more reflective identity accounts than her French texts, in which she records local activities. In the next text, she provides a reflection of her two schools. Although she uses the first person, she adopts a more pragmatic stance than the expressive self she presents in her English text, "Chopsticks," or the previous Chinese text, "Raking Fallen Leaves Together." Xiao An includes a list of her significant interlocutors—her French and Chinese friends and teachers in these two discursive spaces. In comparing the two schools, she refers to her parents' attitudes towards and involvement in her multiple schooling experiences and Chinese literacy development and her own attitudes towards learning Chinese. She refers to her obligation "to do CHINESE homework for 30 minutes to one hour" every day.

Translation

My French school is called *École Primaire Pointe Claire*. It is not far from where I live. Every morning, my father takes me to school. I have to be there at eight o'clock. In the afternoon I'll take the school bus home. I go there five days a week, six hours a day. I take classes in French, English, math, art, music and physical education. In the French school, my teachers are: *Paulette, Sophie, Lucie, Guilène, Jocelyn, Thérèse, Sylvie, Sylvain, Yves, Claire, Lise et Julie*. In my class we are 28 students.

My Chinese school is called Zhonguo School. My mom and dad have to drive me 20 minutes to get to the Chinese school. It is far enough. Every Saturday I take Chinese for two hours. And every day I have to do CHINESE homework for 30 minutes to one hour. The teachers I have in

Figure 3. My French School and My Chinese School

the Chinese school are: teacher Zho, teacher Tan, and teacher Huang. I have seven friends in my Chinese school. They are: Beebee, Lujia, Zheng Can, Zhang Ruqian, Pan Yida, *Linda,* and *Grace*.

I like both my French and my Chinese school because I learn a lot from both schools.

She presents a more distant, individual self than the collective self that usually emerges in her other Chinese texts. We wonder to what extent this perfunctory list discourse, which includes what she has to do or what she has—"I have seven friends" . . . "The teachers I have are . . ."—may or may not be connected to her grandparents' supervision of her Chinese homework; perhaps they are the real addressees in the text.

Her other Chinese texts are largely characterized by a marked use of pronominal references and use of the collective pronoun "we." This usage is illustrated in two excerpts among many in a text about a Sunday outing: "We

set off from home" and "We also bought three baskets of apples in an orchard."
She concludes with her own evaluative comment about the family outing: "We
had a great time that day."

Translation

<div align="center">Sunday Outing</div>

The 3rd October was a Sunday. Our whole family went to *Mont St. Hilaire*. It is a mountain. We set
off from home and drove two hours to arrive at the parking lot at the foot of the mountain. We had
to pay three dollars for the parking. Then we got out of the car and bought a ticket for each of us

Figure 4. Sunday Outing

and began walking up the mountain. After two hours of walking, we came to a lake. This lake was formed by volcanic eruptions a long, long time ago. Further walking from this lake became difficult. There were cobblestones and mud all over. When we were almost at the top of the mountain, we stopped and began to walk down.

Before we went to the mountain, we had roasted lamb in a restaurant. The lamb tasted good. We also bought three baskets of apples in an orchard. They were also good. We had a great time that day.

Until she was six, Xiao An's language learning experiences were in English. Her language repertoire increased when she started at the Zhonguo School on Saturdays and the everyday French school during the week. This was also the year her grandparents came from China to live with the family. Both home and school contexts influence Xiao An's prolific writing in Chinese. In contrast to her autobiographical accounts of family events, which she writes in Chinese, her French entries are mostly reports about 'ordinary' events in her personal

Figure 5. Des spectacles de Synchro

life, French school, and local community. For example, in an excerpt from a French text, "Des spectacles de Synchro," she writes about her after-school synchronized swimming team, including details about the swimming suits and the swimmers' names and performances. Although the majority of the swim team members are Anglophones, Xiao An explains: "Because the events take place in French, it feels natural to write about them in French."

Translation

Synchronized Swimming

The 4th show was my team. Eleven people participated. Our performance was not as good as that of the other teams, but we had more people and many of them never listened to the coach. Our swimming suits were shining blue with little sun shapes all over. Of the three teams, Junior, Senior and lessons, our team had the most beautiful swimming suits. The performance of the Senior team was the most beautiful of the three teams, and the two doublets and the solo were all equally beautiful.

To be continued

Tuesday 22 August 2000

Xiao An usually presents in her Chinese texts a self that is demure, diligent, and respectful. She can also be very self-assured and outspoken. This assertiveness tends to emerge more in her French texts than in her English and Chinese texts. In the text, "La deuxième journée de l'école" she reveals a degree of cheekiness and challenges the assignment of French homework on the second day of school! Her evocative expression punctuated with three exclamation marks clearly reveals her disapproval of and personal stance towards the workload and her teacher's discursive practices:

La deuxième journée de l'école

Aujourd'hui c'était la deuxième journée de l'école. C'était aussi la dernière journée qu'on aura un demi-jour d'école. Aujourd'hui, Pierre (Mr. Lavoie) nous a donné beaucoup de devoirs. Il nous a donné un packet de feuilles pour nous à donner à nos parents et il y a aussi le livre et le cahier d'exercise de Sciences Humaines on doit faire. *Beaucoup de devoirs au 2e jour! Je n'aime pas ça!!!*

Mercredi 30 août 2000

Translation

Today was the second day of school. It was also the last day that we could have a half-day school. Today Pierre (Mr. Lavoie) gave us a lot of homework. He gave us a pack of papers which we have to pass on to our parents, and there are also the book and the exercise sheets of Human Science we have to do. *So much homework on the second day! I don't like that*!!

Wednesday 30 August 2000

Her presentation of self in this text is an example of the strong personality she sometimes displayed during home visits. Her mother reported that once she argued so strongly with her French teacher about a misspelling, "the teacher

phoned us to request that we buy her a French dictionary." Xiao An's answer was simply: "Dictionaries are not always right." Her forceful personality emerged in classroom observations at the Zhonguo School, where students are expected and tend to be respectful and obedient. She even challenged her Chinese teacher for reprimanding a talkative student and threatening to forbid him to speak in the class: "You have no right to take away anyone's right to speak—that would be a violation of the Constitution."

Ivanič (1998) views writing as an act of identity in which "each word we write represents an encounter, possibly a struggle, between our multiple past experiences and the demands of a new context" (p. 181). She uses the term "autobiographical self" to capture the sense of self in relation to the writer's past and present experiences. Across the three languages, Xiao An chooses to write autobiographical texts that focus on the ordinary in her daily living. Her voice and autobiographical self as a Chinese and white Canadian emerge out of these very ordinary life experiences in the discursive learning environments in which she finds herself. However, she adopts a different tone in these identity accounts and positions her "autobiographical self" in these learning environments and languages in different ways.

Her parents have high expectations for her trilingual development. In her English texts, with the exception of her letter/certificate to her grandmother and "Chopsticks," she appears to be a writer who performs in response to the demands of an adult-assigned task, whether the writing situation calls for narrating, sharing or interpreting past and present experiences, or imagining future worlds. Her presentation of an autobiographical self in English is influenced by the different genres she is learning to appropriate in her English class. In her French texts, she adopts a reporting style and presents a more personal, expressive self in which she frequently recounts her participation in local school and community events. This may or may not have been influenced by the journal writing encouraged by her French teacher. Although she has been exposed to English much longer than French or Chinese, she produced the most texts in Chinese. This may be explained by the fact that her Chinese teacher assigned written Chinese homework every week that her grandparents diligently supervised. In these texts, she presents a collective self as she frequently reflects on communal experiences in different places with family and friends. These reflective pieces reaffirm her Chinese roots, demonstrate her Chinese language abilities, and reveal her sense of identification with her immediate and extended Chinese family and community. Although an autobiographical self emerges in all three languages, two different selves appear to emerge: at times, she is assertive and outspoken; at other times, she appears respectful of elders, obedient, and compliant to adult expectations, norms, and values.

Yida—A Claimed and Desired Self—A Violinist
and Intentional Performer

Yida presents herself as a very intentional performer outshining and outperforming others. In home interviews, her father talked about her "strong character, desire to outshine and outperform others, have the last say . . . her desire to win every time even when playing Chinese chess in home games." Eleven-year-old Yida, an avid reader, often reads to her little sister, Linlin. Going to the local library is one of their favourite activities. Her mother reports that, "books are the best presents she loves to receive. She prefers reading in English but accepts books in French too." Her books include a wide range of genres from detective stories to adventures, such as *Baby-Sitters Club, Harry Potter*, and *Little Women*. Besides her Chinese schoolwork, she also writes letters to her cousins in China. In order to maintain her Chinese language and culture, she visits her extended family in China every second year.

Yida initially started her first two years of formal schooling in a Quebec English primary school. The Quebec language legislation, Bill 101, restricts access to English schools. Immigrants who intend to stay in the province must send their children to French school. Because her parents became landed immigrants, Yida switched to a French school. Her parents believed a French language environment rather than a *classe d'accueil* (a welcome class designed to ease the introduction of non-francophone children into the French-Quebec school system) would enhance her French learning. Yida resisted in her first encounters with French. Initially, she could not understand a word of French in this school context, and she did not interact with her teacher or classmates, nor did she do her French homework. She frequently told her parents that she had no French homework: "Mommy, this school is really great, there is never homework." Her ruse was up when her teacher sent a letter home reporting her behaviour. Since neither parent is literate in French, they hired a tutor to help with French homework. Within six months, Yida received the highest grade and became one of the top students in her French class.

Yida's focus on performance is also linked to music. She began a Suzuki method class when she was five and soon started winning scholarships to study violin at the McGill Conservatory. When she was eight years old, she began private lessons with Mr. Li, a Chinese violinist and teacher, well known in the Montreal Chinese community. Mr. Li believes Yida has great potential that "can only be brought out through competition." Yida attends music theory classes on Saturdays at McGill before she attends the Zhonguo School. She is an avid reader but spends most of her time playing and practicing violin. This tension between reading and practicing violin may be attributed in part to her

mother's love of music. Mrs. Pan confessed that she "always wanted to be a musician" and regrets "not being able to accomplish this." She believes that music is a "wonderful way for children to express themselves emotionally." Yida's identity positions include being Chinese, a successful student at her everyday French school, a mediocre student as positioned by her Chinese teacher at her every Saturday Chinese school, an avid reader, a big sister and, above all, a violinist.

Yida reported that she does not have time to write: "I have to practice my violin. But I do all my compositions for both schools." Across the languages, Yida frequently associated writing with homework, a school or an assigned task. The English texts she selected are mostly list discourses reporting daily experiences in journals her mother requested she write during a family trip to China. She includes descriptions of various routine activities, one poem, and two essays. Her Chinese texts include school tasks, descriptive and persuasive writing, exercises, and a math exam. She reads only school assignments and textbooks in Chinese in her leisure time. Although her mother supervises her daily Chinese learning at home, which includes reading simple Chinese rhymes to her little sister, Linlin, and practicing five characters, Yida reported that she knows "too few characters to be able to read a book that interests [her]." However, home visits and observational school data indicate that she reads complicated mathematical problems in Chinese.

Yida frequently included autobiographic accounts of events and family life in English and Chinese. Her English diary account of the family visit to Zhong Shan Ling—Sun Yat Sen's mausoleum—illustrates her descriptive reporting style and intermingling of present and past events. She positions herself between references to Chinese cultural traditions and places of historical significance, such as Yat-Sen's mausoleum, and elliptical descriptions of the tourist routines of a family outing with grandparents, such as buying souvenirs and bartering at the night market.

On Tuesday morning 28 july, Grandma and grandpa decided to take my mother, my cousine [sic], my little sister and me went to Zhōng Shān Níng [the correct name is Zhōng Shāng Ling]. When we arrived at the park, we arrived at the place where we could buy souvenirs. . . . . . .

Then we went in the big door of Zhōng Shān Níng [sic] we fond a place to sit and drunk some water then Linda tool pictures them Mommy called me and my cousine [sic] to take pictures after taking the pictures we went to another door called 天下为公 before we could go in we had to buy tickets if we were higher then 1.30 [m]. I'm 1.40 and mommy is 1.60 and my cousine [sic] is 1.28 I now [know] I am pretty tall. . . .

It was a memorial area inside there was a statue of Zhōng Shān xiān shēn and inside another door there was a statue of a coffin with Zhōng Shān xiān shēn on the top. Then we went down from the monten [sic] when we came down, me and my cousine [sic] got a cup of slush grand ma had green pee [pea] Popsicle and mommy had red pee [pea] popcicle [sic].

Her code-switching to Chinese in an English text illustrates her discoursal self constructed through the social-cultural context around her during this family event. As the father of modern China, Sun Yat-Sen is a revered political, historical, and cultural symbol. He is addressed as 中山先生 (Zhōng Shān xiān shēn, in pinyin), i.e. Master Zhongshan. The four characters inscribed at the marble gate, which Yida refers to as "a door," are used in Confucian classics to describe a person who can govern a state in a wise way. How conscious was she of bringing together these historical and cultural references in the local space of this ordinary family outing? How much of the elliptical, associative style of writing here is a response to her mother's request to "free-write in English" during this trip?

Although Yida deliberately chooses her leisure reading in English, it is puzzling that she selected only a few school assignments and journals, such as the previous text assigned by her mother, as examples of her writing in English. Her English texts written in school also tend to be perfunctory descriptions of her daily routines that she calls "writing compositions." A few of these, such as "Dà Hóu," are entertaining and better crafted.

Here Yida presents a different autobiographical and discoursal self than that in her other English texts. She uses the past tense to describe her adventures with Dà Hóu in many countries and to set up her relationship with her: "I had her with me ever since I was born" to the ending, "Dà Hóu traveled with me . . ." Through these events, we learn about her early childhood in Berlin, pre-school days in Oregon, her visits to China, and her schooling in Montreal. Dà Hóu acts as a friend, gives her comfort and provides constant company, plays Hide and Seek, slides and swings with her, and even travels to China with her. Ivanič (1998) argues that writing, an act that is rooted in the writer's experiences, is linked to the availability of discoursal resources. Yida draws on Chinese discoursal resources such as Dà Hóu (big monkey), a famous character in Chinese tales she reads, and she responds with her own agentive style to accommodate her teacher's request to write a composition. Another explanation for her limited inclusion of English texts may be that the focus was on oral rather than written language in the English as a second language curriculum in her French school. That this learning environment provides few meaningful opportunities for her to exercise her textual agency in English is somewhat ironic given her avid passion for reading volitionally in English and exposure to English from an early age. We infer that she may not perceive writing in English *in school* as a valued discursive practice.

Yida includes only a few texts that she thinks are characteristic of her writing in Chinese. Her little sister, Linlin, has been a focal character in some of her Chinese descriptive productions, as illustrated in an excerpt in which she

Yida Pan   Tuesday, March 6, 2001

Something Special

I ntroduced her to whoever I met.

Something that is special to me is Dà Hóu. (A white stuffed monkey) I had her with me ever since I was born. I brought her with me everywhere I went. Eventually, she nearly got lost. It was a bright sunny afternoon, when I brought her with me while my parents were buying plane tickets at the travel agency from west Berlin to Oregon. It was boring while we were waiting. So we started to play Hide-and-Seek. We took turns to hide. It was my turn to hide, I covered my eyes with my hands, waiting for Dà Hóu to find me. Then father came to me, put me in my stroller and said "Let's go home, it's all settled." I felt that something wasn't right, but didn't know what. Half way home, I finally figured out that Dà Hóu wasn't with me so, I yelled "Dà Hóu!" My parents knew how much she meant to me so, we hurried back. When we reached the entrance, we saw Dà Hóu eyes wide open, as if she finally found me (of course her eyes were always wide open.) Though I was the one who really found her and I was happy. When we arrived at Oregon, I went to pre-school everyday with Dà Hóu of course. We had fun sliding down the slides, swinging on the swings, playing in the sand... One day, I forgot to bring her home with me. I didn't realize until it was bedtime. I cried for hours and hours. Nobody slept well that night. The next morning, I woke up at 6:00 and wanted to leave for pre-school just to get Dà Hóu. When at last I arrived at pre-school, I wanted to take Dà Hó and go back home. I was very cranky that day because I didn't sleep well. From that day on, everybody at pre-school would remind me to bring Dà Hóu home because they knew how important she was to me. So many years have passed; Dà Hóu traveled with me from Berlin to Oregon, from Oregon to here, and even back to China to visit my relatives. Dà Hóu was special to me, still is, and always will be. (Presently, she sits on my pillow reading her favorite book about bananas...)

Figure 6. Dà Hóu – My Special Friend

positions herself as elder sister and her little sister as intelligent. She reveals her autobiographical and discoursal self through her endearing descriptions of Linlin, whom she calls Linda and constructs as a reflection of herself when she was four years old and had a keen interest in reading, music, and poetry.

Translation

Since I was very young, I wished for a little sister. Finally, I got a little sister when I was seven and half. I named her Linda. But we call her Linlin at home.

Linlin has black hair and red lips. She has black eyes and curly long eye lashes. I think she is beautiful.
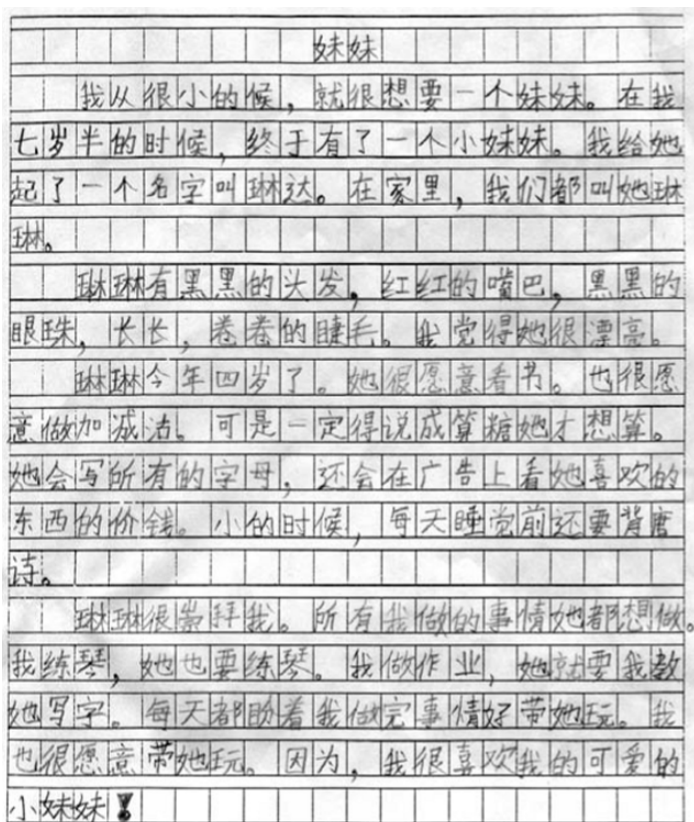
Figure 7. Little Sister

Linlin is four years old. She likes reading as well as addition and subtraction. But she only does it when you use candy as examples. She can write the whole alphabet and also tell prices of certain things from the ads that she likes. She also recites T'ang-poems before going to bed every night.

Linlin adores me. Everything I do, she also wants to do. I play violin, she also wants to play. When I do my homework, she wants me to teach her how to write. Everyday, she longs for me to finish my homework and play with her. I love to play with her because I love my lovely little sister!

In this effusive description of Linlin, Yida reveals their mutual affection: "I love my lovely little sister" and "Linlin adores me." In positioning this big/little sister relationship, Yida alludes to some of the Chinese literacy practices she experiences at home, such as the reciting of "T'ang poems before going to bed every night." Home observations confirm that her mother reminds her daily about her responsibilities to her little sister: "You are an

elder sister, and an elder sister should care for her younger sister, should guide her and supervise her. Therefore, you are a model; whatever you do, she is going to learn." Her responsibilities as an "elder sister" are influenced by her socialization into Confucian ideology and values, such as respecting parents, being polite, caring for younger siblings, and working hard at school.

Although she has had more exposure to English and Chinese than French, Yida interestingly selects mostly French texts rather than English or Chinese texts. We infer from her selection that much of her French writing is a list discourse of school tasks, such as dictées and tests, that reflect her attempts to accommodate her teacher's traditional discursive practices. Her desire to outperform others was a driving force to obtain the highest scores in her French class. When given the opportunity to write on a free subject (*sujet libre*), her writing usually connects to her family and autobiographical self. However, the text "Le Violin Mystérieux," a self-initiated story she published in her school journal, "Exprès St-Louis," reveals a different writer and voice. It is atypical of what she usually writes about in French or even in English and Chinese! It represents a complex interweaving of her autobiographical self, her discoursal self, and self as author. Yida presents herself as a fictional writer that reflects her "real" sense of self as violinist. This piece is more indicative of her French writing potential and her lived world and interests than her other French textual productions.

Excerpts from Le Violin Mystérieux

Il n'y pas longtemps, vivait une petite fille appelée Ella. Elle adorait la musique. À l'âge de quatre ans, elle avait déjà mâitrisé de nombreux instruments. À six ans, elle avait demandé à sa mère si elle pouvait apprendre le violon et sa mère dit oui.

. . .

Quand Ella et sa mère ont fini de déjeuner, sa mère l'a emmenée au magasin *Fuji & Bein's* (le meilleur magasin d'instruments à cordes au monde) pour lui acheter un violon. Sa mère demanda au vendeur de lui vendre le meilleur violon dans le magasin.

. . .

Il y a sept livres d'études obligatoires. Le premier est composé par Wohl Fahrt, le deuxième par Mazas (il est séparé en deux livres. Il en existe un troisième, mais il n'est pas obligatoire). Le quatrième livre est composé par Kreuser, le cinquième par Rode et le sixième est de Paganini.

. . .

Ensuite, sa mère n'a jamais revu sa fille. Elle avait disparu comme Menuhin et Heifetz. . . .

Translation

The Mysterious Violin

Not long ago lived a little girl called Ella. She loved music. When she was 4 years old, she already mastered several instruments. When she was six, she asked her mother if she could learn to play the violin, and her mother said yes.

. . .

When Ella and her mother had finished their lunch, Ella's mother took her to *Fuji & Bein's* (the best shop for string instruments in the world) to buy her a violin. Her mother asked the salesman to sell her the best violin in the shop.

. . .

There are seven books of obligatory studies. The first one is composed by Wohl Fahrt, the second one by Mazas (it is divided in two books. A third one exists but is not obligatory). The fourth one is composed by Kreuser, the fifth one by Rode and the sixth one is by Paganini

. . .

After this, her mother never saw her little girl again. She had disappeared like Menuhin and Heifetz.

Yida began playing violin when she was five years old and has won several prizes at Canadian musical competitions. Two lessons a week with Mr. Li consume most of Yida's time. Ivanič (1998) argues that "a writer's 'autobiographical self' at any moment in time is the product of their past experiences and encounters in all their richness and complexity, shaped as they are by their social opportunities and constraints" (p. 182). Yida's musical endeavours from an early age have influenced the integration of her musical knowledge into her text. For example, she selects *Fuji & Bein's* as a shop for the best musical instruments in the world, two professors, Heifetz and Menuhin, to expresses her admiration for two of the most outstanding violin virtuosos of the 20th century, and compositions by Paganini as examples of difficult violin pieces. These details reveal her self assurance in her music world and her self-proclaimed desire "to be the best violinist in the world."

Yida explains that her inspiration for writing this story came from English books that she reads, such as mysteries, adventures, and magic. Her appropriation of mysterious disappearances into her text, such as Harry Potter's (Rowling, 1997) "apparating," reflects Bakhtin's (1981) metaphorical term "ventriloquation" and concept of "multivoicedness" (p. 293). She provides an example of how a writer can take on other people's voices, make them her own, and populate them with her own accents. Her real-life world as a violinist has enabled her to express and establish the presence of her autobiographical, discoursal, and authorial self. She claims that the ending of her story is "designed to provide readers with an opportunity to put their own imagination to work and wonder where the old violin masters went when they disappeared." She offers her account: "the power of their music has taken them to another world because music is for excellence and never dies." This desired selfhood explicitly emerges in this story as she aligns herself with the most famous violin players of the century and conveys a sense of her imagined identity and self positioning as an 'intentional performing violinist.'

Constructing this desired self in a French text is somewhat ironic since French is Yida's third language and a language she initially resisted in her first encounters with it. Her other texts across the three languages present a discoursal self that emerges from the particular realities and authoritative discourses being con-

structed around her. The socio-cultural contexts in which she lives as a musician offer her more creative possibilities to construct a selfhood from her real life experiences and desires. Taken together, they give her confidence and fuel her drive to create a desired self in her writing—a violinist. While Yida aspires to become the best violinist in the world, Lingling's ambition is to "become a famous writer."

Lingling—An Authorial Self—An Author and Volitional Performer in Three Languages

Lingling explicitly claims her authentic, engaged, volitional performance as an author. Her authorial aspirations and expressions of self emerge in all three languages. This strong aspiration 'to become an author' is reflected in her vast repertoire of self-generated texts she creates, such as fairy tales, poems, comic strips, and school compositions in all three languages. She explicitly declares this ambition to become a 'famous author' in an assigned text she wrote as a nine-year-old third grader for her Chinese Language Arts class. She deliberately entitles this text, "My Ambition," and clearly articulates her goals to "create books for people of all age levels, but first for children and young people," to

理想每个人都有，但我的理想别[特别]，我最梦
想的是将来能成为一位作家。

　　我知道，要成为一位有名的作家并不容易，因作品
不但要写得好，而且还要为人欣赏，由现在起，我
要读多些名作者的作品，把一些好的资料
收藏起来，备以待用。开始时，我要写些容易和
有兴趣的故事给小朋友读。希望小朋友们喜欢它。
然后，我会写些作品给成年人看。我希望我的作品
会吸引他们去时时看我的作品，而我会写些作品
给所有阶级的人看。希望全世界的人都喜欢我的
作品。

Figure 8. My Ambition

read "the works of many well-known writers," and to "collect good materials [books] that I can use."

Translation

Everyone has an ambition. But I have many. What I want most is to be a writer.

I know that it is not easy to become a famous writer. Because a good piece of writing has to be both entertaining and well written. From now on, I will read the works of many well-known writers. I will collect good materials [books] that I can use later. In the beginning, I will write easy and interesting stories for young readers. And I hope they will like them. Then, I will write books for adults. I hope my works will be as entertaining for them as for the children. They will be read often. So I will write books for people at all levels and all ages. I hope that all people in the whole world will like my books.

Lingling and her sister, Meimei, love books and enjoy reading, writing, drawing, and creating stories. Their favourite activities are browsing in bookstores. Lingling claims that she reads and writes some of her "own stories in the actual bookstores." She stated that she is very inspired by "watching people walking in and out of the stores buying books for themselves, their friends and children." She wants to publish many books that are "favoured by people." So visible is a home print culture that Grandma Wang complains that she may ration "paper supplies as they use too many papers" for their self-initiated activities. Books are everywhere. Lingling's mother, Mrs. Lin, explains:

We generally buy books for certain purposes. For example, the Chinese books normally contain Chinese culture or have certain literary values, like *The Monkey King*. You know, books that distinguish between good and evil . . . They [the children] usually make their own choices to buy French books. But the rule is, you don't buy books for children 7 years old when you are 8 yourself. The level of the books must be higher than their present reading level.

Lingling's parents and paternal grandparents also demonstrate their love of books by displaying grownup books throughout the home, such as classical and modern Chinese literature, professional books, Chinese and English popular magazines, and newspapers. Both are strong influential models. Lingling's Grandma, Mrs. Wang, comments:

Our usual behaviour and our conduct have great influence on children. Why does Lingling like reading and is fond of learning? That's the influence from Wu [father] and Li [mother], because the two of them read and write all the time. So do we [the grandparents]. . . . . That is what the ancient said, 无为而治 *wu wei er zhi* (a non-translatable four character idiom meaning to govern by non-interference).

Lingling reads in all three languages, composes music, and take piano lessons from a Chinese piano teacher who is well known in the Montreal Chinese community. She was the only one among the girls who wrote poems and plays in

Chinese, English, and French. During Christmas and other holiday seasons, she sells her self-created holiday greeting cards to neighbours. She clearly sees herself as an author across all three languages and consistently claims this authorial identity, irrespective of her learning contexts. Both her grandparents and parents appear to be strong role models who exert significant influence on her literacy and authorial activities.

She initially selected a few school-assigned texts as representative of her writing in the three languages. However, she also includes four riddles in Chinese. Recall how Lingling's grandparents engage her and her sister, Memei, in joyful word-play activities, such as writing and guessing riddles. They use this well-established genre from the folk literature to facilitate the children's Chinese language development and as a source of family entertainment. Lingling easily appropriates this genre.

Since both her parents and grandparents emphasize the importance of using riddles to facilitate children's Chinese literacy, it is understandable that Lingling's favourite activities are to write and guess riddles and to learn "in a fun game." Since most Chinese riddles are written in verse and rhyme, her early texts are usually poems, as illustrated in "Spring Is Coming 春天到了," which she wrote in Grade 2.

春天到了,	Spring Is Coming
早上起来,	Getting up in the morning,
睁开眼睛,	opening the eyes,
对着窗外,	facing the window,
看一看:哇!	having a look: WOW!
水仙花都开了!	The water lilies are blossoming,
真漂亮!	So beautiful!
下午,	In the afternoon,
回来的时候,	on my return,
又开了三朵!	there were three more buds now open.
春天真美丽!	Spring is truly beautiful!

Home and school intersect and influence her discoursal self and authorial self as revealed in her description of the water lilies in her home garden. Written for her Chinese language arts class, this poem shows how Lingling appropriates the style of T'ang dynasty poets (618–907 AD) in her poem. She reveals her discoursal self by carefully detailing her observation of nature unfolding—the blossoming water lilies and flowers with "three more buds now open."

Lingling draws on her everyday experiences to realize her textual powers in Chinese. She includes an eclectic mix of texts as representative of her writing in Chinese. These texts range from poems to final examinations,

Chinese exercises, and short descriptions of places or events. With the exception of "Little Cabel," an account of a TV cable installation of CCCTV (Chinese Communication Channel) at her house, and "My Ambition," an explicit declaration of her intention to be a writer, her voice seems distant and diffident in these texts. A plausible inference that can be drawn from her perfunctory list is that she is resisting her Chinese teacher's discursive practices. In spite of her mother's opinions about the importance of learning Chinese, classroom observations of Lingling at Zhonguo reveal that she is not very talkative or particularly interested or engaged in the regular dictation and memorization tasks she encounters there. She frequently occupies her-

Figure 9. Children's Amusement Park

self with something more playful or engages in off-task, disruptive behaviours, such as exchanging Pokémon cards, talking to classmates, drawing or cutting up papers, and reading English or French books under her desk. However, when a lesson is about riddles, she becomes more actively involved and engaged.

Lingling's first written texts emerged in English before she formally encountered English and French as second and third languages. Some of these early texts are story drawings with English and Chinese captions, such as the intricate drawing of Children's Amusement Park, which includes swings, bouncing rocks, Ferris wheels, and tight-rope acrobats.

Her self-initiated texts evolve into books with chapters. The English texts she includes are more creative than the texts Xiao An or Yida selected as representative of their English writing. These self-authored books include scenes and plots appropriated from *Alice in Wonderland* (Carroll, 1990) or *Hansel and Gretel* (Lesser, 1999) and other tales of princesses in distress. Thus, fairy tales, magic, and elves are obvious discoursal features of her creative writing. She presents her authorial self in her English writing by also reworking detective plots in her own texts. This strategy is illustrated in an excerpt from a chapter in her serial entitled *The Magic Books of Emily* which she wrote when she was nine.

CHAPTER 3 – The rainbow waterfall (English)

Emily knew that she got to run. She and the spies ran as fast as they can. They finally saw a huge waterfall the color of a rainbow. Emily suddenly has an idea, "Ran, let's 'slide' down the waterfall."

"How about me?" Ron asked.

"Oh you too," Emily answered. So she let herself go down, down . . . down the waterfall. Greedy followed them, so he too jumped down the waterfall. He totally forgot that he was not allowed to touch one drop of water of the rainbow waterfall. That was a rule for all . . . Greedy didn't care. As long as he can make new statues, he'll be happy. So he ran after the group of people. But he touched the rainbow waterfall's water! He suddenly transform into a fierce tiger. The tiger eyed the people in a short distance. Emily was very smart: she climbed on a tree. Ron and Ran followed her. The tiger, who's teacher was the cat, had never learned how to climb trees. He tried. He roared with angriness.

The story is about a little girl named Emily who adores reading so much that she forgets to eat. Her mother hires the two famous twin detectives, Ran and Ron Maren, to spy on her. They find a note Emily wrote to a Monster asking him to take her away. They are present during an abduction in which the monster emerges from a book and takes Emily with him back into the book. Lingling intermingles literary discourses from Chinese and Western fairy tales: Ron and Ran Maren are appropriated from the *Tintin* French comic series; *The Magic Books of Emily* from the TV series "Charmed" in which three young witches possess a magical book that allows them to perform magical

activities; the Greedy figure from *The Monkey King*, a Chinese fairy tale; and the tiger from Lu Bin's children's classical popular Chinese fable. Her story is an example of how she draws on discoursal resources around her and creatively re-accents them to her own authorial self. Her English writing ability is linked to her exposure to English books at home that she does not encounter in school, television programmes, and social interactions with her parents and her own friends.

Lingling's family read newspapers at the breakfast table. The adults usually focus on the news sections while the girls prefer the comic strips. Lingling has many comic books, such as *Tintin*, *Archie*, and *Betty & Veronica*. At first, she copied these characters and developed her own stories about them. She has sent her comics to *The Gazette* and other newspapers and participated in children's writing competitions. Thus, she not only reads comics but creates them, such as her *Zaz & Zinette* comic series.

Zaz and Zinette embark on many adventures. As siblings who often bicker with one another, they also help each other when one of them has been ill treated by others. In these comic strips, Lingling admits that many of the Zinette adventures are based on her own experiences in different linguistic contexts, including school and home. Zinette is a smart little nine-year-old girl with endless ideas, not unlike Mimi in the cartoon TV show "What about Mimi?" The comic strip *Zinette, La Génie* is an example of her textual endeavours in creating texts that disrupt the social order. Zinette helps her brother, Zaz, to get even with a teacher who has punished him by forcing him to copy a phrase "*je dois écouter en classe*" (I must listen in class) one hundred times. Zinette empathizes with her brother and uses her magic ability to get the teacher arrested by the police detectives, Ron and Ran. Lingling appropriated the character of Zinette from other genie plots, such as the film "Aladdin," *The Teenager Witch* cartoon series, and *The Ultimate Book of Spells*. Since Ron and Ran are easily recognizable as policemen and are always mistaken, Lingling emphasizes that the "arrest" is not very serious. Her captions and drawings assume that readers are familiar with the characters and will be amused by her story ending with the well-known quotation, "*Au nom de la loi, je vous arrête*!" (In the name of the law, you are under arrest!)

Lingling's initial disinclination to include French texts was puzzling. Although her parents and grandparents read little French, she and her little sister are quite proficient in French. One explanation is that Lingling uses French as a power leverage to keep her grandparents and parents "out of [her] personal diaries and letters." Another explanation is that her school texts are not typical of the French texts she self-generates at home, as her French

Figure 10. Zinette La Génie

comics illustrate. Her French writing ability is influenced by her formal school experiences in learning the language and by her access to and encounters at home with French literary works that she appropriates for her own self-generated textual endeavours. Thus, the mediational means made available to

children in different learning environments offer affordances and constraints that can empower or limit their social ends and symbolic actions.

Lingling's self-initiated French comic strips also reveal another self, her aesthetic self in drawing, which emerged in her early English texts. Lingling began drawing much earlier than writing. Aware of her talent, her parents sent her to the art class in the Zhonguo School, where she learned structured drawing techniques. However, her aesthetic ability is not the result of instruction alone but emerges from her love of drawing, constant practice, and resourceful engagement with this art form. She creates her comic strips from her eleven-year-old perspective. She adopts a child's stance that presents the world of children seen by a child in a form suitable for a younger audience.

Lingling, aware of her textual powers in the three languages, aligns herself with famous, successful authors. They offer her apprenticeships in appropriating the voices of others, developing her own authorial voice, and re-accenting the various voices and discourses with her own authorial intentions. As an engaged, volitional performer, she resists authoritative classroom discourses and claims her authoring space in fashioning her authorial self in all three languages. Her sense of self is more dialogically oriented, fluid, and consistently creative across the three languages than Xiao An's or at times even Yida's. This fluidity helps her fulfil her ambition to be an author—an identity she claims and that may explain her perfunctory responses to school imposed writing tasks. This fluidity also made it more difficult to provide a bounded summary of her writing in each language and learning environment.

REVISITING THE CONCEPTS OF SELF AND IDENTITY IN THE CHILDREN'S AUTHORIAL ACTIVITY

In revisiting the concepts of self and identity in three eleven-year-old Chinese girls' writing activities, we return to our beginning and the concepts of textual power, writing agency, and identity and self among multilingual children. Central to Bakhtin's (1981) dialogic theory is the assumption that "language, for the individual consciousness, lies on the borderline between oneself and another. The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes one's own when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expression intention" (p. 293–294).

The constructions of self emerging in the girls' written texts in English, French, and Chinese indicate that the girls take up the act of writing to construct personal meanings and positionings that are at times similar and on other occasions quite different. Language and learning environments play

complex, intertwined roles in this construction of self that are at times quite obvious and other times less so, if not elusive.

We offer in this conclusion some general reflections. Constructing a writing identity and presenting a self in multiple languages is not the seamless or bounded socialization process we initially assumed. Some texts reveal a shared identity as Chinese and a collective sense of self that reaffirms the girls' cultural ties to and identification with their Chinese families that is frequently marked by their use of collective pronouns such as "we," "us," or "our." Some texts challenge their mainstream English and French teachers' discursive practices in their local public schools in which opportunities for writing are limited or perceived to be boring. Other texts, frequently those that are self-initiated, reveal a creativity that contrasts with their school-produced texts. These texts draw from the existing macro-level discursive practices and resources to create the girls' own locally relevant discursive positionings of self. Their selves are the primary source that gives meaning to their speaking personality and acts as a generative resource driving them to write or not.

A paradoxical intermingling of micro and macro factors influences the girls' discursive identities as writers. Thus, discursive identities can be imposed, chosen, contested, or resisted. From a macro perspective, if Bill 101 had not been imposed, the girls might neither have attended French public schools nor had opportunities to write in French. At a micro level, many of their texts challenge institutionally constructed essentialist labels, such as Allophone children, immigrants, and English or French second language learners. The girls see themselves as writers in the three languages and do not refer to themselves by these attributed identities or by other dichotomous labels, such as native and non-native speakers or writers. Some of their writings in all three learning environments suggest that they seem to be doing and performing school writing (e.g., genre writing in English, dictées and practice exercises in French, and tests and memorization exercises in Chinese). In these school texts, they appear to present a very passive view of learning that results in an effacement of their real self and impersonal writing styles that are voiceless. However, these texts are valuable cultural references for their teachers in evaluating their linguistic proficiency. That all three girls included examples of these school texts in the three language learning environments suggests they are aware of their importance in doing school and fulfilling the intentions of others. Their institutional presentations of self are influenced by their responses to their teachers' discursive literacy practices, the school identities that have been imposed on them, and how they decide to take up their own positions. The various presentations of self lead us to conclude that the phenomenon of trilingual children who live in multiple language contexts is

complex, especially when it comes to understanding how individual children conceal or reveal themselves to others, appropriate discourses, accent their acts of living into texts, and realize their textual powers in multiple languages. Although we could discern multiple selves across the different languages, a primary self emerges over time. This primary self provides some insight into the girls' sense of their own agency and voice/s as writers and their learning trajectories. French discursive literacy practices in all three French schools tend to focus on dictées and grammar exercises rather than sustained opportunities for meaningful writing or self-generating written texts.

Then and Now

What do we learn about these three girls as writers in multiple languages? How do the girls portray themselves in their self-selected written texts? How do they perceive themselves as writers in 2005 when they are 15 and 16 years old? Have their subjectivities expanded, changed, or transformed to enable them to inhabit new worlds?

Xiao An's autobiographical self emerges from ordinary experiences in her daily living. With the exception of two texts in which she conveys a more expressive self, she presents a school self in her English texts as she negotiates the different genres and responds to the adult communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) she encounters in her genre-oriented English class. In her French journal entries, we see a more personal, individual autobiographical self that participates in local school and community events. A collective self in her Chinese texts is marked by her use of pronominal reference and collective pronouns as she reflects on communal experiences and events in different places with family and friends. In spite of these differences in all three environments, she presents an autobiographical self that appears to be more oriented toward a learning trajectory that emphasizes achievement, success, and fulfilling the intentions of others. How conscious or volitional this self was is open to interpretation. In a recent interview, we learn that she now attends a French private school that emphasizes achievement and competition. She reports that she does not write as much as she did in Chinese or in French and English. She is very interested in biology and science and does not have time to write. This perceived "lack of time to write" may be attributed to the heavy homework assignments in this French school, which school officials rationalize as enabling it to be listed among the top ten schools in Quebec. She still attends Zhonguo, reads in Chinese, and speaks it every day. In English, she said that she writes "only school assignments that mostly include book reports and literary criticism but recently wrote a play in Shakespearian English." In French, she writes only what she is told to write by her teacher. She has "no time for free-writing." She reported

that she has "two jobs as a swimming instructor and also as a sales assistant in a hardware store and will be going to China with my parents and grandmother this summer." Of the two selves observed in some texts, one demure and respectful and the other more assertive and challenging, the voice of an outspoken adolescent now tends to dominate.

Recall Yida: she presented a list discourse of her English journal writing, a task assigned by her mother when the family was visiting in China during the summer months, and a few teacher-assigned pieces. In her French texts, she seemed to accommodate her teacher's discursive practices, which include dictée, practice exercises, and journal entries. We return to the irony of her self generating a complex French story in a language she initially resisted. In the "Violin Mystérieux," she creates her own interpersonal space that reflects her real-world interests and her claimed and desired self as a performing violinist. Yida now attends an English private school that attracts a multicultural, international school population. Although she still speaks Chinese very well, she hardly writes it any more. She no longer attends Saturday Chinese school since her parents discovered that she skipped classes and went to a shopping mall during school hours. Yida claims that the "teacher was not creative and that classes were too boring." She also claims that her French classes are also "boring since we are only allowed to write business letters." She writes mainly in English, creating adventure and detective stories that she circulates among friends and family members. She says that her "school essays have been highly praised by teachers." She is still very good at math and science and is "still outperforming everybody else." However, she says that she is not interested in math and science but finds "it is easy" and gets "very good marks." She still plays the violin, and last year she won the first prize at a Quebec music contest. Her musical accomplishments are frequently reported in the local Chinese newspaper. Her mother still thinks that "Yida uses too much time on reading and writing but too little time on the violin." Not surprisingly, she has decided to major in music.

Lingling explicitly declares and reveals her authorial ambition as she imagines, narrates, and creates comics, poems, and stories in all three languages. As she appropriates the discourse of others in the languages, she resists her schools' discursive practices and clearly presents herself as an author through her self-generated texts. She still claims this authorial identity. Lingling and her family, including her grandparents, now live in the United States. Her grandparents still live with the family for extended time periods. Lingling attends an American public school with a French Immersion program. She is the editor of a weekly school newspaper that is distributed to students and parents. Although she still reads in French, she has fewer opportunities to write in

French. Her parents and grandparents are actively involved in the Chinese school she attends, which has a curriculum similar to that of the Zhonguo School. The school functions as a community center and provides opportunities for them to keep in touch with other members of the Chinese community. She still claims her "ambition is to be an author."

Scholes (1988) argues that "any interpretive text is always in a network of relations with other texts and institutional practices" (p. 30). The girls actively construct their identities by drawing on resources around them—their knowledge of the languages but also their perceptions of the socio-cultural norms of the particular contexts in which they live and position themselves. Their positive attitudes toward their cultural identities and their triliteracy practices are strongly connected to the role literacy plays in their parents' socio-cultural lives and their parents' valuing of the symbolic meanings and cultural capital embedded in multiple languages. Thus, the process of defining self and identity is essentially dialogical and intentional. Through family, school, and community socialization, the girls construct perceptions of their worlds, themselves, and others around them. Vera John-Steiner (1985) maintains that developmental processes entail the resolution of the tensions between the social embeddedness of learning and the creative individual and her drive toward personal voice. The three girls make their own decisions about what resources to use, what words and discourses to appropriate, and how to re-accentuate according to their own intentions. What fuels their choices is intriguing, sometimes obvious, but at other times elusive. All three are able to move beyond adult-defined modes of expression by fusing funds of knowledge from home and school contexts that intrude on each other and their texts. Why do Xiao An and Yida sometimes intone their acts of writing with their own authorial signature, which is often more creative than their teachers' assigned writing tasks in school, and on other occasions do not? Why does Xiao An tend to take up the discursive role of student and construct mainstream academic genres that are mandated by Ministry of Education curriculum and her teacher? Why does Lingling ignore these discursive practices and take up an authorial identity from within which she consistently produces very creative, self-generated texts in all three languages? The differences among these girls are intriguing. French phenomenologist, Merleau-Ponty (1967), captures the dilemma of the different patterns in children's appropriation of symbolic resources this way:

It is as though there is in the child a sort of elasticity that sometimes makes him react to the influences of his surroundings by finding his own solution to the problems they pose . . . It is never simply the outside which molds him; it is he who takes up a position in the face of external conditions (p. 108).

The girls construct their possibilities of selfhood and realize their textual powers by finding a third space from within which to weave their cultural worlds into their texts and aesthetically express themselves in multiple languages. Their identity construction is a dynamic, ever-changing process of self definition. As the number of multilingual students in Canada increases every year, appreciating multilingual children's multiple school experiences, cultural positionings, and multiliterate actions is critical if, as Scholes (1988) argues, "as educators we are to help students unlock textual power and turn it to their own uses. We must help students come into their own powers of textualization" (p. 120). We first need to understand how multilingual children perceive, remember, and express experiences in writing; the different ways they choose from or resist the array of pools of resources accessible to them in particular contexts; and why they take up some positions and not others and why they construct a particular kind of self in one learning environment and language and not in others. Xiao An, Yida, and Lingling shed some light on how triliterate learners may negotiate their discursive identities, create meaning from their daily, lived realities, and construct their own possibilities of self.

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GRACE FEUERVERGER AND ELISABETH RICHARDS

FINDING THEIR WAY: IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE STUDENTS IN A TORONTO HIGH SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION

The historical spaces of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century have been inhabited, in unprecedented numbers, by those fleeing war, poverty, and famine. Their sense of dislocation, as well as their struggle to find voice, meaning, and balance in their new lives, can be regarded as a metaphor for the postmodern urban condition. This immigrant/refugee experience has created complex transformations in all metropolitan centres around the world but especially in those western countries that encourage immigration and offer a sense of possibility and hope for the displaced. Canada is one such country. Furthermore, the Canadian societal fabric is built upon the notion of a multicultural mosaic where, at least officially, the maintenance of minority languages and cultures is encouraged. Toronto, as the largest urban centre in Canada, is a very desirable destination in the global community in terms of immigration and resettlement. Indeed, in recent years, immigration levels in Canada have gone from approximately 85,000 to 220,000 annually, with one out of every four new immigrants settling in Toronto. Indeed, many immigrant and/or refugee students and their parents arrive in Toronto overwhelmed by forces of war, political oppression, and violence, by economic struggle and language barriers. They carry with them hidden but enduring scars that influence all aspects of their educational experiences.

Within this context of demographic shift and diversity, issues of cultural difference, conflict resolution, and sense of 'outsiderness' cannot be viewed as being peripheral to mainstream schooling. We must find ways in which to use our classrooms as safe places to learn, to become friends with the other, as Kristeva (1991) puts it, "urging us to welcome others to that uncanny strangeness" (p. 142). School, as the meeting place, becomes the borderland where cultures collide and intersect in fascinating and complicated ways. Being positioned as the 'outsider' or the 'other' in the context of school represents a myriad of multi-layered experiences in the immigrant student's story and focuses on the need to re-envision the meaning of classroom practice

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within a new paradigm of intercultural negotiation and understanding in a rapidly changing cultural, linguistic, and racial educational landscape. These children "are in constant interaction with the beliefs and attitudes of the host country . . ." (Akoodie, 1984, p. 254), and they are also being socialized by the beliefs and attitudes of their families. A considerable portion of the immigrant student's energy is caught up in negotiating and re-defining these two (and often disparate) worlds that weave and overlap with each other in complex and multi-dimensional ways.

In his book, *The Global Soul*, Iyer (2000) states, "More bodies are being thrown more widely across the planet than ever before" (p. 27). The objective of this interview study is to offer a glimpse into the lives of some newly arrived students of different racial, linguistic, and religious backgrounds as they confront the process of immigration and therefore personal and social displacement in the context of a Toronto inner-city high school. It is a time of trauma, upheaval, and often despair. Creating opportunities for these students to speak to their experience and to validate their sense of frustration and confusion in having to contend with their multiple realities is one of the ways we as researchers attempted to help them come to terms with living within and between cultural worlds and to confront the challenges they face. By listening to these students, we as researchers opened a dialogue with them about school, community, and family that is profoundly linked to their prior experiences of war, violence, and poverty in geo-political contexts throughout the world.

In the interview process, the conversations we had with our participants gave them a voice—a first-time opportunity to construct meaning for their emotionally as well as intellectually vulnerable stories. Given the belief that participants are the best informants of their own lives, we felt that in-depth interviews were the most promising vehicles for recovering these students' stories. All names are pseudonyms. Taken together, these interviews provide us with a first attempt at an exploration of a "collective story" (Richardson, 1997) about the fragile existence of high school immigrant and refugee students living on the margins in an urban, multicultural society like that of Toronto, the Canadian city which the United Nations has named the most ethnically diverse city in the world. This demographic (r)evolution is the motivating factor in our research inquiry as we attempt to focus on the needs of these immigrant populations and their acculturation dynamics through a more nuanced and interdisciplinary lens. As educators, we explore notions of language, culture, and identity in the interrelationships between home, school, and community.

This journey of immigration for the students in our study is about addressing the process of creating and re-creating multiple social identities, negotiations, and aspirations for the future in school and in the wider society. Our chapter is

divided into two parts—the first focuses on how our research and methodology are grounded in the powerful and multi-layered notion of being positioned as the 'other.' This is only a first attempt at illustrating and explaining the complex notion of 'outsiderness' in its many manifestations; to recognize the tensions and dilemmas, and also the strength and resilience, that these newly arrived students conveyed to us in very informal, 'grassroots' ways. The second part of this chapter offers a discussion on how being the 'other' is understood and engaged quite differently by different students. We share excerpts from the primary source interview material that we gathered and thus offer our participants' stories of everyday life experiences in and out of school. Finally, we conclude with some tentative reflections on the shaping, negotiation, and redefinition of their sense of 'outsiderness' within the daily hardships of adjusting to a new society.

RESEARCH AS LIVED EXPERIENCE: THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Through exploring the precarious existence of students living on the borders of cultures and languages, we experienced the incongruity of cultures, the uncertainty of self, the desire to belong, and the formation of hybrid identities that are neither here nor there but 'in-between.' Immigrant students are a good example of such "border dwellers" (Feuerverger, 2001) within linguistic, cultural, social, and often racial or religious contexts. Dispossessed of their former homeland, living in a completely new environment, these students grapple with the fragility of their new identities, often in highly asymmetrical relations of power where the dominant culture is seen as the norm while the immigrant culture is considered deviant or inferior (Juteau, 1997). We wanted to hear about their social and cultural values, their multiple identities, and their aspirations for the future within the context of their school experiences, as well as in the wider society.

This interview study was based on a strong interactive relationship between ourselves as researchers and our participants through dialogue and conversation. As researchers, we searched for the patterns and narrative threads that would weave together their lived experiences of the necessity to find their way in a new society. Narratively speaking, our implicit or even tacit cultural and historical life experiences have a tremendous impact on teaching and learning experiences. "These culturally and socially embedded metaphors have a powerful shaping influence on the way in which teachers come to know teaching" (Clandinin, 1988, p. 9). The theoretical underpinnings of this study are consonant with interpretivists such as Geertz (1988) and Denzin (1988) who offer an understanding of theory not as explanation or prediction

but as interpretation or the act of making sense out of a social interaction. Indeed, they see theory building as focusing on the "lived experience" instead of abstract generalizations. Also, according to Glesne and Peshkin (1992) "the 'lived experience,' originating in phenomenology, emphasizes that experience is not just cognitive, but also includes emotions. Interpretive scholars consider that every human situation is novel, emergent, and filled with multiple, often conflicting meanings and interpretations" (p. 19). As Behar (1996) puts it, "I think that what we are seeing are efforts to map an immediate space we can't quite define yet, a borderland between passion and intellect, analysis and subjectivity, ethnography and autobiography, art and life" (p. 174).

In the high school in which we conducted our research, over 40 different languages are spoken. This is now a very common school situation in the Greater Toronto Area. The number of students who are learning English as a second language in Canada has climbed to unprecedented levels, particularly in Toronto and Vancouver. For example, in the Toronto District School Board, there are 117 schools where at least 25% of the student population is comprised of immigrants who have arrived in Canada within the last five years (Duffy, 2004). The interview sessions follow the experiential learning model derived from the work of Freire (1970) who envisaged the teacher/researcher as facilitator for the student and not as lecturer or transmitter of all knowledge; in other words, students and teachers are seen as partners in the teaching-learning experience. The questions that guided us in this exploratory study are, for example: How do some immigrant/refugee students' past and present lives intersect? What strategies do these students use to be able to navigate two (or sometimes more) disparate worlds? We explored the dynamics of power and identity 'borders' and of cultural and linguistic difference within these zones of diversity.

Conversation in the interview process became one of the most successful data-gathering tools during our school visits. Research is therefore seen as a social process not only as an intellectual one. Our experiences concur with Clandinin and Connelly (1994) and Eisner (1991) and others who contend that listening constitutes a salient part of conversation. These conversations with our participants were a metaphor for the teaching-learning relationship. Also, Mishler (1986) explains that, "Telling stories is a significant way for individuals to give meaning to and express their understandings of their experiences" (p. 75). More specifically, Connelly and Clandinin (1990) express this idea in their assertion that, "Education and educational research is the construction and reconstruction of personal and social stories; learners, teachers, and researchers are storytellers and characters in their own and others' stories" (p. 2) Our intent was to, in Greene's (1988) words, "communicate a sense of their lived worlds" (p. 388).

THE MANY FACES OF 'OUTSIDERNESS': THE REALITY
OF LIVING IN TWO WORLDS

This was the first time that any of these students had been invited to reflect on these difficult and often painful personal issues within a school (or any other) context, and we found it very challenging to balance voice and silence in the texts of our participants. These identity processes are fluid and constantly changing and under construction, like life itself. One can only wonder what they would respond a year from now—what they might say that they did not dare say to us during our conversations with them. But perhaps simply opening a space that allowed these students to consider their 'outsiderness' and their sense of loss as well as their fragile hopes for the future is an important beginning.

Said (1990) claims that the loneliness of exile is "compelling to think about but terrible to experience" (p. 357); "exiles are cut off from their roots, their land, their past . . . [They feel] an urgent need to reconstitute their broken lives" (p. 360). The centrality of emotion in this immigration journey suggests that issues of war, trauma, and violence cannot be explained solely through an intellectual and cognitive process but rather through a different focus on affect, interaction, and interpretation. In other words, the lived experience needs to be seen as an interpretive rather than a causal story. Gilligan (1982) argues that a different developmental pattern can emerge when thinking is contextual and inductive rather than formal and abstract. In terms of the 'biographies of vulnerability' that permeated the discourse of our interviews, we as researchers are mindful of Oleson's (1992) claim that "body and self are intertwined" (p. 147). Accordingly, we try in our research to convey a sense of the mood and feeling of the interview sessions and to show how emotionally powerful these educational encounters became both for ourselves as researchers and for the students in their struggle to re-envision and reshape a meta-text for their life experiences.

As a child of refugees who came to Canada after World War II, Feuerverger (2000) resonates with this painful journey from the centre into the margins; it is an experience of war, mass expulsions, and death, a nomadic wandering in search of a sense of home and of legitimacy in the world. Richards also experienced cultural displacement. While her entry into marginality was voluntary and temporally confined to eighteen months, her sojourn in rural Korea was not without its hardships. Negotiating a culture and language so completely different to her previous experience has given her a profound appreciation for what these students face when entering Canadian society. This 'strangerhood' or 'otherness' in the 'diaspora' is a disturbing way to live and yet much of humanity in the early

twenty-first century experiences this 'foreignness'—as immigrants, as sojourners in a new land, or as displaced persons of war. The theme of Diaspora has become universal. We must accept the reality that the migration and subsequent disloca-tion of cultural groups are the signatures of our postmodern era. Therefore, now more than ever before, it is crucial to learn how to accommodate the 'stranger' and his or her own language and culture in our societies.

It is therefore essential to confront the diversity of the social and personal land-scapes that these students inhabit in and out of schools in more nuanced ways. For example, Noguera (2003) states that a genuine commitment to address the *social* context of schooling is necessary in order to make significant and sustainable improvements in public education. Furthermore, in this present study, we wanted to explore the need for rethinking and reshaping an understanding of cultural diversity as a social phenomenon fundamentally linked to learners' sense of iden-tity and self-worth within their cultural communities as well as in school.

THE FINDINGS

Our findings indicate that these students perceived their marginalized status of 'outsiderness' on a wide continuum ranging from something that they consid-ered to be *a weight or negative force in their lives (sense of victimhood)* all the way to the other end of the spectrum where this 'outsiderness' was viewed as *a positive, regenerative force in their lives (sense of agency)*. Our discussion revolves around the notion of 'outsiderness' that our participants presented, in a myriad of manifestations, as they were constantly shaping and redefining 'being the other' and creating new social spaces and new identity construc-tions-in-progress in and out of school. The summary below attempts to open the discussion in the following section.

'Outsiderness' as a Negative Force

Outsiderness as a negative force characterized by or as:
- something to overcome or deny;
- trying to 'fit in';
- the desire to assimilate into Canadian society and give up their original identity;
- a dilemma or tension to manage (the reality of living in two or more worlds;
- an existence causing feelings of loss, deficiency, or confusion, even despair.

Outsiderness as a positive force characterized by or as:
- a strength to harness;
- embracing their 'in-betweeness' as something liberating;
- understanding the flexibility of identity formation as a means to better academic performance;

- gaining a sense of pride in knowing more than one language and in the supportiveness of their cultural group;
- transcending their former, problematic life through hope for a better future.

It is important to note, however, that the boundaries between these perceptions of 'outsiderness' were extremely porous and the students would move dialectically back and forth between the negative and positive aspects of their lived experiences.

A number of social theorists describe the effect that cultural displacement has on the immigrant's sense of identity and ability to function in society. They depict border existence as something that has a negative effect on self-concept, leading to feelings of demoralization and helplessness (Anzaldua, 1987; Bennett, 1993; Moraes, 1996; Goffman, 1963; Gue, 1985; Kanugo, 1982). Stonequist (1937/1961) describes the situation as "déraciné" (from the French "uprooted") as someone "who has lost something of his former self and has not yet acquired a new self" (p. 6). For the participants in this study, this dislocation of self led to a wide assortment of coping strategies and allegiances. Looking at themselves only through the mirror of the dominant society, those who view their outsider status as a negative force come to see themselves as "falling short of what they ought to be" (Goffman, 1963, p. 7) and thus suffer from the various physical and psychological symptoms associated with victimization. In her book, *La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, Anzaldua (1987) explores the experience of straddling various geopolitical 'edges.' Inquiring into the various possibilities, impasses, and displacements of being a 'border person' (that is, as a minority group person— Chicana and lesbian—living and working in the dominant Anglo culture of the United States), Anzaldua gives us a vision of 'liminal' existence, which Heilbrun (1999) describes in these terms: ". . . betwixt and between . . . poised upon uncertain ground . . . a lack of clarity about exactly where one belongs and what one should be doing, or wants to be doing" (p. 3). Although she admits the importance of historical specificity in identity formation, Anzaldua also articulates a shifting notion of identity in which various selves are mutated and transformed. In this vein, Feuerverger (1994, 1997, 2001) argues that "minority students are 'empowered' or 'disabled' as a direct result of their interactions" (p. 127) with the dominant society.

In this study, many students had already been subjected to processes of exclusion in their home country. For so many of these interviewees escaping religious, gender, and racial persecution, being treated as 'other' was something that they had already experienced in their pre-migration culture(s) often in very malignant forms, such as war. Many spoke of their difference and marginality as something emanating from their prior traumatic experience, and therefore it has become a part of their worldview. Anzaldua (1987) discusses it

as "anything that breaks into one's everyday mode of perception, that causes a disruption in one's defences and resistance, anything that takes one from one's habitual grounding, causes the depths to open up, causes a shift in perception" (p. 39). Traumatic life events, such as war, persecution, and cultural displacement caused many of our participants to feel out of sync with more established Canadian students their own age. We present excerpts from various interviews below. For example, a seventeen-year-old Tamil boy from Sri Lanka discussed the gaps in his education due to war:

Here I had to learn what it is to sit at a desk and listen to the teacher. I am beginning to see how much I missed because I didn't go to school for many years because of war and I am only now learning to read and write in English. I can't read or write much in Tamil. It feels good to be here but also I feel very upset because I missed so much and I don't know how I can catch up.

Reflecting on what it was like to be a Tamil growing up in war-torn Sri Lanka,[i] another Tamil boy says:

Tamils don't have enough freedom. There is lots of fighting and let's say we go to another place down in Sri Lanka, we have to show a pass. We have to take some report from the police station that we are leaving the same country, right? We cannot leave just when we want to because we have to get permission to leave the place, but the Sinhalese, they can go anywhere without any permission.

An eighteen-year-old girl describes a form of discrimination that she feels was directed at controlling women in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan:

Back home, the girls were not allowed to go to school. They said the girls are supposed to sit home, clean, and cook, that's all and they are not supposed to have a good education except boys . . . It's not fair . . . Boys and girls are equal. They are supposed to both have education.

When discussing how the war in the former Yugoslavia had affected him, George, a Croatian adolescent, remarks:

I realize now that some of my friends here never actually think about the things I'm thinking, that's the difference I realize in myself, it's like, internal. I have seen awful things. I feel old, not like a teenager should feel.

Forced to abandon their innocence by virtue of what they witnessed in their home countries, many students, much like George, expressed feeling "old before [their] time." The reality of living in two or more worlds causes feelings of loss, deficiency, anxiety, confusion, even despair. Many also are concerned about mental and physical health problems, especially of their parents or even other students in their classes. Furthermore, some are unaware that they too are suffering. For example, here is what a Bosnian seventeen-year-old girl said:

Some other kids in this class have had bad times too in different countries. I'm not the only one. And my mother is not in good health. She has lots of stomach problems and she cries a lot. Lots of our relatives were killed. Here in Canada, I have to be strong.

Some students felt they were met with some amount of discrimination and hostility in school and in the community. Bert, a sixteen year-old Bulgarian boy, for example, says: "They'll [the Canadian students] call me a loser on the basketball court or they'll call me stupid." (Bert has lived in Canada for a year and a half). Tom, a Tamil, relates a story of where he works in a Chinese restaurant and is paid "less than the other workers because [his] English is not good." These findings are congruent with Corson (1993) who says that language is "the vehicle for identifying, manipulating and changing power relations between people" (p. 1). For many newcomers, their demarcation as 'inferior' was viewed as linguistic in origin. Therefore, students felt that their lack of proficiency in English impaired their ability to accrue social rewards: "I think if I could speak very good English, I think I would get more friends" (Sam, from Mainland China).

Other times, the students saw themselves stigmatized intellectually due to their lack of English. One Vietnamese boy related that when he first arrived in Canada, his English reading abilities were "so bad that the whole class laughed at me." These linguistic markers of difference were sometimes interconnected with the category of race. For example, Joe, a fifteen-year-old Tamil boy, said:

When I see like some Canadian people, white people, they call me some names, if I even look at them, they just make fun of me like that and the teachers, they don't even pass me or give me full marks. Last time I collected 49 [a particular grade which he perceived as sufficient], but they don't change your timetable. Like there [Sri Lanka], they kill you with bombs. Here, they hurt you with feelings.

For some students, having to discard a former life and build a new self created feelings of vulnerability and loss. Sylvia, a Croatian teenager says:

Of course life is better here than in Croatia, but it was very hard [coming here] because from my point of view, I was the best student in the school. Everybody knew me because I used to come half an hour earlier so everybody can rewrite my homework. Like in my free time, I tutored other students and those kinds of things . . . Now, I need the help. (in Canada for 10 weeks)

Others were haunted by a constant sense of tension and imbalance, a sense of uprootedness:

You're not sure when you're talking to someone if it is a good guy or not. I don't know, but in my country, we could say what kind of person is he, but not here . . . I feel like an alien or something. (Frank, Iranian, 17, in Canada for 1 year and 3 months)

Frequently, feelings of confusion, shock, anger and panic, and shame in negotiating two or more cultures culminated in an overwhelming feeling of despair. Experiencing a negative change in her identity on a variety of fronts,

an Afghani girl says: "When I came here, I just, I didn't know anything at all. I mean, I couldn't even tell my name to somebody. It was extremely hard . . . The first, second week, I really did cry."

Lina, a sixteen-year-old girl from Albania, who is in Toronto only with her father, shared her sadness about the difficulties in becoming Canadian and securing a better future:

I just don't know if it will ever work out for me. It was bad in Albania but at least I was with my whole family. I miss my mother and my brothers so much. I haven't seen them for over a year and I don't know when we will be together again. It is all legal stuff. In the meantime, I am trying to learn English as well as I can because I want to go to university but will I be accepted? I want to be a lawyer but it is only a dream. I want to become Canadian and feel like I belong but that will take a very long time. Most days, I wake up in the morning feeling homesick and discouraged. And my father can't help because he is trying to make enough money to be able to get the rest of the family over here.

Muhammed, a teenager from Afghanistan, came to Canada with his uncle from a refugee camp in Pakistan. He is eighteen years old and works in an Afghani restaurant after school and on weekends to make enough money to live. His brother was killed in Afghanistan and his father is missing. He has only now reconnected with his mother by phone after several years. He says:

I feel really lonely most of the time. My uncle is good to me but he has his own family to worry about. I have to make it on my own. I hope I will see my mother again but I don't know how. It's nice being in school. The teachers here are kind to me but I have so much catching up to do. It's not easy learning how to read and write a new language well enough to be able to go to university. If it hadn't been for the Taliban and all that, I would have been able to become a doctor. That is what my parents wanted for me. Now I am like an orphan.

These stories are harrowing, steeped in misery. For those who experience their outsider status as a deficiency, this transformation is felt only as loss. Newly arrived students experience this sense of malaise most acutely; and, some continue to feel uneasy about their new status despite living in Canada for several years. Unable to find a way out of their cultural displacement, students who understand their difference as deficiency view outsiderness as a highly problematic and enduring liability. Anzaldua (1987) says: "Knowing is painful because after 'it' happens I can't stay in the same place and be comfortable. I am no longer the same person I was before" (p. 48). An eighteen-year-old Somali student said:

Will I ever feel 'Canadian?' It is a big question for me. I'm far away from where I came from and yet I still don't feel like I will ever belong here. And I know it will make a difference in what I end up doing later because my English is not so good.

Some other participants, however, believe that by giving up their distinctive linguistic, cultural, and social characteristics, they can raise the profile of themselves in spite of their 'border' status. These outsiders perceive the possibility of being able to recreate themselves in ways that the dominant society considers acceptable, as is encapsulated in the following excerpt from an interview with Raj, a fifteen-year-old Bengali boy:

First of all, I met my friend, my first day in Canada in school, in Grade 6. Actually my friend's friend, used to make fun of me, so my friend taught me all this stuff and in the summer he taught me more English, so later on I got changed. But now my parents wonder whether I will forget my home country and language.

In this assimilationist interaction, "ethnic ties dissolve fairly easily" (Epstein, 1977, p. 46). Raj realizes that categorical discrimination exists toward immigrants, but he feels that it has no relevance for him as a member of that category because he wishes to transcend it. The perception is that in order to re-socialize himself, he must acquire the correct traits and dispositions of a "true Canadian," and thus his outsider status will "disappear." Indeed it seems that his intention was for his subjective yearnings to become part of his public persona—not without its difficulties. This student's ability to become more absorbed into the dominant culture tended to be aided by positive home attitudes toward the new culture. He spoke of his parents as encouraging him to speak English and to make Canadian friends.

   Parents who were more accepting of Canadian beliefs and value systems tended to facilitate this 'assimilationist' position—but in a very ambivalent manner. It is not an easy or necessarily healthy transition psychologically, as Raj suggests. And not all participants found themselves located in situations where they could so readily "melt" into the dominant society. Where Canadian values were felt to be in conflict with home values, students often devised other solutions to the problem of living in two worlds, as mentioned in the next section.

The Delicate Balancing Act: On the Borders Between Cultures

Though most students genuinely desire to embrace their new Canadian identity, their earlier socialization in other cultural environments creates a competing framework for self-identification. They often find themselves on the borders where cultures collide. Wanita, a seventeen-year-old girl from Afghanistan, epitomizes this conflict when she says:

It is hard because my mom sometimes gets mad at me . . . My dad is really, really strict and he doesn't totally agree with Canadian culture . . . and I don't do bad stuff, but still they want me to be perfect, like a perfect Afghani girl, but it's hard for me because I lived half of my life in Afghanistan, and half of my life in Russia, and now I'm in Canada, so I am in a lot of cultures.

A sixteen-year-old girl from Pakistan spoke about bringing a whole change of clothes to school so that she could fit into Canadian society:

I leave the apartment looking like what my mother wears. And then I go into a restaurant nearby and go into the bathroom and change to these jeans and tee-shirt. I want to be Canadian and I hate looking different.

In order to reconcile these two versions of self demanded by vastly different cultural worlds, students compartmentalize their lives in such a way that will enable them to pass as authentic in both environments. Ron, for example, notes that he has become adjusted to living in a bifurcated world where he "becomes more Bulgarian at home" and then "becomes more Canadian at school." Attempting to keep the two worlds apart might mean only having friends over from the home society or only speaking at home in the ethnic language. As indicated above, it may mean dressing at home one way and dressing for school in a totally different (and sometimes clandestine) manner.

Such reconstructions of identity create what Butler (1999) discusses as more space for and recognition of the various actions and 'selves' performed daily in a social landscape blinded and even hostile to variety. This attempt to minimize the cognitive dissonance between Canadian norms and those of the students' homeland(s), however, was not always possible. Igor, a seventeen-year-old Russian immigrant, states how different families react to Canadian norms from the perspective of food at the dinner table:

That's why we [he and his girlfriend] fight sometimes. Let's say, we are having dinner [in my home] and I don't like something so I'll just tell my parents, "I don't like this," and I'll say, "I want to eat something else [something more Canadian, less Russian]," and it would be a normal thing for me to say and they would understand me. But if I eat at my girlfriend's house [also Russian] and her mom's there, and I say something like this, they'd think I'm being be disrespectful or something . . . I mean, I have a right not to like something, right?

Other students were, however, relieved at what they perceived to be greater tolerance and respect in their Canadian school and community. This seventeen-year-old male Serbian student had been in temporary residence in Germany before arriving in Canada and he shared this:

I was surprised how well they treated me here [in Canada] when I came. It's very different from Germany. In Germany, there was discrimination everywhere. For example, one incident with me was eating with my friend, and he was Serbian so we were speaking Serbian in the subway and one lady came to me and said, "You're not allowed to speak another language here. This is Germany. You speak German here." But [in Canada] nobody ever made fun of me because of my accent, or my English.

These students shared with us how they struggle on a daily basis to recreate and reconstruct their identities. They are trying to 'work difference,' which Ellsworth

and Miller (1996) refer to as "the possibility of engaging with and responding to the fluidity and malleability of identities and difference, of refusing fixed and static categories of sameness or permanent otherness" (p. 24). The fact that self is not infinitely malleable creates a problem for those wishing to change various 'selves' according to context. In this instance, the conflicting norms invoked by Igor's home culture and that of his new culture lead to feelings of frustration. This process of 'living in two worlds' was further complicated by the lack of contact that some immigrants had with the homeland or lack of a viable community of support in their new surroundings. Also, it was often the case that the longer the immigrant had left the home culture, the harder it was to follow its incumbent norms, making the 'living in two worlds' option less tenable.

Finally, it is interesting to note that several students pointed to the danger that exists when people hold on too tightly to their original identities and are unable or unprepared to deal with their location of marginality in a new society. This may in fact lead to fractiousness and even violence. Frank, an Iranian boy, for example, speaks of a conversation he had with another student where assertions of each other's ancestral borders involved reinstating ancient forms of hierarchy, exclusion, and ethnocentric behaviour:

> When you move to another country, you like your [home] country more than when you lived in your country . . . Like you believe that your country is powerful and this stuff, it's better and stuff. It's kind of nationalism . . . Like, in my country, nobody can say bad things about my own country, but here, some other [Greek] guys come here and talk about my country's [Persian] history . . . and we had some losses to the Greeks, there were Persian and Greek wars that happened in history. And some Greek kids come and say to me, "We kicked your ass," at that time and I sometimes say, "Who cares? That was a long time ago," but some people still hold on to it.

This excerpt supports Connor's (1999) claim that those working for peace in ethnic conflict are dealing with issues that are not rooted in fact but in the perception of fact, "not with a chronological history, but with sentient or felt history" (p. 173). The Greek and Iranian (Persian) boys invoke their limited historical understanding of their nation's ancient past and use this knowledge as a platform for their own perceived personal power and superiority as a way of assuaging their sense of marginality as newly arrived immigrants. The two 'dead' empires are resurrected in an attempt to legitimize a current position of dominance, demonstrating to what extent feelings of nationalism can interfere with intercultural harmony in a diverse school. For example, many students bring the sectarian violence from their home countries into their Canadian classrooms. Here is what one student confided:

> There are lots of kids in this school who are really crazy, and want to bring the fights of their countries in here. Some Serbian kids hate the Bosnian kids because of the war and because they are Muslim.

And some of the Muslim kids think their way is the best way and don't know much about being Christian or anything. I heard some kids saying very bad things about Jews too. Some of our teachers are talking to us about how we have to learn to respect other people's cultures and religions.

These issues are beyond the scope of this paper, but we decided to include these two excerpts as they indicate a deeper tension in current immigration and acculturation issues that we began to unearth during this study. Religious belief and identity are currently major divisive factors in global society. Violent conflicts between members of different religious groups rage in many world regions, and some students in this study who have arrived from such areas are 'acting out' these issues (in the form of verbal and physical fights) in the school. This behaviour certainly reinforces the fact that multicultural education needs to be understood from more interdisciplinary and transnational perspectives. Diversity should become a source of real learning for all and offer cutting-edge ways in which to deal with intercultural conflictual issues constructively and creatively. We as educators must try to open spaces for dialogue so that these issues can be discussed in safe ways in order to bridge gaps and reconcile difference. It is a daunting task but a necessary one, given the growing friction in some inner-city high schools both locally and globally.

Thus far, this paper has described 'outsiderness' as something that poses additional hardships and stress on immigrant students. However, not all participants addressed the phenomenon of 'in-betweeness' as solely one of deprivation. Although most students saw their newcomer status as a detriment, some were able to re-envision the stigma of their difference and even felt that their marginality improved the quality of their lives, although this was never a simple matter. These views are classified in the category of " 'outsiderness' as a positive force" and are discussed below.

'Outsiderness' as a Positive Force

'Outsiderness' was perceived as a strength to harness by a great many students, and these findings are congruent with the research of some theorists who note that there may be advantages to marginality (Collins, 1991; hooks, 1984; Wyn, Acker, & Richards, 2000). Some of the potentially positive outcomes that lie beyond the adversities endured by people in marginal situations include the hope for personal liberation, keener insight, and social change (Bennett, 1993; hooks, 1984; Seelye & Howell Wasilewski, 1996; Stonequist, 1961; Wyn, Acker, & Richards, 2000). By questioning what lies at the centre of the educational enterprise, students who view their 'in-betweeness' as a strength are able to resist the hold of those normative discourses that define their worth and thus use their marginality as "a central location for the production of a counter hegemonic discourse" (hooks, 1990, p. 341). There was evidence in our data that some of the adolescents in our study in fact embraced their 'in-betweeness' as something quite liberating.

A sixteen-year-old female Afghani student, for example, talks about the hardships of her life but also includes her positive attitude toward some teachers in school. She is perhaps beginning to envisage the possibility of transcending her former problematic life:

I feel so alone sometimes and have so much to worry about. I was always afraid in Afghanistan and then I was in Russia and didn't feel comfortable there. But in Canada everybody's equal and you don't have to be afraid of other people or getting beaten up and you can rely on the . . . system. You can follow your own culture, you don't have to be afraid to wear your culture's clothes and no one will make fun of you . . . Not like Russia. I feel that school here is very supportive and my teachers are always trying to help me learn English better and they let me speak and write in my own language.

One of the benefits of coming to Canada, according to Sanjeet, a Kenyan boy of Indian (Gujurati) ancestry, is that his grades improved.

Well, that's one of the things that brought my marks up. There [in Kenya] I had a lot of friends in my class. We used to joke around in front the teacher. Yeah, I have less friends here; that's another reason why my marks went up. That's fine for me.

Unlike most students who experienced their loss of interaction with relatives and friends as difficult or even traumatic, a few of the interviewees enjoyed their new-found anonymity. By not caring about fitting in, Sanjeet feels he can devote more of his time and energy to the learning process and hence use his isolation to improve his academic performance. There is also the motivation to "catch up and do well in [his] grades so that [he] can enter university." Sanjeet perceives a greater flexibility in terms of identity formation and a chance at improving his professional future in Toronto, and therefore he feels less constricted than he did living in Kenya of Indian ancestry. This sense of hope in the midst of all the over-whelming changes taking place in his life was refreshing to witness. He was by no means the only student who felt this way. Many others viewed their immigrant status as a catalyst to forge a new identity and the possibility of a brighter future.

Anna, a sixteen-year-old girl from Kosovo, focuses on her new life in Toronto as a second chance:

I feel like I have a chance at a better life for myself. I know I have to work hard to make it happen. But now, as a new Canadian, it is possible. Before, in Kosovo, it was a dead-end. Even though I will never forget where I came from and I still have relatives there. That is home for me but so is Toronto now.

Reflecting on her understanding of herself as "Canadian," Mari, an (African) girl from Kenya, is aware of the flexibility of multiple identities which she embraces as a positive force:

With my friends here at school, I'm different. At home, I'm different but it doesn't matter because I am who I am and no one can change that except me . . . I think I'm a person who changes wherever I go. It's more fun because you've got more stuff to talk about, instead of the same stuff over and over.

Anna and Mari perceive their roots to be portable and flexible, allowing them to accept both old and new homes while still keeping their sense of self intact. Becoming attached to new ways of being and doing things, they express their hybridity as a kind of freedom that enables them to transcend the confines of their earlier problematic and more restricted cultural backgrounds. This tendency to move toward a fluid definition of self was particularly pronounced for those who had migrated from more than one country. For example, here is an excerpt from sixteen-year-old Maryam who lived in Bulgaria and then Italy before coming to Canada: "I was born in Bulgaria and feel Bulgarian but also I liked being in Italy. And now I am in Canada and I am beginning to feel like I will be Canadian."

Other students used their 'border' status to interrogate taken-for-granted norms of Canadianess. Multilingualism became a source of pride for many students and increased their sense of cultural and linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1977). Here are some excerpts.

Seventeen-year-old Nabia, from Somalia, says:

When somebody goes to me and asks, "Okay, how many languages do you speak?" I say, "Three" . . . and I ask them and they say, "One" and [that] they are Canadian. And I say, "So am I." And you know they're not better than me. I can speak more languages.

Here Nabia develops a set of understandings about the immigrant student that enables her to move away from being "the victim of the distortion of the perception of others" (Grambs, 1992, p. 194). Rather than judging her success in terms of her ability to win mainstream approval, such as having the perfect (and therefore unmarked) Canadian accent, Nabia re-defines her worth in terms of her ability to speak and impart a second or third language. Her reworked definition of competence transforms Nabia as an object of other people's desires to a subject who creates the ground upon which she/he is to be considered desirable.

While Nabia recognizes there is a considerable amount of discrimination facing the immigrant student, she also believes that immigrant students' ability to survive in a new world in multiple languages and cultures is a testament to their sense of agency in the midst of marginality. By re-framing her marginality as a strength, Nabia is able to resist those forces that position the immigrant student as inferior.

Agra, a sixteen-year-old Romanian girl, shows a sense of empowerment in her becoming literate in more than one language:

You know, I feel good about the fact that I can speak and read and write Romanian. It helps me in French because those languages are similar. Also, it's nice to show my ESL teacher that even though I'm not so good yet in English writing, I have another language where I do write well. And she [her ESL teacher] can see that and is making me feel much better about my chance at really learning how to write well in English.

As the value of their cultural capital increases in school, many students begin to have more positive desires for the future. In this way, they are in the process of transcending negative feelings of 'outsiderness'; the opportunity to reach forward offers many students a sense of hope. A female, sixteen-year-old student from mainland China is in the process of reconstructing her professional desires for the future as she sees her growing cultural capital as a valued resource in the future.

When I first came to school, I felt like a nobody. But I speak better English now and I write better and my teachers are treating me more like I am a good student. I'm starting to feel like I might go to college because I want to go into business administration. Also I speak Mandarin and Cantonese and the Chinese economy is becoming very important, so I might be able to use these languages in my work. It is going to be about being global where people will need to know other languages and cultures.

There were many other students who saw this possibility of greater success for themselves in a Canadian and transnational economy, offering them a shot at a better job. Here is one male seventeen-year-old from Iraq sharing his professional dream:

I have to work much harder than if I grew up here in Toronto. But some of my teachers tell me that I have a chance to get to university if I really work hard. And they are helping me and I will try. If I had stayed in Iraq, it would have been the end for me. I really want to try to become a dentist. Maybe I can. It's not impossible.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Continued waves of immigration to Canada have created educational challenges in terms of how to best serve newly arrived students and their parents within our schools. This need has become particularly acute as these students continue to be overrepresented in the dropout statistics (Duffy, 2004). What emerged uniformly from the interviews in this study were deep feelings of 'outsiderness.' The students were coming from personal lived histories of deprivation and trauma, from social upheaval, and often from war in their home countries and thus were entering the Canadian landscape with hidden (and not-so hidden) scars and were searching for a sense of belonging, for a way to begin again. Also, their perceptions of being situated as the 'other' are not homogeneous but rather multi-layered. Sometimes immigrant students feel that their identities are rejected by both Canadian and home communities; other times, they are able to create a space where their multiple identities are accepted and respected. Sometimes their own prior lived experiences of conflict and war create negative stereotypes about various

ethnic groups and religions, which they bring into the Canadian classroom. All these factors affect how they view their world. Indeed, these are crucial issues in terms of nation building and citizenship education for all students in Canadian society.

It was heartening to witness these students continually attempting to reconstruct the solitary spaces of 'in-betweeness' into more robust versions of their cultural selves, in whichever ways were possible. They were always in the process of interrogating, disrupting, and ultimately restructuring the notion of 'outsiderness' within the two extremes of 'outsiderness' as a negative force (sense of victimhood or deprivation) on the one end of the spectrum, and of 'outsiderness' as a positive force (sense of agency and hope) in their lives on the other end. The boundaries between these perceptions of 'outsiderness' were extremely porous, and the students would move dialectically back and forth between the negative and positive dimensions of their lived experiences, often fluctuating between the two. Many students, for example, pictured their 'otherness' as a dilemma or tension they were forced to manage. However, these students also perceived Canada's social boundaries as quite permeable in comparison to those in the countries of their earlier immigrant experience. They saw that students are not punished for speaking their first language or made to feel ashamed of their cultural background, and that Canada is a land where newcomers are generally made to feel welcome. Within the diverse mixture of peoples in Toronto, some cultural groups are more numerous than others and some students, for example, spoke of being able to rely on a large network of friends and relatives to help them adjust to the new country. In contrast, students from other cultural groups who lacked this supportive environment in their own group spoke of having to forge relationships with people outside their cultural backgrounds. Thus, some students were more buffered from the effects of 'being on the margins' than others.

Finally, what emerged from these findings is the need for a more critical lens in order to focus on how *all* students must learn to live together peacefully in multicultural, multi-faith, multiracial classrooms. What seemed very valuable for the students was to have an opportunity to tell their stories. Reclaiming voice was important. Undoubtedly more research into this complex and timely issue is necessary in order to explore the intricate and multi-faceted perceptions that students hold toward the 'other,' and as such, to generate curriculum and policies that will enable them—and indeed all Canadians—to respect the dignity and human rights of *all* persons in our civil society, both in and out of school.

NOTES

[i] Sri Lanka has been involved in ethnic conflict and civil war for over twenty years with little indication of lasting peace in the near future. At the center of the conflict is Sri Lanka's ethnic diversity, which became polarized between the majority Sinhala-speaking community and the minority Tamil-speaking community after the departure of the British and independence in 1948. Sweeping reforms that discriminated against the Tamil minority were enforced by the Sinhala government as a result of the social, political, and educational preferential treatment of Tamils by the British during their rule. Since 1983, the conflict has played out in the form of civil war between the Sri Lankan government and LTTE, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam, who are seeking autonomy and self-governance for the Tamils in the Northeast of Sri Lanka (Ganguly, 2004).

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SECTION THREE

HOW STUDENTS ARE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN SHAPING THEIR OWN LEARNING AND IN THE IMPROVEMENT OF WHAT HAPPENS IN CLASSROOMS AND SCHOOLS

INTRODUCTION TO SECTION THREE

The ten chapters in this section focus on how students are actively involved in their own learning and in the improvement of what happens in classrooms and schools. Consisting of studies conducted by researchers in Australia, Canada, England, and the United States, this section includes chapters focused on the experiences of young people from 6 to 18 years of age. Chapter authors explore the challenges and possibilities of student engagement in the development of educational programs, policies, and practices, and they document and support the engagement of students in decisions and actions designed to improve their own learning, the practices of teachers, or the organization and operation of classrooms and schools.

A theme that runs throughout this section is captured by the term "student voice." As Rudduck (this volume, 2002) and others (e.g., Fielding, 2004a; Levin, 2000; Holdsworth, 2000) have pointed out, calls to heed student voices in the process of analyzing and reforming schools have echoed intermittently over the past several decades. More recently, the phrase student voice has emerged to refer to the various initiatives that strive to elicit and respond to student perspectives on their educational experiences, to consult students and include them as active participants in critical analyses and reform of schools, and to give students greater agency in researching educational issues and contexts.

We open this section with Jean Rudduck's chapter, "Student Voice, Student Engagement, and School Reform," which draws on several projects directed by Rudduck in England that included students of all ages, in different kinds of school, in different parts of the country. The chapter focuses on the contribution of student voice to the improvement of students' school experience and some of the issues involved. Rudduck provides a broad frame, including discussions of the precursors of the present student voice movement and sources of support for student voice, an explication of a particular approach to accessing student perspectives, which Rudduck terms "consultation," and specific examples of what students want, clustered around autonomy, pedagogy, social, and institutional issues. Rudduck addresses as well the challenge for teachers in learning from student consultations, the benefits to students and

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to teachers of student consultations, and issues raised in principle and practice, including the issue of time, building institutional commitment, anxieties generated by the change in power relations, authenticity, and inclusion.

Researchers in the United States and Australia offer us insight into some of the ways that students struggle in school and the things that need to change for these students to be more successful. Their findings corroborate Rudduck's and offer insight into the particular experiences of high-achieving students on the one hand and school dropouts or leavers on the other. Mollie Galloway, Denise Pope, and Jerusha Osberg, in "Stressed-Out Students—SOS: Youth Perspectives on Changing School Climates," report on student perspectives gathered at a conference designed by an interdepartmental advisory board at Stanford University in the western United States entitled "SOS—Stressed Out Students: Helping to Improve Health, School Engagement, and Academic Integrity." The purpose of this conference was to initiate a dialogue about academic stress in middle schools and high schools (for students age 12–18) and to help practitioners, parents, and students on school teams devise strategies to address the causes and consequences of academic stress at their sites. The chapter authors each served on the SOS advisory board and designed the conference with the intention of gathering student perspectives and empowering students to become change agents in their schools. Drawing on interview and survey data collected before, during, and after the conference, this chapter shares students' perspectives on academic stress and depicts students' views on attempting to change the culture of competition at their schools. Students offer suggestions for changing homework and testing policies, strategies for teachers to engage more students (e.g., decrease busy work, relate material to students' lives), and ways to get more students and parents informed about the problem and involved with the change efforts. These suggestions mirror those of researchers who study connections between school climate, student motivation to learn, and student well-being.

In "Toward the Pedagogically Engaged School: Listening to Student Voice as a Positive Response to Disengagement and 'Dropping Out'?" John Smyth draws on interviews with 209 young Australians focused on the reasons for their decisions not to complete their schooling, or why it was they had decided to leave school before graduation (at the end of year 12). This chapter includes three parts. The first section, "Voices on Early School Leaving," draws from a project that pursued what young people had to say about their decisions to leave school early. The second section, "Hearing Voices on School Engagement," draws from a project that explored how teachers of young adolescents were attempting to re-invent themselves in ways that engaged students. In this case, the voices are of two young people from disadvantaged backgrounds who

were insightful and eloquent about the conditions that had to be brought into existence to facilitate their learning. The third section presents a framework for school reform that has explicitly emerged based on recommendations from these young people, which Smyth refers to as the Pedagogically Engaged School. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the implications of listening to student voices as an integral part of pursuing meaningful school reform.

Three chapters in this section, which represent work done in England, the United States, and Canada, respectively, report on specific efforts to involve students in school reform. " 'It's Not About Systems, It's About Relationships': Building a Listening Culture in a Primary School," by Sara Bragg, reports on a reform effort led by the then Deputy Head of a primary school in England (Alison Peacock) to engage children in the life of the school. The effort involved not only consulting children about extra-curricular matters, such as the school environment, but also considering their views in curricular areas and giving them control over their own learning processes. The chapter draws on emails, conversations, and formal interviews with Peacock over two years and shapes them into a number of narrative strands: (1) a "relatively linear, optimistic" story of the work Peacock did with students at the school; (2) a complicating of the same story by adding the responses of some of the other teachers at the school, as refracted through Peacock's own voice; (3) a third section that brings together teachers' and students' perspectives to document the development of a more collective approach; and (4) a short afterword written by Peacock reflecting on subsequent developments. Bragg indicates that she hopes "such narratives may help explore details of practice that can make a difference to the experience, outcomes, and success of student involvement." Aiming to show some of the complexity, indeed messiness, of this work—the tensions as well as the triumphs—Bragg makes explicit that her goal and her hope for others is to learn from such efforts.

Susan Yonezawa and Makeba Jones, in "Using Students' Voices to Inform and Evaluate Secondary School Reform," take as their guiding premise, as the chapter title suggests, that secondary school reform can be analyzed and informed through the use of student voice. The authors show how student inquiry can be a "use-inspired tool to inform and to prompt change in secondary schools." Yonezawa and Jones used student focus group data from 160 students gathered within one large urban school district on the west coast of the United States to both evaluate its high school reform's effectiveness and to prompt reflection and change at the district and school levels. Drawing on their interviews with students from the 15 schools involved in the study, conducted in focus groups with 12–14 student volunteers who were in the 9th–12th grades (students who were between 14 and 18 years of age) and who

represented proportional diversity in prior achievement, track level, gender, race, and grade, they focus on two issues identified by the district as central to the reform effort—personalization and rigor. Yonezawa and Jones use their work with this district "as a case in point to reveal that student talk can be a useful tool to re-shape district reform particularly when the reform is contentious, equity-minded and perhaps has been slowly or shallowly implemented." They also discuss some of the impediments to including students in such reform efforts.

A third chapter, "Building Student Voice for School Improvement," looks at a 10-year effort to develop student voice as part of a secondary school improvement project in a Canadian province. Sharon Pekrul and Ben Levin report on an improvement program that is operated by an independent, non-profit, third-party organization that works with secondary schools across the province. Pekrul and Levin discuss five activities that have developed as part of the project: (1) students as learners/doers, through which schools were asked to involve students in their planning, to collect data from students, as part of their internal needs assessment, and to look specifically at how student engagement in change could be built; (2) student networking, including training on "What is Student Voice," facilitation skill development, and opportunities for students from across the province to network, including an annual student voice conference, planned and led largely by students, that brings together students from many schools; (3) students as advocates, which fosters student participation and engagement in the democratic process and policy development; (4) students as researchers, which supported school-based, student, action research initiatives and presentations on educational issues by students to other students, school staffs, parent advisory groups, school boards, provincial organizations, and community organizations; and (5) students as advisors, through which students participate in the work of the project's Educational Advisory Committee.

Looking across several efforts at involving students in educational reform in the United States, Dana Mitra, in "Student Voice in School Reform: From Listening to Leadership," offers three case studies and compares these three in-depth examples of reform efforts in secondary schools on the west coast of the United States. The first example includes what Mitra describes as a minimal form of involvement of students—"adults listening to students through interviews and surveys, with teachers and other school personnel interpreting the data"—as it was undertaken at a school located in a dormitory town community containing a mix of working- and middle-class students from primarily Caucasian, Filipino, and Hispanic backgrounds. The second example explores how students who attend a school located in a dormitary Community

in northern California and that serves a community comprising first-genera-
tion immigrants from Latin America and Asia as well as working-class
African Americans and European Americans engaged in collaboration with
adults. In such situations, Mitra explains, "students and teachers work
together to conduct research and to seek changes at the classroom or school-
wide level." Decisions are shared at this level, but most often adults have the
final say. The final example describes a leadership initiative in which "youth
assumed much of the responsibility for making changes happen, and they
took the lead in making decisions." For this final example, Mitra drew on a
broader examination she had conducted of youth activism in 16 student voice
efforts in Northern California and particularly on interviews with youth and
the adult advisors in these groups to examine different structures and designs
for student voice and youth activism to study how they influence the types of
outcomes that can occur in such work. The three examples included in the
chapter illuminate the lessons learned by these groups and consider both
the benefits of their chosen strategy to increase student voice and the difficul-
ties of their chosen path toward reform.

While all of the efforts described in this section reflect political stances
assumed by the researchers, the teachers or schools with whom they worked,
or both—since repositioning students in schools and in research on schools is
a political stance—the final three chapters in this section represent the most
explicitly political efforts to amplify student voices and reposition students
(a) within standard classrooms, (b) within schools where teachers move
beyond the walls of the classroom, and (c) in research. They also, not coinci-
dentally, illustrate students gaining increasing political independence and
influence, amplified voices, and political clout.

In "Clarifying the Purpose of Engaging Students as Researchers," Joe
Kincheloe argues for positioning students as researchers—critical analyzers—
of subject matter rather than as passive recipients of knowledge. Through
providing examples of students as researchers within both secondary and
college classrooms in the southern United States, Kincheloe argues for "tran-
scending the imposed, top-down curricula of authoritarian education in a way
that brings local, anti-colonial, subjugated knowledges to the curriculum"; he
argues for "engaging in a critical politics of knowledge production that democ-
ratizes the community of knowledge producers"; he contends that we need
to "challenge colonized/regulatory forms of education, . . . develop new forms
of meta-learning, . . . and change students' lives for the better as they come to
understand the ways power inscribes knowledge. Finally, Kincheloe argues
that we must "engage learners in a critical ontology—appreciating the forces
that have produced selfhood and consciousness."

In "Making It Real: Engaging Students in Active Citizenship Projects," Pat Thomson argues for "the notion of 'active citizenship' as an ethical and pedagogical orientation to the classroom, to political education, and to school-community projects." This argument asks us to move beyond the idea of citizenship education as learning about the origins and practices of democracy and create opportunities for students to engage with the "realpolitik of democracy." Drawing on reports and award bids written by the teacher and students, class and school newsletters, research notes, and interviews with the teacher and students in two Year 9 (13 year olds) middle-school classes at a school on the outer city suburb of Adelaide, South Australia, Thomson presents a case study that focuses on two active citizenship activities: (1) the restoration of a creek area within the school grounds as an educational and recreational resource for the school and wider community and (2) a cross-age tutoring project. Thomson argues that when a democratic active citizenship curriculum and experience-based democratic pedagogy work together, an active citizen is formed through 'real' learning, which includes the following: (1) understandings about civics, citizenship, and democracy, together with a meta-language for describing the practices involved, plus learnings from other curriculum areas that are the focus for civic action; (2) experiences of democratic practice in students' classroom and the school; and (3) experiences of civic, community-based action.

Michelle Fine, María Elena Torre, April Burns, and Yasser A. Payne describe deep participation by youth in educational and policy research and development in their chapter, "Youth Research/Participatory Methods for Reform." In their chapter they draw on two youth research projects in which they were involved in two different areas in the United States. The first is the case of Williams v. California, a class action lawsuit in which poor and working class youth were, as a class, suing the state of California for inadequate schools, under certified educators, insufficient books and materials, decaying buildings and less than sufficient intellectual preparation for college. One of them was asked to be an "expert witness" testifying on the relation of these conditions on students' psychological, social, and academic well being, and in response they designed a study of California youth perspectives on educational justice. The second project is a participatory action research project the authors designed to provide youth commentary on the victories and unfulfilled promise of *Brown v. Board of Education*. When a series of inner ring suburban school districts gathered to consider evidence of an "achievement gap" and asked them to help them respond to the crisis, the authors enlisted a collection of youth researchers, drawn from varied segments of these communities, to design research on policies and practices that produce and exacerbate the gap.

Together they produced a performance, book and a DVD. The authors explain that, "across both cases, youth critique and desires—for rigor, belonging and respect—formed the basis for public scholarship." In their presentation, they explain, they "enter each 'site' listening to details of design and listening for depth of youth analyses, and then we offer cautions about what it means to engage youth critically as analysts of school reform and educational injustice."

Through their explorations of how students are actively involved in their own learning and in the improvement of what happens in classrooms and schools, chapter authors in this section highlight the importance of redefining students' roles and responsibilities in school, in school reform, and in research on schools and school reform. Offering various examples of how student voice work calls into question existing power relations, social and institutional structures, and educational and research practices, these chapter authors offer some of the most radical challenges to educators and researchers to reconsider and revise the ways we understand and position students.

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JEAN RUDDUCK

STUDENT VOICE, STUDENT ENGAGEMENT, AND SCHOOL REFORM

Note:

This chapter draws on data from several projects directed by the author, including two funded by the UK Economic and Social Research Council: School Improvement: What Can Students Tell Us? (1991–1994) and Consulting Students about Teaching and Learning (2001–2004).[1]

STUDENT VOICE: SETTING THE SCENE

During the last few years, there has been a tidal wave of statements from around the world supporting the idea of young people in school finding and using their voices; for example:

By talking with and listening to students, we can learn more about how classroom and school processes can be made more powerful . . . . this kind of discussion is critical to learning. (Levin, 2000)

The fact is that students themselves have a huge potential contribution to make, not as passive objects but as active players in the education system. (Hodgkin, 1998, p.11)

This chapter focuses on the contribution of student voice to the improvement of students' school experience and some of the issues involved. Student voice works, I shall argue, in two ways. First, it offers a practical agenda for change, at the school or classroom level, that gives teachers insight into what learning and the conditions of learning look like from the perspective of different students or groups of students. Second, it supports an important shift in the status of students in school from, as Hodgkin (1998) puts it, "passive objects" to "active players," and in the teacher-student relationship from one that is tightly hierarchical to one that is more collaborative and that allows both teacher and student to move beyond conventional roles to develop a stronger sense of partnership. Student voice is most successful when it enables students to feel that they are members of a learning community, that they matter, and that they have something valuable to offer.

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Over the last 20+ years, schools have changed less in their regimes and patterns of relationship than young people have changed. Out of school, many students are involved in complex situations, both within the peer group and within the family, and they may be carrying tough responsibilities. Schools have tended to offer less challenge, responsibility, and autonomy than many students are accustomed to in their lives outside school. We need a more accomplished way of recognizing young people's capabilities, hooking into their thinking, and harnessing their insights. School reform is not a question of a quick makeover to meet the requirements of the moment. It is not about a bit of liposuction to improve the school's grades profile. It is, instead, about reviewing the deep structures of schooling that hold habitual ways of seeing in place. We need urgently to review the goodness of fit between schools and young people—and their commentaries on what helps them to learn in school and what gets in the way of their learning will help.

Precursors of the Present Student Voice Movement

Student voice may be presented as a novel, contemporary initiative, but it has in fact been around for a long time, whether in independent schools (such as A.S. Neill's[2] much written-about school, Summerhill) or worked on by individual teachers in state schools (whose commitment to student empowerment may not have been so well documented). It has also achieved national recognition in 'temporary movements' at particular periods in our social history. For instance, in England in the early 70s, at a time when student unrest in higher education was hitting the headlines internationally, the secondary school student wing of the National Union of Students (NUSS) drew up a list of 27 articles. Their policy statement has been described as "one of the most uncompromising and idealistic statements of liberation philosophy ever seen in British educational politics" (Wagg, 1996, pp. 14–15) although now, in the midst of the present wave of interest in student voice, the things they called for seem less radical. It is interesting that students themselves focus more on aspects of school organization than they do on the curriculum, teaching, and learning. Here are a few of the students' priorities for change:

- An increase of student responsibility and self discipline in schools.
- All forms of discipline to be under the control of a school committee and all school rules to be published.
- The right to determine their own appearance at school.

The NUSS statement of priorities was followed in the mid-70s by a prominent educationist's statement on behalf of students. So controversial was it at the time that the sponsoring body would not publish it! Here are some of the things that Stenhouse (1975a; 1983) thought would make a difference to young

people's experience of school; they are similar in focus and spirit to those in the NUSS document:

Students have a right to demand or expect:

- that the school shall treat them impartially and with respect as persons.
- that the school's aims and purposes shall be communicated to them openly, and discussed with them as the need arises.
- that the procedures and organisational arrangements of the school should be capable of rational justification and that the grounds of them should be available to them.
- that the school will make unabated efforts to provide them with the basic skills necessary for living an autonomous life in our society.
- that the school will enable them to achieve some understanding of our society as it stands and that it will equip them to criticise social policy and contribute to the improvement of society. (Stenhouse, 1975a; 1983, pp. 153–154; in Rudduck & Flutter, 2004, pp. 108–109)

It is interesting to reflect on which items in these documents from the 1970s are now commonplace in schools and which ones still remain on students' wish lists.

Sources of Support for Student Voice

Linking both the 1970s manifestos is a concern about students' rights, a theme that re-emerged in the late 80s and sparked a new student voice movement. The catalyst in 1989 was the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. But children's rights are not the only argument for student voice. Support also comes from people who endorse the perception of young people as consumers and who argue that as a key group of stakeholders in schools they should have the chance to comment on their schooling. There is also strong support from the citizenship lobby, which emphasizes the importance of young people being sufficiently informed and confident to contribute to contemporary debates about global issues. Many young people today are aware that their generation may well have to face a deepening crisis in employment, a growing gap between rich and poor, and an intensification of environmental hazards. Magazines and TV programs highlight issues of health (and obesity and exercise), of child-bearing (as familiar boundaries dissolve in the context of surrogate mothering), of everyday eating (as the risks and benefits of genetically modified food continue to be debated), and of global warming (as the possible source of massive and tragic environmental disasters). Citizenship education can help young people learn to weigh evidence, to take account of different perspectives on an issue, to develop a position on an issue, and to be prepared to modify it in the light of new evidence.

Citizenship education is also about preparing young people to take their place as citizens in a democratic society, but the emphasis is often on preparing them to be future citizens and to use their voices effectively in *life beyond school* whereas what matters to students is their lives in school *now*. Oakley (1994) chastises us for keeping our eye too much on the future and not enough on the present. We are preoccupied, she said, with students "becoming," with their status as "would-be" adults rather than with their here and now state of "being." Consultation is an enactment, in the present, of the values of citizenship education; consultation and citizenship, together, are powerful allies in the task of redefining the status of young people in schools and shaping a climate that would make such a change of status possible.

There are other arguments that support student voice; for example, the advocacy of those who seek to develop schools as learning communities and who are committed as a fundamental principle to the virtues of participation and consultation for all members. Although these different advocacies may reflect slightly different value positions, the advantage is that with such widespread endorsement, student voice may have a better chance of survival now than in its previous incarnations.

What Do We Mean by Consultation and Participation?

Finally in this introductory section, a short comment on terms. Consultation is a form of student voice that is purposeful, is undertaken in some kind of partnership with teachers, and usually initiated by teachers. It involves talking with students about things that matter in school or gathering their views through writing (see MacBeath, Demetriou, Rudduck, & Myers, 2003). Consultation may involve: conversations about teaching and learning and the conditions of learning; seeking advice from students about possible new initiatives; inviting comment on ways of solving problems, particularly about behaviours that affect the teacher's right to teach and the student's right to learn; and inviting evaluative comment on school policy or classroom practice. Consultation is a way of hearing what young people think within a framework of collaborative commitment to school reform.

Consultation implies participation, but there can be participation without student voice, although it is probably diminished by omitting it. Participation is about involving students in aspects of the school's work and development through membership of committees and working parties that focus on real issues, events, problems, and opportunities, and involving them through a wider range of roles and responsibilities. At the classroom level participation is about opportunities for decision-making and having choices and about understanding and managing your own learning priorities. A problem of participation is that in practice it is sometimes restricted to 'representatives' or

'enthusiasts' and can lead to the creation of (or affirm existing) elites, even as consultation can favour those students who are socially confident and who "speak the language of the school." These issues will be opened up later.

There is also a difference, I think, between the potential impact of work on student perspectives and work on student voice. Teachers who are interested in student perspectives may see students primarily as sources of interesting and usable data, but they are less likely to have goals that are expressed in terms of community. Eliciting and using student perspectives can provide a practical agenda for change, but it does not guarantee change in the status of students within the school. On the other hand, teachers concerned with 'voice' usually take on the serious and significant task of eliciting and presenting the experiences and views of groups on the margins, thereby helping them to move from silence and invisibility to influence and visibility. Such work implies a deeper review of students' roles and status in schools at various levels and in various arenas.

SO WHAT DO STUDENTS WANT?

Many students want opportunities to talk about teaching and learning and the conditions of learning in school. A U.S. high school student commented:

Sometimes I wish I could sit down with one of my teachers and just tell them what I exactly think about their class. It might be good, it might be bad; it's just that you don't have the opportunity to do it. (Shultz & Cook-Sather, 2001, p. xii)

Students have a lot to tell us that could make school better.

In the various projects that feed this chapter we heard pleas from students of all ages, in different kinds of schools, in different parts of the country for the following things. Their comments have been assigned to one of four 'clusters'—the autonomy cluster, the pedagogy cluster, the social cluster, and the institutional cluster.

The autonomy cluster: students emphasize the importance of being able
- to have choices and make decisions,
- to be able to talk about their work and their problems with learning,
- to be able to work more at their own pace, and
- to be able to do more work on things that interest them.

The pedagogy cluster: students want lessons and learning
- to be connected to their everyday lives or future jobs,
- to have a variety of activities —and not too much writing and copying,

- to have clear explanations of what they have to do, and
- to have "real learning" that makes them think and not short cuts to get right answers.

The social cluster: students want to
- feel that they are respected by teachers and other students,
- know that they will not be mocked and humiliated,
- be able to work collaboratively and have discussions, and
- be able to say who they work well with and to influence seating arrangements for learning in particular subjects.

The institutional cluster: students say they would like
- to be given more responsibility,
- to have certain policies and procedures explained and justified,
- to be able to contribute something to the school, and
- to feel that everyone is a valued member of the school, even though they may not all get good grades.

Two things struck us: first, that the items in these broad categories are remarkably consistent across schools and, second, that the qualities that matter to students tend to be as much about how they are treated as how they are taught.

What students say about 'what makes a good teacher' is also pretty consistent. *Good teachers are*
- respectful of students and sensitive to their difficulties in learning
- human, accessible, and reliable/consistent
- enthusiastic and positive
- professionally skilled and expert in their subject.

We have filled out each of these broad topics using, as far as possible, the words that students use (Rudduck & Flutter, 2004, pp. 75–79); here there is space to expand on only one.

Good teachers are respectful of students and sensitive to their difficulties with learning:
- they do not go on about things (like how much better other classes are or how much better your older brothers and sisters are);
- they do not shout;
- they do not make fun of you or humiliate you in front of others;
- they are not sarcastic or vindictive;
- they do not speak to you in an irritating tone of voice;
- they respect students so that students can respect them;
- they will let students have a say and will listen to them;

- they explain things and will go through things you do not understand without making you feel small;
- they believe students when students tell them something (e.g., when students say they do not understand something, good teachers do not say: "If you'd been paying attention then you'd understand"); and
- they treat students as individuals rather than just one of the mass.

Interestingly, teachers who embody the virtues listed above are not, it would seem, hard to find. Students were abstracting the qualities they appreciated from their daily experience of lessons with a variety of clearly excellent and trusted teachers across a range of subjects. The issue was how to extend these 'good' qualities, which the students were very perceptive about, within their schools. All the items have a common-sense persuasiveness, but because they are familiar, the power of their collectivity as a guide to good relationships in the classroom can easily be overlooked. If every new teacher in school were regularly to check her practice against this profile, then respectful and responsive teacher-pupil relationships might develop more readily.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

In the context of school reform, researchers have been gathering data from students for many years, and although our present concern is largely with voice at the centre of the teacher-student relationship, we should not forget how effectively students' accounts of experience, told to and disseminated by external researchers, have led to system-side review and change. For example, in recent years the student commentaries that we have elicited in a series of projects have helped policy makers to extend their understanding of issues that are significant for students' engagement with learning. Students have helped us to see the following:

- Engagement may dip in a particular year.
  For instance, here in England it is often Year 8, the second year of secondary schooling, where motivation and performance drop because schools are inadvertently sending messages implying that this year does not matter as much as years that culminate in major tests or examinations, and so students adjust their effort accordingly: "At the moment, Year 8 is just the year between 7 and 9 but nothing more. Once you get to Year 9 I think that is where it starts getting more important".
- What it is like being a student assigned to the bottom track or set where you feel that you don't matter as much as students in the higher ones: "[In the top set] you've got more confidence in yourself. Like if you're in the bottom set you ain't got no confidence. You think you're just going to fail."

- What it means at 11 (when most students in England move from elementary to secondary school) not to get your first, second, or third choice of school. One student explains: "I think people do sometimes get upset when they think they're the only one who haven't got in and they start to think they're not smart or they've done something wrong." Another says: "Why did they pick them not me? . . . . You think you must be bad."
- What it is like to be put in the highest track or set in a high-status subject (maths, for instance) and not feel confident—and also not feel able to tell anyone about your anxieties: "I think that certainly in the top sets they concentrate too much on the really intelligent people that they want to get A's but they don't think about the other people (in that set) that might be struggling . . . and if you're asked a question which you don't understand everyone looks down at you—'Oh, don't you know that kind of thing?'—so I think it causes a lot of people to just sit there and just kind of worry about it on their own".
- What it is like when you *want* to change from being a "shirker" to a "worker" and find that teachers persist in seeing you as you *were*: "I think I earned myself a bad reputation in Year 7 and now (some teachers) don't like me that much, which is not very good for me. They don't believe me when I say I am trying to be good. They say, 'You don't know how to be good.'"

These comments were all gathered by researchers in conversations with students, but we are also learning more about what happens when teachers lead the consultation process (McIntyre & Pedder, 2004). The agenda for consultation will, of course, be different in different schools, but we have many accounts of the ways in which student commentaries have led directly to changes in practice. They may not amount to anything as grand or fundamental as reform, but for the students involved, even small changes can make a positive and welcome difference to the conditions of learning.

In the schools we have worked with, students have been effectively involved in, among other things:
- shaping the design of new play and social areas,
- reviewing and advising on classroom displays of student work,
- redrafting school mission statements,
- reviewing and modifying the content and tone of the 'school rules,'
- reviewing and revising the systems of rewards,
- reviewing and modifying the way that homework is set,
- trying out new ways of reducing anti-social behaviour in the school grounds and leisure areas, and
- reducing disruptive noise in the classroom.

In all these instances students were invited explicitly to take on a problem-solving role, sometimes as student researchers. Student participation has also led to fundamental changes in some standard procedures. For instance, in some schools, students are regularly involved in interviews for new staff, they may have a role in helping induct and train new teachers, and they may routinely contribute to school self-review.

The Challenge for Teachers in Learning from Student Consultations

Teachers remain the gatekeepers of change in most schools, and if they cannot find the time, feel uneasy about listening to what students say, or are reluctant to follow it up, then student voice is unlikely to have any discernible impact. Indeed, students may develop a well-founded scepticism about being asked for their views if they are listened to but not really heard.

So what do we know about the way that interested and reasonably sympathetic teachers respond to what students say about their own teaching in particular lessons? First, a few examples of the kinds of thing that students comment on. In one project (see McIntyre, Pedder, & Rudduck, 2005), teachers were new to the idea of consulting students, and a colleague from the local university (who was also a member of the project team and whom we refer to as the "linked researcher") acted as go-between, inviting comments on particular lessons from a group of student informants and feeding back the comments—as students were expecting—to the teacher concerned. Students commented on such things as the amount of teacher talk in a lesson ("She rambles on a bit and that makes us lose concentration") and the importance of lessons having a clear focus and structure. They also said that they valued clear explanations, but they observed, quite reasonably, that if the teacher repeated the explanations several times to make sure the slower students understood, then the quicker students might switch off; their recommendation was that if teachers have to give repeat instructions they should do so just to the groups that needed them and not to the whole class.

Teachers were impressed by students' awareness of the difficulties that different groups of students in their class might have and by their thoughtfulness about teaching strategies that did not disenfranchise some of their peers. In this next example, they are talking about the way that a practical demonstration in maths (using "the pole") suits some while others are more comfortable with something more abstract:

Some people look at things different to other people. So some people might understand when she shows us with the pole and other people might not get that at all. And other people might understand it when she does it on the board, so it's for the whole class to make sure that everybody understands.

It is also interesting that the students accept responsibility for ensuring that everyone understands and do not see it just as the teacher's responsibility.

One group of students identified the good things in a particular lesson, which included the teacher's use of words that were familiar ("The teacher explained it very well. . . . . she's like younger and she sounds more like us") and also the use of examples that connected the work to their everyday lives. A different group commented on the advantage of a more interactive style ("If he asked more questions then we'd become more alert instead of just sitting there, like, just listening to him all the time"). The students also singled out for comment the importance of teachers not underestimating what they could do and giving them more responsibility in lessons ("I thought that we could have done it ourselves if he'd just given us a little bit of help" and "It's nice to have a teacher who trusts you to do something on your own").

In a parallel project, there was more deeply rooted tension within the classroom (Arnot & Reay, 2004), and sharply critical comments were often directed by students at different sub-groups of their peers. Recommendations to teachers were, however, more courteously expressed. The example that follows underlines the difference between what the student wanted to say and what she felt able to say: "I'm thinking to myself, 'Oh, hurry up please, sir, you're driving me nuts!' You feel like you're gonna be in there 'til Christmas. . . . . God, sir, I'm not a snail, I'm not a dunce, I'm not dumb. We can take it a bit faster." What she felt able to say was more polite although less vivid: "Please sir, please, could you take it a bit faster, please?" Another student, this time from an elementary school, had also come to see the importance of being diplomatic: "You have to learn how to say what you feel but in a nice way, without offending anybody, and to tell the truth."

It is relatively straightforward to comment on school-wide issues where there is no single person directly responsible. Commenting on teaching and learning in the classroom, however, is more tricky to manage, and we were interested in finding out what, from a range of comments that students made, teachers ignored and what they took on board. We found (McIntyre & Pedder, 2004, McIntyre et al., 2005) that student ideas had to meet some quite demanding criteria before teachers would consider using them. First, they had to be based on what teachers recognized as a valid and not an imagined or over-personalized account of classroom realities. Second, there was the practicality test and it was at this hurdle that many suggestions fell. Practicality concerns included, for instance, the requirements of the National Curriculum and of associated assessment arrangements and the lack of freedom teachers felt they had to do anything not tailored to these requirements, the time that teachers would need to spend preparing the new approaches that the students

had suggested ("In general [this] would be too much of a nightmare to work"), and issues of space (e.g., for more physically active lessons) and timetabling (e.g., creating more double lessons). Another common concern of teachers was whether a critical perspective was widely shared within their teaching group and whether a suggestion would be attractive to, and effective for, most or all members of the class. Three teachers reflect on what their students have said:

More than one of them said I talk too much.

You see, I know who that is . . . . it wouldn't work well with the whole class, I'd lose too many of the class.

If it was a general view perhaps of most of the students in the class . . . . then that's something we could try, isn't it?

There were some instances where students' ideas were rejected because the teacher judged them to be educationally undesirable, but there were also occasions when student comments reminded teachers of basic procedures that had perhaps not been given enough attention:

The aim and the purpose of the lesson wasn't actually that clear to a couple of students, which, you know . . . . the purpose and aim of the lesson must be clear. I think, partly, that was my fault.

Not surprisingly, many teachers found it difficult initially to hear students' suggestions that they should *not* do things that they were accustomed to doing or that they should do less of them, but on the whole they were bravely accepting:

(They said) that I talked too much and I think I do. I agree with them...I've just got to try and cut down, what did they call it? . . . the blabbing! . . . . to say what I want to say in as few words as possible, because I do think they do more when it's handed over to them.

Teachers responded well to requests for teaching approaches that were already within their repertoire ("We really liked it when you . . .") but which they had not used with this particular class for some time:

I think one thing that came out was they'd like to discuss wrong results more, which I think is a fair comment really . . . perhaps I'll try to make an effort to at least do one piece of investigational work where we spend a lot of time evaluating it.

Again, teachers were generally receptive to ideas that students had enjoyed in other subjects and thought might work well in their lessons:

I think that's a very good idea—revision for homework and then testing each other—which, you know, I hadn't really thought about, which is very practical. I'll probably take that on board next time.

Not surprisingly, students can find it motivating to be consulted about how they can best be helped to learn and to be treated as actively responsible members of the class: "It cannot tenably be claimed that schooling is

primarily intended to benefit students if students' own views about what is beneficial to them are not actively sought and attended to" (McIntyre et al., 2005, p.150).

BENEFITS TO STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

Our evidence comes from a number of recent student voice projects where we relied heavily on the testimony of students and teachers. We concluded that where student voice was thoughtfully introduced, with due respect for its fundamental principles, there can be considerable benefits for schools, for teachers, and for the students themselves.

What's in It for Students?

This is what students say they value about opportunities for greater participation and consultation:
- being able to talk about things that matter to you in school;
- being listened to and knowing that what you say is taken seriously;
- feeling that you belong and that you can make a difference to how things are done; and
- feeling that by talking about things and taking part in things you understand more and have more control over your learning.

The impact data from interviews with students and teachers threw up three main categories:
- *membership*: students felt more included in the school's purposes
- *respect and self-worth*: students felt positive about themselves as a result of being asked to respond and also as a result of seeing the difference that their comments and actions had made
- *agency*: students valued being able to do something for the school.

Such outcomes feed directly into students' motivation to learn and confirm the observations of Osterman (2000), who said this:

> Students who experience acceptance are more highly motivated and engaged in learning and more committed to school . . . . research links the experience of relatedness or belongingness to outcomes of particular significance in education—academic attitudes and motives, social and personal attitudes, engagement, and academic achievement.(p. 359)

This is how we think it works: being consulted about things that matter can positively affect students' learning in two ways. First, what students say provides a practical agenda for reform that they recognize and will endorse. If their suggestions are acted on, or if there is some explanation of why they cannot be acted on, then students are more likely to feel that they have a stake

in school and they are more likely to commit themselves to its learning purposes. Second, being consulted and knowing that what you say is taken seriously builds students' self-respect and gives them a sense that others respect them and this, in turn, can also strengthen their commitment to learning. This argument can be presented schematically:

Student consultation

yields a practical agenda   **strengthens student self-esteem**

which leads to

enhanced commitment to learning and to school

which is sustained by

transformation of teachers' knowledge of students
(greater awareness of students' insight and capacity for constructive analysis)

which in turn leads to positive changes in

pedagogy   **teacher-student relationships**

Teachers' enhanced awareness of students' capabilities as courteous and constructive critics can lead to a continuing review of pedagogic practice and help build more open and collaborative teacher-student relationships.[3]

What's in It for Teachers?

Teachers tell us that hearing what students have to say about teaching and learning, and seeing them in different roles, has given them:
• a more open perception of young people's capabilities,
• the capacity to see the familiar from a different angle,
• a readiness to change thinking and practice in the light of these perceptions,
• a renewed sense of excitement in teaching,

- a practical agenda for improvement, and
- confidence in the possibility of developing a more partnership-oriented relationship with their students.

Here are some comments from teachers that made clear what they valued in consultation and participation (MacBeath et al., 2003):

We've learned a lot . . . about how students rapidly improve in their learning and their self-esteem and their motivation through dialogue with staff, through feeling important, feeling cared for, feeling their views matter. I think it's had a really, really significant effect. (p. 6)

We've had some very clear pointers from students about how they like to learn and I think it's given quite an encouragement to different ways of teaching . . . We've modified things or developed things further—and had the courage of our convictions. (p. 6)

We've learnt a lot about targets: how overwhelming targets can be if you set 33, you know, because every member of staff has to set three or four. We've changed our policy as a result. (p. 6)

Another teacher from a different student voice project (Newman, 1997) said this: "Children's responses are really surprising...you don't know what goes on in their heads . . . . I find they say things that I would not necessarily have thought of because of my own preconceptions" (pp. 10, 12). Researchers and teachers agree about how insightful young people are when asked about aspects of teaching and learning but the sad thing is that the students themselves are often surprised that anyone wants to hear what they think.

It was Stenhouse (1975) who said that only teachers could really change the world of the classroom and that they would do so by understanding it (p. 208). Consultation and participation can help teachers towards such understanding. But, as many teachers have told me, before they can focus wholeheartedly on developing student consultation in their school, they need to feel that *they* have a voice, that they are listened to, and that *their* views matter.

ISSUES RAISED IN PRINCIPLE AND PRACTICE

What students say about teaching, learning, and the conditions of learning is generally reasonable, insightful, and constructive: their suggestions are modest rather than revolutionary. Why then is student voice still so difficult to introduce and sustain? The main concerns are about:

- Time
- Building institutional commitment
- Anxieties generated by the change in power relations
- Sustaining authenticity
- Inclusion

The Issue of Time

Teachers say they are wearied by innovation overload and increasing bureaucracy. Student voice is seen by some as yet another innovation, albeit one whose values they may be sympathetic to, and it takes time to build a climate of trust and openness in which student voice can flourish. A related concern is that consultation may take time away from covering the syllabus and preparing for the tests:

We're very often pushed for time because there's very often a lot of content to get into.

I think there is room for drama (which students had said they would like more of in English lessons) but it can't be every single lesson. . . . . And if you do drama things every lesson, you're neglecting the English skills they need. (McIntyre et al., 2005, p.156)

Hence, in some settings consultation either becomes an end of term treat or it is routinised ("Oh, no, they want our views again").

Jamieson and Wikeley (2000) suggest that "schools need to systematically find out as much as they can about the interests and concerns of their young people and use this information as a starting point to debate and work with young people in designing the arrangements of schooling" (p. 446). But undertaking a school review that charts students' perspectives on issues that matter to them also takes time. Again, the thought of "providing all students with a chance to negotiate, plan for, and participate" can be daunting, especially when added to "an already overcrowded curriculum and to the planning burden of already overstretched teachers" (Jerome, 2001, p. 9). It is not a task for the faint-hearted!

Building Institutional Commitment

Developing a coherent, school-wide framework for student voice can be difficult: the underlying values of consultation have to get into the blood stream of the school and areas of dissonance and contradiction need to be worked on. Students can often help us identify them. For instance, students noted that in a school ostensibly committed to voice and democratic values, teachers only listened to "the good ones" while students from another school said that although they were asked for their ideas in lessons it turned out that "the teacher always had the best idea."

There are often patches of exciting and liberating work on student voice in schools, but the potential of student involvement will not be fully realized, and certainly not sustained, if it does not reach out beyond the individual teacher, however committed he or she may be, to the school as a whole (Rudduck et al., 1996). Too often in the history of innovation and change in schools, a promising initiative has remained the province of one teacher or one department

where it has functioned as a cultural island, set apart from and having no inter-action with mainstream values and practices in the school. As Louis and Miles (1990) remind us the difficult part is "getting new practices and ideas into the real life of the school" (p. 5).

This view is widely shared. For example, Larsen (2001) argues that, "In thinking about a school for the 21st century, the central concern must be on changing the way students and teachers engage with learning" (p. 69). Rachal (1998) suggests that a "schooling atmosphere" needs to give way to "a less hierarchical and more collaborative relationship" (p.186). Mitchell and Sackney (2000) remind us that "[change] begins with a confrontation with the values, assumptions, belief systems, and practices that individuals embrace" (p. 13). Schools will need support in the task of "reshaping long-standing structures that have fostered disconnection, separateness, division," features that often prevent teachers and students in schools from "sharing powerful ideas about how to make schools better" (Wasley, Hampel, & Clark, 1997, p. 204).

A teacher involved in a project on pupil participation (Finney, 2005) offers his analysis of the problem of change. He comments on the improvement strategies that the management team in his school tend to rely on and the more fundamental change that, in his view, is actually needed: "The management puts more systems in place, they rejuvenate old ones but there is nothing wrong with the systems that we already have. It is our perception of the stu-dents, that's what we've got to change" (p. 71). A student in the same school (judged to be one of the 'top twenty troublemakers' in his year group) shares his perception of the kind of change that is needed—and his proposal highlights the importance of influencing school-wide assumptions and taken-for-granted practices:

School has grown to be the way it is now because of being threatened with detentions, being rewarded with commendations. Everyone has split themselves by their own frame of mind into those who say, "I want to be good. I want to get commendations. I want to get rewards. I want to get stuff." Other people, they know this is hard and it's so much easier to fall below standard. Then you get a bad reputation and there's no chance to redeem yourself. It splits people, it splits the school. (Finney, 2005, p. 59)

Changing the way people see and think about the values that the school, wittingly or unwittingly, reflects and expresses is bound to be a slow process but, as Mitchell and Sackney (2000) point out:

Confidence in the process of change builds up as groups and individuals, teachers and students, begin to experience a sense of common purpose and shared responsibility and engage together in reflection, enquiry, and risk-taking from a desire to learn and to seek better ways of doing things. (p. 133)

Anxieties Generated by the Change in Power Relations

The current glossy popularity of student voice can make consultation seem easy, but in many settings it is not. Consultation challenges traditional power-relationships, and both teachers and students may be uncertain what the boundaries of possibility are.

For a start we have to revise our views about the nature of childhood and be prepared to see young people differently even when they are in their student role. Grace (1995) has talked about the "ideology of immaturity" that gets in the way of our seeing students as responsible and capable young people. And Wyness (2000) reminds us that the most enduringly comfortable assumption is that childhood is about dependency: "In many contexts and for a variety of reasons, the child as a subordinate subject is a compelling . . . . conception" (p. 1). This legacy of public perceptions of childhood has made it difficult, until recently, for people to take seriously the idea of school children as accomplished social actors in their own world. Pupil voice initiatives require that we review our notions of childhood.

Student voice challenges familiar expectations about who does what in school. As Levin (2000) has said, "Students . . . want to understand why things are done as they are done (and they) wish to have some choice about how and what they learn" (p. 13). Many matters that have traditionally been assumed to be the responsibility of teachers could instead be discussed and negotiated with students. Indeed, an eleven-year-old pupil who had been involved in analyzing, summarizing, and presenting the responses of pupils to the school review said, "It's good to have the opportunity to do something that normally only teachers would do," and a fellow pupil said, "It's a privilege being part of something in school where we're doing something to change things for the better."

Both students and teachers can be anxious about what is acceptable in consultation. Teachers are anxious about what students might say about them, about the possibility of unleashing a stream of negative criticism (although in fact we find that students are generally constructive and fair). Younger students are sometimes anxious because commenting on what teachers do is seen as "rude" or "wrong"; older students, on the other hand, are more inclined to be anxious because they fear retaliation. They explain: "I don't want to get detention, and I think he'd feel like, 'If you can't say anything nice then get out of my class' " and "It's better to write it down than to tell her because then she can't shout."

Anxiety is an understandable response to novel situations, especially those where positions in the hierarchy are suddenly de-stabilised. Anxiety can be allayed by hearing accounts from teachers in other classrooms or schools who

have tried giving students a voice, who have survived the experience and
become excited by the possibilities it opens up:

Staff that you thought wouldn't ever listen who'd say, "Fine, yes, but that's not for me." Once they
see the students reacting and hear what they're saying, they may be saying in a lesson, "Well would
you mind if I did that a slightly different way, would that be all right?", they're suddenly thinking,
"Well, maybe they do know what they're talking about." (Mullis, 2002, p. 2)

There will of course be some settings where, because of the sharpness of the
'them and us' divide, the accounts given by students to outside researchers—
they are unlikely to talk openly at first to their own teachers—may be harsh.
Severe criticism of school regimes is often triggered by perceptions of the
different ways in which different groups are treated, valued, and privileged, but
if schools are to improve, this is the kind of uncomfortable self-knowledge that
they need to confront.

   There is, in the present climate, some security in the idea of moving towards
familiar goals in familiar ways, but many teachers seem ready to trade in
the quieter life for more risk and excitement and a better deal for their students.
Many recognize and are impatient with what Frowe (2001) calls "the com-
modification of education," and its modernising vocabulary of "delivery,"
"consumers," "markets," and "output characteristics." He goes on to argue that
the language "is not simply a passive record keeper but an active constituent
of the practice" and its effect could be profoundly dehumanising and mecha-
nising: "there is little time for genuinely open conversations through which
children may have opportunities to develop their understanding and learning"
(pp. 95, 96, 98).

Authenticity

In developing student voice teachers need time to do things thoughtfully,
courage to do things differently, but also the commitment to doing things
reflectively. Such commitments are the basis of authenticity. Authenticity
is about communicating a genuine interest in what students have to say. It is
about learning to listen, to offer feedback, to discuss what lines of action there
are, and to explain why certain responses are not possible. Authenticity is also
about ensuring that the agenda for consultation includes students' questions
and concerns and not just teachers'.

   We have to ask whether the topics permitted for discussion in schools
are ones that *students* see as significant and whether the discussions are occa-
sions for genuine dialogue in which students can speak without fear of retalia-
tion. Fielding argues that initiatives that seek student opinion on matters
identified, framed, and articulated solely by researchers or teachers, or that

invite comment on issues that students see as important and that do not lead to action or discussion of possible courses of action, are not likely to be seen as credible. Students will soon tire of invitations that: (a) express a view on matters they do not think are important; (b) are framed in a language they find restrictive, alienating, or patronizing; and (c) that seldom result in actions or dialogue that affects the quality of their lives (Fielding, 2004, pp. 306–307). And as Fielding and Prieto (2002) have said, using a powerful and memorable image, "We . . . regard it as crucial for student perceptions and recommendations to be responded to, not merely treated as minor footnotes in an unaltered adult text" (p. 19).

Authenticity is also about being attentive to the existence of divergent voices in the group. For example, after a class or school referendum has been organised and analysed, it is important that there is feedback to the students whose views have been canvassed and that space is made for discussion of what actions can be pursued from among those suggested. Minority positions need to be noted and respected and not merely dismissed out of hand in favour of what might be a comfortable and somewhat conservative consensus of the articulate majority.

Inclusion

[Work on voice] starts from the position that interesting things can be said by groups who do not occupy the . . . high ground—they may actually be quite lowly and situated at some distance from the centres of power. (Smyth & Hattam, 2002, p. 378)

In developing consultation, we have to ask, Whose voices are heard in the acoustic of the school? Students are often able to tell us: "I think they listen to some people"; "If you're doing well they listen." The problem is that consultation assumes a degree of social confidence and of linguistic competence that not all students have, or feel that they have:

For many young people who have not participated extensively at home or at school in open discussions or small group conversations, ... and as planners and thinking partners, their facility with certain language structures lies dormant. (Brice Heath, 2004, p. 53)

The more self-assured and articulate students may tend to dominate consultative conversations and to be more readily "heard" by teachers, but it is the silent, or silenced, students who find learning in school uncongenial whom we also want to hear from so that we can understand why some disengage and what would help them get back on track.

In the context of student voice, the language issue is complex and potentially divisive. According to Grace (1995), "discourses are about what can be said and thought but also about who can speak, when, where and with what

authority" (p. 26). They carry implicit messages about membership. Those whose language register is close to that of the school are likely to feel a stronger sense of membership. For example, Mitra (2001) discusses the attempts of an ethnically and socially mixed group of students in a U.S. school who are trying to work together on projects designed to enhance student responsibility and status:

> When the group first came together . . . they didn't yet have the language to articulate who they were. And this contributed to their struggles to agree upon a joint enterprise. . . . The students needed to get along with students different than them, students from different cliques, who speak different languages, who are different tracks in the school's academic system. (Mitra, 2001, pp. 10, 11)

One of the problems was the feeling among some that those who were more articulate in the language of the school establishment were more likely to shape the decisions of the group, leaving others feeling disenfranchised.

Another example: Silva (2001) writes about the social dynamics of a high school student reform group. On one occasion, the group were considering who should present their views to the school principal. The one ESL student in the group was quickly ruled out on the grounds that she did not "have the language skills to present." Silva suggested that in fact she might "be able to better represent the needs of those students" who had limited fluency in English but the suggestion was rejected: "We don't want to go in there and sound stupid. No offence—I mean I couldn't do it either," Silva comments: "The notion of representing the larger student body, including limited-English speakers, became secondary to the importance of an articulate delivery" (Silva, 2001, p. 97).

The important point is that consultation processes can sometimes re-enforce rather than challenge existing dividing practices and sustain regimes that lead to some students being valued above others. An example of unintended divisiveness is when teachers who have been working in traditional school cultures start to build a new kind of learning community by working in a small-scale and relatively protected way with a few students. This is often the only way that they can bring about change. But the pioneer students are often, and rightly, invited to "display" their progress and achievements to other teachers, to the senior management team, and to governors, and they may also go off to regional or national student conferences. Given responsibility and trusted to do well, such students can quickly develop a command of the situation and learn to meet the different challenges with maturity and confidence. The only problem is that these pioneering groups of students can become an elite, creating new hierarchies within the body of students itself, and their status is often rooted in competence in talk which may, in turn, be linked to social class.

MAINTAINING MOMENTUM

Student voice is currently popular, and one of the perils of popularity is surface compliance. Schools may well feel obliged to be seen to be "doing it," taking it on board without having the time to think through why they want to do it, how it fits with other initiatives within the institution's development plan and scheme of values, and what the personal and institutional risks are. We have to recognize as well that in developing student voice in schools we may have to battle not only with the legacy of the past, which constrains our view of what schools and young people might be, but also with a set of powerful contemporary initiatives that limit the possibilities for change by defining achievement so narrowly.

It will also be important to ensure that new generations of teachers understand the rationale for student voice, the issues it raises and the kinds of impact that it can have on students, teachers, and schools; they will also need to feel confident about different strategies for inviting student comment and different ways of involving them. One of the strengths of student voice for teachers in training as well as for experienced teachers is its capacity to raise significant, and challenging, professional issues. I summarise here the most provocative and productive:

- changing images of childhood and the way that student voice challenges traditional images of children as dependent, as conforming to the ideal of "being seen but not heard," and as "empty vessels waiting to be filled";
- the personal risks involved in innovation, including the problem of finding time in a crowded curriculum, as well as the temporary destabilizing experience of change as innovative teachers move from a familiar and safe position of power to a relationship that is more collaborative, open, responsive, and consultative;
- the debate about performance and what is valued, including the privileging of a narrow range of skills that can be measured through tests and exams and in contrast the support that student voice can give to the development of self confidence, autonomy, concern for others, and so on;
- the need for principles embodied in statements of young people's rights to be carried through into a range everyday relationships and practices;
- the discomfort of being prompted, as students talk about their experiences of schooling, to review familiar beliefs and practices that have provided or that provide the promise of security and stability;
- the problem of finding time and space for the careful exploration of ideas that teachers would like to support but that conflict with the "quick-fix, what works" imperatives that currently dominate centralized policy initiatives.

In short, we should not underestimate the degree of challenge that student voice can present to both experienced and new teachers.

Cook-Sather (2002) has said, pointedly and powerfully: "Decades of calls for educational reform have not succeeded in making schools places where all young people want to and are able to learn. It is time to invite students to join the conversations about how we might accomplish that" (p. 9). That is what this paper has been about, but in many settings, inviting young people to "join the conversations" is not as straightforward as it sounds. Cook-Sather's (2002) assertion—that it is "time that we count students among those with the authority to participate both in the critique and in the reform of education" (p. 3)—is a crucial one.

Are we ready for this?

NOTES

[1] The Consulting Pupils Project, directed by Jean Rudduck, was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council as part of its Teaching and Learning Research Programme. The project had six constituent projects, each led by different members of the team. The project's book outcomes include the following:

Arnot, M., McIntyre, D., Pedder, D., & Reay, D. (2003). *Consultation in the Classroom: Developing Dialogue about Teaching and Learning*. Cambridge: Pearson Publishing.

Fielding, M., & Bragg, S. (2003). *Students as Researchers: Making a Difference*. Cambridge: Pearson Publishing.

Flutter, J., & Rudduck, J. (2004). *Consulting Pupils: What's in it for Schools?* London: RoutledgeFalmer.

MacBeath, J., Demetriou, H., Rudduck, J., & Myers, K. (2003). *Consulting Pupils: A Toolkit for Teachers*. Cambridge: Pearson Publishing.

Rudduck, J., & Flutter, J. (2003). *How to Improve Your School: Giving Pupils a Voice*. London: Continuum Press.

[2] For a statement of the philosophy that guided the development of Summerhill, see Neill, A.S. (1917, 3rd edition), *A Dominie's Log*, London: Herbert Jenkins Ltd. There are also numerous books on Summerhill itself.

[3] In 2004, towards the end of our project on consulting pupils, we conducted a small-scale survey among the teachers who had been involved. Ninety-six teachers returned our questionnaire: 84% said that consultation was having a positive impact on students' self-esteem; 80% thought that consultation was helping students develop a more positive attitude to school and to learning; 75% thought it was helping students develop more positive attitudes to teachers.

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MOLLIE GALLOWAY, DENISE POPE, AND JERUSHA OSBERG

STRESSED-OUT STUDENTS-SOS: YOUTH PERSPECTIVES ON CHANGING SCHOOL CLIMATES

INTRODUCTION

In May 2004, an interdepartmental advisory board at Stanford University designed a conference entitled, *SOS-Stressed-Out Students: Helping to Improve Health, School Engagement, and Academic Integrity*. The purpose of this conference was to initiate a community dialogue about academic stress in suburban middle schools and high schools and to help practitioners, parents, and students on school teams devise strategies to address the causes and consequences of academic stress at their sites. Chapter authors, Galloway, Pope, and Osberg each served on the SOS advisory board at Stanford and designed this annual conference, now in its second year, with the intention of gathering students' perspectives on academic stress and empowering students to become change agents in their schools. In this chapter, we review relevant literature, describe the conference components that encourage student engagement and voice, and share findings from our 2004 and 2005 conferences on student perspectives of academic stress. The results focus on students' perceptions at the beginning of the reform process, reflecting their initial ideas about how to change the culture of competition at their schools and how to reform their schools to support student voice, well-being, and motivation to learn. Findings also explore students' perceptions of the potential supports for and challenges to being part of a school reform effort. The chapter ends with lessons learned about including students in the school reform process.

THE SOS CONFERENCE

Responding to nationwide reports of increased anxiety and depression for incoming and continuing college students (Benton, Robertson, Tseng, Newton, & Benton, 2003) as well as to recent research on the health risks of stressed-out students in grades 5–12, particularly in suburban communities (Luthar & D'Avanzo, 1999; Pope, 2001), Denise Pope organized an

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interdepartmental advisory board at Stanford University whose goal was to design an intervention at the middle school and high school levels to counter academic stress. The Stanford board developed a plan based on the power of stakeholder dialogue and site-based school reform efforts. The first step was to hold a public forum on academic stress in May 2004 to educate schools and community members about the severity and scope of the problem. In an attempt to increase student voice and agency, the board invited a panel of middle school, high school, and college students to tell stories of the stress and anxiety they felt in school and to discuss possible solutions. The SOS board also invited a high school principal, Richard Simon from New York's East Williston District, to join the panel and share the details of his school's innovative efforts to reduce academic stress. Over 300 people from local communities were in attendance to hear these testimonials and ideas for change.

The next day, Stanford hosted fifteen local school teams, each of which included a school principal and one or more administrators, teachers, parents, and students, for a series of workshops devoted to fostering health, school engagement, and academic integrity. School team members attended sessions on designing engaging curricula and alternative assessment strategies, developing honor codes and plagiarism-proofing assignments, nurturing students' mental and physical health, and developing parent and student leaders. Each school was also assigned a doctoral student or expert in the field of education to act as team coach, helping to facilitate the change process for the next six months. Teams were to meet with their coaches at least twice over the summer or fall for a minimum of two and half hours per meeting to discuss the root causes of academic stress at their school sites and to develop plans for school change. The coaches were not there to impose their own (or Stanford University's) agendas but rather to facilitate meetings with the multiple stakeholders on the teams—parents, teachers, students, and administrators—who do not usually come together to discuss issues such as this one. Coaches were specifically told to monitor and encourage student participation in these team meetings and to help schools design action plans tailored to their particular student and community needs. In November 2004, we reconvened the school teams to share success stories, determine benchmarks to assess progress, and problem-solve to improve change efforts. In May 2005 we hosted an additional conference using the same format, with nine new schools and seven returning school teams. The content and design of the conference were based on knowledge and recommendations from research in the areas of adolescent development and schooling, adolescent health, and school reform. We provide a brief overview of this research below.

Adolescents' School Experience

Middle schools and high schools are meant to be places where adolescents can learn new skills, develop self-confidence, cultivate relationships with peers and non-parental adults, and prepare for the transition to adulthood. Parents and educators hope youth will explore their talents and passions during these years, as they search for a sense of identity and their place in the world. Adolescents seek to take an active role in what they are learning, express their ideas and opinions, and participate in the school-based decisions that affect them (Ginwright & James, 2002; Eccles et al., 1993).

School climate   Research has demonstrated that schools rarely provide such opportunities for adolescents. At this stage many youth are seeking greater autonomy and more challenging learning material; however, schools are often structured to provide less. While adolescents are in need of support from non-parental adults such as teachers, they find fewer opportunities to get to know and connect with these adults (Eccles & Midgley, 1989; Eccles et al., 1993). Moreover, middle schools and high schools tend to place greater focus than do elementary schools on students' abilities relative to others, reflecting a performance-oriented climate, rather than focusing on students' effort, learning, and improvement, reflecting a mastery-oriented climate (Midgley, Middleton, Gheen, & Kumar, 2002). Students notice these changes. Harter (1996) found that between sixth and eighth grade, youth report that their teachers are increasingly focused on evaluation and give more attention to grades, competition, and controlling students. Recent research has demonstrated that this attention to relative ability may be even greater during the high school years (Midgley et al., 2002).

The contextual changes in middle schools and high schools have been associated with students' reported decline in their motivation to learn (Eccles & Midgley, 1989; Midgely et al., 2002). Students in performance-oriented climates show decreased task interest, refrain from seeking challenges, and believe that success is predicated on performing better than others rather than bettering themselves (Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Ames, 1992). It is in these kinds of climates that youth are most likely to report being stressed-out by their schoolwork.

Student emotional well-being in school   In addition to analyzing links between school climate, motivation, and learning, some researchers have also explored students' emotional well-being in their analyses. Studies have indicated that students report greater fear of failure in school during

adolescence and are increasingly worried about academics (Eccles, Lord, & Roeser, 1996). Those students who are doing well in school or who find school engaging do not necessarily show positive mental health. For example, Roeser and colleagues delineated a subgroup of youth who were highly motivated to learn and succeed in school but who also reported poor emotional health (Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 1998; Roeser, Eccles, & Freedman Doan, 1998).

Qualitative studies by Pope (2001) and Phelan and colleagues (Phelan, Yu, & Davidson, 1994) support the claim that high motivation and academic success are not necessarily markers of psychosocial well-being in adolescence and may for some students be associated with unhealthy levels of stress. Phelan et al. found that many of the adolescents whom school staff described as model students experienced serious mental health problems, including one with obsessive compulsive disorder and one who had attempted suicide twice during the course of the study. Similarly, one of the youth in Pope's study of motivated suburban students echoed the feelings of her peers when she said she would "do 'whatever it takes' to get ahead, even if this [meant] 'sacrificing individuality, health, and happiness'—not to mention compromising ethical principles" and forgoing any deep understanding of the curriculum (Pope, 2001, p. 5). Pope linked these unhealthy student behaviors to an achievement ideology in the school where students feel compelled to manipulate the system and compromise their values in order to get the grades and test scores they believe they need to earn admission to competitive colleges.

Well-being in suburban communities   The pressure to get the highest grades and gain admission to selective colleges seems to be particularly strong in suburban and affluent communities. While students from these communities have often been considered at low risk for maladjustment, studies by Luthar and colleagues suggest a different pattern (Luthar & Latendresse, 2005). These studies have shown that suburban youth report increased depression and anxiety compared to normative and urban adolescent populations, and they may resort to substance use to self-medicate as a result of these negative feelings (Luthar & Becker, 2002; Luthar & D'Avanzo, 1999; Luthar & Latendresse 2005). The researchers have linked these mental health problems in part to achievement pressures. Youth in suburban communities believe that they have to meet their own and their parents' extremely high academic expectations (Luthar & Latendress, 2005; Luthar & Becker, 2002). Other studies have demonstrated that students continue to show this maladjustment after they make the transition to college. Benton and colleagues (2003) have indicated that over the past thirteen years, incidents of college students'

reports of distress have risen, with pronounced increases in rates of anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation.

The SOS Conference was designed for schools with large populations of high achieving, college-bound students. The SOS board was particularly interested in understanding how these students could play a part in changing the unhealthy cultures at their school sites. We relied on research on the students' role in school reform, reviewed below, to help us develop our conference model.

Student Voice and School Reform

While teachers, counselors, school staff, and parents can be involved in change efforts to reduce academic stress, recent research suggests these efforts will not be successful unless the adolescents themselves are also involved. As mentioned above, most schools do not offer opportunities for students to have a say in what they are learning, how they are learning it, or the conditions under which they are supposed to be learning (Fullan, 2001; Whitehead & Clough, 2004). The traditional organizational structures and power hierarchies of schooling tend to discourage student involvement in school decision-making beyond planning prom and school spirit week, and teachers and administrators rarely solicit students' perspectives on policy matters.

Nonetheless, a growing body of research suggests that when schools take student voice into account, positive results accrue both to the students and to their schools. At the classroom level, involving students in curricular or instructional decisions has been found to increase student engagement, to improve their metacognitive and self-regulatory capacities, and to promote academic achievement (Charlton & David, 1997; Oldfather, 1995; Rudduck & Flutter, 2000). In his review of the literature on student engagement, Newmann (1981) also noted a relationship between greater student attachment to school and the presence of school structures that facilitate student participation in school policy and management. Studying examples of such structures in a reform context, Mitra (2004) observed gains in the participating students' senses of agency, belonging, and competence. SooHoo (1993) similarly found positive developmental outcomes, like increased confidence and commitment to learning, among middle school students active in a youth-led school reform effort. In addition to the advantages reaped by students, Fletcher (2003) has theorized that engaging students in school change efforts will yield more committed and invigorated teachers as well as more supportive learning environments in which academic achievement gaps are bridged.

Along with the benefits noted above, involving students in school decision-making may bring certain challenges. The form and nature of the opportunities for

students to share their opinions and ideas may inadvertently privilege particular youths' voices over others (Silva, 2001). Adults may not be prepared to hear what young people have to say or to accept them as co-constructors of policies and solutions (O'Donoghue, Kirshner, & McLaughlin, 2002). Tokenistic gestures toward youth involvement may also forestall authentic participation and partnerships, particularly when youth are assigned non-voting status on boards or committees (Haid, Marques, & Brown, 1999; Hart, 1992; Kaba, 2001).

Despite these challenges, students do want to have a say in the decisions that affect their lives, and they have valuable insights and ideas to offer (Cook-Sather, 2002; Fullan, 2001; Oldfather, 1995; Rubin & Silva, 2003). Their potential to serve as effective agents of change in their schools and communities is beginning to attract heightened attention (Fletcher 2003; Ginwright & James, 2002; Mitra, 2004). However, students can also act as formidable obstacles to school change agendas. Fullan (2001) contends that "unless [students] have some meaningful (to them) role in the enterprise, most educational change, indeed most education, will fail" (p. 151). The SOS conference design was predicated on such an understanding of the importance of both student voice and student buy-in to reform.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research themes presented above offer evidence that performance-oriented school cultures are linked to more negative outcomes for learning, motivation, and psychosocial well-being. Students can be involved in efforts to reform school culture, and when involved, they can show positive outcomes on these same indicators. Our research aims to promote a better understanding of students' experiences when they face achievement pressures and of their perspectives on being involved in a change process to improve the climate at their schools.

This chapter relies on data collected during the various components of the two SOS conferences. School teams attending the conferences drew from primarily affluent suburban communities. In 2004, thirteen public schools and two private schools participated in the conference. Ten of the fifteen schools were high schools, four were middle schools, and one served students in grades 6–12. In 2005, seven of the original teams returned for a second year (5 public, 2 private; 6 high schools, 1 serving grades 6–12). Nine new schools also attended (2 middle schools, 7 high schools; 4 public, 5 private). The school teams included up to seven individuals, with all but one team bringing at least one student participant.

Over the two years, a total of 11 middle school and 26 high school students participated as members of their school's SOS team (21 Males, 16 females, 67.6% Caucasian, 18.9% Asian, 10.8% Hispanic, and 2.7% African American). The majority of these students actively contributed to the lives of their schools. Many had significant roles in student council, participated in extracurricular activities, and like the 'Jocks' in Penny Eckert's (1989) ethnography, most enjoyed relationships with important adult actors at the school, whether with the counselor, an influential teacher, or a top-level administrator. It was in part because of these relationships that many of the students were asked to join the SOS teams. Although we did not obtain each student's GPA, all of the SOS student participants reported interest in attending selective or highly selective 4-year colleges.

Primary data are drawn from interviews, workshop sessions, and meetings with the SOS student participants. All SOS students who attended the 2004 conference were invited to participate in an interview in the weeks prior to and after the May conference. Because of students' time constraints, only five were able to participate (two males and three females, all from public high schools). Each interview lasted approximately 30 to 60 minutes and was audiotaped and transcribed. We also gathered data from two workshop sessions at the SOS Conference, one at the November 2004 reconvening when students from eight schools gathered to discuss their roles in the SOS process and to brainstorm next steps for school reform, and one at the May 2005 conference, where students participated in a discussion about school leadership. Workshop sessions and interviews covered similar topics, including: student expectations and goals for the SOS conference; the nature of academic stress at their schools; the consequences of this stress on student mental health, motivation to learn, and academic integrity; and the opportunities for student voice at their schools. Data from team meetings were drawn from audio recordings from five team sessions with coaches (representing four different high schools) that took place in the summer and fall of 2004. Since interview and team meeting data come primarily from high school students, and since we had more high school students than middle school students attend the SOS workshops, the results reported in this chapter focus on high school students' perspectives. When useful, the adult SOS team members' perspectives are also provided.

Data analysis took place throughout the collection process. Each author coded transcripts and compared initial codes to create a common coding scheme. Codes were based on the original interview protocols as well as themes that we discovered while reading the data.

RESULTS

"Doing School" and Other Manifestations of Academic Stress

Our findings from the SOS conferences are consistent with previous research on academic stress in middle schools and high schools (see Pope, 2001 for example). All of the students in the study agreed that academic stress was a serious problem at their schools. Students' and administrators' perceptions of the consequences of academic stress varied but tended to fall into the following categories: consequences for students' mental and physical health (anxiety, depression, suicide ideation, self-mutilation, eating/sleep disorders), consequences for student engagement in school (disengagement, "doing school," overscheduling), and consequences for civic/spiritual health (value conflicts, cheating).

Physical and mental health   We heard disturbing stories of the physical and mental health tolls related to academic stress. Several students described friends who suffered from anxiety and depression due to the overwhelming stressors at school. Team members from three of the schools admitted that recent student suicides may have been the result of severe academic stress. We also heard many stories of students who had little time to eat or sleep because of their hectic class schedules, homework loads, and after-school activities:

Some [of my friends] pull all-nighters at least once a week . . . I don't know how they do it and how they stay awake. Because some kids just do not sleep. And other kids . . . all they do is work. I know one friend, she does not have time to eat! And it's not that she is anorexic . . . but she just can't—because she has volleyball, then she goes home and she wants to get her work done. So by the time she's done, it's probably, like eleven, and she has not had time for a break.

Another student complained that she had been feeling ill and missing school because of stress:

I have been struggling recently in my senior year to get through each day. I've had Fall Play rehearsals from about 3–8 all this week! I'm not one to manage my time well . . . I've missed so much school this week because I haven't been able to finish all my work and because I don't feel well.

Stress-induced fatigue led to illnesses and, in some cases, serious injury. For instance, during a team session, a parent told the following story:

We just had homecoming. One of the top students in our school was involved in a very serious car accident right after he did his skit . . . This child had no sleep for four days. He had a Lit project due and then another project due, and he was up all night. He went out to get his tux for homecoming, but fell asleep at the wheel . . . His mom asked him, "What did you learn from this? Are you going to get more sleep?" And he said, "I don't think I'm going to get more sleep, but I've learned not to get behind the wheel if I haven't had enough sleep."

These tolls on students' physical and mental health seem inevitable when the students have so much work to do in school and after school and not enough hours in the day to do it all.

Motivation to learn   Students also confirmed decreased motivation to learn as a result of undue pressure to achieve high grades. They complained of being 'robots'—forced to do repetitive tasks that held little meaning for them. As one student explained: "You learn the information in the class and then you have to go home and repeat it eight billion times, and so it's just like kind of pounding it into your head . . . But that work just makes me not enjoy learning. And so, that kind of disengages you from the classes."

Another admitted that, "[Students] don't want to learn because they're just getting the grades . . . And, so it just seems like useless busy work." Consistent with previous research with motivated and high-achieving youth, these students admitted to "doing school" rather than deeply engaging with the material (see Pope, 2001).

Academic integrity   We heard several stories of students who compromised their civic values and manipulated the system by scheming, lying, and cheating in order to get ahead. One student explained, "This stress causes normal, healthy kids to turn to some extremely unhealthy and unethical ways of relieving this stress." Another student echoed this concern and explained how the need to get good grades caused him to "lose his focus" on learning:

I know that people definitely are more stressed out about school life than they should be. Everyone is working . . . way too hard on their grades and trying to do well in school. I mean, it's good to be getting good grades and stuff like that, but you should also enjoy your time in high school and not just be all in the classroom . . . It's hard because . . . you're really there to learn . . . and gain knowledge, but you lose focus because you're so worried about the grade. You find ways to cut corners because you have so much work to do and you just try and get the best score you possibly can.

This persistent worry over grades led to a wide range of academic integrity infractions. One student revealed findings from a school survey that "almost 100 percent" of the students in her school had cheated at one point in their high school careers. The morning scramble to copy homework and to plagiarize from textbooks and the internet seemed to happen every day, according to some students. Other students described elaborate cheating scandals at their schools that involved stealing tests, selling essays, and breaking into computer files to change student grades. Students on two different ends of the spectrum cheat most often, according to one student: "It's mostly the people who either don't care, don't study and just cheat; or it's the people who care so much that they feel like they have to." Teachers and administrators confirmed that their

top students were some of the worst offenders—because these are the students that believe they have the most to lose by getting low grades. These issues regarding academic integrity, stress, and the notion of "doing school" by simply going through the motions, rather than engaging or retaining important skills and concepts, are symptoms of several root causes of academic stress.

Root Causes of Academic Stress

When we asked the students about the causes of academic stress, many blamed the high expectations of parents and college admissions offices. Several mentioned that their parents "push them *so* hard." According to the students, the parents "want their kids to go to top notch colleges," so the parents expect "a jillion hours of community service, and you need to play soccer. You need to do band and you need to have art lessons, and piano lessons . . . And they expect [the kids] to still get like straight As." Students told us that they worried they would "shame their family" if they brought home 'low' grades of Bs, and one school counselor related his frustration when a family "kicked a student out of the house for getting only a 3.5 GPA." These parents worried about college admissions for their children, and, in turn, the students worried as well.

One student admitted that, "the students are hard on each other too." They know they are competing for only a few spots at the "best-ranked" colleges, and they are determined to do all that is necessary to gain admission. This achievement ideology seemed to spur most of the behaviors described above, and according to students and teachers, this root cause of stress is "growing every year." We heard stories of eighth graders in advanced math classes going to after-school tutoring clubs to get higher SAT scores, of sixth graders with stomachaches worrying about getting into Stanford, and of high school freshmen going so far as to stage a "riot" to avoid getting low test scores:

Students are just flipping out here . . . And we've had a lot of, you could say riots . . . When I was a freshman, things were pretty relaxed. But now the freshmen this last year . . . they broke into this classroom once they took this really hard test and they didn't want it graded, so they destroyed everything in the room and they wrote on the board, "Don't grade these tests."

At the root of this frustration, these tolls on students' health, motivation to learn, and integrity, is the notion that these students *have* to succeed, in the form of high grades and test scores and ultimate admission to a selective college, because otherwise, as one student explained, "the alternative is going to [a community college] and flipping burgers for the rest of our lives." While attending community college is a viable and effective option for a large

number of college-bound students, this quote reflects a misconception on the part of many affluent suburban students that attending community college is "unacceptable" and will not lead to future success.

The SOS Conference was designed to educate the community about these causes and consequences of academic stress and to highlight the students' perspectives of the hectic pace of their lives and the pressures they endure. The students played an important role on their school teams as they related these life stories and worked alongside other adults to design change strategies for their schools to reduce unhealthy competition and counter the root causes of stress. The following section describes the students' perspectives of their roles as change agents and as representatives of youth voices.

SOS Students as Change Agents

Students' roles   Students perceived their primary responsibility as providing their adult team members with insight into their own and their peers' experiences of the phenomenon of student stress. Reflecting on her role as the student stakeholder, one student defined her charge as "representing the student body." Another student echoed, "I feel like I have to provide what other students are going through." Some students acknowledged the practical difficulty of attempting to capture a broader student perspective. One expressed, "I try to voice everyone. But it's hard because some people's situations are *so* different." Two other student stakeholders identified this task as the greatest challenge of their role. One described that task this way: "The biggest challenge is just sort of being able to get the genuine student's voice. 'Cause I can get my friends' [perspectives] and everything, and that's great . . . but that's not a clear sort of consensus of what our whole school is about."

Most of the student stakeholders we interviewed felt that their contributions to their teams were valued; however, their accounts of how their input was solicited and used varied. One described her SOS team as very receptive to students. "When we speak, they stop and turn and listen. And if we're not speaking enough, they ask us a question." Another student described his surprise that his input was valuable:

At first, I didn't think that I would have that much impact on decisions because I wasn't a part of the [school] staff. But as it turned out, I ended up having the most say on what happened because I was part of the student body that we were trying to help fix . . . so I ended up being much more useful than I ever thought I would be.

This same student credited the SOS coach with involving him in the exchange around the table: "[The coach] did a great job of keeping me in the conversation and getting back to my input."

In contrast, some students acknowledged that there were times when the adults controlled almost all of the discussion or decision-making. One described, "I think all the members of my SOS group are really passionate. So they like to talk a lot. I feel like a lot of times I don't get as many chances as I'd like to speak up." Another student reported during a team meeting that she was unaware of changes that adults were planning to make and felt that the student body in general did not know that the school was trying to address the issue of stress. Other students noted that they were not always invited to the team meetings, or meetings were held at times when they were unable to attend (e.g., during their extracurricular activities). The SOS students understood the importance of their contributions to the dialogue and were often actively involved in the team discussions; however, results show that despite the aim of the SOS conference, students were not included in all parts of the reform process.

Perceived challenges to changing the school culture   While students felt generally supported as members of their school team, they recognized several challenges to being part of an effort to reduce student stress and increase motivation to learn and academic integrity. First, part of their struggle with the reform effort arose from the realization that many students had learned to succeed in the current system. They described how cheating, gaming the system, and stress have been normalized: "[Stress is] so expected and normal now . . . You expect it and it sucks, but you deal with it . . . we've gotten so comfortable doing . . . whatever it takes." SOS student participants indicated that students no longer "see the benefit of honesty" and "don't care about morality if it means they can get a good grade." One explained that as students, they have little other option but to cheat:

The reason why people are cheating or are abusing the system is because they feel the need that if everyone else is cheating . . . or padding their résumé, that if they don't, then they're screwed . . . it's not necessarily that we're compromising our own values; it's like you're compromising for like a just reason.

Cheating was often described as the only way for students to achieve at a high level.

While many of the SOS student participants felt that the system perpetuated negative behavior and a lack of engagement, they found it hard to change their own habits. A student described the dilemma this way: "You feel the need to succeed . . . And sometimes it's sad, [but] by whatever means necessary." Another described the system as unfair, yet she admitted that she felt the need to play the game to meet high expectations from parents, school, and herself: "It's really unfair to be competing against your peers and feeling like you have

to be the most high-achieving student. And you feel like you're forced to take classes that you don't necessarily enjoy, because of the expectations." How do you change a system that is so deeply embedded in the culture? How do you change a system when many students have figured out how to succeed within it, even if by unhealthy means? As one student stated: "Right now it's not cool to love learning. It's cool to work the system. So the kids are holding each other back in the way that they don't allow each other to learn."

A second major challenge students expressed, related to the perceived normalcy of stress and achievement pressure, was that peers believed the system was too difficult to change. In fact, several SOS students identified peers' pessimism toward change as one of the greatest obstacles facing them in their attempts to effect change:

I think the students have accepted the stress. And although we're trying to tell them, "You don't need to," they've already said, "Oh, it's okay, it's good." So that's a real problem, because the students accepted it, when they need to be the ones saying, "No, we can't take this."

Using similar language, another SOS student participant commented, "I think [it] would be a huge problem getting the students to actually believe we could change [the culture of stress]."

During an interview, one student shared an anecdote that detailed her experience of running up against this student pessimism toward change. She recalled how excited she felt when she joined the Leadership Council at her school, thinking she would finally be able to do something to improve the conditions for students. However, when she suggested that they work toward alleviating student stress, her peers rebuffed her ideas, arguing, " 'We can't really do anything about it; it's just there.' " When the interviewer asked the student why she thought her peers adopted this attitude, she replied, "I guess it's because [the stress has] been there all three years, or all the years we've been in high school, and it just seems natural." Another student offered a similar explanation for the student pessimism around change he saw at his school: "It would be really tough to change . . . because it's just been happening for so long now . . . It's just like a deep-rooted problem." Sadly, we heard similar frustration from adult SOS participants who wondered if they could have any impact on such an entrenched ideology of competition and stress.

A third challenge that the SOS students perceived to the reform effort was related to students' discomfort in voicing opinions on their own stress, engagement, and integrity to administrators, teachers, and parents. At one school, students in a Leadership class were expected to sign up for and serve on a school task force, but according to one student, "Probably like four out of the whole class actually attended meetings and did what they were supposed to do."

When asked why she thought this was the case, the student speculated that her peers might be scared to participate. She went on to report that her own experience on a testing task force proved to be both daunting and awkward:

> At some of our task force meetings, I did have a hard time speaking up because one of the headss of the departments was someone [whose class] I tried to drop, and she wouldn't let me . . . I just felt kind of nervous . . . And some of my old teachers were in there, and I didn't know if I should [describe] the problems I had with them . . . They're pretty defensive, actually.

For students, voicing concerns about teachers or teaching can seem like a political quagmire. Students know that word travels among teachers just as rapidly as it does among students. They also know that they need to remain in the good graces of teachers for their grades and for college recommendation letters. As a result, some students felt hamstrung in meetings with multiple stakeholders. One student recounted, "We all get an equal say in our meetings, but I don't want to be whiny, so I don't talk that much."

Other SOS students voiced the suspicion that more students do not "get their voice out" because they do not want to show any signs of weakness. One SOS student participant equated students sharing their voices with "crying for help." She also acknowledged, "I'm really comfortable with my counselor, so I'd always go talk to her. But I can understand how someone else would feel . . . like they can't say anything." She recognized, too, that many students refrain from seeking help from teachers because students do not want to look like they are "being tutored or something." Although she seemed willing to admit her need for help to her counselor and to certain teachers, this same student confessed that she sometimes tried to hide her own stress, "to almost appear like I'm not stressed out to everyone else so they can see like you're capable of doing it." This tendency to cover or mask stress was something that other SOS student participants commented on as well. Because many students are concerned with their image, they may avoid voicing their true concerns about school in public forums or group meetings. Even if schools were to provide more forums for students to air their grievances, unless the audience is perceived as non-threatening and unless their accounts remain confidential, it seems unlikely that many students will take advantage of such opportunities. For these students, the political pitfalls and the danger of tarnishing one's image pose too great a risk.

Some SOS students also suggested that their peers might not recognize the forums and channels the school provides for student voice as legitimate. Of her school's leadership council, one student explained, "I don't think they can really make decisions . . . The policies they pass [are] basically about Leadership Council or Leadership." At least one SOS principal agreed, admitting that his

school rarely utilized students' suggestions for change. However, as members of the SOS teams, the students in this study found a legitimate venue for student voice. In fact, they believed that providing their teams with the students' perspectives was a major factor in being able to improve the school culture and promote student well being, motivation to learn, and academic integrity.

Students' ideas on how they can participate in SOS reform efforts   During interviews, conference workshops, and team meetings, SOS students offered their perspectives of how they could engage in the process to reduce stress at their school sites. While the results presented below come from an early stage in the reform process, we believe it is important to show students' initial perceptions of how to engage in reform, given the complexities of involving students in school changes of this nature. In fact, we found that soliciting students' initial ideas and opinions on an issue that so personally affects them was a necessary first step. Below we present results on: (1) what students wanted to do to change the culture of their schools; (2) what students from three of our returning SOS teams did at their schools over the course of the year; and (3) what students recommended that other stakeholders at their schools (e.g., teachers, administrators) do, given students' recognition that they could not do everything on their own.

Students had varied suggestions for ways they wanted to be involved in reform efforts to reduce stress and foster well-being, motivation to learn, and integrity at their schools. The majority of ideas centered on raising awareness among students, staff, and the parent community, and having open discussions about the problem. Some SOS students reported their plans to hold school forums. One explained:

It'd be really interesting having a forum at your school like discussing this [conference] . . . first I'd give [everyone] an overview of what you learned and stuff and just have microphones, and just impromptu kids can come up and speak about their fears and their stresses and just, you know, ways of effecting change . . . I think that . . . if you give them the time and opportunity to feel like they have the power to make a difference, that's all they need.

Others felt that awareness needed to be raised at the elementary school level with parents and students so that stress could be reduced before students reached adolescence. One student made this suggestion:

I think we need to start going back to like the earlier grades, and start as early as we can right now. Because obviously, if we go back to our high schools and start talking about this . . . we're all stressed-out already, . . . because you've already been set with this mindset to get into college, or whatever that perfect place may be. So you have to go back earlier to prevent this from happening later on.

Another continued: "I also think it's really important to talk to elementary and middle school parents, and just tell them that having a well-rounded child does not mean having a child who is the best at everything."

Students believed media could provide another easy and effective way to raise awareness by sharing data and recommendations for coping with stress. School newspapers, television programs, and newsletters reach large numbers of students, staff, and parents. One student recommended surveying the student body and posting results in the newspaper. Another student suggested that the parent community could become more aware of the causes and consequences of the problem via media:

[A] suggestion we had was to put out some articles in our monthly newsletter that goes out to the parents, to sort of get them to realize the level of challenge in school and being flexible, supportive. Sometimes parents don't even realize what they're doing, which is sort of unfortunate, and then they see that their kids are crying and they're like, "Oh, my gosh! I'm doing that." And some of them will completely change. I think they want to help, just they get a little lost along the way sometimes.

Another group of students came up with an idea during an SOS workshop to hang posters in every classroom with information about their school's honor code. Teachers and students could then have a discussion around its meaning and importance and would see it every day. All of these suggestions were aimed at starting discussions and making all stakeholders (students, parents, school staff) aware that academic stress and the lack of academic integrity, motivation to learn, and well-being are serious issues that schools need to address.

Student involvement in SOS school reform   The above results show the kinds of plans that students hoped to enact through the SOS process. We also gathered data from team meetings regarding how students who had spent a year with their SOS teams were starting to implement specific reforms to counter academic stress. Given the emphasis on fostering academic integrity, one school team chose to gather student input for a new honor code. They began by surveying students to ask about cheating habits and to check student awareness and understanding of the existing honor code. One of the student team members described her role in involving the student body in the process:

I was talking to [students] about it to see if they really understood what we were doing, and at the beginning they had a lot of questions. They were like, "Why do we need to rewrite the honor code?" And I was like, "Well, do you know what it is?" They were like, "No." And so I was like, "Well, we can revise it with all you guys, then it would mean something more." So I was just trying to explain to them that, you know, it was good that they could hopefully feel more secure knowing that they could have input into it, and it would mean something more to them and hopefully other people.

As a result of these efforts, this school convened a student-run task force to re-write the honor code based on input from the entire student body.

A student from another school participated in creating a student and parent survey that assessed perceptions of stress and student behavior. He provided input on how to appropriately word questions to get the best and most honest responses from the student body. Additionally, he devised a plan to gather a panel of graduates who had chosen a variety of paths after college to show students and parents the multiple post-high-school options available to students.

At a third school site, three additional students joined the SOS student participant for team meetings. The team discussed and voted on the top issues that needed to be addressed in order to reduce stress at the school, including issues such as revising the school schedule, changing the advanced placement point system, and including more staff development days. Students had equal say during the discussion, and when the team voted on the issues to be considered by the school, students had an equal vote alongside administrators, teachers, and parents. Although these three reform efforts are ongoing, and we do not yet have data to assess their end results, we speculate that the students' involvement in these efforts may strengthen the chances for successful reform and that the students believe their efforts have improved the likelihood that the changes will be successful.

Students' ideas on how schools can decrease academic stress and increase motivation to learn   Students were cognizant that though their efforts were important, they alone could not change the culture of academic stress at their schools. In order to foster a healthy school climate, others at the schools also needed to make change, and students had strong beliefs about what the nature of these changes should be. Some of the recommendations focused on school-level reform, whereas others focused on what teachers could do in their individual classrooms. All of the students' suggestions were consistent with recommendations from research on learning and motivation.

SCHOOL-LEVEL CHANGE. The SOS students felt that schools currently send only one message about what is means to be successful, a narrow message suggesting that youth are successful when they achieve academically or gain admission to a highly selective university. A student described the school culture:

You start high school and you start planning for college. And I think that like that's important . . . I mean obviously [schools] play a big part in helping you plan out your future, but I think that like college and career counselors should also like find a way to like give us sort of like a double message that, "Hey, it's not [getting into that top-level] school that measures your success . . . If you

guys are getting burned out, it's okay to not take five AP classes and only take four. It's okay to take a class that you really like."

Students felt that schools should define success more broadly. One student expressed that schools:

Need to get away from this image of like the student that is a dart being thrown at a dartboard of colleges that are like concentric circles, where you have . . . the best in the middle . . . [They should] move more . . . to like a fluid situation where . . . it's more based on where you actually really want to go, like what you think will work for you.

Another student reported that schools should recognize achievement outside of the academic realm. He believed that "students should be more encouraged in other pursuits" and that it does not need to be only the "smart kids . . . who receive the most accolades for performance."

Students also felt that better scheduling of tests could help reduce stress. Some suggested that moving semester finals before winter break could send a message that tests and achievement were not the only focus of school but that student well-being was also a priority. A student indicated: "They should do [finals] before break. My friends [at other schools] are like, 'I've finished finals; I'm done. I'm just going to chill [and have] two weeks of break' . . . I'm like, 'Are you kidding me? What's wrong here?' "

Two students from one of the SOS schools pushed strongly for a test calendar so that all tests and projects did not fall on the same day or week:

The one big change that we were pushing for was for the test calendar to be more effective. Like we have one, but like the teachers can like reschedule and there's seriously some leaks, where there's just test, test, test, test, test like every period. And I don't think the teachers realize it. They hear it like when it's been assigned and they can't do anything about it 'cause they've already done their lesson plan for that specific time and then they realize that there's two other projects due.

Many SOS students agreed that if test calendars were utilized effectively, students would be better prepared. Similarly, if exams were held before vacation, students could have a real break from schoolwork and stress and return to school ready for a new semester. Students recognized that even these small changes to the school calendar could effect changes in school culture.

CLASSROOM-LEVEL CHANGES. SOS students felt that teachers could also support students' well-being, motivation to learn, and academic integrity in the classroom by using certain teaching strategies. In particular, they suggested fewer hours of work (particularly busy work), curriculum and projects that related to their lives, opportunities for input, and improved student-teacher relationships. Students felt all of these changes would lead to improved mental health, a more positively motivated student body, and a lower incidence of

cheating. One student expressed how cutting back on the number of hours of homework would help student well-being:

I think the amount of work [teachers] expect kids to do is just . . . it's *way* too much. And I want to be like, "Okay, *you* take every one of my classes, and you try this for one night." Like, they think that [their class is] the only class that you have! And I mean if you have an hour of homework [for each class], you have six classes, and you do a sport, it's like, "What, do you expect me to stay up 'til, like, one every night to do all my work?" So I think if they just cut down, or gave you time in class, or something, [that would help].

Another student described how reducing busy work would improve integrity:

[If it's busy work students will] just like sit there and copy because they don't see the purpose in it. If you can see a purpose in the paper, I think people will appreciate it. And guilt gets attached if you end up cheating, which people rarely do if it's an important assignment or if it has value.

Students similarly described that cheating could be reduced and motivation increased when teachers demonstrated interest in material and showed students how material connected to their lives. One expressed:

If the teachers were really enthusiastic and got the kids to understand and put the material into their lives, then why would they cheat? If [students] like it, if they're interested, they're going to want to learn . . . So many teachers just are so plain about it, and they just give you the material. And if they're teaching the subject they should *like* it at least, or, like, be enthusiastic.

When connections were made between the curriculum and students' lives or real-world situations, students reported positive engagement. As another student noted, even the typically unmotivated students in classes could engage:

When we're reading a book and it's just related to some really huge controversy that's happening in our own society, people get really passionate about that . . . People who are so disengaged in school just get really into the discussion and then . . . people who you don't really expect to sort of think about those types of things have their own opinion on the topic.

As depicted in the quotation above, SOS students described that they were more engaged in classrooms that were autonomy supportive, that is, where the teacher offered opportunities for students to discuss and voice their opinions and when the teacher allowed them some choice in the curriculum. For example, one student described her experience with an open-ended assignment:

I think when you are allowed to kind of make [an assignment] into your own thing, it helps so much . . . We were given a project where [my teacher] said, "This is what you need to include. But do it however you want. You can do an essay, you can do a game." And, you know, I made a brochure. And I actually had fun! And I understood the book so much better. And it was fun! I showed my parents, "Look what I did!" And I actually learned a lot from that. So I think if you just kind of let the kids take it into their own. They would just absorb it so much better.

Finally, students underscored that having a positive relationship with a teacher could help reduce their stress. One reported that teachers should be "friendly" and stated, "If teachers could kind of open up a little more and try to be somewhat closer to the students, I think [students] would feel more comfortable. Then if [students] were struggling they wouldn't feel embarrassed." This student's response hints at a larger concern, discussed in the previous section—that asking for help shows weakness. Many students are embarrassed to tell teachers that they are confused, and they quietly continue without receiving the guidance necessary to learn and improve. The SOS students reported that closer student-teacher relationships could eliminate embarrassment and give students confidence to seek the help they need. A student indicated, "It makes it become more laid back if the teacher knows you and you know more about them and you feel like you can joke around with them . . . You feel more comfortable to ask them questions." Some students took comfort in knowing that their teachers cared for them and were willing to listen to them: "If you do have a problem you won't hold back. You can go talk to them. You know that they'll be there to help. Having a relationship with a teacher also brings the trust level up, which helps you as a student more in that class."

Some of these recommendations may seem overly simplistic; it is not easy to get teachers to change their practice, and it is not clear that these school and classroom level changes will significantly reduce student stress (especially given the stressors that originate from parental pressure and the college admissions process). However, all of the SOS students' recommendations remain consistent with the motivation literature that shows teachers can indeed make changes in their classrooms to improve students' well-being, increase their motivation to learn, and foster their academic integrity. Additionally, since our focus is on improving school climate—a topic that directly affects the students—it seems essential to ask the students for their perspectives on what can be done to improve their daily lives. This dialogue between students and adults can lead to increased student buy-in and, thus, greater chances for successful reform.

DISCUSSION

School administrators, teachers, and parents can listen to the voices of these SOS students and others like them to work together to create a climate that is both healthy and engaging. The SOS conference began this process for twenty-four schools. Below we report some of the lessons learned from the SOS students' experiences that can serve as a guide for schools, researchers, and other youth development practitioners as they consider how to involve students in

school reform efforts. These insights may help maintain and sustain students' participation in school reform over time.

The team model for the SOS conference was designed so that each student would have an equal role as a member of the school team. Including students on teams was central to the work that was conducted over the course of the SOS process and also acted as a method for enlightening the adults on the team, who may not always hear students' perspectives.

In addition to requiring students to participate on reform teams, we propose several other supports for students to realize their voices more fully on their teams and in their schools. First, it is challenging for students and adults to engage in the process of reform together around issues of student well-being, motivation, and academic integrity. As some of our participants described, students may feel uncomfortable talking about such issues and may be embarrassed to admit weaknesses. Before students can become involved in the reform process, schools need to provide open and safe forums for discussion to allow students and school staff to recognize the problems that exist and to agree to work together toward change. These forums must offer students multiple ways to express their opinions, both publicly and privately, and students must hear from adults that it is safe for them to share their ideas, questions, and concerns.

Second, students and adults should be provided training to prepare them for their roles. Student training needs to help students develop skills both for expressing their ideas and opinions amongst a group of adults and for eliciting the perspectives of other students at their school. Adults on school teams need to be given guidelines for involving the student member(s) of a team. We found that on some SOS teams, adults still controlled much of the conversations and decision-making and often failed to invite student voice. Adults (teachers, administrators, school staff, and parents) need to actively and outwardly demonstrate to youth that their voices are valued. The SOS students reported that the general student population at their schools either did not see use in voicing their opinions or did not know which avenues to take. Adults need to make all students aware of how they can voice their opinions. In addition, when student voice is used to make a school decision, adults should communicate this to the larger student body, sharing how their ideas are being used and valued.

Third, as reflected in the comments of the SOS students, more than one student team member is needed if students are to adequately act as change agents in their school. The "strength in numbers" rule applies here. A group of students may be exponentially more effective than one, as they bolster and support one another in their work.

Fourth, student turnover is an inevitable challenge in the school reform process. Schools can plan and prepare for turnover by seeking new recruits for positions early, by utilizing students from multiple grades on the reform teams, by building succession policies, and by documenting roles and responsibilities. New students can be trained prior to entering the group. Schools can also consider processes like shadowing, where new recruits attend meetings with current student members to groom them for their upcoming roles.

Finally, the SOS process reminded us of the power of having each stakeholder (an administrator, teacher, parent, and student) as part of the reform dialogue. In order to work toward a common goal and to enact change in a school, all parties need to be present and active in the conversation. Each stakeholder's voice must be shared and heard by other members of the group; each voice is central to making change. The SOS team members reported the value of being able to spend time sharing a dialogue together (a luxury that rarely occurs on a regular basis, let alone actually being able to move towards some change as a group). Many of our SOS students felt that administrators, teachers, and parents were hearing a true student perspective for the first time. It is in these group settings, where all members of the school community can feel that their voices are heard and valued, that change is most likely to happen.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

After these first years of the SOS Conference, we know that our work towards involving students as equal members of the school reform process is just beginning. Reforming schools is complex. Including the students in the process both adds to this complexity as well as offers opportunities for positive outcomes for the students and the schools. The recommendations we provide are applicable to all school reform efforts. However, we assert that student involvement is particularly central to reform efforts that target change in school climate, and that school changes on issues such as academic stress cannot be successful without student buy-in. Because of our SOS work, many stakeholders are now aware of the significant stress that students at these schools feel as a result of pressures to get the highest grades and test scores, participate in the most activities, and attain admission to highly selective schools. The recognition by both youth and adults that this pressure must be reduced for healthy adolescent development has allowed the two groups to come together around a common goal. In addition, we believe that many of the students on the reform teams have made important strides toward improving the reform process at their schools. As the SOS teams, and other groups around the country advocating for change in their

schools, continue their efforts, we hope that students remain an integral part of enacting these reforms.

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JOHN SMYTH

TOWARD THE PEDAGOGICALLY ENGAGED SCHOOL: LISTENING TO STUDENT VOICE AS A POSITIVE RESPONSE TO DISENGAGEMENT AND 'DROPPING OUT'?

INTRODUCTION

Below is one of the most perceptive comments I have encountered in over a decade of researching school cultures and what is necessary to engage young people in meaningful schooling. It was made by Robert, a young person who is officially designated by the pejorative term "dropout" because he made the active decision to leave two high schools:

The government is talking about truancy and people leaving school and that, but the problem is that there's nothing there to keep them at school. There's no reason to be at school. No one at our school wants to be there, and that's why the truancy rate is so high, that's why the grades are so low, that's why you've got people misbehaving, undermining teachers' authority—as they would have you believe. That's why they've got people leaving early—because they don't want to be there . . . teachers don't see that as being their problem it's the students' problem and there's nothing wrong with the system . . . they're scared, I think, to say: "Well, we were wrong, we failed these kids. The system is wrong, we are wrong, and we actually have to do something about it." It's easier just to say: "Well no, it's the students' problem, the system is never wrong, it's not us . . ." (Robert, 15-year-old "dropout" from high school, 25 February 2003).

We encountered Robert at Plainsville school (not his real name nor that of the primary/elementary school he had attended a number of years earlier) in a project that sought to understand how the experience of schooling could be different for young people like him.[i] Robert's words profoundly capture and illustrate the central proposition of this chapter: school is not working for very large numbers of young people, and this need not be the case. Young people themselves are powerful and insightful analysts of what works and what does not work for them in school and the conditions that need to be brought into existence for them to have a meaningful education. The problem is that adults, and education policy makers and politicians in particular, largely choose not to listen to what these young witnesses of schooling have to say. If, however, we listen carefully to these young informants, we can get a clear picture of what is

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dysfunctional about much of what transpires in schooling, why it is so many young people decide to exit, and how schooling might be different for them.

This chapter falls into three parts. The first two are heavily skewed in the direction of listening to young voices on schooling and reporting what they had to say. The first section, "Voices on Early School Leaving," draws from a project that pursued what young people had to say about their decisions to leave school early. The second section, "Hearing Voices on School Engagement," draws from a project that explored how teachers of young adolescents were attempting to re-invent themselves in ways that engaged students. In this case, the voices are of two young people from disadvantaged backgrounds who were insightful and eloquent about the conditions that had to be brought into existence to facilitate their learning. The third section presents a framework of school reform that has explicitly emerged out of the "voiced research" (Smyth & Hattam, 2001), from these young people, which I refer to as the "pedagogically engaged school." Finally, the conclusion summarizes the implications of listening to student voices as an integral part of pursuing meaningful school reform.

VOICES ON EARLY SCHOOL LEAVING

To frame the actual comments students make about their reasons for leaving school, I offer the table below, which presents a number of archetypes of the conditions that young people referred to in their discussions with us as researchers. These categories represent tendencies of school cultures that were hostile to young people in some instances and hospitable to them in others. We have called these "a cultural geography of the high school" (Smyth & Hattam et al, 2004, pp. 162–163), and they are a helpful and useful shorthand way into the actual voices of the young people in the study. In some cases these experiences amounted to schools that presented as aggressive and fearful places that demanded conformity and compliance, while in other cases they were less so, as schools had worked out how to be more active in the way they embraced, understood, and accommodated young lives. Paradoxically, these were schools in the same publicly provided education system.

It is worth repeating that this schema was developed entirely from listening to the voices of young people who had made the decision to terminate their schooling. There were no observations of schools or classrooms; the study involved no formal visits to schools except on the odd occasions when young people requested to meet the researchers there for reasons of convenience. Nor were these categories developed out of any school reform literature. What is presented below was based entirely on the 10 megabites of interview transcripts derived from the "purposeful conversations" (Burgess, 1988) the researchers had with the young informants in the study.

TABLE 1 The Cultural Geography of the School around Early School Leaving

Dimension	'Aggressive'	'Passive'	'Active'
School climate	• fear, silence, resentment • some students speak back • treated like children	• benign attitudes • habitual actions • struggling to come to grips with changing nature of youth • some students' lives are written over • culture of dependence • treated indifferently	• student voice • agency and culture of independence
Inclusion/ exclusion	• 'trouble makers' removed • students' own sense of justice not welcome	• 'ease out' those who don't fit	• those who traditionally fit the least are the most welcome!
Curriculum construction	• hierarchically determined • streaming undermines self-image	• an intention to deal with the relevance to students' lives, but this is not translated into the curriculum	• negotiable around student interests and lives • connected to students' lives • respect for popular culture • a socially critical dimension
Students' lives/ emotions	• no space for dealing with student emotions	• acknowledges student emotions, but deals with them immaturely	• students are listened to • atmosphere of trust
Behaviour management	• policies and guidelines adhered to and enforced • compliance demanded	• attempt to operate equitably, but the school gets caught in the contradiction of wanting to operate differently but not having the underlying philosophy, self-fulfilling prophecy	• behavior management generally regarded as a curriculum issue • student participation in setting the framework

Continued

TABLE 1 *Continued.*

Dimension	'Aggressive'	'Passive'	'Active'
Flexibility	• compliance demanded	• gestures towards flexibility, but interpreted by students as inconsistency and lack of understanding	• respectful of student commitments and need for flexible timetabling
Pedagogy	• condescending way of treating students • over-reacting and paranoid teachers	• uninteresting classroom practice and boring curriculum • lots of misteaching, (mis)management of learning processes	• enlarges cultural map for many students • students treated like adults • negotiation of content and assessment
Pastoral care	• no way of acknowledging harassment, sexism, racism, classism	• pastoral care but of a deficit kind • inadequate time, skill, structure and commitment	• actively connects with student lives • acknowledges importance of re-entry and alternatives

Source: Table 6.1 (Smyth & Hattam et al., 2004, p. 162–163)

So, how did young people explain their reasons for leaving school in their own words? How did they envisage the institutional interferences to their completion of schooling? Here is a sampling from *Dropping Out, Drifting Off, Being Excluded* (Smyth & Hattam et al., 2004) of what they had to say, organized around five dominant themes:

1. Individual responsibility
2. Opportunity to express views
3. Care, respect, and consistency
4. Quality of teaching
5. Maturity of treatment

But before I turn to these themes in more detail, I want to clarify that these themes have been selected from among many that emerged in the research because of the consistent picture presented by young people who had left school early. These themes were what they saw as being dysfunctional about school, but interspersed among these were glimmers of hope about how things could be different. What consistently runs through these themes is the extent to which schools were able to work out how to genuinely connect with young

lives, how schools might be places that welcome what young people were able to contribute, and the way schools were able to do this through cultivating a sense of "belongingness" (Osterman, 2000)—the feeling that students were part of a community that understands, supports and cares for them, their lives, and their aspirations for the future.

What is important here is the general trajectory of the young people's comments in terms of the extent to which schools were supportive of their project of "becoming somebody" (Wexler, 1992). Sometimes their comments might come across as very direct, excessively harsh, even condemnatory of schools, while on other occasions, their commentaries come across as extremely perceptive of what worked for them in schools. As much as possible I will try to present the comments of these young people in terms of gradations, that is to say, moving from what they depicted as being obstacles or interferences, to instances of a kind where schools appeared as places of understanding and were helping students construct pathways that were valuable, meaningful, and worthwhile.

Individual Responsibility

School cultures that had an aggressive or passive predisposition had a strong tendency towards a culture that saw issues around young people in individualistic ways; behavior, attendance, and progress were invariably construed as the individual responsibility of the student. Where shortcomings existed, these were presented by schools as deficiencies that resided in the students, their families, or their backgrounds.

Deviations from rules or unspoken norms invariably resulted in consequences, which were couched in terms of failure on the part of the student to take personal responsibility. This judgment frequently came across in ways that made it appear as 'common sense,' in which the (in)actions on the part of the student justifiably provoked the response by the school.

In the following excerpts, students voice their experiences of these predispositions of the schools. This is typical of the responses students gave:

Nothing's followed up . . . it's your problem . . . you are in a big place, and basically nobody gives a stuff. (#001)[ii]

After absences, for whatever reason, students in the aggressive and passive schools spoke of the difficulties of re-connecting to school:

The teachers would be supportive, but you have to catch up. (#009)

Students frequently mentioned the piling-up syndrome:

Once you let yourself get behind . . . it all just piles up. (#009)

'Freaking out' was also another common expression of this phenomenon:

The first couple of weeks seemed alright then I started getting more and more projects to do . . . I freaked out . . . rushing stuff, wouldn't get it in on time, not getting the marks I should have. (#014)

In these cases, students were being given the message that success or failure were individual attributes and that non-compliance with the pedagogical regime of the school would bring predictable consequences. Education, under this regime, was seen to be largely a one-way relationship—the school and the teacher had a diminished responsibility towards students.

On the other hand, the orientation of the active school culture was quite different as teachers took a decidedly less harsh view of student responsibility:

Some teachers were really good . . . if you wanted help they'd counsel you . . . encourage you. (#014)

What is being conveyed in this brief set of comments are quite different views of the ways schools position young people: in some instances, an orientation that regards young people as being individually responsible for what happens to them in schools, to other views in which the school regards itself as being actively involved in a joint project of finding ways of accommodating the complexity of young lives. Both represented statements about the capability and willingness of the school to listen to and read student voice.

Opportunity to Express Views

It seems almost too trite to say it, but when schools are democratic places in the sense that students have genuine opportunities and spaces in which to air their views and to have ownership of their learning, then schools become places more conducive to student learning.

In the research being reported here, if a school had an atmosphere of fear, silence, and resentment, then the school came across as being harsh in its treatment of students it felt were 'deviant' and who were prepared to argue with it or interrogate it. As one student put it:

It's basically 'them and us,' like there's teachers and there's students and a lot of the friction is in the discipline that they try to give us. Like, our school didn't use to have a school uniform and they brought in a school uniform, well that was that. And they just took it way out of proportion . . . it's just little things that teachers do . . . Like I mean, you're allowed to wear plain blue tracksuit pants but if they've got a little Nike or something, you get detention. (#027)

Students sometimes put it in terms of the school having "nothing to do with your life" (#062). Or, as another student put it:

I think it is better to leave school . . . school's over now . . . You can get on with the real stuff or whatever. (#059)

The interviewer put it back to the student in these terms: "You mean, getting on with real life? School is the place *before* the real stuff?" (#059).

In instances of this kind of mismatch, students saw the school as "cracking down on you," "monitoring your effort," "having you carded" (referring to the official behavior management strategy of school warnings prior to suspension/ exclusion/expulsion).

Capturing the sentiment in another way, one student said:

Instead of making it fun to be there, they made it hard for me. In the end I just told them to stick it because they made it too hard for me to be in their system . . . They wanted me out of school when I was 15. (#028)

Students were also able to quickly see the price of compliance:

It was a very nice neat school if one got As in everything and particularly if it was in Maths, Chemistry, Biology, Physics. (#007)

Students often portrayed school as a place where "teachers are continually yelling this and that at us" (#087). The way the process was experienced was captured by this student:

You don't learn anything if you don't make mistakes . . . And I would probably have been a pretty difficult student . . . I'd have a teacher, you know, yelling this and that at me. I'd like, well you know, say, you can't . . . I've never been able to just shut up and not say what I think . . . I know I have to accept rules but I'm no good at accepting the ones that I find unreasonable. (#087)

It is important that I acknowledge the preponderance of negative comments by students so far, which ought not to be surprising since the project was, after all, pursuing interferences to young people completing schooling. It would have been most surprising indeed if it had been otherwise.

We know from other research that students often have a very well-developed sense of what they regard as fair and just with regard to the way schools treat them, and this does not always rest easily or comfortably with conventional notions of hierarchy, policies, rules, and school procedures. This is not to suggest, however, that students were always right in these matters or that schools ought to be places of anarchy. Rather, it is to acknowledge the salient point that where schools are unable, incapable or unwilling to be flexible in terms of how they provide and sustain spaces for student expression, then schools can be experienced as very alienating places indeed.

Care, Respect, and Consistency

Policy makers are only starting to openly acknowledge (National Research Council, 2004; Willms, 2003) what has been widely known to many teachers (Muncey & McQuillan, 1996) and researchers: that student engagement in learning has a lot to do with a constellation of factors that are closely related

to student voice, namely: 'connectedness' (Schaps, 2003), 'caring' (Battistich, et al., 1997; Schaps, et al., 1997), 'relationships' (Rubin & Silva, 2003), 'belong-ingness' (Anderman, 2003; Solomon, et al., 2000; Osterman, 2000), 'respect' (Hemmings, 2002; 2003), schools that are 'humane' (McQuillan, 1997), and most of all, schools that present as 'communities of learning' (Kushman, 1997).

Schools that were indifferent came across like this:

They didn't encourage me to leave, but they didn't encourage me to stay. They said, it's your decision. (#014)

According to one student, the school was especially impersonal:

I think they called me to return some books or something. I just went in and did that. (#004)

Another typical response indicative of indifference was:

They just said, if I wanted to leave, to get a note from my parents . . . and get the teachers to sign the leave form. (#062)

On the other hand, the kind of schools young people repeatedly expressed through our research as wanting were ones that had a more flexible approach to negotiating a range of aspects of learning. For example:

They'd help you work out a plan so you wouldn't fall behind. (#014)

What students seemed to be looking for, therefore, were schools and teachers that cared and were prepared to genuinely grapple with and understand the complexity of their lives. While caring might be regarded as a personal pre-disposition on the part of teachers, there is also a sense in which it could be construed institutionally as something a school actively and widely pursued and encouraged.

One of the more controversial arenas in which care, respect, and consistency became particularly poignant in this research was around school discipline policies. How these policies were envisaged and enacted was indicative of the lengths the school was prepared to go to find humane ways of ensuring that it complied with the law while at the same time acknowledging that students had rights in consistency of treatment and continuity in their learning. This was an issue around which student voice became a paramount concern.

A typical story would often be of a student, who had previously not had a history of suspension, being suspended for the possession of marijuana or some other prohibited substance like cigarettes. Suspension brought with it immediate difficulties for students maintaining their studies, but it also had tangible consequences for students upon their subsequent return to school:

Some [teachers] were really nice and understanding and did their best to try and help me catch up, but one teacher held it [my suspension] against me and called me a 'waste of space' and [said] that [I was] "taking up space in the classroom." (#015)

While the school offered her counseling, re-entry meetings, and behavior plans, for this student, in the end the teachers just did not "have the same respect for me . . . I didn't really feel part of the school when I came back" (#015).

Playing it by the rules for this student meant that the school was setting her up for almost certain failure because of the way the suspension process worked and the stigmatization that accompanied it:

[They laid] lots of emphasis on working out your time management [but] missing out on five weeks stuffed that up . . . messed all my time lines and this stuffed up the rest of the year. (#015)

There seemed to be a fairly well-defined, slippery slope for students who engaged in 'running amuck.'

Consistency of treatment was a big issue for students too, especially around the issue of school uniforms—a constant source of "interactive trouble" (Freebody, Ludwig, & Gunn, 1995, p. 297). School uniforms were raised in 65 of the 209 interviews, generally in relation to the way they impacted students' sense of identity. There seemed to be different forms of treatment for different students, depending upon their previous record of 'being in trouble':

There was one incident where I got in trouble for my uniform . . . I had to go home, change my uniform and then go back to school and there were two other students in the class who basically had the same thing wrong with their uniform, but they didn't get into trouble for it and I thought that was unfair. I could never understand why I'd get in trouble for something but yet someone else would have the same thing wrong and they wouldn't get in trouble for it, then you'd try and say something to the teacher, "How come I'm getting in trouble and that person's not?" and they turn around and say you're back-chatting. (#025)

Different rules for different students, different rules from different teachers. (#027)

From another student, there was a very clear picture of how the detention process worked:

I got suspended and put on probation. I used to give the teachers a hard time. I was horrible, a complete bitch. I know a lot about the school's detention system. I was always getting it for minor things, like not wearing the correct uniform. You'd be told to pick up papers or go to the detention room. I used to love going to the time-out room because I could go to sleep there. It was often packed. Sometimes it was so full I had to sit outside in the corridor. (#083)

It is hard not to be left with the impression of a suspension, exclusion, and expulsion policy that was putting these young people on a fast track out of the school. One way of interpreting these comments is in terms of how well a

school had found ways of respectfully dialoguing with and listening to its students in ways that ensured they stayed at school rather than exit prematurely. Clearly, this puts a different construal on what is meant by 'high stakes' where students seem to be the predominant risk-takers.

Quality of Teaching

How young people interpret and experience the teaching regime in schools is often a major indicator of how much they feel included in decisions about their learning. Didactic forms of teacher-directed learning are invariably seen by students as being exclusionary and having the effect of marginalizing what they regard as relevant in their lives. When teaching included them as co-constructors of learning, then students saw this as a more general hallmark of respectfulness—of them as learners and as young people making a transition to adulthood.

Some of the negative statements by students in our research made it obvious that they were very clear about what uninspiring (and inspiring) teaching looked like:

Like Maths. Instead of teaching the class he would actually, like, write up on the board and as he was writing he would be talking to the board and teaching the board and we'd be sitting there, like, yeah okay, and you'll go through it and the next thing you know you're lost and . . . too late, he keeps going so you just, oh. So that's when you start talking to your friends because he's actually, like, talking to the board. He's got no eye contact with you so you just lose him and then if you don't understand a problem you put your hand up and he can't see you so he just keeps going so you miss that part, miss that part, you just give up. You just don't worry about it . . .

What students like this were saying, in effect, is that schools produce "dickhead behavior" (#151).

Students were saying that some schools set up antagonistic relationships between teachers and students that culminate in their decision to leave school—even when this meant giving up on getting school credentials.

It seems that for some students school is simply not worth the aggravation. The way the school responds to some students, in terms of pedagogic relationships, can amount to pushing those students out:

Yeah, because the teachers, they don't explain it to you properly. They explain bits and pieces, then if you put your hand up and ask, they say, "Weren't you listening? You should listen . . . "It's like, well, I was listening [Interviewer: but you don't get a chance to say], but I still don't understand. So, they go off their head, and you say, "What a waste of time, why am I here," and you just get up and walk out, go home, and forget all about school. (#153)

Students who self-deprecatingly described themselves as 'having an attitude problem' or 'getting shitty really easily' could not handle the fact that the school treated them like children.

Most people hate getting told what to do, and that's what teachers do, just tell you . . . [I would] just snap and couldn't handle being told what to do. (#151)

Turning now to some of the positive statements students made, they were also able to explain what good teaching relationships looked like:

[Teachers] who would talk to us . . . not just write on the board, or say, "Do this page and finish it by the end of the lesson" . . . I need things explained again . . . with Maths, do an example for me, then I understand. When I don't understand, I just leave it behind. (#151)

One student talked about the flexibility introduced by a substitute [replacement] teacher:

We had this substitute teacher who came in one day. And we were sitting at the back and were talking and that, and we just turned around and he said, "This is ridiculous. Let's get outside and actually do sport instead of sitting in here learning about sport." It's like, yeah. Wicked, let's go. We had a great day, and everyone felt a lot more respected. (#028)

Often the portrayal of good teaching went something like this:

[Teachers who were] easy to talk to . . . [would] actually sit down with me and help me with my work . . . talk to you politely when you are not in lessons . . . someone you can turn to when you're struggling with your work. (#163)

It is possible to sum up what students were saying here as a plaintive cry to be actively included in making decisions about the conditions and circumstances of their learning. This is not to say that they wanted teachers to shirk their professional responsibilities for exercising pedagogical judgment but rather that young people wanted to have some agency. Student-centered learning as it was being articulated by these young people was certainly not akin to a situation of 'anything goes'; they wanted to learn, but they did not want this to occur within a context of authoritarianism.

Maturity of Treatment

Starting from a position of what they saw as being detrimental or problematic to their continued progression through school, students told stories of frequently getting caught up in the rules and structures of the school.

There was a pervasive resentment at being treated like small children. In the words of one student:

In high school you are treated like you are a child, so you act like a child. (#093)

Students held strong views about how they were treated:

[They] keep a firm clasp on you, treating you like you are a year 8, saying, you can't do this, do that. (#093)

Like most kids at school are there because they just don't know what else to do. And the school just doesn't allow that independence. (#093)

Students who had left school and gone into employment had a basis upon which to compare relationships in work and school, as the following student revealed:

I was only 6 months off of being 18 but I'm treated so different at like my workplace. I'm treated like an adult whereas they treat you like little primary kids and I couldn't go back to that environment where they like tell you what to do and treat you like little tiny kids. I just couldn't do it now. I just . . . wouldn't go back to like a normal, you know, high school. (#016)

Another simply shrugged her shoulders philosophically about this inability of the school to understand her life or perspectives, by saying: "It's just school" (#015).

But not all stories were so overwhelmingly negative, as in the case where the school regarded students in mature ways that respected their capacity to make informed decisions. When they had the opportunity to experience the alternative, students responded constructively to schools that treated them respectfully:

Um, [the school] was really good just because they treat you like adults. If you don't want to go, you don't have to, basically, as long as you keep handing your work in on time. (#004)

So, again, it is possible to see in these comments a fairly consistent pattern of respectful maturity on the part of the school being embraced by students. When that was not present, there was aggravation, frustration, and alienation. At the heart of this, it seems, is a pattern of institutional listening (or not, as the case might be) to the voices and aspirations of young people.

BRINGING STUDENT VOICE INTO CONVERSATION WITH SCHOOL REFORM

In light of the material presented so far in this chapter I do not want to give the impression of over-determining the voices of students by laying too much interpretation on what they had to say. Nor on the other hand do I want to over-romanticize what they said. Both of these would be against the spirit of what I am attempting to do here. In whatever strategies we pursue to grapple with the kind of situation I have described so far, the starting point has to lie in ways that honor the voices of the young. In other words, we need to re-think the issue from the vantage point of schools being places in which students want to be.

With that in mind, I want to do several things in this section. First, I want to suggest a broad way of re-orienting the way we think about school failure that departs from victim-blaming approaches and that focuses instead on the institutional relationships involved. Second, I want to present some more optimistic voices of young people who have had the opportunity to experience forms of schooling that are attentive to their voices. In this I want to present the notion of trust as an essential ingredient in enabling young people to come to grips

with the legitimacy of schooling. Finally, I want to conclude by presenting an emerging constellation of elements that acknowledge the pre-eminence of student voice in school reform—what I am calling the "pedagogically engaged school" (Smyth, 2003b; Smyth, 2003c).

If we are going to turn around the situation of increasingly large numbers of young people choosing to walk away from schooling, then we will need to begin our analysis from a radically different starting point from that which says students are unmotivated. It is becoming very clear from the widespread current attempts worldwide to impose reforms on schools from the outside (most notably muscular forms of accountability and zero tolerance) that this way is not working. Far from fixing the problem it seems likely that such reforms have become part of the problem, exacerbating and accelerating tendencies like that of dropping out of school. Currently, in most western countries, anywhere up to 50 percent of young people are not completing high school, and the percentage is even more alarming for subgroups whose backgrounds do not fit with the middle-class orientation of most schools.

What needs to be done to attend to this distressing situation is not beyond our comprehension or capability, but it does require a radical re-think. Rather than regarding success and failure at school as residing in the internal traits of students labeled as "unmotivated" (Erickson, 1987, p. 337), what we need instead is to regard what is happening as residing in "invisible cultural differences" (Ibid, p. 337); that is to say, motivation and achievement (and by implication school retention/completion) are a "political process" (Ibid, p. 341) in which young people are making active "existential choices" and decisions about whether they are prepared to "trust in the legitimacy of the authority and the good intentions of [the school]" (Ibid, p. 344). In other words, whether schools succeed in retaining young people depends on how effective the school and the community are in persuading young people that compliance will indeed advance their interests in the short and long term. When we frame the issue in this way, the imperative becomes one of how schools and the wider community collaborate successfully to create the circumstances of trust that can work against the withdrawal of assent (and I will explain this in more detail below) by increasing numbers of young people. A major part of the creation of trust is to give young people a meaningful voice in shaping the conditions of their learning in ways that amount to genuine ownership of that learning.

Bringing about the substantial level of change necessary for schools to turn around early school leaving will require detailed understandings of what is happening when young people choose to terminate their formal schooling and what is happening within the processes by which schools and communities re-invent themselves in doing something about the problem.

Educational anthropologists like Erickson (1987), Ogbu (1982), and Levinson (1992) argue that when young people withdraw (or even disengage) from schooling, then they are resisting or withdrawing their assent (Erickson, 1987, pp. 343–344). According to Erickson (1987), when we say students are "not learning," and by implication when students choose to separate themselves from schooling, what we mean is that they are:

. . . "not learning" what school authorities, teachers and administrators intend for them to learn as a result of intentional instruction. Learning what is deliberately taught can be seen as a form of political assent. Not learning can be seen as a form of political resistance. (pp. 343–344)

While earlier parts of this chapter indicated what students had to say, as educators we need to understand more about how to bring into existence specific learning conditions necessary for students not to withdraw their assent. In other words, we need more clarity about the school reform conditions necessary to interrupt or significantly modify the decision trajectories of the unacceptably large numbers of students who are withdrawing their assent by choosing to leave school.

Thinking about the issue of early school leaving in this way invokes the increasingly widespread notion of "engaging pedagogies" (McFadden & Munns, 2002). In other words, the conditions in which young people say, "School is for us!" (Munns, McFadden, & Koletti, 2002). Practically speaking, this means getting inside the ways in which students display "an emotional attachment and commitment to [formal] education" (Munns, McFadden & Koletti, 2002, p. 4). In Levinson's (1992) terms, it means exploring more generally how it is that schools go about successfully creating "culturally appropriate activity settings" (p. 213) tuned into the complexities of what is going on inside young lives.

HEARING VOICES ON SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT

One way into the issue of how to engage students in learning from the vantage point of the kind of young voices described so far in this chapter is to acknowledge the importance of the notion of "geographies of trust" (Scott, 1999). That is to say, trust is a vital element in the extent to which young people are prepared to acknowledge and affirm the "institutional legitimacy of the school" (Erickson, 1987, p. 345).

It is this issue I want to turn to now via the experiences of some students at Plainsville, mentioned earlier in this chapter. It is a tangible instance of a school working at creating conditions that militate against early school leaving. At the center again are the voices of the students themselves as they constantly move back and forth, making comparisons between what works and what interferes with their learning. Robert and Darren (not their real names), both of whom had

been students of Plainsville, tell their stories in circumstances in which both had dropped out of high school. I will allow them to proceed uninterrupted with commentary to follow.

Robert (interview 25 February, 2003)

I've been to two high schools . . . they're all really the same . . . Decorated differently but the structure is always the same. They're all really the same house, just decorated differently.

The biggest problem is the lack of individuality. They've got a middle ground and if you don't fit into that, then the high school is going to fail you . . . If you're not capable of sitting there with a pad and a pen and copying and doing what you've been told, then you're not, in their eyes you're not learning . . . you're going to fail.

It all comes back, yeah, to lack of individuality . . . If you fall outside of that circle they're teaching, you've got no hope.

It really just sets people up to fail school.

 . . . Before I came to [Plainsville] in Year 3, I was at two private schools . . . I was always in trouble with teachers, other students, um, I was always at the office, always in trouble . . . Then I came here [to Plainsville], and I was in trouble here, however it was better . . . I was going [to school] because I had to. It was still better but wasn't something that I *wanted* to do but I *had* to do it.

[A new principal] came in and all of a sudden all these small changes began to occur . . . I started thinking, yeah, yeah, this is getting somewhere, where I might actually want to come every day, I might want to be here.

The thing is that it changed the students' attitude towards school . . . They actually want to come here and get actively involved in their learning. It's not really a problem of them [students] coming and just wanting to sit around and do nothing, because they actually want to get down and get involved in their learning and decisions and learn for themselves.

[At Plainsville they were] . . . making students see how their learning is relevant. So if you go to someone in the class and you say, "What are you doing, why are you doing it?", they're going to say, "Well because it's going to give me these skills. I'll be able to do this, it's going to help me in this way," and ultimately you want them to say, "Because I want to learn it."

I think really what she [the principal] wanted to do was take everything that the school was and everything that people knew about the school and reverse it, like . . . [T]rying to show them [the teachers] that if they could just give up some of the power, like over teaching and running the school and everything . . . if they could just give it up the students weren't going to make a mess of it, and that it was going to be dirty for a little while, and they were going to feel really anxious about it, but if they could just give up the power the students were going to benefit from it.

I know it sounds really bad, but there's no such thing as a teacher here, really. There are 300 learners, and the teachers are learning, the adults are learning and the kids are learning. The students— really the teachers are really just there to facilitate their learning rather than to teach them.

You've got, ah, six to eight summative tasks and if you do those, complete those, you know, to a satisfactory level, then you pass . . . you're graded for the overall semester . . .

When you complete a learning plan, or you've completed a section of learning you have a round table assessment . . . with three of your peers, yourself, and an adult.

At the end of term you'd sit down with your adult and your parents and discuss what you'd done, what you'd learnt, what had been going on.

. . . Here they try to look at alternative consequences and logical consequences which are going to make the kids turn their behavior around but at the same time keep them in school. See a lot of the kids here, they want to be here. They know a suspension would be a real punishment because they want to be here, they don't want to be at home. You've got kids that are here, they get here at seven o'clock so they can work on stuff before class and are here until nine o'clock some nights . . . I was one of those kids, I'd be here until, you know, ten o'clock at night typing up speeches and different workshops and things. I wanted to be here and therefore I didn't muck around because I didn't want to get in trouble, I wanted to be here, I wanted to learn so I tried to say on task, and yeah, there were less temptations to muck around and stuff like that.

Darren (interview on 23 February, 2003)

I went to . . . I'd been to three schools before I came to Plainsville and they [previous schools] were very heavily with, um—like traditional schools and students didn't have much of a voice at the schools I went to. But I came to Plainsville and I did four years, I think it was, before they did . . . when we changed like the way we were learning.

You had all this like choice [at Plainsville], you could choose how you were learning to do [something?] . . . You like, did have a voice. [At high school] it's like you started at the bottom . . . When I went to high school, it was just like you tried to talk to the teacher and you got into trouble for it; . . . unless you were in Year 10, they didn't care what you said...

[At Plainsville] You can use computers and you had stuff like that, and then you go to high school, and it's just like, "You can't use computers, they don't work, you know." It's just, I don't know. And you have a teacher over your shoulder and you can't if you're looking for something, you can't, unless you have a teacher's permission and it's just, I don't know, sometimes I just think high schools are a waste of time.

I guess it was really hard for the teachers [at Plainsville] at first because it was going from like you know they have all the power and the students don't . . .

Yeah, as Robert was saying . . . if you sit in the [high school] classroom and a teacher is talking to you, within the first five seconds of it . . . you just kind of switch off.

I was in trouble in the school, like, when it all changed over, like school was a lot of fun—like before it all happened I wouldn't get up in the morning. I wouldn't come to school, like to try and get me to school was a headache for Mum. But as soon as it all changed over, I *loved* to come to the school. School was so much fun.

Cascading across the commentary of both Robert and Darren it is not hard to discern the general tenor of what they experienced as impediments to their learning and how, on the other hand, these obstacles might be turned around. Central to what these students had to say was the issue of power—what happens negatively when students are denied it ("you switch off " . . . "always in trouble" . . . "sets people up to fail") and what occurs positively when teachers are prepared to negotiate power with students ("no such thing as a teacher here" . . . "just here to facilitate learning"). The negative consequences of power could be seen in everything from students being denied the opportunity to speak ("sitting there . . . copying and doing what you are told . . . have [to get] a teachers' permission") to a lack of power over how their identity is recognized and

constructed by the school ("lack of individuality" . . . "decorated differently but always the same"). The consequence in these circumstances was also predictable: "[You] switch off."

The alternative was able to be starkly contrasted by these young people in terms of how it felt as the school "gave up some power" in areas like how and what they studied (development of their own "learning plans"), to how they were assessed in their learning ("round table assessment"). They talked about how sharing power opened up school to them as a place that was more welcoming ("I might actually want to come . . . to be here"), and that the consequence was a changed attitude towards schooling ("see how learning is relevant") with teachers who were prepared to see students as being accountable for their learning ("you could choose how you were learning . . . teachers there to facilitate"). The consequence was that students saw themselves as being the beneficiaries of schooling, through comments they made such as: "I wanted to be here and therefore I didn't muck around." Thus construed, school became a place that assisted them along the pathway they wanted to go along, rather than appearing as an obstruction or an adversary.

CONDITIONS THAT PROMOTE STUDENT VOICE: THE PEDAGOGICALLY ENGAGED SCHOOL

Knowing about and acknowledging the importance of students having a voice in shaping the conditions of their learning is insufficient on its own. We need to also be clear about how this sentiment might be systematically and comprehensively brought into existence in schools. It is that issue I want to turn to next.

The students from the *Listen to Me, I'm Leaving* study in the early part of this chapter, and Robert and Darren from Plainsville in the latter part, provide insight into the conditions necessary to sustain learning. What these young people have to say is complex, multi-faceted, and a refreshingly honest assessment of the impediments to as well as the possibilities necessary for meaningful student learning. It is interesting that what the young people cited in this chapter had to say is not dramatically different from what is capturing increasing international policy attention. The issue of student and school engagement ranks among the most urgent in the international educational community as evidenced by both the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (Willms, 2003) and the National Research Council (2004) in the U.S.

According to the OECD, in respect to student engagement in schooling and the extent to which young people feel a sense of belonging or wanting to participate in schooling:

There is a high prevalence of students who can be considered disaffected from school in terms of their sense of belonging or their participation. On average, across OECD countries, about one in

four students are classified as having a low sense of belonging, and about one in five students has a very low participation . . . [A] case can easily be made that the criteria [upon which this judgement is reached] are quite conservative (Willms, 2003, p. 25).

Furthermore:

 . . . It cannot be inferred that low student engagement during the secondary school years is simply the consequence of family-related risk factors, such as poverty, low parental education or poor cognitive ability . . . Moreover, there is ample evidence that the school environment has a strong effect on children's participation and sense of belonging. (Willms, 2003, p. 10)

The National Research Council (2004) put it in these terms:

 . . . Interest in and desire to learn is critical to the amount of effort we are willing to put into the task, particularly if it means mastering difficult or unfamiliar material. Children often come to school eager to learn but . . . many lose their academic motivation as they move through elementary school into high school. In fact, by the time many students enter high school, disengagement from course work and serious study is common. (p. ix)

Stepping back a little from these comments for a moment and thinking about them in terms of what the young people cited in this chapter were saying, it seems that those who most intimately experience the institution of schooling are saying similar things. For example:

- The young people here were continually voicing concern that schools be places of belonging and that they be open and welcoming to their lives, backgrounds, experiences, and aspirations for the future;
- Young people were also saying that schools have it within their power to create an ethos in which all students can learn, not just those who come from not-at-risk backgrounds. Interestingly, Plainsville was an instance of a school that had all of the external environmental features of severe disadvantage (see Smyth & McInerney, 2006, for elaboration), as were 80% of the young people in the *Listen to Me* (Smyth et al., 2000) study. Low student engagement, and its correlate, early school leaving, is more complex than family-related risk factors. Such factors on their own are no longer an acceptable excuse for allowing large numbers of children to be effectively left behind.
- Young people were also able to point to ways in which schools organized themselves that either inspired or extinguished learning, and successes or otherwise in this realm had much to do with the extent to which schools were successfully struggling to reinvent themselves in a context of the rapidly changing nature of adolescence.

In short, it seems that on some issues young people and some authorities are not that far apart in terms of their diagnoses.

If we take this wider interest in the issue of student engagement in school and backward map the kind of voiced perspectives of students cited throughout

this chapter, then it is possible to construct a framework or heuristic that I am calling the "pedagogically engaged school" (Smyth, 2003b; Smyth, 2003c).

Working from what students have said, it is possible to discern three broad elements—school culture, pedagogy/teaching/learning, and school structure—that have 12 sub-elements within them. This seems a most appropriate way in which to celebrate and conclude this chapter on student voice around school reform. While it has not been possible in the space available here to provide student commentary on every aspect of this framework, for reasons of completeness and comprehension I will nevertheless present the framework here in its totality. Much of what is contained in this framework can be directly inferred from the voiced commentary of students contained in this chapter or in other aspects of the two cited research projects. I present the framework in summary form and without interpretive elaboration.

School Culture:

1. Students have high levels of ownership of their learning, and the curriculum acknowledges the lives, experiences, and aspirations of students;
2. Student voice is actively promoted in the way schools are configured, with students being encouraged to be activist critical thinkers of the communities and societies in which they live;
3. There is active community involvement through continuous school-community dialogue and relations about the school and its agenda;

THE PEDAGOGICALLY ENGAGED SCHOOL
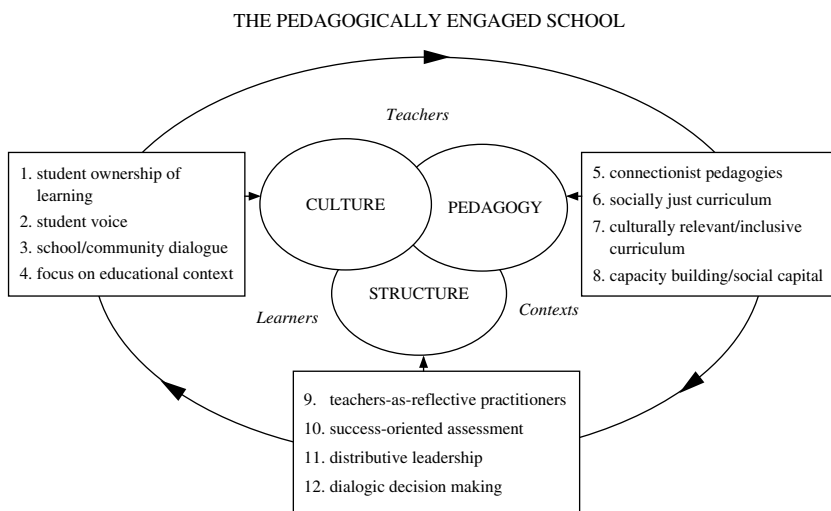
4. Such schools work continuously at ensuring that everyone in the school understands the wider context in which the school is embedded and the forces operating to shape it.

Pedagogy, Teaching, and Learning

5. Teachers employ connectionist pedagogies that engage the diverse lives students bring with them;
6. The interests of the least advantaged are addressed in how the school is succeeding in providing a curriculum that is socially just and that integrates knowledge in accessible ways for all young people;
7. Failure (or disengagement) is regarded as a failure of the school, its curriculum, and pedagogy (rather than the student); such schools pride themselves on the way they negotiate culturally relevant forms of learning;

The central guiding ethos is the school's institutional capacity for relationship building; in other words, forms of teacher-based social capital that suture together the learning resources necessary for all students, not just those from advantaged backgrounds, to learn successfully.

School Structure

9. Teachers are provided with the time, space, and resources to work as critical and reflective practitioners;
10. Assessment and reporting is not used for competitive ranking purposes but rather to provide authentic informative feedback on student success, areas of growth, and areas for improvement;
11. Leadership does not necessarily inhere in high office or status but rather according to the location of expertise; what is enacted is a distributive view of leadership around the educative agenda of the school;
12. Decision making is based on dialogue, debate, and contestation and is a demonstration to students of what it means to live in a democratic community.

If schools can be envisaged and enacted along these lines as well as those being suggested by the young voices invoked in this chapter, and if we can promote the courageous leadership necessary to bring the pedagogically engaged school into existence (as it clearly has been in instances like Plainsville and many other schools), then many of the dashed young aspirations we heard about here could be avoided.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL REFORM

The issues raised in this chapter are ones that have a profound message for educational policy makers and far-reaching implications for all of us as

citizens. The lessons are ones deserving and requiring careful and serious consideration. When taken as an ensemble or constellation of elements, the student voices presented in this chapter make an overwhelming and compelling demand for national and international attention.

Synthesizing what students in this chapter and others not quoted here have to say, it is possible to surmise that the qualities of the pedagogically engaged school should include:

- giving students significant ownership of their learning in other than tokenistic ways;
- supporting teachers and schools in giving up some control and handing it over to students;
- fostering an environment in which people are treated with respect and trust rather than fear and threats of retribution;
- pursuing a curriculum that is relevant and that connects to young lives;
- endorsing forms of reporting and assessment that are authentic to learning;
- cultivating an atmosphere of care built around relationships;
- promoting flexible pedagogy that understands the complexity of students' lives; and,
- celebrating school cultures that are open to and welcoming of students' lives regardless of the problems or where they come from.

Reflecting something of the rapidly changing circumstances in which listening to students has become the new strident educational imperative of our time, Fletcher (2004) put it that:

The tide is turning from the antiquated notion of students as passive recipients of teaching, to a new recognition of the interdependence that is necessary between students and adults (p. 4)

This means ushering into existence school reforms based upon a radically different set of relationships to ones that currently characterize adult-created institutions like schools and how young people are expected to inhabit them. Fletcher (2004) captured this nicely in the term "Meaningful Student Involvement," his spin on "the process of engaging the knowledge, experience and perspectives of students in every facet of the educational process for the purpose of strengthening their commitment to education, community and democracy" (p. 4).

Practically speaking, this means having schools actively and courageously engaging students "as teachers, education researchers, school planners, classroom evaluators, system-wide school decision makers, and education advocates" (Fletcher, 2004, p. 4). Ultimately, and most importantly, meaningful involvement of students has to provide spaces for student voice in order to ". . . raise students above their own narrow conceptions of self-interest for the benefit of the schools and communities they are members of" (p. 4).

NOTES

[i] For reasons of brevity, and in order to provide more space to hear from informants like Robert, I will not go into the details of the study, the background of the young people, or the methodology of the study. Those matters have already been reported upon extensively in the educational literature (Smyth & Hattam, 2002; Smyth & Hattam, 2001; Hattam & Smyth, 2003; Smyth, 2003a; Smyth, 2004), in the report of the project appropriately entitled *Listen to Me, I'm Leaving* (Smyth, Hattam, Cannon, Edwards, Wilson, & Wurst, 2000), and in the book that emerged from the project (Smyth & Hattam with Cannon, Edwards, Wilson, & Wurst, 2004). We interviewed 209 young Australians on the reasons for their decisions not to complete their schooling, or why it was they had decided to leave school before graduation (at the end of year 12).

[ii] Codes refer to the numbering system attached to informants during the research.

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SARA BRAGG

"IT'S NOT ABOUT SYSTEMS, IT'S ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS": BUILDING A LISTENING CULTURE IN A PRIMARY SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores a reform effort to engage children in the life of a primary school. The effort involved not only consulting children about extra-curricular matters, such as the school environment, but also considering their views in curricular areas and giving them control over their own learning processes. It was led by the then Deputy Head of the school, Alison Peacock, but eventually grew to include all staff and all children, and many others in the school community.

In the UK, what is generally known as 'pupil voice' or 'student voice' is currently undergoing something of a renaissance, sometimes to the surprise of those who have for decades advocated it as part of a general programme for greater democratic accountability (see, for instance, Holdsworth & Thomson, 2002). It takes different forms, the term being applied to a wide range of activities that encourage reflection, discussion, dialogue, and action on matters that concern students, school staff, and their communities. These activities include, for instance, peer support arrangements (buddying systems, peer tutoring and teaching, circle time), student representative bodies (that have broadened from the traditional School Council to include students on governing bodies and appointments panels for new staff, as well as student researchers), and more recently, student leadership initiatives (training students in leadership skills, students as lead-learners, and student-led learning walks).

These activities are supported by a number of government-funded policy statements and activities in the UK. For instance, a recent paper from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), *Working Together: Giving Children and Young People a Say* (2004), makes an important symbolic, if cautious, statement. The DFES has also funded the National College for School Leadership, which in turn is supporting student voice initiatives. The new Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) school inspection framework now requires inspectors and schools systematically to seek the views of young people. Schools can also choose to invest in survey approaches from

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external providers, such as the longstanding Keele Survey from Keele University or the more recent Hay McBer computerized programme, *Transforming Learning*, which assesses student views on teaching and learning. Some local education authorities (school districts), notably Bedfordshire and Portsmouth in the UK, have also invested substantially in student voice within school improvement initiatives. Even the research on which this chapter is based—part of a government-funded network of research projects on *Consulting Pupils About Teaching and Learning* that has produced several books of both advice and reflection on pupil involvement (Arnot, McIntyre, Pedder, & Reay, 2004; Fielding & Bragg, 2003; Flutter & Rudduck, 2004; MacBeath, Demetriou, Rudduck, & Myers, 2003)—might be seen as evidence of a new commitment to student voice at high levels.

Thus student voice might now be said to be a more secure, even institutionalized, initiative. As it grows, however, it moves away from the radical, utopian, and libertarian traditions in which for the most part it initially took root. Now that it is being adapted and realized in a range of contexts, for various purposes, one can no longer think of it as one enterprise or endeavor only. This change offers new possibilities for informed critique and exploration of the practice of student voice in specific contexts, without undermining its general rationale. Instead of writing in the mode of advocacy, as its supporters did for many years, it is possible to write in a mode of critical interrogation, investigating not an abstract, as-yet largely unrealized goal, but an increasingly empirical reality.

Some critics have identified disappointing developments in the actual implementation of student voice (Fielding, 2004a, 2004b). In some schools, it appears to extend little beyond administering questionnaires that are often barely understood or even actively resented by students, whilst still wrapping itself in a liberatory rhetoric. It can reinforce divisions between students, between those who actively get involved in school reform in ways that directly benefit their education and relations with staff, and those who resist it as yet another imposition by a system that does not serve their needs (Silva, 2001). In such cases, student voice appears to represent the rise of a neo-liberal hegemony, in which student participation is harnessed to meeting managerial goals of raising standards and attainment in publicly measurable ways within an essentially unchanged system, rather than within a model of rights (Thomson & Gunter, forthcoming). It does so partly by internalizing within teachers a form of student surveillance, and by encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning in individualistic ways that may also internalize liability for failure (Bragg, 2003).

The initiative explored in this chapter exemplifies, I would argue, some of the more promising possibilities within student voice, but at the same time it is

not free of the ambiguities and complexities that emerge as intentions are implemented. For over 30 years, Michael Fielding has worked, researched, and published widely in the area of progressive schooling, student voice, school leadership, and education policy, in what he terms a "constructively oppositional mode." In the case reported here, he as the project director and Sara Bragg as researcher worked with Alison Peacock, teacher and deputy head, during a period of funded research on 'students as researchers' (2001–2003). We have collected together the e-mails, conversations, and formal interviews we exchanged with Alison over two years and shaped them into a number of narrative strands.[i] The first is the story of the work Alison did with pupils at the school. This is a relatively linear, optimistic story. It contains rich suggestions concerning how such work can be staged successfully. The second narrative, by contrast, explores over the same timeframe the responses of some of the other teachers at the school, as refracted through Alison's own voice. This story is much more fraught with tension and difficulty and so is able to pinpoint some of the real dilemmas in this work. A third section brings together both teachers and students again, as hard work over more than a year paid off in developing a more collective approach at last. Finally, Alison adds a short afterword reflecting on subsequent developments.

We hope that such narratives may help explore details of practice that can make a difference to the experience, outcomes, and success of student involvement. Our aim is to produce not a model of how to conduct student voice but rather greater insight into its various meanings, and a rich account of a collective process shared by teachers and students, in order that we may be able to learn *from* it.

A theme often raised by participants in our research project was about the relative importance of putting in place systems that would ensure continuity of initiatives. We had seen examples of these systems in other schools. For instance, one school head had issued a decree that all departmental plans were required to research and include the voice of the student. Such unilateral decisions were often envied by teachers in less supportive contexts, and they can indeed be powerful catalysts for initiatives. Nonetheless, Alison argued in response that "the process must be organic and open to change, because that's what teaching is, you're constantly reassessing what you do. It's not about creating systems, it's about getting the relationships right." Her work was invitational rather than a directive, managerial model, offering scaffolded examples rather than the disengaged expectation of accountability, and attending carefully to the personal dimension. Pupil voice work, as will be seen, can be disruptive of settled relationships and identities, and these are themes that run through our discussion. We draw on the work of writers such as Ellsworth,

who have proposed attending to "mode of address" in pedagogy, that is, to how teaching and learning address students and teachers and position them in relation to knowledge, power, and authority—to who it thinks they are, who it wants them to be, and what "ways of reading the world" it constructs for them (Ellsworth, 1997).

BACKGROUND

Barley Mill Junior, Middle and Infants (JMI) School in Hertfordshire (a county north of London) is of average size, with about 315 pupils aged between 5 and 11, twelve qualified full-time teachers, and eleven support staff. The intake of children is quite mixed, but on the whole the school is in a broadly middle-class area, with a supportive parent body and good links with the local community, such as local businesses. The profile of the school is largely in line with the national average in terms of free school meals and special educational needs (usually taken as an indicator of poverty levels). Because the school was expanding, it had more children in the younger years than in the older classes, which was an issue Alison had to address.

After four years of teaching at Barley Mill, Alison had become Deputy Head, a few months before she began the work described below. The head of the school supported Alison's work throughout but did not play an active role within it. The school had an open-plan structure and a tradition of child-centred pedagogy, such as circle time, a commitment to the values of play, and listening to children. Within this framework, however, individual teachers had autonomy and some certainly did believe in ranking or ability grouping, with the result, in Alison's view, of setting children within a class against one another and creating an atmosphere of hostility and competition. In addition, the procedures in place for listening to children and involving them in whole-school issues were less successful, consisting primarily of a school council dogged by what Alison terms "Parish Council Syndrome"—that is, being elitist, worthy, and unrepresentative. By the time Alison began her work, the council was moribund.

STORY 1: DEVELOPING 'VOICE' WITH PUPILS

Alison was already committed to working within her own class (a year 5 or eight- and nine-year-old group) in ways that refused to label children according to deterministic notions of ability. She had earlier completed a Masters in Education at Cambridge University, where she had met Michael Fielding. She had later been involved in a research project there called *Learning without Limits*

(later published; see Dixon, Drummond, Hart, & McIntyre, 2004). Both these experiences had, she felt, given her the professional confidence to resist national trends where she disagreed with them, particularly those towards streaming (fixed-ability grouping). As an example of her mixed-ability but learning-focused approach, she had instituted "independent time" with her group, starting each morning with a half hour in which students chose their own activity. Children valued this highly, and when encouraged to justify the learning it involved, they articulated powerful arguments, such as "It clears my head," "I'm ready for learning," and "I want to get up in the morning because I know that I'm coming to school to carry on with my project." By asking them to be explicit about the benefits of this unstructured time, Alison aimed to help her students meet the requirements of the school inspection programme (which might be suspicious of it) as well as to become reflective learners.

At the point where our research began, Alison wanted to extend the kinds of approaches she had been using with her class to the whole school. Her first move with pupils was to begin "Pupil Voice" assemblies, in the Autumn Term. Here, she worked (mainly alone) with 120 children aged between eight and 11 (at Key Stage 2) in the school hall, to discuss their perceptions of the school and how they could work together to make changes. She described it as being "as interactive as possible, very much discussion-based, very participative— 'Let's work together, this is a whole-school issue which I think we could make some progress on, what do *you* think about how we can improve things?" ' For instance, she would use "buzz groups" or ask pupils to move around the hall to different corners to vote on statements or ideas—techniques that meant that all children could express views, even if not verbally.

Children's first contributions were that they often became too hungry to concentrate on their work by late morning. The school accordingly set up a new tuck shop for morning breaktime. This short-term and visible step may have been crucial in persuading children that the process was genuine and worthwhile. Pupils also proposed a "Suggestions Box" in the dining room. Children could write about any concerns and know that a teacher would help sort them out. It is worth noting that children never abused the suggestions box. Teachers elsewhere have complained that students sometimes write rude or obnoxious comments, using the anonymity it provides. The difference here may have been the extent of children's ownership of it, since Alison had ensured they designed and decorated it and then introduced and explained it to other children. They were also free to write about any issues rather than having a predetermined theme. In comparison, when another school in our project used a similar box only for issues related to "learning," at a stage where children were not yet even sure what this term meant, it was hardly used. The

processes clearly built on an existing trust between staff and students, as the children had to believe that their concerns would be taken seriously and acted on; though we might note that at this stage their roles were traditional (teachers as protectors and caregivers to children, and children as relatively passive in terms of finding solutions to problems).

Over the course of the term, Alison also worked to engage children in the discourse of learning. For instance, she asked her class to help advise her on the choice of a new mathematics textbook, getting them to assess a number of options. Whilst professionals would make the ultimate decisions, pupil preferences could be a source of insight. Equally importantly, the task addressed young people as active agents in learning and so began the process of shifting their sense of identity within school. We might note, however, that their contribution was contained or constrained. They were invited to share the school's values and interests; challenging the relevance of the math curriculum per se was not an option. Some critics have argued that such "voice" is therefore limited or even manipulated (Noyes, 2005).

By January, Alison was working on what she described as "a magazine about what we're doing at the school to involve children more," to give to other pupils, staff, and parents. Children acted as journalists and researchers interviewing teachers and pupils about events and how they felt. They suggested a title, *Team Talk*, which drew on Alison's repeated emphasis to them on teamwork and cooperation. As an aside, we would point out that her mantra, "there's no 'I' in team," derives in part from new managerialist ideas, and some critics might have concerns about drawing on business models and values within education (cf. Gewirtz, 2002). Nonetheless, Alison was able to report that her work had "snowballed because we're giving more and more over to the children. They don't want to hurt you, they just want to make it better. 'If you're happy you can learn,' they say, and I think they're right."

Good communication throughout the process of change seems a key practical strategy for generating support. In addition, the success of the magazine may have lain in the new but recognizable identities it offered to children, as "journalists" and, to a lesser extent, as "researchers." Such roles seem to speak to them and appeal by exceeding the more common identity they are offered within schools, that of "pupil" (which they often perceive as a subordinate one, even in its more "active" variant of "student"). Children have some knowledge of what being a journalist might involve, gleaned from their encounters with the media outside school, and can activate this understanding in performing their roles. As Kenway and Bullen (2001) have pointed out, the media and consumer culture more broadly address young people as valued, knowledgeable, important informants and customers, and this contrasts with the approach

more often taken by schools. By asking children to become journalists, or to advise their teachers, Alison may have engaged identities to which children are increasingly accustomed out of school.

By the New Year, Alison and the children had identified a further concern: the playground. Fortunately, this coincided with the school management's own plans to improve it. To a certain extent, Alison felt ambivalent about the playground project, commenting:

> I don't want them to see their involvement as being at the level of playtimes. I want them to be able to broaden into thinking about their learning. But you've got to start somewhere and we're moving from territory where they feel comfortable to something that they haven't been used to commenting on so much.

In this statement, she acknowledged the need to engage initially with pupils about those areas they claim or consider to be their own territory (playgrounds, breaktimes, toilets) rather than those prescribed by teachers. And indeed, the school (through the Parent-Teachers' Association) demonstrated its willingness to give children a high degree of autonomy in these matters by giving them a budget for equipment that was under pupils' control. This was a concrete mark of trust indicating genuine sharing of responsibility and power in decision-making. The children wrote to local businesses and garden centres to seek support. They designed the playground with a landscape gardener who came in voluntarily to work with them.

Since Alison was explicitly concerned to move on and develop debates about issues related to teaching and learning, she made links to academic work by positioning students as researchers, who carried out surveys with younger children during break times and in assembly about their ideas for landscaping and how different areas could be used. The children responded well to being given responsibility and challenged adults' assumptions that they would not be capable of this work. Children had some "wacky ideas that the adults would never have thought of," according to Alison. For example, they suggested the playground have a digging pit, a self-contained area where they could dig with small trowels and sticks and look for bugs or fossils. They also proposed a stage, slightly raised from the ground, where they could perform dances. They wanted a "sad" area, "somewhere to go and be quiet sometimes," an idea that eventually became a "sensory garden."

In March, Alison reported to us:

> Playground Day was a huge success. It involved absolutely everyone—parents, grandparents, local industry, governors, all the children, all the staff. Children acted as reporters and created newspaper front pages . . . [The playground] includes a water feature, and I would say that all the kids think that it is the most marvellous symbol of what they can do by working together. They are so

proud of it. I think they are beginning to see that this student voice works, it's real . . . Last night, a dad phoned to say that he was so impressed with what the children are doing that he wants to donate £1000 worth of building work for our playground. Hurrah!!!

That same month, Alison, staff, and pupils attended a Sussex University conference on Pupil Voice at which they were able to present their playground work. It gave Alison a chance to connect others to the wider issues and networks, and it gave all of them a way to celebrate their achievements. Children also, Alison said, "grew about six inches" when Michael then asked the school to write an article for the "Special Issue on Student Voice" that he was editing for the journal, *Forum*, *for promoting 3–19 comprehensive education*.

Children worked on the article that April, all contributing short accounts edited by Alison (see vol. 43, no.2, Summer 2001). When it was finished, however, she mused:

I could read it and think, it doesn't bear any representation to Barley Mill whatsoever, because it's been a horrendous day and this child's in tears over here and that one hates the world and the other one's walked out, and all the rest of it. But in terms of what they were aiming for, they did brilliantly. I think that they knew that in an ideal situation, they wanted teachers that would listen to them, to be able to debate things that mattered to them, and that they couldn't envisage learning in an environment where that wasn't taken into account. And it isn't always taken into account, but the fact that they value it so highly and that they could see that other people valued it, has got to be a good starting point. We're on fertile ground here.

In May, Alison reported two new developments. In the first, she involved the children in setting five targets for the school development plan (which all schools were required to produce). "Their first target was 'more responsibility for our own learning.' OK then!" In the process, a task often seen as an administrative or managerial headache done to satisfy external requirements became enlivened and meaningful. Alison observed that "children do seem to be getting a sense that they can speak for the school, 'We at Barley Mill think this,' and that's very powerful. It means that they're thinking, 'It's not just what we do in our classroom, we can affect change throughout the whole school.' I'm seeing a school-wide impetus about things, which is thrilling really." Michael Fielding and I were struck by the 'adult' voice children used in demanding this 'responsibility.'

Secondly, the school was advertising for a new year 4 teacher, so Alison talked to children (age 7–8) in that class about what kind of a teacher they wanted. In her account:

Initially I get all the standard answers, "somebody with a sense of humour, kind and pretty," it's like they want a Mary Poppins! So I took it a step further and then asked what interview questions they thought we should put, to give them a different way in. Then they role played being the different teachers and we tried out some of the interview questions that they'd come up with, and

the sort of answers that they might give, and asked "which teacher out of these would you want and which wouldn't you want?" I think it is about giving them the right kind of forum in which to express their ideas, because they genuinely do know. And children have everything to teach us because they're the ones that are evaluating what we're doing all the time.

Although schools do increasingly use student interviewers as part of their appointment process, some adults' reservations about student voice have to do with getting precisely the kind of answers Alison first obtained from the year 4 children. They fear that students will make unrealistic requests or judgments, without thinking through their consequences or meaning. As a result, teachers may resist student voice, or take the easier option of training up outstanding but acquiescent pupils. Alison's gift is shown in her ability to structure the process as a collective endeavor in which all can contribute and to build successfully on what children do implicitly know.

During the Summer Term, Alison also tried to access pupil voice through a range of methods. For instance, she asked students to draw pictures of themselves as learners in a symbolic way. One boy, who was about to sit his national tests, drew them as an enormous ten-ton weight about to fall down on his head. He told her, "Well I just think this could all just come down and crush me . . . It could all just get too much . . ." She commented that this experience reinforced her sense that "although the playground is really important and does have a big impact on the classroom, the curriculum is also of importance to how children feel emotionally about themselves, and themselves as learners and where they're going to and how successful they'll be. We underestimate what children are capable of telling us about themselves, and about the ways they're coping with working with each other."

In addition, we see here how "voice" is not spontaneous, but rather carefully constructed, which underlines the importance of looking for different strategies through which children can "express" themselves. Using only the conventional channels of expression, such as written literacy, often hands power and the centre stage to those who are already familiar with them. (Anna Robinson-Pant's work on school councils also bears this out [Robinson-Pant, 2004]). In this sense voice is a "technology," in the Foucauldian sense used by Triantafillou and Nielsen, writing about participatory approaches to development (2001). Its meaning and the extent to which it is "empowering" depend not on the use of certain techniques in and of themselves but rather on the contexts of their use and their broader purposes.

Over the summer holiday, I organized a meeting with another primary teacher in the research project. It went on for over three hours, as the two teachers described and compared their different schools, shared ideas and problems, and reflected. Many of Alison's words in this chapter are drawn

from that discussion, but the content of the meeting may have been less significant than the fact that it happened at all. Teachers increasingly find that such opportunities for reflection are squeezed from the normal timetable. Forming links with external supporters, therefore, offers affirmation and confidence building; it allows for learning from others but also about oneself through the process of explaining one's work to an interested audience.

In the second year, Alison's work began to gather pace. She continued teaching the same class, who now moved to be the most senior group in the school and in many ways led the development of student voice. In September she wrote:

Year 6 prepared an assembly for the whole school, with a message about their year 6 Buddy system. They have established a new "friendship stop" on the playground where children can go if they are feeling sad or lonely. They sang, "We're the Buddies" to the tune of "Bob the Builder" [a popular children's TV programme] and added really good lyrics (apparently the six-year-olds were singing it on the way to swimming the following Monday). All this was their idea, I would never have suggested they write songs . . . What excites me always with kids is that they have much better ideas than I ever have. If you can give them a framework and some freedom within it, so that they can re-negotiate the task in their own way, they make it much, much better.

By this point, it seems that students had gradually built a sense of partnership in learning throughout the school. Alison had encouraged the older children to empathize with their younger peers by remembering their own experiences as new pupils. The younger ones could see that the older children were committed enough to put energy into providing entertainment for them and communicating their support. This was a new and different sense of school community than the Suggestions Box described earlier, where teachers were to solve problems; here, children were being given an opportunity to do so for themselves. As Alison remarked, this builds a sense of school community and "it has got to be powerful learning."

This example also indicates the creativity that can emerge when students bring into the school the informal out-of-school cultures—such as children's TV—through which they construct their identities and affiliations. In some instances of student voice, young people are implicitly or explicitly constrained to speak within the terms of official, school-sanctioned discourses, which can have the effect of excluding students who have less facility with this way of speaking. Alison's approach here—allowing pupils to choose the forms—engages aspects of children's identity and knowledge in a meaningful way.

During this term, Alison began work on what was then a new government initiative, "Healthy Schools," discussing in the Pupil Voice assembly what makes a healthy school. Whilst many schools saw this only as an opportunity

to discuss policies on snacks and crisps, Alison (in line with her views on the impact of the curriculum on students' sense of well-being) turned this exercise into a major investigation into "what makes a 'decent teacher,' as they put it!" Children came up with categories they saw as being the main qualities of a good teacher and then voted for those they most agreed with. Alison's class collated the data and put them onto an Excel graph (again, highlighting the link to learning), and then they all fed back to the staff and to the other children in the school. The main findings were that "the quality that the children thought was most important was that the teachers trusted *them*, and second, that they could trust the teacher. That whole issue of trust is absolutely crucial."

In November, Alison emailed us enthusiastically to say, "Really really exciting collaborative work this week!!!!!! We set up a writers' workshop with our year 6 and year 2 children writing together. The results and process were breathtaking! We're also teaming children who have special educational needs with buddies. Everyone stands to benefit so much. Very thrilling." Whilst there is not space to describe this work in detail, perhaps what is most relevant here is how it positioned older children as responsible, capable and caring—roles more often reserved for teachers or for specified categories of children (such as class monitors).

Just before the end of this term, Alison took six children and four staff to a second University of Sussex conference on Student Voice. Students were asked to make a written application about why they should go, which made the selection process visible and relatively transparent rather than relying on high-achieving students. Alison commented that the day helped her "to reflect on what we've achieved and celebrate it. When you are in the middle of it you don't always see how much you've done."

Alison was emphatic that she did not want to dictate what students said at this conference, to avoid the not unfamiliar situation where students are only allowed to give strictly monitored presentations that have been pre-approved or even designed by adults. Instead, she encouraged students to create their input on the train journey. Its genuine spontaneity came over clearly to the audience, as students aged between six and 11 talked in unrehearsed but excited ways about what they were doing. It provided an example of how student participation initiatives have the capacity to shift school cultures and relationships in ways that redefine the traditional boundaries between "teachers" and "students." Other positive examples we have found have been where students have presented their work to their peers in assemblies, addressed staff or governors' meetings, run workshops on staff training or Continuing Professional Development days, contributed to the creation of a new school

development plans, and engaged formally with local councilors. In all these ways, they have been redefining appropriate roles and identities for students as well as for teachers, usually with the support of internal school champions in senior positions in the school, but also in some cases, by training.

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STORY 2: "BUT I ALREADY LISTEN TO CHILDREN!"—
THE TEACHER'S VOICE

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Thus far, the pupils' story suggests that within just over a year, they were flourishing in their new positions of authority and responsibility. Seen from the point of view of teachers, however, events over the same period look more complicated. In the first place, the school culture, like many schools, fell short of its rhetoric of teamwork and aiming to value all members of staff. Some staff did not feel appreciated or recognized, and the values held by staff varied quite widely, as already noted in relation to teaching styles and ability grouping. When Alison arrived at the school, she observed that there would be separate Christmas lunches for teachers and support staff, which ran counter to the school's avowed belief in equality amongst them. There were further divisions between the teachers of the younger Key Stage 1 pupils (children who are 4–7 years old) and of the Key Stage 2 pupils (children who are 8–11 years old), with the former even finding the older pupils intimidating.

Even Alison's initiative of "independent time" for her class, described above, encountered problems, in a way that demonstrates the limits of working within a single classroom rather than at the whole-school level. Alison's pupils became used to her flexible approach and, when they moved up into the next year, reacted badly against the more formal and structured methods used by Julia, their new class teacher. This left all those involved upset and angry, and in Julia's case, demoralized. Alison's pedagogy had the effect of constructing Julia's as a "problem" or even as incompetent in a way that would not have otherwise arisen. Whilst Julia was not in principle hostile to what Alison was doing, she did not have the grounding in such ways of working that would make it possible for her easily to adapt her own approach.

We might also observe, however, that the suppression of "teacher voice" is a wider issue; the teacher's role in professional and curriculum development matters has been consistently sidelined in government policy in the last 25 years. Despite recent enhancements to teacher status and pay, some have argued that the teaching profession remains an uncertain, and relatively uncritical, one. There are clearly contradictions in insisting on listening to pupil voice when teacher voice has been undermined.

At the beginning of the first school year in question, Alison held a staff meeting and talked about student voice and her plans for the assemblies. She reported:

> Everybody was unanimous that we ought to be listening to the children. One teacher said, "But I listen to children all the time anyway!" I said, "So do I, but I don't know what children across the whole school are thinking" . . . It felt that the impetus is coming from me and everybody else is going along with it partly to please me, partly because it seems that I will be doing the bulk of the work anyway. But at least I've got their blessing and they know what I'm aiming for.

Corson (1992) has argued that "for (new) values to count they need to be . . . articulated sincerely by significant figures in the organisation so that they become part of the taken-for-grantedness of the place" (p. 249). We see here an attempt by Alison to be an "intellectual champion" of an initiative, to articulate a clear rationale for student voice work, to engage in debate and discussion about what underpins a new way of working, and to argue with conviction about the "why" and not just the "how." This kind of support gives a development status and raises its profile, especially when it is a new venture. In principle also, Alison was taking an organic, patient approach, starting from teachers' willingness to work in new ways and providing the resources that turn such "openings" into "opportunities" to achieve this in practice (cf. Shier, 2001).

However, the power dynamics are complex; Alison is in a position of seniority and might have had a certain intellectual weight through her Masters qualification and links with universities, which in turn might have made it difficult for her colleagues to challenge her. Gender ideologies and history combine to make many primary teachers intellectually unconfident; Alison may have further intimidated them by distributing an article by Michael Fielding that was aimed at an academic audience. This raises issues of how one might listen to and take into consideration the "voices" of those who have doubts about a project, including students and parents as well as other staff. Rather than combining to make a coherent whole, such voices frequently clash—as when for instance, parents object to students' views on abandoning uniforms or assemblies or see participation projects as a distraction from assessed schoolwork. Deciding whose voices are to count is an ethical and highly charged political matter.

The response of the teacher who argues that she already listens to children, whilst not constituting overt resistance, raises interesting issues. Many primary school teachers' identity is founded on concepts from child-centred or progressive pedagogies in which they see themselves as deeply engaged in children's worlds (Walkerdine, 1981). This is very different, however, from the kind of listening that Alison wanted to encourage, where, in effect, the kinds of

questions to be asked, and the range of "voices" children can use, shifts significantly—from working on children's behalf to working with and alongside them, for instance. This means that what Alison was asking involves not only a minor change in pedagogical practice, which might be easily absorbed, but also a paradigm shift in teachers' very identity, which might be highly problematic and disturbing. Whilst we suggested above that children respond positively to this kind of work because the identity offered is attractive and consonant with their out of school identities as consumers, teachers may feel that their existing practice is being criticized and redefined as lacking, with no clear new identity yet apparent.

During this first Autumn Term, Alison gave teachers some handouts about "Giving Children a Voice" to discuss in Circle Time and feed into the pupil voice assemblies. They were designed to offer a structure for teachers in their own classrooms and contained questions she had written, such as: "If you could change something about the school, what would it be?"; "How would you let someone know if you were being bullied?"; and "Do you think teachers should ask children what they think about school? Why?" She found that she got unsatisfactory answers, things like, "It's too noisy in our class because the radiator makes a noise" and "We don't like always having to do English and Maths in the mornings, why can't we do it in the afternoon?" Teachers may have been disappointed by such responses, and, lacking the skills to develop them further (as Alison did when she discussed Year 4's ideas for their new teacher appointment), were reaffirmed in their doubts about this process. Alison remarked, "But then what actually happened as a result of it? I don't feel the teachers themselves have much ownership over this at all." Even in response to the Suggestions Box, she observed: "I worry that I am leading it far too much—all the comments are addressed to me or the head."

At this stage, however, she was engaged in a delicate balancing act between wanting to lead the process so that it would be successful with pupils, based on her greater expertise, and wanting to involve teachers. Indeed, teachers perhaps had to come second, in that too much involvement might have inhibited children's responses. She remarked that "staff do come into the assemblies to see what we are doing, but the Key Stage 1 teachers in particular seem suspicious and feel excluded. And anyway, if the children have all their class teachers sitting round the edge, how genuine a debate is that actually going to be?" There are obvious paradoxes here between leading and inviting others to collaborate. At this stage, Alison suggests that top-down leadership is necessary to promote participation and engagement by children and that teachers may need to be excluded in order that children are included.

The Playground Day, however, did offer a means to reach out across the whole school community, as indicated above. A further example was that catering staff at the school produced special "take out" burger meals, which children had suggested would be their preferred option for lunch that day. These were immensely popular, which was therefore gratifying for the staff, whilst also maintaining a focus on pupil voice and the benefits of cooperation. Similarly, at the first Student Voice conference, Alison was careful to include as many people as she could, across the school community—she attended with the head, their road safety ("lollipop") lady, and a governor, plus six children. They came back enthused about the ideas shared there, including that of a "graffiti wall" where children could write up their thoughts and feelings on post-it notes. No other school in our network brought such a range of adults to our events, although questions of resourcing might be as significant as political will.

Later, Alison did meet some explicit challenges from other teachers about student voice, reporting:

> Julia has been challenging me about Pupil Voice. She says, "They know what to say in theory, but in practice they don't carry it out." The children are good at coming up with all the answers for an article or a debate, they know that they should be working together as a team, but, then why is it that Danny's just pulled the chair out from underneath Oliver and he's fallen on the floor . . .

As we saw in the previous section, Alison of course had similar doubts herself in relation to the children's article for the "Student Voice Special Issue" of *Forum* over the mismatch between the high ideals voiced by the children in their contributions and everyday school experience, which was inevitably far from perfect, full of contradictory behaviours and emotional intensity.

Subsequently, Alison hit an even more problematic "low," emailing us to say: "Hit a snag today. One of the staff was upset because she received a report card on her performance as a teacher from one of her pupils—complete with targets! She was affronted and felt that this pupil voice thing was turning things on their head."

When encouraging pupil participation, particularly on teaching and learning issues, teachers who have not experienced this way of working before often voice genuine anxieties and concerns. They may be skeptical about young people's knowledge, intentions, or capabilities, especially where they do not have a particularly positive relationship with pupils. They may feel that children are not competent to offer comments on their work, that they may not keep confidentiality, that they do not have the specialist knowledge necessary, or that it gives a platform to the "wrong" students. They may be suspicious about what will happen to the data that students collect if they carry out formal

research. Some argue that students do not fully understand the complexities of the context or the system in which they operate. All these concerns need to be acknowledged. Negative outcomes are less likely where students are supported in their work and enabled to understand the broader context of their activities and where issues of values and ethics are addressed early on and returned to throughout the process—the "freedom within a framework" Alison referred to, above.

In the case of the "report card," it is hard to ascertain how far the student was purposely malicious. He was "citing" words, and we cannot tell precisely what effect he intended them to have. Having seen what he wrote, it seemed to us that it could equally well have been affectionate. However, this scenario high-lights profound challenges about student voice work, particularly who gets to evaluate whom and how. Teachers are used to being put in the position of evaluating children; thinking that pupils might evaluate teachers in turn effects profound shifts in identity and power. How differently would teachers write reports on students if they were also to be evaluated? Would it inhibit profes-sional judgment or promote new professional relationships? How far can the agenda be kept to common, collegial goals rather than individualistic, divisive ones? (Fielding, 1999).

We have been repeatedly struck by how readily some students take to the idea of voice and how familiar they already are with the discourses of educational management. When students set "targets" for the school, they included the idea of "taking responsibility" for their learning, which is precisely that being pro-moted in current British education policy. In the case of the report card, too, a child demonstrates familiarity with the language of performativity. There is a common perception that such official discourses, although they are about children, do not involve them and indeed go over their heads; these examples show what a fundamental misunderstanding this is. It also reveals how "pupil voice" is shaped/spoken by the broader discursive contexts that are available, which are often those of an individualised and competitive model of education. Alison's achievement was partly to give pupils access to other discourses of mutuality, care, and cooperation, which then resulted in contributions such as those year 6 students made to the school assembly (cf. Thomson & Gunter, forthcoming).

In the Summer Term, the school was given a School Achievement Award (a few thousand pounds recognising improved test results). Alison insisted on dividing it up on a pro rata basis for all staff, including the janitor, classroom assistants, and "lollipop lady" (road safety officer). Whilst the latter told her it was "wonderful" to feel so included, some teachers objected: "One was absolutely outraged that the caretaker, for example, should be getting a sum of

money. 'What had he done to get those kids through their SATs (national tests)?' He'd done absolutely nothing as far as she was concerned. But I think it's about building a whole school community. If teachers aren't prepared to respect and learn from someone with fewer qualifications or years of experience than them, how will they listen to children?" Alison's choice here was powerful and profound, effectively challenging deep and strongly held assumptions about adults' roles and identities and about who is worth acknowledging. It was a practical but highly symbolic way to demonstrate what a commitment to working as a whole school 'community' might mean in practice.

STORY 3: TOGETHER AT LAST?

By Autumn of the second year of the project, significant challenges remained, although much had been done. The turning point appeared to be the December, end-of-term conference organized as part of our larger research project. By January, Alison reported, "Brilliant results from the conference. It inspired Jane [a year 2 teacher] to propose weekly whole school mixed age Pupil Voice Circle Meetings. We discussed it at our INSET [training day], and amazingly, all staff agreed to give them 15 minutes a week." Alison had found the right ally in Jane, who as a teacher of the younger pupils helped to bridge the gap between Key Stage 1 and 2 teachers. The fact that the initiative came from someone other than Alison might also have made it more acceptable.

Alison described the meetings as follows:

All children aged 4–11 take part and teaching staff lead the circles. Every teacher has about 25 children from all age ranges and we have a whole school agenda. Year 6 children take notes from each circle and these are collated by my class or me and fed back the following week as minutes and new agenda items. So teachers who are less confident about working in this way have a safe set of boundaries, they know what they will be doing. Support staff join the circle meetings too and the staff leading each circle will change every fortnight so that all staff will get to work with all children. We wanted children to get to know all the adults in the building and see that we all want to hear what they have to say. Plus it gets over hierarchies—like the fact that KS1 teachers don't know the older children as individuals and can find them daunting. I am delighted because the emphasis has now shifted away from me but I am able to co ordinate and facilitate.

Two months later, Alison reported:

Our new method of consulting the whole school community is increasingly exciting! We take decisions via the various circles. There is a very real sense amongst the children that children are listened to. Staff—even the ones who have been suspicious of Pupil Voice in the past—find children very mature and are constantly surprised by them. The most thrilling part for me is that all teaching and support staff are now actively involved—something that has taken two years to develop.

Subsequently, two governors joined in circle time, to get to know the school better, and the year 5 children began to help take the minutes, so that they would be skilled up by the following year. And Year 6, not the teachers, ran the sessions. Alison reported, "The younger children speak more now than they ever have done before because it's their peers that are leading it, and they look up so much to Year 6." The pupils had therefore helped Alison find a solution to a problem that bothered her in the early days of the process—of enabling the youngest age groups to feel more confident about speaking.

By this point Alison seemed to have succeeded in her intention of "getting the relationships right." She had created an environment in which young people engaged with adults in meaningful activities whose purpose was clear to them. The project had constructed a context for children in which learning could happen naturally, take care of itself, because it flowed from an exciting, rich, significant experience. Moreover, the project was communal (including, at various points, parents, care givers, support staff, the world beyond the school as well as all the teachers and children). This project was therefore very much about learning, not in the traditional sense of individualistic outcomes related to the curriculum but rather in the sense of collectively developed understandings of issues that were real to students (and to teachers). Doing this work successfully depended on the quality of the relationships established between members of that learning community, which animated and gave substance to the structures that were in place. Formal frameworks worked for rather than against personal and educational aspirations and contributed appropriately to wider purposes.

Since our narrative (and research) ended, the school also developed a peer teaching programme that took place during the weeks at the end of the Summer Term, after national tests had finished. Older children planned and ran several small group sessions for younger children in maths and geography. Such activities developed children's empathy with (the difficulty of) the teaching process, and it also increased their confidence and their ability to reflect on their own learning. Alison particularly relished observing their sense of collective ownership, their feeling that they themselves could take charge of their learning, suggest how it could be made more enjoyable and worthwhile, which led to "a qualitative sense of joy in learning."

CONCLUSION

We can see from this account that successful student participation does not arise through an unstructured or permissive process. It requires extensive facilitation in order to provide a framework within which both teachers and students feel comfortable and that then enables new insights and developments to occur.

Alison scaffolded her work carefully in order to support both teachers and students, involving them as what Lave and Wenger (1991) describe as "legitimate peripheral participants" until they felt ready to take on new roles. For instance, she supplied teachers with the questions that they could use to discuss student voice with children before they felt able to make appropriate proposals themselves. She involved others in the process by taking them to events. Teachers initially modeled how to conduct the Pupil Voice Circle Meetings, but they were given an agenda so that they too were guided in what to do. Only after children observed this for some time did they begin to lead the meetings.

We have indicated throughout this chapter how student voice troubles existing relationships and identities and fosters new ones. The benefits to students are perhaps most immediately obvious. Alison's work created new relationships of children *to themselves* as they became more confident learners and as labeling by ability became less significant. Relationships *between* students shifted as Alison gave them access to discourses of care and mutual concern for each other rather than individualistic competition. Within this context, changing relationships *between pupils and teachers* ultimately became supportive as teachers came to see how, in Alison's words, "they don't want to hurt you, they just want to make it better" and as pupils were encouraged to understand the dilemmas of teaching. Hierarchical relationships *between different staff members* diminished, perhaps with more difficulty. And finally, teachers were eventually enabled to take up a different relationship *to themselves*, redefining their professionalism in terms of collegiality with other staff as well as children (Fielding, 1999).

Alison states that her experience has reinforced her feeling "that there's a limitless potential if children are given the opportunity to communicate how they need to learn." However, she also acknowledges that,

the reality of the partnership approach to teaching is not easy. It's something that's taken me a long time. All of my teaching career I've been working towards doing this and I'm still doing so . . . The children need to know where the parameters are in order that they can operate in a way that outwardly seems very free and easy but is not at all . . . You can only build that environment by having an assertive presence in the classroom. Within that, you can build opportunities for individuals to flourish. There's a real structure there and I think it's difficult to see from the outside because it doesn't look as if it exists. There are boundaries and it's all to do with respecting each other, understanding the principles of the way we work.

AFTERWORD BY ALISON PEACOCK

In January 2003 I left Barley Mill School to take up a headship. When I announced that I was leaving, Julia, the teacher who was initially most resistant to the work, proved to be the one who declared that "pupil voice must continue,"

which was a wonderful affirmation. We have continued to maintain contact as friends as well as colleagues.

A new leadership team of head and deputy took over in an interim role. Staff who were most keen to continue the work of pupil voice were galvanized by Julia. The work continued until Julia left the school in September 2003 and has now petered out.

This provides an insight into the manner in which leadership impacts systems. The system and mechanism for listening to children remained, but by the time that Julia left the school, the ethos had changed.

Meaningful teacher-pupil dialogue occurs when there is a relationship based on mutual respect and trust. The new leadership team did not see the importance of this work, and consequently the school environment changed, and development of pupil voice was no longer deemed relevant in a busy curriculum. All of this took place although there were still members of staff who believed fully in the work carried out during the project.

I believe that "teacher voice" has to be developed alongside pupil voice for the dialogue to be truly meaningful within a whole school situation. If the leadership team does not develop these relationships with staff as well as with children, then systems designed to enhance school effectiveness through consultation will be shallow and will easily become subsumed by more pressing concerns.

My new school, The Wroxham School, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire, was judged as "failing" when I arrived and is now performing within the top 5% of schools nationally. I believe that this transformation is fundamentally due to my insistence that both staff and pupil voice are crucial to maximize standards of teaching and learning. Wroxham is a "listening school" and the school ethos is one of valuing every individual whilst developing a lifelong love of learning.

Note: the school aims to resist labeling by ability and is working with the University of Cambridge to conduct an in-depth research study during 2006–2007. Most recently, Kaye Johnson has researched Wroxham School for an international study published by the National College for School Leadership, *Children's Voices: Pupil Leadership in Primary Schools*.

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NOTE

[i] Although Sara Bragg is credited as the author of this article, it depends throughout on the extensive contributions and the intellectual and moral framework provided by Michael Fielding during both the research and the writing process. The collective "we" used here attempts to do some justice to his influence and support. It also incorporates the powerful role played by Alison Peacock, in her practice (to which we hope to have done credit by writing the chapter around it), and in her willingness to participate extensively in the research project throughout the process. The article is thus indebted to both.

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SUSAN YONEZAWA AND MAKEBA JONES

USING STUDENTS' VOICES TO INFORM AND EVALUATE SECONDARY SCHOOL REFORM

THE UNTAPPED POWER OF STUDENTS' VOICES

The utilization of student voice is rare in K-12 reform. Despite the fact that they are the recipients of reformers' good intentions, students are infrequently asked their opinions as to what enhances or detracts from their learning (Loutzenheiser, 2002; Nieto, 1994; Schultz, Buck, & Niesz, 2000). In particular, students who struggle are often silent (or silenced) in the process of change. This continues to be the case despite researchers' efforts to document marginalized students' school experiences (Fine, 1991; Lee 1996; Nieto, 1994; Yonezawa, Wells, & Serna, 2002).

A small but growing number of researchers identify student voice as helpful to understand structural and cultural problems within schools (Mitra, 2001; Nieto, 1994; Rudduck, Day, & Wallace, 1997; Shultz & Cook-Sather, 2001; Silva, 2001; SooHoo, 1993). Nieto (1994), for example, has long advocated inviting students to the table and eliciting their perspectives regarding needed changes in schools. Mitra's (2001) and Silva's (2001) research demonstrates how students' voices can be embedded in reform planning and implementation. Shultz and Cook-Sather (2001) invite students to reflect in written form about their schooling experiences. Our work in District A expands on this scholarship.

Despite the call by some to include students in reform plans, there exists little literature suggesting students could evaluate educational reforms (Rubin & Silva, 2003). To that end, our chapter is one of few to suggest that student voice can be a powerful, use-inspired, evaluation tool of school reforms across the country. Student voice can contribute to school change by providing specific suggestions of what works in schools and classrooms. Youth can articulate powerful insights to inform researchers, practitioners, and policy makers as they make decisions regarding changes to school and classroom practice. Student voice can augment standardized test scores, which for many districts and schools have become the ultimate marker of educational success and failure. (For more information about the methodology of our approach to evaluating and shaping reform through student voice, see Jones & Yonezawa, 2002.)

We use our work in District A as a case in point to show how we engaged students' voices to theorize about, to evaluate, and perhaps most importantly, to shape District-A high school reforms. We see our work as an example of the problem-solving research called for by the National Academy of Education in that it tackles the broad-based, complex problem of improving learning environments for students in a large urban district while trying to influence teacher practices as well as the educational system.

RESEARCH METHODS

District A contains 22 comprehensive and alternative high schools. We received funding to conduct student focus groups at 15 of those high schools. (See Table 1 for a demographic profile of all 15 high schools.) Because all schools were not in an equal state of readiness due to willing (or unwilling) leadership and various other issues (for example, one school was being closed down the following year for renovations), we agreed to focus on 13 of the schools in 2001–2002. These 13 schools were places where principals and teachers had begun the reform and were more open to student perspectives. During 2002–2003, we expanded the number of schools we studied to 15.

TABLE 1 District A Student Focus Groups: Numbers of students by school, 2001–2003

School	# of Students 2001–02	Selected by	9th	10th	11th	12th	# of Students 2002–03	Selected by
			Sample breakdown by grade for 01–02					
Clover	14	School	2	4	4	4	12	School
Crain	14	UCSD	6	8	0	0	10	UCSD
King	12	UCSD	4	8	0	0	10	UCSD
Lexington	14	School	1	8	2	3	0	School
Montgomery	16	School	6	10	0	0	12	School
Bay Mills	10	School	1	3	3	3	10	School
Murray Manor	0	–	–	–	–	–	11	School
McEnroe	9	School	3	2	1	3	9	School
Hamilton Park	12	School	3	4	2	3	9	School
Light Plateau	12	School	2	2	4	4	8	School
Downey Sands	10	UCSD	0	2	7	1	12	UCSD
CSPA	0	–	–	–	–	–	13	School
Rowen Sunset	13	School	3	3	4	3	12	School
Serendipity	11	School	2	3	3	3	8	School
Cassidy Union	13	School	1	5	2	5	12	School
Totals	160		34	62	32	32	40	

At each of the 15 schools, we ran student focus groups with 12–14 volunteers. At some sites, students were recruited by counselors instructed to convene diverse groups of students across grade, gender, race, home language, track placement, and grade-point average as cited in table 2. Counselors nominated students based on perceived ability to speak articulately or for having unique perspectives. Facilitators worked with counselors to ensure diverse selections; however, because counselors selected the students, the students likely possessed greater social capital than the general population, and consequently, they may have been more positive in general. At other schools, we randomly selected students from all ninth- through twelfth-graders while attempting to achieve proportional representation in prior achievement, track level, gender, race, and grade.

TABLE 2 Characteristics of Students in 2001–2003
District A Focus Groups

Characteristics	Percent
Gender	
Male	47%
Female	53%
Race	
White	31%
African-American	17%
Latino	29%
Asian	8%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1%
Grade Level	
9th	22%
10th	39%
11th	19.5%
12th	19.5%
Cumulative GPA	
> 3.00	53%
2.99 to 2.00	37%
< 2.00	10%
English Language Proficiency	
English Speaker	55%
Reclassified Fluent English Proficient	36%
Limited English Proficient	8%
Special Education	1%

All data for this table were retrieved from the District A district database 2001–2002.

Table 3 shows the student focus group participants' demographic break-down. In sum, the focus groups were well correlated with the general population by race, gender, and grade levels. Participants varied substantially from the district high school population by prior achievement (grade-point average), language proficiency, and special education. 90% of the student participants had a 2.00 GPA or higher, 91% were either English speakers or had been

TABLE 3 District A High School Demographic Data for 2001–2002

School	Number of Students	Free/ Reduced Lunch	English Learners	Racial Breakdown of Students	State Academic Performance Index (API)[1]
Clover	1368	35%	17%	43% Hispanic/Latino 46% White 5% Asian/Pacific Islander 4% African & African American 2% Other	605
Crain	1679	71%	42%	36% Hispanic/Latino 28% African & African American 26% Asian/Pacific Islander 7% White 1% Other	514
King	1670	56%	28%	31% Hispanic/Latino 27% Asian/Pacific Islander 21% African & African American 19% White	602
Lexington	755	62%	20%	62% African & African American 28% Hispanic/Latino 8% Asian/Pacific Islander 2% White	490
Montgomery	1428	43%	20%	39% Hispanic/Latino 31% White 14% Asian/Pacific Islander 13% African & African American 1% Other	572

Bay Mills	1570	53%	23%	44% Hispanic/Latino 27% White 15% Asian/Pacific Islander 12% African & African American 1% Other	609
Murray Manor	2478	17%	9%	9% Hispanic/Latino 29% White 52% Asian/Pacific Islander 6% African & African American 4% Other	724
McEnroe	2895	28%	15%	50% Asian/Pacific Islander 25% Hispanic/Latino 19% African & African American 6% White	617
Hamilton Park	2223	20%	9%	53% White 26% Hispanic/Latino 10% African & African American 10% Asian/Pacific Islander 1% Other	697
Light Plateau	1885	26%	12%	49% White 38% Hispanic/Latino 7% African & African American 4% Asian/Pacific Islander 1% Other	664
Downey Sands	2123	46%	37%	64% Hispanic/Latino 16% White 14% African & African American 3% Asian/Pacific Islander	529
CSPA	1483	24%	3%	19% Hispanic/Latino 39% White 8% Asian/Pacific Islander 29% African & African American 5% Other	680

TABLE 3 *Continued*.

School	Number of Students	Free/ Reduced Lunch	English Learners	Racial Breakdown of Students	State Academic Performance Index (API)[1]
Rowen Sunset	1997	10%	4%	58% White 29% Asian/Pacific Islander 8% Hispanic/Latino 4% African & African American	772
Serendipidty	1927	29%	7%	35% White 25% Hispanic/Latino 23% Asian/Pacific Islander 16% African & African American 1% Other	686
Cassidy Union	1771	17%	8%	45% White 22% Asian/Pacific Islander 21% Hispanic/Latino 10% African & African American 1% Other	723

[1] In this state, schools are given an Academic Performance Index (API) rank number. The number spans from 200 to 1000 points; however, any score over 800 is consider very high and schools who reach this cut off are considered having met their academic achievement requirements. The API is a highly public and political score because it is calculated mainly from schools' annual standardized test results. It is also the score the state uses to determine funding (both teacher rewards and extra site funding for low scoring schools) and interventions with repeatedly low-scoring schools threatened with state takeover

reclassified from an English learner to fluent English proficient, and only 1% was designated special education.

Facilitators tried to ensure that the time and dates of the sessions did not inadvertently exclude any sub-populations. To this end, facilitators sometimes scheduled rotating sessions with some held mid-morning, some at lunch, some in afternoons, and some after school to ensure that all students could participate without significant time away from in-class or after-school commitments.

All the sessions were run by a facilitator who used a semi-structured protocol that had been co-crafted with district leadership. The protocol focused on topics central to the reform. Topics included personalization, academic rigor, administrators' and teachers' roles, and testing policies and procedures. Some schools

added topics (e.g., school safety, cheating, and race relations). During the groups, students talked about their experiences in classroom and school life as related to the topics. Focus group facilitators used the protocols because of time constraints; however, they occasionally explored topics that emerged from students' discussions. The groups met five times for at least an hour each time. All student participants received a $100.00 Target gift card as compensation for attending all five sessions. The sessions were videotaped, audio-taped, and transcribed.

We analyzed the student focus group data by constructing case reports for each of the schools. The reports included site-specific methods, analyses of main findings by reform themes (e.g. personalization, rigor, leadership), examples of supportive student focus group data, and analyses by site-specific data categories (e.g., safety, cheating). We also combed transcript data and coded it by reform themes and sub-themes using a grounded theory approach. We were careful to note data that supported reform strengths and weaknesses, as well as data on new themes that arose in the groups.

For the general reporting requirements of the grant we wrote a report encompassing all the topics for each school. These reports were shared in one-on-one meetings with the principals as well as the district leadership responsible for overseeing high schools. At some sites, researchers met with school site councils or department heads to discuss results. Facilitators also made whole-school faculty presentations at sites. Student quotes were cited to impress upon faculty how students experienced school and classroom life (see Jones & Yonezawa, 2002, for a description of the faculty feedback process). A whole-district report was generated that evaluated the reform across the sites. This report was provided to district administrators, including the superintendent.

In the following section, we describe the working relationship between ourselves and the District-A high school reform. We explicate how the district conceptualized personalization and academic rigor as high school reform tenets. We then share examples from the data on these themes to evaluate and inform the District-A change efforts from the students' perspectives. We focus on personalization and rigor because these are two critical areas that the district identified as central to their efforts and into which students in the focus groups provided particularly good insights.

THE CREATE-DISTRICT A PARTNERSHIP AND DISTRICT A HIGH SCHOOL REFORM

District A is the second largest district in California with over 150 schools. It served 141,002 K-12 students in 2002–2003. Slightly more than half were eligible for free and reduced lunch (53%). Nearly 40,000 students (28.5% of students) in District A were designated English Learners and together spoke

64 different languages, although the predominant language was Spanish. The district was heavily Latino (41%), with white students making up the second largest group (26%) and Asian-Pacific Islanders (17%) and African-American students (15%) constituting the remainder.

Our work with District A began in 1998 with two high schools, Crain and Downey Sands High Schools, both of which served District A's poorest and most diverse students. Through university partnership outreach, our research center, known as the Center for Research in Educational Equity, Assessment and Teaching Excellence (CREATE), received state money to partner with these high schools and several feeder schools. CREATE partnerships assisted schools with professional development, health, parent and community relations, and student academic enrichment during and after school as well as inter-sessions and summer sessions.

At the same time, District A embarked on a new school reform effort supported by the Institute for Learning and headed by the then-District-A-Superintendent and then-Chancellor of Instruction. At the heart of the reform was an intense literacy focus, redefining of the principal as instructional leader, and teacher professional development across subject areas. Over time, we would learn that the reform was more successful at the elementary level, leaving reformers frustrated at the stagnation of the high schools. (See Stein, Hubbard, & Mehan, 2002, for details about the District-A reform.)

In 2001, District A began creating smaller learning communities within its comprehensive high schools. The premise was that by personalizing the high school environment through smaller learning communities and raising the level of academic rigor in classrooms, more students would succeed on benchmark measures including college preparatory course-taking patterns.

Tackling the Comprehensive High School Culture: Personalization

Theodore Sizer (1996), in his book *Horace's Hope*, the last of the Horace trilogy, writes that one of the most important efforts on the part of school reformers is the creation of "places of human scale" (p. 91) within high schools. This is important, Sizer (1996) argues, because teachers must have the support and capacity to know their students well. "Good teaching requires a strong relationship between the instructor and the instructed. Learning requires a safe place, and that means not only physical and psychological safety but a climate in which a student knows that he can ask any question with the assurance that a well-known adult will attend to it" (p. 94).

District-A administrators included personalization in their high school reform because they were convinced that more personalized learning environments

could increase students' willingness and ability to learn. High schools in District A served on average 2,000 students. The District-A average class size was 27 students, slightly higher than the state and county. District A struggled with the same difficulties faced by large, urban, high schools and defined personalization as follows: Personalization involves the development of a school climate and organization that produces strong, personal support for each student and a feeling on the part of the student that the adults in the schools believe that the student can and will succeed. (District A, March 12, 2002, *Institute for Learning Status Report on District High School Reform Efforts*)

Focusing on Academics: Rigor

District-A high schools had also been easy places for students to "get by." High schools in the district failed to produce graduates with cognitive and technical skills transferable to the post-secondary world. In 2001, the district's graduation data showed that almost 30% of high school students dropped out, only about two out of every five graduating seniors met minimum entrance requirements for the University of California and California State University systems, and of graduates enrolled in California four-year colleges, 50% required remedial work in English and mathematics (District A, August 7, 2001, *Executive Summary of Carnegie Corporations Schools for a New Society Initiative: District A High Schools Achieving Rigorous Performance*).

These disturbing achievement patterns underscored the district's press on principals to make sweeping changes in the teaching, learning, and performance in classrooms. The district described the mission of its high schools as "producing students who are able to meet rigorous graduation requirements, pass the California high school exit exam, meet [local university and college-entrance requirements], and make a successful transition to postsecondary education or a career of their choice" (District A, 2002b). Yet student achievement data showed many District-A high school students struggling to meet these standards. In a high school reform status report to the school board, the district noted one of its key goals as increasing schools' academic press, defined as follows:

Academic press is the degree to which various forces—school policies, practices, norms, expectations, and rewards—generated by both staff and students, constitute the academic 'environment' experienced by students and press them to work hard and do well in school. (District A, March 12, 2002, *Institute for Learning Status Report on District High School Reform Efforts*)

Reform Without Clear Direction

The district identified personalization and rigor as key aspects of its reform without guidelines on how schools could address them. For personalization, some schools developed new or modified advisories. Class size reduction

TABLE 4 Sample of District A Interventions Targeting Personalization and Rigor

Personalization	Academic Rigor
• Class-size reduction (9th & 10th English, Algebra)	• Aligning curriculum to state standards
• Whole-school advisory periods	• Introduction of 9th grade physics for all students
• Conferring (in English classrooms primarily)	• Elimination of remedial mathematics
	• End of course assessments in science, social studies, mathematics, English
	• Double and triple period English courses for low-reading students.
	• Staff developing on purposeful planning— posting daily agendas.

(20:1) in ninth- and tenth-grade English and algebra classrooms and a focus on conferring in English helped too. As for academic rigor, teacher professional development focused on aligning curriculum with state standards, developing end-of-course assessments, and instructing teachers on literacy strategies. Only occasionally did principals hold staff development sessions specifically addressing personalization and rigor. (See Table 4.)

CREATE's Role in Evaluating High School Reform

CREATE conducted an overall quantitative and qualitative evaluation on district and high school efforts to increase personalization and academic press in schools and classrooms. Quantitatively, we measured District-A high school students in a cohort model over five years on various standardized test, college preparedness, and related achievement measures. Qualitatively, we examined students' experiences in arguably personalized and rigorous high school environments. Part of this evaluation involved focus groups with students, parents, and teachers over the grant's five-year period. CREATE also helped shape the reform by sharing students' comments with administrators and teachers. For this chapter, we will focus on how the qualitative student voice data informed and evaluated the District-A high school reform and, subsequently, informed district changes.

HOW STUDENTS DESCRIBE THEIR EXPERIENCES WITHIN DISTRICT-A CLASSROOMS ON PERSONALIZATION AND ACADEMIC RIGOR

In this subsection, we describe how students perceived the personalization and rigor that they experienced. We then discuss how students talked about engagement as a mix of personalized and rigorous learning. We conclude by reviewing how students' perspectives informed District A's reforms.

Before we begin, we remind our readers that although we selected examples of students' quotes for use in this chapter, the quotations come from a large qualitative database of students' voices collected from 15 schools. The examples we use in this chapter to highlight students' perspectives represent robust findings within the larger sample, which obviously cannot be fully shared.

Personalization: What Kinds of Connections Exist Between District-A Teachers and Students and How Do They Influence Student Learning?

Because personalization is a key aspect of the reform, we asked students in the focus groups about their relationships with teachers and other students and if and how teachers provided individualized instruction. We discussed with them whether or not depersonalized environments were a problem in District-A high schools and if so, how extensive the problem was. We also wanted to know how students characterized the problem. Below are the protocol questions we used to tap into the concept of personalization with the students:

Student Focus Group Protocol for District-A Schools 2001–2002

Personalization
1. Do you enjoy coming to school? Why or why not?
2. What kinds of relationships have you had with your teachers? Do you think you have a relationship with your teachers?
3. Do you feel your teachers understand your strengths and weaknesses as a student?
4. Do you have a sense of what a teacher needs to do in order to really help you learn?
5. Do your teachers know that about you? How do they show you that they understand or don't understand how you need to learn?
6. Have you ever done or said anything that has helped or hurt your relationship with a teacher?
7. How do you think your teachers see you? Do you think your teachers know you as an individual in a seat? Does that matter?
8. Do you feel comfortable in your classes? Can you be yourself? What about the class makes you feel comfortable or uncomfortable?
9. Is there an adult at this school with whom you feel you could share a personal problem? What is this adult's position (teacher, principal, counselor, coach, etc.)? Do you feel that you have adequate access to this person—e.g., that you could get in to talk to him or her when you needed to?

Weak student-teacher relationships were the norm   We found that students agreed wholeheartedly that depersonalized classrooms and poor relationships

between students and teachers were endemic to District-A high schools. Nearly every student could describe at least one and often several classrooms in which they had felt detached from the teacher and subject matter. For example, when asked what kinds of relationships he had with his teachers at his school, a King High School student, Huy, replied:

> *Huy*: I don't have none. I don't think I have no relationships.
>
> *Facilitator*: Nothing? Not good or bad?
>
> *Huy*: No. Just go to class and read.
>
> *Facilitator*: Not with any of them?
>
> *Huy*: No.
>
> *Facilitator*: How about last semester?
>
> *Huy*: No.

To some students, the idea that teachers would know them as individual learners or would have the time or inclination to do so was unfathomable. Students felt that teachers rarely understood their academic strengths and weaknesses, often failed to check for understanding, and seldom helped students master the curriculum. Linda, at Cassidy Union High School, said: "I've never had a teacher that has known whether or not I'm a good student, or not a good student but what I'm good or bad at." Ramona, also at Cassidy Union, agreed: "I feel the same way. I've never had a teacher that knew what my strengths and weaknesses are." At Bay Mills High School, Javier lamented that teachers did not understand his needs:

> *Facilitator*: Do you think that your teachers, in general, understand your strengths and weaknesses as students? . . . So some say yes and some say no?
>
> *Javier*: No . . . there's a certain teacher that just makes rules and expects all of us to follow them the same way and that's kind of tough . . . Sometimes that makes us feel less than comfortable . . .
>
> *Facilitator*: Okay.
>
> *Javier*: They don't understand me.

Even elite high schools did not fare well on this question of individualized instruction. Lucerio, at Hamilton Park High School, which typically serves more affluent and high-scoring students, echoed Javier's point that individualized attention was hard to come by:

I have this one teacher, he gives us our homework and then he goes and sits in the corner, and he doesn't come back and tell us how to do it or anything. He just gives it and says, "Do it, and it's due

at the end of the class." I don't get what we're supposed to learn out of that because we don't know how to do it. I don't even know if I'm doing it right or not.

Stereotyped judgments and abusive actions by teachers undermine teacher-student relationships   Other students reported interactions with teachers who judged them or their peers. These students stated that teachers ridiculed their dress (e.g., baggy pants) and speech (e.g., heavily-accented English, loud mannerisms). "Some teachers judge you [by] the way you dress . . . If you have baggy pants or something, they stereotype you as a gangster or this and that," explained Dante, at Montgomery High School. Alvin, at King High School, agreed: "People get under-estimated and stuff. I don't know how to explain it, but people get judged on the way they dress and stuff. If they look bad, then the teacher doesn't even try to teach them. He just forgets about them." Another King High student, Carlo, chimed in, "Yeah. I wore baggy pants one day and [my teacher] called me a 'gangster.' He's like, 'Oh, what gang are you in? What do they call you?' I was like, 'Dang, I ain't in no gang.' " When teachers made judgments, students became unmotivated or refused to attend class.

Occasionally, students reported what they saw as racist remarks by teachers. For example, comments to Mexican students that they were tardy or forgetful because a "typical Mexican" is "you know, always late with stuff" or comments to Black students about being loud or always having to sing "rap music" did not go unnoticed by students.

Teachers also wielded power in what students claimed were unnecessarily harsh ways, thereby undercutting any hope of a personalized teacher-student relationship. Students reported some teachers punished and controlled students. Teachers sometimes "try hard to be mean" like they are "showing off," said Lauren, a Montgomery High School student. "They say things like, 'You don't mess with me,' and for every little joke they give out a detention." Renee, a soft-spoken student at Cassidy Union High, was similarly appalled when witnessing the behavior of her science teacher, who had lost control of the classroom earlier and regularly took out his anger on them:

In two of my classes, especially my physics class . . . it's to the point now, where [the teacher's] disrespecting us more than we're disrespecting him. Today a student was drinking water. And he told her to stop drinking water because it shouldn't be in the class. And she said, "Do you want me to die?" jokingly. And he said, "*I think everyone does*." And the whole class just went quiet. He just gets so angry that he can't control what he says anymore . . . That's just not right.

When teachers make students "feel dumb," students question their abilities Most disturbing were student reports that teachers could make them "feel dumb" by how they answered questions or targeted students. According to

Elizabeth, a Cassidy Union High School student, teachers sometimes "treat you like a child instead of a person. They just make you feel dumb . . . No, not necessarily dumb, just like it doesn't matter what you think. And you don't care, you stop trying." A Montgomery High School student, Isaiah, described how interactions with his math teacher made him "feel dumb":

> *Isaiah*: My teacher today, he asked me [a question and] made me feel dumb.
>
> *Facilitator*: Made you feel dumb? What happened?
>
> *Isaiah*: Remember the story that I was talking about with my friend [who] always gets picked on? The [teacher] asked me today. The [students] didn't understand this problem in Math. It's a Math class. And then [the teacher] put me right there on the spot, and then he goes, "Still don't get it?" I'm like, "No, I don't . . . I don't get it. You're not coming to me. I'm not understanding you. I don't think it's my fault. You're not explaining it well . . ."

Negative teacher-student relationships were detrimental to students' motivation, self-esteem, and perceived ability to achieve in a class. Despite the bravado of adolescent youth, these teens told us that they took seriously what teachers said about them, sometimes causing them to second-guess their abilities. For example, Sara, an honors student at Cassidy Union High, stated:

Whenever a teacher tells me I can't do something, I actually start believing that. And that's the worst feeling because just recently we had a big research paper and it had to be 10 pages long or something, it's probably not that big for like a senior. We could do it on basically anything and I just wanted to do it on some kind of like scientific thing, and my teacher was like, "No, you are not scientific minded enough to do this," or something. And I [said], "I am really into this, I like it a lot." And she [told me], "No, do something on women's suffrage or something."

The indifferent and sometimes hostile relationships students described between them and teachers troubled us immensely. How could students be expected to learn and teachers to teach effectively in such environments? Students told us that learning often stopped in such classrooms.

This is not to say that there were not students who could describe classrooms where teachers tried to know them as individuals, to check their learning, and to offer one-on-one help. Krystallina, a senior at Rowen Sunset High School, described a teacher who had warm relationships with students, relationships that she used to enhance her teaching: "She gets very close with [her students]. She is very into what she teaches, and she tries to make everyone in the classroom understand, and if someone doesn't, she makes sure that they will understand it. She makes everyone get it; she won't let someone just sit there." Most students, however, told us that while personalization was essential, it was not happening widely in District-A high schools.

Personalization Is Both Relational and Instructional

We also heard talk regarding teachers who used pedagogies that responded to students' varied ways of learning. Students in all high schools appreciated teachers who understood that teaching one way "may not be the only way we can learn." Repeatedly, students explained that they learned best when teachers used multiple instructional strategies, as Minh, from Clover High School, stated:

> [Effective teachers are those who are] trying to use visual representations in class instead of just the book, just reading it. They want to help you understand the material . . . all the way through. [One teacher I had] used a lot of expression and a lot of, you know, vocal changes when he read and that added life to *Hamlet*. And then we watched the videos too. We watched about three different versions of it and that gave us a different perspective of it so just being able to use visuals really helped.

Samantha, a student at Hamilton Park High School, recalled a positive learning experience in an English class where her teacher stopped periodically during the lesson to explain the material in different ways to students having trouble understanding:

> *Samantha*: Well, I remember when we read we always got in a circle. We put our desks in a circle. And she would stop after about every page, and she'd explain what was actually going on because it's really hard to understand [that author]. She just did like things so you could understand what was going on in that class and make it fun.
>
> *Facilitator*: How did she know if the class wasn't understanding?
>
> *Samantha*: Most of the time if we didn't understand it, we'd tell her and she would say, "Okay, well . . ." Then she explained it a different way. She wouldn't just say the same thing over and over again because like obviously we didn't get it the first time. And she was also really hard, and at times I was kind of frustrated. I was just like why do we have to do this? But after we were done with the project, I was just so happy that we did it, and it was a learning experience.

We heard numerous statements about the ways teachers' multiple methods of delivering academic content facilitated learning. Varied teaching styles accompanied by diverse assignments often captured students' interest. When teachers did not rely on the course textbook or simple fact-finding worksheets and tailored their instructional practices to meet students' needs, students felt motivated and retained material.

Personalization Remained a Struggle Within District-A High Schools

Some students reported strong teacher-student relationships in their classrooms, but the district concern that teachers and students within District A high

schools were not connecting was largely upheld. Personalized classrooms were the exception within District A high schools, not the norm, and students conceptualized the problem of depersonalization as relational and instructional. They struggled to maintain respectful, much less close, relationships with teachers. They also struggled to find teachers whose instruction created personalized learning environments. Thuy, a student at Clover High School, said:

> There's a difference between being a teacher and being an instructor. Especially a good teacher because they are going to be the ones who want to reach out and help these students and an instructor can [and will only] tell you the book and tell you to read the chapter and take a test.

Where Is the Academic Rigor in District-A High School Classrooms?

In this section, we look inside District A-high school classrooms and describe what mattered to student learning from students' perspectives. Given the pervasive patterns of low achievement and graduation rates, and the massive professional development opportunities provided for teachers over the last two to three years, were classrooms across District-A high schools more rigorous for students? We used the following student group protocol questions to assess rigor in district high schools:

Student Focus Group Protocol for District-A Schools 2001–2002

Academic Rigor/Quality of Instruction
 1. Describe a class where you think you're really learning, and why.
 2. Describe a class where you're not learning, and why.
 3. Tell us specifically about what these classes look like. For example, describe your assignments, assessments, grading, homework, teaching style, peer interactions, student engagement, etc.
 4. Can a good (high-quality) class also be a hard (academically rigorous) class?
 5. Do you have too much, too little, or the right amount of homework?
 6. When you think over all of the classes you've had, what kind of teaching do you feel helps you learn best? Helps you learn the least? In other words, what do you think is high quality and low quality teaching? Do you feel that, in general, you've experienced high-quality or low-quality teaching? What makes teaching high quality or low quality?
 7. What's the student's responsibility in the classroom?
 8. Do you feel like you know what your teachers expect from you?
 9. If so, how do teachers convey their expectations?
10. If not, what do you do?
11. Do you feel that your teachers have fair expectations? Are they low or high? How do they help you meet those expectations? What else that they are NOT doing might help you meet their expectations?

12. Do you have an idea how your teachers define a 'good' or 'successful' student?
13. Do you agree with those definitions?
14. Do you feel you're learning the things you need to know in order to succeed at your goals after you graduate from high school? What else might help you be successful in your future?

We answered these questions by drawing on students' experiences from across district high schools.

Regular students in District-A high schools were just "getting by"   Students, particularly those who were not in advanced-level courses, shared examples of "strategies" for getting by in District-A high schools. Students told us, for instance, that passing a class without investing much effort was fairly easy. In District A-high schools, students commonly did minimal work and received passing grades from teachers perceived as uncaring, unorganized, and uninterested. Many students, for example, believed teachers never corrected homework. "I think teachers, they don't really correct the homework," said Allison from Downey Sands High School, "Sometimes the teachers will say flat out, 'You know, I didn't have that much time. If you did it, I gave you a check credit.'" Students across focus groups tested math teachers by scribbling random answers on homework, on which students said teachers always gave them full credit. Sometimes, all students needed to do to pass was to attend class. Javier at Lexington High School told us, "I had [a] teacher this year [who] told me all I have to do is come to class and I would get an A I'm not learning anything." Similarly, Tony, a student at Montgomery High School, said his math teacher expects students "to just be quiet and he'll pass you."

Another strategy for getting by in district classrooms was cheating. Students talked extensively about rampant cheating and how easy it was to cheat. Ben, at Rowen Sunset High School, said cheating was "almost [an] everyday thing," and that students probably "learn more about cheating than [the subject]." Other students at Rowen Sunset echoed Ben's assessment of cheating at the high school. Maureen, for instance, explained that students went to great lengths to devise ways to cheat without getting caught by their teachers:

You just really don't want to screw up anything. It seems like the teachers are pretty strict about rules on cheating and everything so . . . you devise all of these little concoctions. Like, [I had a] pen. We got one my freshman year where you clicked it, and it had little messages [that appeared on the pen] [e.g., Don't do drugs]. And I put a piece of paper in there [and] I rolled it up [in the pen]. You just clicked the pen [for the answers]. It was pretty cool.

Students, generally, were willing to take risks to ensure passing classes without investing effort in the work.

The lack of rigor in high school classrooms was so common that it led some students, like Jesus, at Downey Sands High School, to believe that rigor was not applicable to high school courses. Said Jesus, "Personally, for me, [a challenging class] would have to be a Psychology class. I'm not taking Psychology but I would imagine it would be more difficult in college, if I wanted to be a lawyer, taking my classes, I would find them interesting, but they'd be very difficult. I don't think that question could really apply to a high school student." Interestingly, and perhaps sadly, Jesus was pursuing a high school equivalency degree, a degree granted upon successful completion of a battery of standardized tests meant to measure students' knowledge in reading, writing, mathematics, social studies, and science at the high school level, because, despite his love of learning and books, he felt disengaged from his courses.

Regular students don't want to "get by," they want to learn and be challenged
Students in all of the focus groups said repeatedly that they wanted challenging classes. Although they admitted that they sometimes sought easy classes, they stated that they did so more for the good grades to boost their grade point averages (point accumulated averages of students' grades that colleges use to decide admissions and high schools use to determine class rank and, sometimes, graduation). In fact, students like David, from Hamilton Park High, said they wanted to be challenged in their classes because by law they had to attend school and they figured they might as well learn:

A class needs to challenge you or else what are you getting from it and what makes it good? You should learn something from it and grow from it, so I think that part of it is somewhat difficult. I mean, you can have fun classes, but I don't know if I'd consider them good classes. After they're over you think, "I just wasted school time. I can have fun after school." It's best if it's challenging and fun, but let's not ask for the moon. The most important thing is to be challenging.

Indeed, students became animated when they discussed classes in which teachers seemed interested in their learning. Students described classrooms with teachers who had high expectations and how they were sometimes baffled by these teachers' refusal to give up on struggling students. Daniel, from Bay Mills High, said, "I have this teacher who keeps a folder and it has where you're at in it. He always looks at [the folder] and pushes us to get to the next level. That man's crazy," said Daniel with playful awe. "He'll do anything to get you to go up to the next level. He'll say, 'Do you want me to sing it?' And I think he would. He just keeps explaining it. He won't let you quit." Although students were sometimes surprised by teachers' devotion, students noticed and greatly valued teachers' commitment. Rebecca, from Rowen Sunset,

explained how one teacher got upset when she saw students not working to their potential:

My English teacher . . . I have never had a teacher like this before. She doesn't give many assignments to us. But when she does . . . she expects us to get them done because it's not, like, she is asking much out of us . . . I've never seen a teacher like her because when we don't turn something in, as a class, [when] everyone doesn't get it done, it upsets her because she doesn't want to see us fail. And people that aren't doing good, she makes sure that they get things done because she doesn't want to see them fail, not because she is trying to get on their case or anything. She pushes them to do it so they won't fail because it really upsets her.

We heard frequently that students believed teachers wanted them to learn and knew teachers were willing to help them. But we did not hear about students being challenged by the curriculum or students feeling courses were rigorous.

Regular students don't want to "get by," they want teachers to teach them
We were impressed by students' astute observations of teacher practice. Many students, particularly those who were in remedial or regular courses, observed teachers conveying low expectations daily through a poorly organized classroom environment and haphazardly planned lessons. Rochelle, at Downey Sands High School, remembered dreading "baby" assignments in English:

> *Rochelle*: Last year [in my] English class, [the teacher] was boring. She'd teach the same thing. She'd teach [us] like an eighth grader.
>
> *Facilitator*: What kinds of things did she do that made you think this is something you do in eighth grade?
>
> *Rochelle*: Like Linus, [doing] baby books. That's boring. I don't like that, baby books. And she'd make us read in front of the class. Like we'll write something, [and then she'll say], "Now do you want to share what you wrote?" Well, what do I want to share it for? Don't nobody care. There ain't nobody going to listen.

Rochelle hated the class and believed the curriculum was "dumbed down" for students because the teacher believed students could not handle higher levels. Another student from Downey Sands High School, Tyrone, shared a similar experience and condemned his teacher's lack of planning:

[My English teacher] will bring us all the way to the library with nothing to do, and tell us to just sit there and read. I don't even like reading, so don't bring me to no library and tell me to start reading because I'm not going to read. If she gave me something to do, like, "Look up this and look up that, or look up these words." She only did that once. She only did that one good thing. Like [twice]. We had vocabulary words two times. That's it.

Tyrone believed his English teacher used the library when she could not think of other work. This English teacher's lack of planning and lack of instruction occurred regularly. Many students across focus groups described teachers who used worksheets instead of instruction. Keisha, at McEnroe High School, disparagingly described her science class:

> My science teacher, she doesn't explain anything to us. She gives us worksheets and she makes us take it out of the book and she never explains it to us. She just gives us the answers. So it's like we don't really want to be there so we end up not doing the work because it's just so boring. She's not teaching it to us, so there's no use in even doing it.

Wallace, at Lexington High, was exasperated with his Spanish teacher's failure to teach:

> My Spanish teacher, she gives us an assignment but then she doesn't tell us how to do it. She just gives us assignments and expects us to know how to do it. Then we raise our hands to ask questions, [and] she tells us to look in our book. But our book only gives us one example and we are supposed to go off that one example? We really don't understand how to really do it in Spanish, so we are like, "We can't read in Spanish. That's why we are in here."

Students perceived teachers in such classrooms as uncaring and unreflective. As students talked, many of them, including Keisha, Wallace, Tyrone, and Rochelle, described being frustrated with weak practice. Yi, a sophomore at Montgomery High, said emotionally, "My math teacher . . . every time [I would] ask help from him, he would tell me to sit down . . . [He] should be the one who's trying to put effort into teaching. But it seems like he doesn't even really care." Students across focus groups described teachers who expected students to teach themselves with textbooks or worksheets and who failed to answer students' questions.

There was certainly a range of learning experiences in district high schools. Many students in District A were in classes where they felt they were learning; they understood enough content to complete assignments and assessments with passing grades. There were numerous examples of teacher practice that held students to high standards with interesting curriculum.

Nevertheless, we were surprised by student responses around the specific reform concepts of academic press or rigorou*s* academic environments. Although many students felt they were learning in their classes, only students in Advanced Placement (AP) and honors courses (those taught at higher levels for students deemed advanced in their studies) felt challenged by a rigorous curriculum. Students in regular (not advanced) classes explained that they liked their classes and teachers, that teachers willingly helped students individually and after class, and they were given interesting projects. But they rarely felt challenged to work and think harder.

Students, across all academic levels, believe rigor resides in the upper track in district high schools   Advanced Placement and honors students stated that upper-track courses were rigorous and intellectually challenging. Most upper-track students made statements like Terry's, from Cassidy Union High, about Advanced Placement class quality at his affluent high school:

> *Terry*: [AP classes are] really challenging. I have two other AP classes and one's harder than the other, but they are still really challenging and compared to some of the schools in [the county], I think that our school has one of the best . . .
>
> *Facilitator*: Academic programs?
>
> *Terry*: Yeah, program. And . . . I think it's good.

Students also talked about Advanced Placement and Honors teachers' high expectations and unwavering standards regarding student work. Teachers' firm standards motivated students.

We learned that the quality of upper-track courses differed according to the teacher, however. Within the schools' high status academic programs was a continuum of effective and rigorous upper-track classrooms, as Sabrina, at Downey Sands High School, described:

My economics teacher is really hard, but I know that I get a lot out of it, and I probably pay attention to it the most because it's challenging. Some classes that I've had before that are supposedly advanced, they don't really seem advanced. Like in my English class we did a project. It was supposed to be on medieval times, where we built a castle, and I don't know. It took so long to build the castle, and it was like something a fourth-grade class could do.

Several students shared disappointments about Advanced Placement teachers who did not appear to take teaching or students' learning seriously. Leo, at Cassidy Union, felt unprepared for the Advanced Placement test because of the teacher's perceived weak teaching:

That's how my math teacher is, I think. Statistics. That class is really, really hard and the teacher . . . she teaches you stuff but she doesn't really go in depth. And I just had my AP test last week, and it was so hard because we weren't prepared for it. There were things on there that we should have known, and we didn't. Nobody knew what it was because we hadn't gone over it in class. And it's like if you had a problem on it, she would just turn around and say, "Read the book."

Cameron, at Cassidy Union, believed that teachers largely determined whether a class was challenging: "I think it depends on the teachers you have sometimes. Because some teachers have high expectations of their students and a lot of the students will work to meet those expectations, and a lot of teachers don't have high of expectations so, the kids don't push themselves. They only push themselves hard if they need to."

Although rigor certainly resided in upper track classrooms, Advanced Placement and honors students experienced differentiated rigor in classrooms depending on the quality of teaching practice. Even upper-track students were not consistently experiencing high-quality academic environments. Students agreed wholeheartedly with the district's emphasis on increasing student learning and achievement by improving teacher practice. But the district still had a long way to go. Overwhelmingly, District-A students, across regular and upper-track courses, were not pushed to learn rigorous curriculum.

Student Engagement: A Blend of Personalized and Rigorous Learning

As students across the high schools discussed what influenced their learning, specifically the notions of personalization and academic rigor, they made an important distinction about high-quality and effective learning environments—classrooms should *engage* students in learning. Engagement, from the student perspective, combined aspects of personalized and rigorous learning. In other words, students' learning was facilitated not only through high-quality instruction, challenging curriculum, and high expectations but also through teachers knowing students in ways that helped them construct more nuanced and sensitive learning environments.

Comfortable and respectful classroom environments provided students with safe communities in which to master challenging content. Strong connections with the teacher and among students built a community of learners who felt comfortable taking risks among peers. When students perceived the classroom environment as unsafe, students' learning suffered, as we learned when Alicia, a student at Lexington High, admitted feeling scared to ask questions in geometry:

> *Alicia*: I don't understand math. Geometry is hard and she doesn't explain it.
>
> *Facilitator*: And do you ask questions?
>
> *Alicia*: I try to but she makes me feel stupid. [The teacher will say], "You should know that already." It embarrasses me and kids are going to laugh, and then you don't want to ask questions because you don't feel comfortable.

Many students across focus groups shared Alicia's sentiment that it was important for teachers to create a trusting learning environment in which students could openly grapple with unfamiliar and difficult content. Isaiah and Maggie, from the personalization section in this chapter, talked about how their math teacher's refusal to help them made them feel dumb. Their teacher assumed that they lacked ability because the students needed him to explain the lesson again. We also saw in the personalization section how Sara, an honors student, second-guessed her

ability to select a difficult topic for a project because she believed her teacher doubted her ability to produce a successful project with such a topic. When students felt comfortable enough to ask questions, and their questions were answered satisfactorily, they remained engaged in the subject and focused on learning.

Safe learning environments also involved treating students as active participants in constructing learning experiences. Students in the focus groups explained that motivation and engagement in the content occurred when teachers' instruction allowed students to be active learners. Amy, at Montgomery High, engaged in her active physics class because the curriculum provided opportunities to participate in the learning and because of her teacher's efforts to work with students individually:

> *Amy*: In Active Physics we had to learn the Law of Reflection, so she got out the little laser pointers and she put mirrors all over the place and we had to do the angles . . . like, on our table, she gave us mirrors to reflect and we had to find out the angle of incidence and all that kind of stuff.
>
> *Facilitator*: Okay. Why was that helpful for you?
>
> *Amy*: Well, it wasn't just her doing it. We did it along with her. She showed us how to do it on Friday and [then] we did it by ourselves, and she'd go table to table, and, if we needed help, she'd give it to us.

Interestingly, the introduction of the district-wide, ninth-grade physics course in 2000 was controversial. Many teachers, administrators and parents opposed the inquiry-based physics because of perceived lack of rigor. However, Amy's example showed that when teachers used an active curriculum and tailored instruction to student needs, students were engaged and mastered the content at higher levels.

Students across focus groups also discussed how knowing teachers as people influenced their learning. Kiersten, a hearing-impaired student at Montgomery High, felt that a previous relationship with a teacher helped her learn biology:

> *Facilitator*: What is it about biology that makes you feel like you're learning?
>
> *Kiersten*: I have connection with the teacher and I worked with her last year in advisory. And she's learning sign language, so that makes me feel like she's making an effort to communicate and know me. I like that a lot.

We heard repeatedly how students were motivated to work with teachers who got to know students as individuals and who allowed students to know them as human beings. When high school students in the district felt connected to teachers, they were engaged and worked harder to please their teachers and to meet expectations.

The high school students across the district stated that teachers who create high-quality academic environments do so by consciously fostering a safe, trusting learning community in which students actively participate and using aspects of personalization and academic rigor to engage students in mastering challenging content.

JUXTAPOSING STUDENTS' VOICES WITH DISTRICT INITIATIVES: WHAT CAN STUDENTS TELL SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EDUCATORS ABOUT THEIR REFORM EFFORTS?

Adolescent youth made it clear that teachers' content knowledge, pedagogy, and expectations greatly influenced the learning environment in the classroom. The voices and experiences of these high school students affirmed research on the vital importance of highly trained and knowledgeable teachers and ongoing, effective professional supports for teachers (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Haycock, 1998). Moreover, District-A high school students argued that personalization and academic press are not mutually exclusive. These students' voices taught us that engagement is critical to student learning and achievement. From the students' perspective, effective teachers are those who blend aspects of personalization and academic press to engage students in meaningful, challenging curriculum in safe classroom communities.

Through a combination of formal reports to the district, informal conversations with top district administrators and school principals, and formal presentations to entire high school faculties, we shared the information—sometimes with students alongside and sometimes without them—from the students of District A with those in power within the district. Although the students' voices were not always heard willingly, many teachers and administrators perceived the words from their students as provocative and insightful. Teachers and administrators frequently remarked to us afterwards how learning about what was working or not from the students' perspective was more helpful than aggregate standardized test scores that often pointed them in too few or too many directions. Many of them could visualize students who sounded like the students we spoke with in their classrooms. Teachers sometimes painfully recounted having similar interactions with students without realizing that their actions and words may have affected students in profound ways.

We understood through these many conversations, somber and hostile, that students' voices had a powerful role to play in school reform, and not simply in its formative or planning stages. Students could help educators understand how and when a reform was floundering and often earlier and with more

precision than other feedback measures. Next are summary examples of findings from the student voices that were shared with District-A educators.

What District-A Students Could Tell District-A Educators about the Reform

Students' voices made clear that the reform had not improved noticeably either personalization or academic rigor. Their classrooms remained places where they often felt disconnected from the teachers and content. They were frequently allowed to drift through courses with little effort. Nonetheless, the District-A high school reform, students said, was focused on the right aspects of change. Students said personalization through tighter teacher-student relationships mattered, and these improved relationships could help bolster rigor in classrooms.

Students suggested that weak implementation of the District-A high school reform may have been due to a disconnect between what students meant when they described topics such as personalization and rigor and how the district encouraged and allowed schools to enact reforms in those areas. The district's response to these areas of need had been a strongly structural one. Districts and their schools adopted curriculum, created new programs, and altered school classrooms, administrative positions, and bell schedules in an attempt to achieve personalization and rigor. But students reported that the personalization and rigor had to happen fundamentally in the classrooms. The district had focused heavily on teacher professional development in the enactment of new classroom curricula, but they did so without always linking curricula and pedagogical approaches back to core concepts of personalization and rigor—concepts supposedly at the heart of the reform.

For example, District-A leaders rightly believed that students were disconnected from their teachers and classes and, as a result, uninterested in academic life. District-A teachers needed specific strategies for achieving a more personalized learning environment for students. But instead of providing teachers with these in-classroom strategies, District-A high schools often began peer-mentoring programs or teacher-student mentoring structures, such as advisory, as structural efforts to personalize their schools. The dilemma with these types of programs is that their efforts resided outside the classroom and, thus, outside the regular teacher-student interaction, which students described as central to the topic of personalization and essential to the promotion of rigor within academic courses.

At Rowen Sunset High School, for instance, administrators and counselors worked hard at honing their advisory to maximize connections between students and adults. But students stated that this program did little to improve the weak connections students sometimes felt with their third-period mathematics

teacher or their sixth-period chemistry teacher. Similarly, at Downey Sands High School, students described the brand-new advisory program designed to address student-teacher personalization as occurring outside of regular classroom interaction. While it gave students the opportunity to connect with a Downey Sands High School adult, it did not improve interactions between students and teachers in class.

District supports for increasing academic press did focus on the interior of the classroom, but it failed to do what students said was essential: help teachers convert stronger connections between teachers and students into more rigorous demands on kids. Instead, intensive teacher professional development around curriculum and instruction focused on state curriculum and grade level standards without including discussions of how to get students to want to achieve these standards. Furthermore, staff development failed to make clear for teachers how new instructional strategies in literacy or science, for example, might help them deliver academic content in ways that engaged students and motivated them to think harder, to work harder, and to master the content. Students said they needed their teachers to know the content well, to motivate them, and to engage them in learning the material.

Sharing students' insights with District A   Have the students' voices made a difference in influencing the reforms of District A? Although multiple factors influence the direction a large, urban school district takes in its reform initiatives, we believe that the students' perceptions played a role in reshaping the timing and direction of the District-A high school reform initiatives.

First of all, the students' insights signaled early in spring 2002 to the high school reform leaders and funding foundations that things were not improving qualitatively for students in the high schools. Numerous presentations and reports on the students' perceptions to the district administrators as well as attendance by district administrators at school faculty presentations—led by us and, at times, the students—signaled to them that the reform's aims of personalization and rigor were not progressing well within the high school classrooms.

As a consequence of gaining this insight, the district began discussing the need for a new high school reform effort in fall 2002 and used some of the student voice data to argue for this as-yet-undefined new direction at community meetings and in numerous formal documents. Although district officials never invited the students to participate in these meetings or in formal presentations to community members and business leaders, they did borrow from the students' direct quotes when arguing that things were not working well in the current reform initiative.

The power of the students' voices was obvious to district administrators who also tried to use the student perceptions to convince not just people outside the schools but also those inside the schools as well that the initial efforts at reform via personalization and rigor were insufficient. In particular, district officials and principals explicitly asked that students' voices be shared with all the high school's teaching faculties in 2002 to convince teachers, especially those at higher-performing schools, that reform was needed.

Finally, the district significantly changed its high school reform efforts beginning in fall 2003 and began to look increasingly at more dramatic changes to the structure and culture of its lowest-performing, comprehensive high schools. Explicit in this renewed effort at reform was the district's call that they had to intertwine and deepen efforts at personalization and academic rigor. While they initially looked at creating smaller learning communities (a model where many interdependent, small schools are set up to house students within the structure of a much larger high school) throughout many of their comprehensive high schools, eventually, the district moved to a combination of smaller learning communities and the creation of 14 new, autonomous small, high schools, as well as a number of new alternative, small, high schools for special populations. Key thinking behind these new moves was the district leadership's belief that personalization had to become more than advisory programs and rather had to be instantiated in every facet of the school so that academic rigor could be pursued more effectively within classrooms.

Although we cannot be sure that the students' voices were instrumental in driving the district to a new, more substantial reform effort, we believe that their voices did contribute to the renewed focus on reform in District-A high schools. Students, like the canary in the coalmine, were the first to tell us in convincing, sometimes poignant, ways that the new reforms were not working for them. Their words, shared often without awareness of politics or protocol, helped the adults around them understand that more had to be done if high school students in District A were to find the personalization and rigor that district officials, teachers, and students agreed were essential to classrooms.

THE LIMITATIONS OF STUDENT VOICE IN EDUCATION EVALUATION EFFORTS

The application of student voice in educational evaluation is not without limitations. One of the reasons that federal and state governments, districts, and schools turn to standardized-testing data to measure themselves is because quantitative scores provide quick summaries of how schools are doing year to year. Quantitative scores also provide an easy comparison of schools or

districts with others in an effort to see how they measure up. Meanwhile, student voice data, admittedly, reflects the perspectives and experiences of only a tiny subset of students (perhaps 24 in a school of 2400). Interview and respondent bias may also warp the results.

Our efforts to share student voice data to evaluate school reforms have met with these same concerns. We have attempted to address them in several ways. In student sampling, we have always either selected students through purposive random sampling or allowed schools to select the students themselves, thereby allowing if anything for a positive bias. We have usually relied on aggregating students' voices across multiple schools to maximize the number of students' voices we have captured in focus groups—approximately 200 students in this particular district's case. We also have shared our focus group protocols with district and school administrators in advance to ensure their confidence in the questions. Moreover, we have always maintained that our intention is to provide thematic, not actual, representation of the students' voices. That is, our data analyses of students' voices have always included combing through and coding student voice data for patterns and trends and selecting representative pieces of data related to those patterns. Finally, whenever possible we have used other data (interviews with teachers, parents, administrators, classroom observations, and quantitative data) to triangulate with the students' voices.

We have learned that students, like those in District A, can cogently and vividly capture how schooling experiences make it more or less difficult to succeed in the educational system. As we struggle to understand whether educational reform initiatives work, adults often examine test scores but rarely add what students' voices and experiences can provide. In our case, District A high school reform efforts were measured through state standardized test scores, exit exams, and college preparedness outcomes (e.g. on-track status for four-year college entrance, college entrance exam scores and test-taking rates, grade-point averages, number of students taking and passing advanced placement courses and exams, etc.). But they were also measured and informed by students' observations and reactions to the situations they faced daily in classrooms.

We recognize that there is a long way to go before the education establishment regularly accepts adolescents' viewpoints as anything more than either the ramblings of immature youth or statements from the endearing but naïve. It is our hope that by writing about the contributions that we believe students have made in conversations about and evaluations of educational reforms to which they have been subjected, researchers, policy makers, and educators can begin to see the promise of including students' voices in formative discussions of educational reform.

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SHARON PEKRUL AND BEN LEVIN

BUILDING STUDENT VOICE FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Over the last 15 years the Manitoba School Improvement Program (MSIP) has worked to develop student voice as a key part of its secondary school improvement strategies in the province of Manitoba, Canada. This chapter tells the story of those efforts and assesses their strengths and limitations. Through research and student-centered initiatives, MSIP has developed an understanding of the importance of student voice in creating meaningful change in high schools. In fact, in some cases the voices of students provide the tipping point to shift the culture and practices of high schools. Combining collaborative and authentic tasks that build skills and confidence, and widening the arena of student influence, student voice processes can give students a credible voice in and allow them to have an impact on the institution that plays a major role in their lives.

In giving this account we are conscious of the need to balance advocacy for student voice with careful attention to evidence and grounding in a critical theoretical perspective. As participants in the experiences we describe, we do not pretend that our account is dispassionate. At the same time, our analysis is grounded in research—our own and others'—and has evolved over time as we have confronted the evidence of our efforts and the efforts of others. We do not claim that we have achieved a definitive understanding, but we do believe that our experience, sustained over time, can help others develop their own views. MSIP has practiced what it preaches and been diligent about collecting data on its own practices, including several independent evaluations, which are discussed further later in this chapter. Our account is therefore not based only on our own predispositions but also on careful attention to substantial, third-party evidence about our work. The quotations cited in this chapter are representative of the findings of these external evaluations.

There is, as readers of this Handbook will realize, a substantial and rapidly growing literature on student voice. The second author has been a regular contributor to this literature for more than 25 years (Bryant, Lee, & Levin, 1997; Levin, 1977; 1993, 1994, 1995, 1998). In developing our ideas we have

also drawn on the work of other scholars, such as Corbett and Wilson (1995), Erickson and Shultz (1992), Fielding (2001), Cook-Sather (2002), Rudduck and Flutter (2000), and Thomson and Holdsworth (2003). The many authors and sources in this Handbook show just how wide this body of scholarship is. We have also been impressed with work that addresses the key role of student engagement and motivation as levers for improving school outcomes (Newmann, 1992; Nicholls & Hazzard, 1993; McCombs & Whistler, 1997). An important but insufficiently known Canadian project that looks at student engagement and participation across the country can be found in Smith, Butler-Kisber, LaRocque, Portelli, Shields, Sparkes, & Vibert (1998). Our overall framework for thinking about student voice in school reform is described in Levin (2000), where five arguments, both pragmatic and educational in nature, are outlined in support of a key student role.

1. Effective implementation of change requires participation by and buy-in from all those involved; students no less than teachers;
2. Students have unique knowledge and perspectives that can make reform efforts more successful and improve their implementation;
3. Students' views can help mobilise staff and parent opinion in favour of meaningful reform;
4. Constructivist learning, which is increasingly important to high-standards reforms, requires a more active student role in schooling; and
5. Students are the producers of school outcomes, so their involvement is fundamental to all improvement.

The first three of these arguments involve considerations of how meaningful change in organisations is created and sustained. These ideas are widely promoted in regard to all kinds of organizations, not only schools. For example, principles of quality management include similar claims about the importance of participation by all members of an organization. The latter two arguments, however, are unique to education because they have to do with how it is that learning occurs. Our position on student voice, then, is one that seeks to embody both philosophical and pragmatic arguments. The MSIP project work described in this chapter used these multiple perspectives, supporting various kinds of work on student voice for all the reasons outlined above.

THE MANITOBA SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (MSIP)

Manitoba School Improvement Program (www.msip.ca) is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organization that was established in 1991 as a pilot program by the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation, headquartered in Toronto, and has evolved into a self-supporting organization devoted to improving learning opportunities for Manitoba youth in public secondary

schools with a particular focus on students at risk. MSIP acts as a broker and catalyst to Manitoba public high schools and their community partners in their voluntary school improvement and change processes. It is unique in Canada as an independent, third-party, school reform entity, and it focuses on school improvement planning, emphasises collaborative school cultures, and is school centered and community partnership oriented (Pekrul, 2000). More than 50 schools in 13 districts are part of the MSIP network. (Manitoba has a total of about 200 secondary schools, so MSIP is a substantial presence.) The organization's work has been cited in national and international literature on school improvement (e.g. Harris, 2000; Harris & Young, 2000).

During the 1990s, public education in Manitoba, as in many other jurisdictions, was subject to a series of changes and reforms that created considerable controversy. Among other steps, the Manitoba government reduced real funding to schools, took away some collective bargaining rights and benefits from teachers, tightened secondary school curriculum requirements, increased province-wide testing of students, and promoted school choice (Levin, 2005). There were other more positive changes as well, it should be noted, such as growing attention to student diversity, more emphasis on site-based management, and a requirement for school planning, but many educators felt themselves under siege from public criticism and reduced funding. One of the appeals of MSIP, we believe, was that during these difficult years it offered schools a positive direction, opportunity to network with like-minded people, and some discretionary funds to support improvement initiatives.

In 1999 a new provincial government was elected whose education policy was much closer to MSIP's approach (Levin, 2005); although the organization had worked closely with the Department of Education from the start, the link is now stronger in a number of areas, though MSIP also retains its independent status and strategy.

No single reform strategy has been able to show substantial lasting effects on secondary school performance across many schools. Given that backdrop, evaluations of MSIP have shown some significant impact. Documented results of MSIP initiatives (Earl & Lee, 1998) include improved academic performance, increased student enrolment, increased family and community involvement in schools, reduced disciplinary incidents, improved class attendance, and increased student graduation rates. The most recent evaluation of MSIP (Earl, Torrance, Sutherland, Fullan, & Ali, 2003) provided additional support for the organization's impact and identified a number of processes MSIP uses to support schools' success, described more fully below.

An elected volunteer board of directors drawn from the business, education, and community sectors governs MSIP. The six or so staff work with a volunteer Education Advisory Committee (EAC) that provides input on its programs

and activities. Community and corporate foundations, private donations, the Manitoba Department of Education, and MSIP's participating schools and school districts (called "divisions" in Manitoba) fund the work of MSIP.

MSIP works as a "critical friend" to schools, providing both pressure and support through school-based planning, data-driven analysis of issues and strategies, consultant services, and grants to schools and school divisions to support change and improvement. MSIP has also built networks of schools and districts interested in improving outcomes for students. MSIP works with these networks to provide professional development to staff and students. In addition to working with schools, MSIP has several partnerships with school divisions that bring each division into better alignment with all its secondary schools. In recent years the organization has also placed more emphasis on trying to affect the broader policy context around secondary education by working with community groups and the media as well as by influencing government policy.

Evaluation is a central part of all MSIP work, both for participating schools and for the organization itself. MSIP began with a strategy for reform that was to be bottom up and staff driven at the level of individual schools. Over the years, based on what the organization learned, including three independent external evaluations (Earl et al., 2003; Earl & Lee, 1998; Fullan, Lee, & Kilcher, 1995), MSIP gradually began to provide more direction to the schools with which it worked, although staff teams in each participating school continue to play a key role. For example, early on MSIP required schools to gather some data on their situation at the outset because we learned that this step was vital to schools' being able to identify their true improvement needs. Another requirement was an authentic process of engaging the broader school community early in the process, as against the common tendency to want to have everything sorted out in the staff before communicating with parents. Increasing focus on drawing school divisions into the process and on influencing the public policy context were also changes in strategy growing out of the evaluations, as it became evident that school change would not occur or last without support at the district level (Fullan, Bertani, & Quinn, 2004; Togneri & Anderson, 2003). The organization has also asked all participating schools to think about how to engage students in the improvement process, as described more fully below.

Figure 1 illustrates MSIP's School Improvement Framework. This framework has developed over time through dialogue between MSIP's staff, participating schools, and the Education Advisory Committee. The process has benefited from the presence on the EAC of such outstanding thinkers in educational change as Michael Fullan, Andy Hargreaves, Louise Stoll, and Lorna Earl.
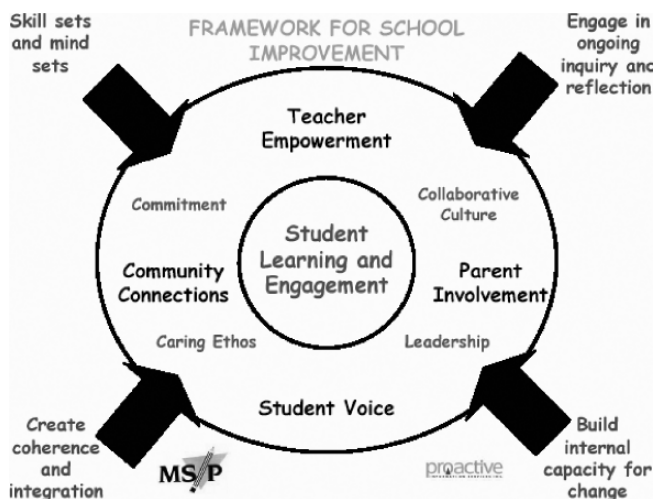
The chart shows the multiple elements that require attention if real change is to occur. In the MSIP model, student learning and engagement must be at the centre of all change efforts. This focus is not as automatic as it might seem; it has required ongoing effort to get school change proposals focused on learning rather than on structures and organization. Our model also gives priority to engagement of all partners—students, parents, and the broader community. While teachers continue to play a critical role, our belief is that change that is owned only by the staff is less likely to have the desired impact. The model also advocates distributed leadership not only across the staff but also with students and community members as well.

The MSIP change model also pays attention to affective as well as cognitive dimensions. We recognize the importance of "will"—the motivation to change—as well as "skill"—the ability to do things differently. These attributes must be developed together through a process of data-based inquiry and capacity building.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENT VOICE

MSIP had an interest in students as partners in school reform from its inception, but an organizational focus on supporting student voice work began to emerge later in the 1990s as part of the changes in the strategy just described (Pekrul, 2004). Based both on our initial work with schools and our continued

engagement with the relevant research, the organization put steadily increasing emphasis on a stronger role for students in secondary school improvement work. Over the last few years, a series of "student voice" activities has been undertaken, using at various points all five of the rationales outlined in Levin (2000). These projects were designed as individual activities in order to attract the necessary funding. However, all were part of a larger commitment by MSIP to give priority to various aspects of student voice, and all have been part of our learning, including external evaluation, of what works in this area. Specific activities have included:

1. **Students as learners/doers:** Students were given a steadily more significant role in the MSIP application and planning process in all participating schools. Schools were asked to involve students in their planning, to collect data from students as part of their internal needs assessment, and to look specifically at how student engagement in change could be built. At the same time, support to schools has given increasing emphasis to changes in teaching and learning in classrooms, again with attention to the views and roles of students. MSIP and its network of schools together created a Student Voice curriculum as part of the *Students at the Centre* initiative outlined later in this chapter.

2. **Student networking:** MSIP, in partnership with its schools and school divisions, organized various activities to provide high quality training specifically for students on 'What is Student Voice.' Activities included facilitation of skill development and opportunities for students from across the province to network, including an annual student voice conference, planned and led largely by students, that brings together students from many schools.

3. **Students as advocates:** With support from Manitoba Association of School Trustees (MAST), MSIP has conducted the *Student Perspectives in Educational Decision-Making* (SPED) project to foster student participation and engagement in the democratic process of school district policy development.

4. **Students as researchers:** Working with partners, MSIP supported student action research initiatives and presentations on educational issues by students to other students, school staffs, parent advisory groups, school boards, provincial organizations such as MAST, forums held by the Manitoba Department of Education, and community organizations such as service clubs.

5. **Students as advisors:** MSIP's Educational Advisory Committee (EAC), which reviews and recommends on all school change proposals, has included student members for many years. More recently, the organization

has created a process for students from participating schools to review and comment on all school change proposals and reports to ensure that student voice perspectives were adequately represented.

Each of these initiatives is next described more fully.

Students as Learners/Doers

In the fall of l998, MSIP began a pilot project called *Students at the Centre* (SAC), designed to explore the potential of student voice in supporting positive change in high schools. This initiative involved over 75 students and 15 teachers in five urban high schools. The purpose of the project was to empower students to have a voice, both in their own learning and in the direction of the school. It would be fair to say that at least in some schools there was resistance to this idea, but once in place it did have some positive impact. As one student commented in the evaluation (Lee & Ursel, 2001): "I really enjoyed working with staff as a member of the planning committee, since I felt I had a voice on the committee. I was able to contribute my thoughts on behalf of the student body." A school principal spoke of students' learning to "become learners" through their involvement with SAC. She argued that the activities not only "broadened their world" and made them more confident but also taught them research and presentation skills that supported their academic development (Lee & Ursel, 2001).

A product of the SAC initiative was a Student Voice curriculum that schools can utilize. The curriculum has three modules: Helping Students Succeed Using Emotional Intelligence Theory; Discovering Students' Strengths through Multiple Intelligences; and Student Voice through Action Research. Each module addresses four general outcomes with further specific outcomes within these:

I. Students will become aware of their own personal learning style and share their knowledge to promote self-initiated, lifelong learning.

II. Students will gain awareness of the school, the school system, and the school culture within which they exist while also exploring the larger community.

III. Students will experience having a shaping voice in their school community by conducting an action research project.

IV. Students will become empowered to create a forum for student voice in their own school by organizing a student conference with students from other schools.

Educators from the MSIP Network of Schools wrote the curriculum for grade 9, 10, and 11 students, including both "at-risk" and adept learners. The learning activities in each module are designed to reach those students who do not

feel a personal connection either to their learning or to the school and to encourage adept learners to articulate how they learn. Schools have used this curriculum to provide school-initiated course credit and or have integrated units into other curricula.

Student Networking

Simultaneously with the implementation of the SAC project, MSIP initiated a student conference entitled *Make a Choice! Raise Your Voice!* This is now an annual, province-wide MSIP Student Voice event. The conference, primarily organised by high school students, is part of a strategy to place issues of student voice at the centre of school reform efforts. Each year more than two hundred students from across Manitoba spend a day in sessions talking about ways in which their participation in the life and work of the school, and especially in school improvement, can be strengthened. An evaluation of the 2004 conference by more than 100 students, or 45% of those attending, indicates the following:

- 93% say they had enough time to learn practical ways that they could have a voice in their school;
- 78% said they plan to act on a Student Voice idea at their school;
- 76% of them said that their willingness to act was a result of attending the conference; and,
- 77% said they were interested in being part of a network of schools that focused on Student Voice issues.

Feedback from students illustrates the value of student participation and their ownership of the conference. One student wrote that the conference was ". . . a chance for students to see what others have done and question how they can improve their school."[i]

As another example of the value of bringing students together from different schools, in the fall of 2004, MSIP hosted a one-day forum for students and teachers entitled, "Learning is Not a Spectator Sport." Approximately 100 students and 15 teachers from the MSIP network of schools attended a day of dialogue and activity challenging traditional thinking about learning. The group explored the following questions:

1. What is the purpose of learning?
2. What are the conditions that facilitate learning?
3. What are the processes to facilitate and support learning?

Although these are central educational questions, in our experience they are rarely addressed directly in high schools. The students at the session focused largely on practical purposes for learning, especially preparation for employment. However, they also often referred to personal development and socialization as primary purposes with particular emphasis on citizenship, respect for

others, and social skills (Proactive, 2005). One student commented, "School is about marks and competition, not about learning." Student responses are consistent with a considerable body of evidence discussed elsewhere in this volume. They indicated that teachers played a significant role in creating the conditions for student learning. They cited teacher enthusiasm, support, creation of a safe classroom environment, exhibiting passion for the content (subject/course), making connections with students, and demonstrating the relevance of the content to students as vital attributes for teachers to demonstrate. The students made numerous references to what some of them called the "curriculum coverage epidemic" they saw in the way teachers worked. They felt rushed, overwhelmed, and frustrated with the push to cover curriculum and indicated that they wanted freedom to diverge, go deeper, and have choice in their learning. The students felt they knew they were learning when they experienced a sense of relevance with the content, when the content was interesting, and when the learning occurred naturally and their confidence increased. Ultimately, they said they knew they were learning when they were able to teach something to someone else and apply it elsewhere in their schooling and personal lives.

Students were asked for their opinions on re-inventing secondary schools. They cited opportunities to learn about other places and cultures; having choice that equates to passion for learning; moving away from age-grouped classrooms; being able to focus on exploration and inquiry; having some flexible time; and accommodation for differing learning styles. One student suggested, "The government should stop funding schools and start funding learning" (Proactive Information Services Inc., 2005).

Students as Advocates

In 2001, MSIP, in partnership with Manitoba Council for Leadership in Education (MCLE—a consortium of Manitoba organizations working together to develop educational leadership), created an initiative called *Student Voice: Voices of Today and Tomorrow* (SVT). This initiative is designed to expand the public's view of educational practices and successes in Manitoba schools. SVT brings youth from rural and urban high schools into contact with business and professional men and women in their local communities. This initiative has been developed around four goals:

- Provide authentic opportunities for student leadership and the advancement of student voice;
- Broaden the horizons of the students;
- Enhance public knowledge of education; and,
- Promote an accurate view of educational practices in today's Manitoba schools.

The SVT program involved students in MSIP network schools meeting with or speaking to local business and professional organizations in their communities, such as Chambers of Commerce of Kinsmen or Kiwanis groups. Students engage only with groups that are open or inclusive in their membership. Participating students have to be representative of the full student population in the school. The topic of the presentation is at the discretion of the individual school as long as the presentation seeks to represent current school practice and is intended to enhance and expand the public's view of education. Immediately following each presentation members of the community organization are asked to complete an evaluation of the student presentation. Since the inception of this project in 2001, more than 100 students from 29 schools have presented to 29 rural and urban service club organizations amounting to 1,143 business and professional men and women. The initiative continues to receive requests from business and professional organizations.

The evaluations show substantial appreciation by the community organizations and that the events increased their understanding of and support for students and schools. The following are quotes from evaluation slips audience participants were asked to complete (Gitzel & Mandryk 2004):

Evidence that our young people are as good and as sensible as ever. Well done!

I contrast with an article I read last week, which cast such a negative shadow on our youth to what I was hearing from these young people. There is great hope for the future.

It is much easier to pay taxes now that I know my tax dollars are being well used in the field of education.

The coordinators of SVT also ask teacher leaders to complete an evaluation after each event. One teacher wrote:

This experience was a very positive one for the students and myself. We don't often have the opportunity to explain to a captive audience how we feel about our school. We are often battling stereotypes about teenagers, high schools and even about our particular school and so having the opportunity to tell the real story of our school was wonderful. [The students] will be sharing the presentation with our Student Council and parent association. (Gitzel & Mandryk, 2004)

Students from MSIP Network of Schools are also called upon to make presentations at forums and think tanks. As an example, in July of 2003 a group of students supported by MSIP consultants conducted a workshop entitled "What is this thing called Student Voice?" at the conference of the Canadian School Boards Association in Winnipeg. The students introduced participants to ways students can have a voice in the classroom, how students can have an impact on their school, and how students can share what they are learning. They highlighted MSIP's Students at the Centre project and Student Voice Curriculum as well as action research in MSIP's schools through SPED (described below).

Students as Researchers

Student Perspective in Educational Decision-Making (SPED) was designed to create bridges between students and decision-makers (school board officials), to create meaningful dialogue about student views concerning their own education, and to encourage and support student involvement in the democratic education process. The project, in partnership with the Manitoba Association of School Trustees (MAST), was intended to address many of the problems that both elected decision-makers and students encounter by increasing the active participation and engagement of high school students in their classes, in the life of their school, and with school board officials. It also had the purpose of informing MSIP and MAST regarding the effect student engagement could have on educational policy development and models or conditions that would support such effects.

An evaluation of SPED (Proactive Information Services, 2005) suggests that its potential to change the way policy-makers do business in a sustained manner is affected by the culture of school boards and schools and the prior experience of schools and school trustees with student voice initiatives. This prior experience shapes attitudes as to whether students can and do make a difference if their voice is allowed to be heard. The lessons learned show that MSIP as an independent, third party played a key role in supporting teachers and students involved in SPED. However, with the focus on influencing decision makers, MSIP and MAST, in concert, needed to intervene more directly and more often with local decision makers to ensure that student input was indeed heard, since this approach ran against standard practice and beliefs. Action was most likely to occur when there was alignment of issues between students and school trustees. For example, healthy food choices in school cafeterias was an area in which student and school boards views coincided in several cases, leading to quick action. However, in other areas boards were less willing to hear students' voices.

In both the SPED project and the Student Voice Curriculum, action research is a tool used to engage students in school issues. Action research involves students working with teachers or a professional evaluator to explore school issues, such as school climate, teaching methods, school spirit, and school policies. For students, learning about action research offers practical skill building in research methods and presentations, increased commitment to school, and recognition of others' points of view. For teachers, teaching about action research offers a way to get to know their students' opinions and aptitudes, as well as an opportunity to have in-depth conversations with students about school issues (Bryant, Lee, & Levin, 1997).

Each school approaches student action research differently. At one school the research was part of a peer mentorship course, at another research was

conducted on teaching and learning on drug and alcohol issues, while yet another researched building positive relations with the surrounding community. In all these cases and many other examples not cited, students developed an action research project that the school community believed could lead to school improvement, they determined which research methods to use, they acquired competencies in design of research instrument(s) and interpretation of research results, and they were required to present the findings to appropriate school and community members, in most cases including school boards. Many schools build student action research into credit courses, increasing both student and staff engagement in the activity, but students often go well beyond course requirements once they get interested in an action research project. Thus, action research can be a strong vehicle for building student engagement and modeling practices of constructive pedagogy.

Students as Advisers

MSIP practices what it expects of its network of schools—meaningful engagement and capacity building for students. From quite early in its history, the Education Advisory Committee (EAC) of MSIP has had representation from high school students. In fact, some of the students who served on the EAC promoted the creation of a youth membership category for MSIP so they could remain engaged after their graduation.

An environmental scan of students attending the 2003 Student Voice Conference moved the EAC to create a Student Chapter of the EAC. With the support of the United Way of Winnipeg, MSIP now engages students in the review of school improvement plans. Schools and school divisions (districts) submit annual improvement plans to MSIP's EAC for feedback and recommendations ultimately resulting in allocation of funds and of MSIP's staff support. Each year, a group of 12–15 students from several schools within the MSIP Network is approached to act as the EAC Student Chapter. MSIP consultants train students in reviewing school and division plans to assess the degree of student voice exhibited in the plans. The student feedback is presented to the EAC and is included in feedback and recommendation letters from the EAC to each school or school division. The EAC has consistently found the student comments to be insightful and has asked schools to respond to those comments in further planning and action. The student comments constantly push schools and the EAC to give full recognition to the importance of involving students in meaningful ways at every step of the improvement process.

MSIP consultants conducted structured conversations with the Student Chapter in the fall of 2004. The focus of these conversations centered upon the

value to the students of their role as Student Chapter. The students valued the chance to see what other schools were working on and said that they got ideas from the material that they could incorporate into their own schools. Overall, they felt that if school improvement is really for students, students should be evaluating school plans. When asked what they learned about schools and about student voice, they thought most plans seemed to gloss over the really big challenges. Schools do not seem to have a lot of evidence to justify their decisions to work on certain priorities. One student said, "Teachers and principals have most of the control. Sometimes the strategies in the plans seem to be about how to make schools better for teachers, i.e. getting students to behave and show up on time."

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED ABOUT STUDENT VOICE

Based on our reading of the research, described at the outset of this chapter, as well as the experiences described in this chapter, we draw the following conclusions about student voice:

- Motivated, engaged students are central to lasting school improvement. It is a mistake to think that reform done to students by well-meaning adults will be successful, since in the end it is students who must do the learning. Students can play an important role in school improvement when they are asked to do so and conditions created to allow them to do so.
- MSIP schools that have been most open to and supportive of student voice have consistently found—sometimes to their surprise—that students can be tremendous allies in their work, including having a powerful effect on parental and community support for change. We also believe that students often have greater ambitions for what schools could be than do adults, so harnessing their idealism and energy has the potential to expand our sense of what is possible.
- Student voice is not just about supporting school improvement but has educational benefits in its own right. Participating students in the various initiatives described here have found the experience valuable to their learning as well as developing confidence and leadership skills. Thus, as suggested in the framework at the start of this chapter, student participation in reform has both political and educational justifications.
- Although student voice has many positive aspects, it is not nearly as widespread as one might wish. The reality is that many high school students are not invested in schools, seeing their education as a matter of jumping through the hoops in order to move on to other things in their lives, such as out-of-school opportunities, careers, or post-secondary education. MSIP

has learned that a voice requires a listener. In order for students to be involved actively in their learning, decision-makers must be prepared to listen, to respond, and to make changes to their policies and practices. The reality is also that most secondary schools are not organized to bring students actively into the discussion of school improvement. Many MSIP schools initially resisted a more active role for students, although some initial activity often shows educators clearly just how valuable to them this work can be. Even after 10 years of steady effort, we find that most new participating schools start out skeptical about the value of student voice.

- Student voice only happens where there is commitment and support from the school. It is easy to shut down student input, something that happens often even in supposedly well-meaning schools. Our experience is that student voice is a lasting phenomenon only in those schools that continue to give it ongoing attention. As with any other key element of change, advocates must be in relentless pursuit of creating the understandings and conditions to foster student voice. Principals play a key role in shaping the willingness of a school to give students a real voice.

- Like teachers, students need support to help them develop their voices effectively. Students enjoy and can benefit from training that helps them understand school decision-making processes and improve their capacity to participate in those processes. It is especially important to engage not only the articulate, successful students but also those whose voices are otherwise not heard. This can be done, but it takes careful work and attention. One MSIP school tells the story of students presenting their action research findings at a school division wide conference. A conference participant indicated that he was concerned that this group of students was obviously drawn from high-performing and motivated students, whereas in fact the presenting students were representative of disenfranchised students who had found an avenue in this project for engagement in their own learning. However, we recognize that these success stories are the exception, not the rule, and ongoing vigilance is required to build an inclusive approach to student voice.

- Because students tend to have short time horizons, they need to see action following from their participation and regular demonstrations that their voices are valued. This is counter to the tendency in our organizations to work through change very slowly.

Our work on student voice has made us both optimistic and pessimistic. The potential for students to play a powerful role in school improvement while also achieving important educational benefits gives grounds for hope about what might be done in this area. Working with students provides constant affirmation of their interest and potential to do more. At the same time, the fact that

despite the strong evidence so few secondary schools are seriously involved in developing student voice is disappointing. This Handbook, however, shows that many people in many places are working actively on a stronger role for students in the educational process, and we look forward to continuing to participate in those efforts.

NOTE

[i] Quotes in this section from the evaluation of the Manitoba School Improvement Program Inc. Student Voice Conference, Fall 2003, reported by Proactive Information Services Inc. March 2004.

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DANA MITRA

STUDENT VOICE IN SCHOOL REFORM:
FROM LISTENING TO LEADERSHIP

Although many high schools have struggled with how to improve academic outcomes, few have gone straight to the source and asked the students. In recent years, the term "student voice" increasingly has been discussed in the school reform literature as a potential avenue for improving both student outcomes and school restructuring (including Carbonaro & Gamoran, 2002; Fielding, 2002; Mitra, 2003; Rudduck & Flutter, 2000). The concept addresses a core issue that has been missing in the discussion of school reform—the dilemma of ownership. Simply put, student voice initiatives push schools to reevaluate who gets to define the problems of a school and who gets to try to improve them. Typical student activities in U.S. high schools include planning school dances and choosing a homecoming court. Student voice denotes considerably different opportunities for young people. It describes the many ways in which youth could actively participate in the school decisions that will shape their lives and the lives of their peers (Fielding, 2001; Goodwillie, 1993; Levin, 2000).

At heart, the expectation behind student voice is that students are included in efforts that influence the core activities and structures of their school, yet student voice opportunities vary from school to school in terms of the expectations about youth capacity and the desire to foster youth leadership. In practice, student voice can entail youth sharing their opinions on problems and potential solutions. It can also entail young people collaborating with adults to address the problems in schools or youth taking the lead on seeking changes, such as improvements in teaching and learning, as well as school climate.

Drawing on my previous research of three student voice initiatives in U.S. schools, this chapter conceptualizes how schools can engage students in school reform by providing detailed illustrations of what student voice looks like in practice. The examples illuminate the lessons learned by these groups and consider both the benefits of their chosen strategy to increase student voice and the difficulties of their chosen path toward reform. The first example will describe a minimal form of involvement of students—adults *listening* to students through interviews and surveys. Teachers and other school personnel

then interpret the data. The second example discusses students engaged in *collaboration* with adults. In such situations, students and teachers work together to conduct research and to seek changes at the classroom or school-wide level. Decisions are shared at this level, but most often adults have the final say. The final example describes a *leadership* initiative in which youth sought to make changes in their schools and communities. This last case describes a rare opportunity in which the young people assumed much of the responsibility for making changes happen, and they took the lead in making decisions.

LISTENING: ELICITING STUDENT PERSPECTIVES AS DATA

To understand reform at the ground level, some schools have asked students directly how they have experienced changes in their schools. When gathering student information, this listening to student voice consists of adults seeking student perspectives and then interpreting the meaning of the student data as a part of a reform initiative. While it is the most common form of using student voice reported in the research, students have little ownership of listening efforts.

Such initiatives can provide great benefits to school reform, however. Gathering information from students is a key data collection strategy for learning about student experiences and ways to improve schools, as seen through the repeated use of focus groups, surveys, interviews, and shadowing young people as they move throughout the school day. Students are often neglected sources of information in a school reform efforts; yet asking students' opinions reminds teachers that students possess unique knowledge and perspectives about their schools that adults cannot fully replicate (Kushman, 1997; Levin, 2000; Rudduck, Day, & Wallace, 1997). Most often reforming schools and outside researchers have sought student perspectives on learning, pedagogy, and curriculum (Cushman, 2000; Daniels, Deborah, & McCombs, 2001; Nicholls, 1993; Pope, 2001; Powell, Farrar, & Cohen, 1985; Thorkildsen, 1994; Turley, 1994), including students' opinions on teaching and learning and what should be changed in schools. A common theme across such studies was the students' desires for positive, strong relationships with their teachers as opposed to the isolation and lack of respect and appreciation that students reported they often feel (Lynch & Lodge, 2002; Phelan, Davidson, & Cao, 1992; Poplin & Weeres, 1992; Yonezawa & Jones, 2003).

My research at Seacrest High School [all identifying names have been changed in this chapter] provides an example of a reforming school that benefited from listening to student experiences—particularly the impressions of alienated and struggling students (Mitra, 2001). Situated in a bedroom community containing a mix of working- and middle-class students from

primarily Caucasian, Filipino, and Hispanic backgrounds, the school received a large grant from the Bay Area School Reform Collaborative (BASRC), a $112 million education initiative in the San Francisco Bay area that encouraged schools to collect data on problems in their school and develop tailor-made reform strategies based on their findings.

The teachers and administrators at Seacrest examined why a large percentage of ninth and tenth grade students in their school were failing their classes. After considering what data would be most informative for deciding how to improve their school, teachers and administrators decided to ask failing students why they believed they were unsuccessful in school. Four students who had received at least three Ds or Fs the previous year joined teachers during a summer professional development day. The students were asked to speak truthfully to help their teachers understand how they might make the school a better place to learn.

On the day of the focus group, the students sat in a circle called a "fishbowl." Teachers sit in a bigger circle outside the students watching intently and taking notes:

Adult facilitator: What works and what doesn't work that teachers do to help students learn?

[silence]

Student 1: In a lot of my classes, the smart people raise their hands. [Teachers] always listen to them more than the people who barely raise their hands.

Student 2: Often there might be favoritism in some cases. Like, you could have one student who comes in late but does his work but he won't get in trouble. Another comes in who doesn't do all this work but enough to pass and he'll get in more trouble.

Student 3: Some teachers gave up on me instead of encouraging me. I think they gave up on me because I gave up.

Adult facilitator: How do you learn best?

Student 1: I need to see it, act it out, you know?

Student 2: I learn a lot better from people who sit next to me than the teacher. The teacher puts me near all the people who earn good grades and the people who are passing. I learn from them.

[The two other students nod in agreement.]

When asked to explain why some students do not succeed in school, the students in their own words talked about having differences in learning styles,

needing additional counseling and tutoring, and having a sense of mutual respect between teachers and students. Their responses provided teachers with specific reform issues to target in the upcoming year.

Students' frankness, as exemplified in the discussion above, in discussing the problems was greatly appreciated by the Seacrest faculty. A teacher present at the focus group described the student responses as "very honest, very serious, their chance to contribute. They were careful to say what they really felt. They were not trying to mislead us. They weren't saying what we thought we wanted them to say. I was in awe." The student data encouraged Seacrest staff to jump right into tackling some of the tough issues of reform rather than spending much time easing into the process.

Gathering perspectives from students not only provides rich data for school reform efforts; it also provides a distinctly different kind of information for consideration. When not involving students, and particularly those who are failing subjects or rarely attending school, it is easy to shift the blame of failure to these students rather than look at problems with the school's structure and culture (Fine, 1991; Kelley, 1997; Stevenson & Ellsworth, 1993; Wehlage, Rutter, Smith, Lesko, & Fernandez, 1989). Adults tend to blame problem behaviors on a lack of motivation or neglectful parenting; the youth instead talk of wanting respect from adults and supportive opportunities to learn and to gain responsibility (Heath & McLaughlin, 1993).

Seacrest High School supports this contrast in perspectives. When Seacrest compared teacher survey response to what they learned during their student focus groups, the faculty was shocked at the differences in opinion. According to teachers, the top two reasons for student failure were motivation (30% of responses) and attendance (16.5%). As the schools conducted more focus groups, students of all backgrounds and academic tracks pointed to specific problems with the school itself as the basis of the failure of many classmates rather than locating their difficulties in themselves or their neighborhoods, as many of their teachers did. The Seacrest students raised concerns similar to those mentioned in other efforts to listen to students. As was the case in other research using student focus groups, Seacrest youth attributed their failures to a lack of fit between their needs and what the schools provide (Cusick, 1973; Nieto, 1994; Soohoo, 1993). They suggested structural and classroom procedures that hamper their learning, the lack of opportunities to build caring relationships with adults, and blatant discrimination as being the actual problems in the school.

While listening to students can provide many benefits, a potential limitation of listening to students stems from not involving students in the interpretation of data gathered in research. In most instances, adult researchers analyze

student responses by transforming their responses into analytic themes and drawing conclusions from their assumptions. This strategy is particularly problematic when adult researchers attempt to fit youth responses into preset categories. Lumping the perspectives of young people into one mold rather than recognizing that youth face different challenges depending on their communities and backgrounds can lead to stereotyping youth rather than understanding the unique challenges faced by the students and their school community (Strobel & McDonald, 2001). To have student perspectives sufficiently understood requires having youth more actively involved in the reform process.

COLLABORATION: ADULTS AND YOUTH PARTNERING TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AND EFFECT CHANGE

Student voice activities focusing on collaboration consist of adults and youth working together to share in the planning and decision making in their endeavors. Students share ownership of such efforts with adults. The adults tend to initiate the relationship and ultimately bear responsibility and have the final say on group activities and decisions. Students often report experiencing a feeling of empowerment by actively participating in school reform initiatives, such as the design and analysis of inquiry-based reform practices (Mitra, 2004). In other words, collaboration in part encourages students to research themselves rather than just being researched (Fielding, 2004).

Student voice efforts at Whitman High School illustrate a collaborative student voice relationship (Mitra, 2001, 2003). Located in a bedroom community in northern California, Whitman High School serves a community comprising first-generation immigrants from Latin America and Asia as well as working-class African Americans and European Americans. Half of Whitman High School's students are English-as-a-second-language learners, and half qualify for the free or reduced priced lunch program. With the school graduating just over half (57%) of the students that start in ninth grade and with one third of its teachers electing to leave each year, Whitman High School staff felt compelled to make changes.

When Whitman received a major grant from BASRC to launch a three-year reform effort, the school's reform leadership team made the unusual decision of asking students what they felt needed to be improved. Fourth-year English teacher Amy Jackson partnered with the school's reform coordinator, Sean Martin, to develop a process for students from all academic levels, races, and social cliques to share their views on why students were failing at Whitman, to analyze their perspectives and those of their peers, and to decide collectively upon actions to take.

Like Seacrest, the reform leadership at Whitman asked students what needed to be improved in the school for them to be successful. While initially intending to solely listen to students, as the process unfolded the reformers decided to involve students in data analysis, in addition to their serving as a source of data. Jackson and three other adults worked with students to make sense of the results of the data they collected. The youth and adults worked together to develop a shared language and a set of skills that created a shared knowledge base and understanding from which the group could communicate and proceed with their activities. The adults offered assistance to the students by asking probing questions and providing informal assistance with research methods. The students particularly needed help with learning how to break the data into chunks and to organize their work so that they accomplished the tasks identified as the joint work for each meeting. The adults also taught the students education lingo, such as the concept of "standards-based reform," to help them to identify themes in the data.

The students did their share of teaching during this process as well—particularly through translating student explanations into language that adults would understand. The reform leadership at Whitman was struck by the difference it made to have students interpret the focus group data rather than adults alone. They noticed that when adults analyzed the data, they translated student speak into adult words, which often strayed from the intentions behind the students' words. Having Whitman students at the table preserved the integrity in the student voices by ensuring that the adults understood the issues students truly felt were most important. For example, the adults interpreted a student's comments in one focus-group transcript as meaning that she did not see the value of coming to school. The students in the group explained to the adults that this interpretation was incorrect. The student was missing school due to family problems, and when she came back to school, her teacher seemed very angry with her for missing so much class. Ashamed of the possibility of letting down her teacher and mentally tired from the problems at home, this student did not want to engage in such a confrontational situation with the teacher, so she stopped coming to class entirely.

The students divided the data and worked in small groups in subsequent meetings to identify recurrent themes in the focus group data. Over the course of three months, the students and adults worked together to identify four main themes in the transcripts as the most pressing areas for reform at Whitman: (1) improving the school's reputation; (2) increasing counseling and information resources for incoming ninth graders; (3) improving communication between students and teachers; and (4) raising the quality of teaching. The students then presented these findings to the school faculty.

The enthusiasm generated from the focus group experience caused the student participants to want to continue to work on some of the problems that they had identified. The students decided to call themselves Student Forum. By considering the focus group themes and talking to teachers and students further about what changes were most needed in the school, they chose to focus their efforts on building communication and partnership between students and teachers due to the tense school climate the pervaded the school. They developed two complementary strategies for building communication between students and teachers that have been classified in previous writings as 'teacher-focused' activities and 'student-focused' activities (Mitra, 2003). By developing this two-pronged strategy, teachers and students taught each other about their perspectives, and both learned to be open to the other's point of view.

Teacher-focused Activities

Students learned about teacher-focused activities from Amy and from Sean Martin—the school's reform leader who had been a guidance counselor in the school for 25 years and who assumed responsibility for running the school's reform efforts once the BASRC grant began. The students participated in many professional development sessions with teachers. At these activities, Student Forum members served as experts on the classroom experience in a variety of activities.

Through participation in teacher professional development sessions, Student Forum members provided teachers with feedback on how students might receive new pedagogical strategies and materials. In the words of one teacher:

It focused [us] on the reason we're here. A lot of staff remarked [on] how you get a very insightful perspective with a student at the table. You don't have to second guess what they would think. Because so many teachers seem to think . . . they're the experts on how students would react and what they would think. People find it refreshing. And it's a little intimidating for some people to have them there, but I've heard positive comments.

Teachers found the student perspectives extremely helpful to their reform process.

Students also suggested ways that pedagogy and curriculum could be changed to improve student learning. For example, a consistent concern of Whitman students was the school's math curriculum, because the textbooks did not provide them with sufficient examples or explanation. Student Forum critiqued all of the possible new textbooks and identified which books seemed to provide the best explanations and which appeared confusing and unhelpful. They recommended to the math department that they adopt two particular

textbooks that they believed would best meet the needs of Whitman students based on criteria such as whether the book had clear and specific explanations to the problems.

Student Forum members helped teachers to translate their words into language that students would understand. For example, the youth helped to translate curricular standards into terminology that students could grasp. Junior Troy Newman explained that they focused on ". . . breaking down vocabulary that some students may not understand. So we were trying to put it [the rubrics and the departmental standards] in a way where all students understand. I guess you could say we were translators."

Similarly, Student Forum developed the questions for the school-wide writing assessment that all students took twice a year to measure writing competency after learning that students did not take the assessment seriously because they did not see its relevance to their lives. Student Forum member Joey Sampson explained, "One of the main things about the writing assessment is that the students don't like the topics or the prompts they had to write on." Student Forum developed new questions for the assessment for the following year so that the topics would be relevant to students and phrased them in language that the students could understand. To develop good essay questions, one Student Forum member explained, "We went out to the classrooms and asked students what issues they wanted to write about. And now we're taking them and trying to write the prompts about things [that] we think the students would have no trouble writing on." The resulting questions focused on violence in the media and drug abuse among teenagers.

Students also served as an accountability mechanism during teacher meetings, and they expressed great pride in this role. Senior Student Forum member Joey Sampson commented, "When teachers are with each other, they're with their peers. But with students around, their teacher part engages and they want to show that they can be on task." Likewise, teachers noticed the difference. Just having students present in the room changed the tenor of meetings. Resistant teachers particularly were less likely to engage in unprofessional behaviors such as completing crossword puzzles during staff meetings or openly showing hostility toward colleagues.

The students also benefited from teacher-focused activities. They developed a deeper understanding of the changes teachers were trying to make, which allowed them to see teachers as both fallible and sincere. For example, participation in teacher research groups on teaching reading helped students to gain a greater understanding of what their teachers were trying to teach them. A student participant explained, "One of the things that [teachers in the group learned to use was] reading circles. My teacher used it on us today [in class].

Knowing where it came from, having the background, that was cool knowing what we were going to be doing." The student's participation in the reading research group helped her to improve her own learning and to gain a greater understanding of the classroom from a teacher's perspective.

Student-focused Activities

In addition to teacher-focused activities, Student Forum also developed student-focused activities in which the group helped teachers to gain a better understanding of student perspectives. In their first attempt at a student-focused activity, pairs of students took teachers on tours of their neighborhood. In the words of one student tour guide, "It was cool. They [teachers] learned where we lived, worked, the different territories, where we stay away from, where people get killed and hurt for being in the wrong areas. I thought it was really successful."

Students felt that they truly did come to know their teachers better, and they believed that teachers came to understand them better as well. During a pizza lunch, the tour guides reflected on their experience. One guide remarked, "I was in the car with the principal, and we took him right down the street. We got fifty yards away and he got lost. Now he knows where I live. And I see him down the hall and he says 'hi' to me. He'll go out of his way. I've seen a lot more of the teachers try to make an effort to say 'hi' and include students in their conversations."

Students also learned that teachers could provide advice and support in tough situations. A guide commented, "It brought out a better student-teacher relationship. A girl was talking about how she walked home at night and how someone took her purse. The teachers were thinking of ways they could help her out. From doing this process, we can better the teacher and student relationship."

Over one third of Whitman's 90 teachers participated in this student-focused activity. They found the experience valuable and commented that they developed a better understanding of students' lives. In the words of one teacher praising her experience on the tour, "You guys inspire us." The teachers were so enthusiastic about the experience that the administration made the tour a regular part of new-teacher orientation at the beginning of the school year.

As a second student-focused activity, the group wanted to address the school's reputation—a pressing concern that was mentioned repeatedly during the focus groups. Student Forum member Joey Sampson explained, "Ghetto is an important topic because we're classified as 'ghetto'—our school is. And the neighborhoods that we come from are. We were like, 'Well, our reputation is that we're perceived as a ghetto school. So it's like where does that come from?' We wanted to deal with that directly."

The group decided to initiate the conversation by hosting a student discussion on the issue, which they called a "Ghetto Forum." By creating opportunities to openly engage in a discussion of language, Student Forum encouraged their peers to discuss their identities and to consider what sources they draw upon to define that identity. Student Forum facilitated a similar conversation with all of Whitman's teachers about what "ghetto" means, how it applies to Whitman, and the consequences for the school. The group found that some students used the term as a source of identification and pride amongst their peers but viewed it as a derogatory term when used by people who did not live in their neighborhood. Others viewed "ghetto" as a state of mind that lowered expectations for themselves and for others.

An adult reform leader at the school also noted a change in teacher-student communication during the Ghetto Forum activity that occurred later in the same school year. He commented, "It's fascinating what [students] were saying about how teachers responded to them—a lot less condescension! One young man was saying, 'I never thought I would agree with that teacher!' And really feeling much more of an equal basis . . . So we're going forward with a better relationship between students and staff." The group planned to continue the dialogues the next school year and to think about how to move beyond the stalemate that existed based on differing perceptions about students and their neighborhood. They hoped that by raising consciousness about the different interpretations of individuals and their neighborhoods, they could create a collective sense of the direction in which they wanted the school to move.

Overall, the student-focused activities helped to reduce tension between teachers and students, to increase informality, and to help teachers and students identify one another as individuals rather than as stereotypes. For example, one Student Forum member commented that in her tour group, "Teachers and students learned equally. We got off track talking about our lives in general instead of talking about the neighborhood. I felt like I was driving around with my friends. There was no tension." Given the history of tension between teachers and students at Whitman, students and teachers alike appeared to value the opportunities to build positive relationships.

The experiences also empowered the youth involved in Student Forum. As I have explained in previous research (Mitra, 2004) participating in these activities inspired youth to believe that they could transform themselves and the institutions that affect them. A leader of Student Forum, Sala Jones, explained, "Me being a student, I can really do something. I'm just not an ordinary guy. I have a voice . . . My opinion counts and people need to really respect my opinion, to value it." Students develop a greater sense of self-worth when they feel that people are listening to their perspectives.

Rosalinda Gutierrez, another member of Student Forum, transformed her role in school from forced compliance in which she attended school out of obligation to that of change maker. She explained that through participation in Student Forum, she believed that she could make an impact in improving the school:

Now I'm very confident in myself. I know that even if there are people that I don't like working with, I could still work with them. I'm actually good at this type of thing—helping others. I know that I can make changes. Sometimes I used to think that our lives were kind of pointless. And it's like, you can make real changes. Now it's the school, and maybe in my career and my adult life I could actually do something, with a lot of determination and a lot of will.

Participating in the group also helped Student Forum youth to acquire the skills and competencies to work toward these changes, such as developing problem-solving skills, learning public-speaking skills, and collaborating with students from diverse backgrounds and possessing opposing opinions.

LEADERSHIP: YOUTH-LED INITIATIVES TO SEEK SCHOOL-WIDE CHANGE

Unlike collaboration efforts, one of the explicit goals of student voice initiatives demonstrating leadership is to increase student authority and decision-making power. To examine conditions that can enable student voice initiatives in which youth assume strong leadership positions in the endeavors, I conducted a broader examination of youth activism in 16 student voice efforts in Northern California. Through interviews with youth and the adult advisors in these groups, I examined different structures and designs for student voice and youth activism to study how they influence the types of outcomes that can occur in such work. The data from this research have suggested that the examples closest to autonomous student voice initiatives tend to occur in community-based organizations rather than coming from groups working within the auspices of school personnel. An example of such a construction is Unity of Youth, which began as a community-based response to racial conflict and violence at five schools in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Unlike Whitman, Unity of Youth originated as a non-profit organization, not as a school-based club sponsored by someone on the school payroll. Unity of Youth received permission from Hillside High School, a large, struggling, comprehensive school in an urban area, to hold its meetings in an empty classroom once a week after school. The group developed campaigns to address injustices and to build alliances with students from backgrounds different from their own as well as with adults. Campaigns

addressed concerns about school-specific issues, such as surveying students at Hillside about the school's pressing needs and subsequently lobbying for cleaner, open bathrooms. The group also developed a long-term project to create a Student Unity Center that would provide students with a range of services in one location, including health services, academic support with tutoring and mentoring, after-school programs, job placement, an ethnic studies library, and conflict resolution resources.

Most striking about Unity of Youth was the way in which youth were at the forefront of these initiatives. When outsiders called to request information about the group, youth answered the phone and scheduled interviews with me. When it came time to apply for grant funding, youth wrote the proposals. Graciela Soliz, one of the student leaders of Unity of Youth explained, "Working with Unity of Youth, I learned how to write a grant, and it really helped me with my public speaking. It actually got me back together academically, it helped. It's helped me in so many ways with my leadership skills, getting other students involved, getting along with adults and definitely with other youth."

Students in Unity of Youth emphasized that youth make the decisions in the group. Regina Johnson, a Unity of Youth leader, explained, "Adult advisors can only do as much as the youth do. If we don't do our part, then they don't have a job. We are the ones who do the most work." Regina continued to explain the role of adults as only engaging in activities that youth cannot do. For example, Regina explained "They'll set up meetings with the school board or set up meetings with the city council."

The group's adult advisor, Elsa Managua, demonstrated that youth leadership is as much about the adults in the process consciously stepping back to allow young people the space to lead (Mitra, 2005a). As an adult advisor, she focuses on being clear on her role as a facilitator of youth development. She explained:

I think the more I do it, the more I'm just clear about okay so what are, what's my objectives? What are my motives? I'm here to facilitate the information for [youth]. I tell them, "If I'm doing what I intend to do really well then you guys will have this job in four years." That's the leadership development. There's this process for [youth to] go [though] and I'm just here to see that [they] go from step, step one, step two, step three, step four. With youth organizing, I mean if we wanted to open up a center, all the adults could get together and open up a center in six months, but that wasn't the process. It was the process of getting them to understand, "What do people want in the center?" and then having them talk to people. We could have looked in any book that said we would need, we need anger management and caring adults, but that wasn't a goal. It's a youth development organization.

Fitting with other research on the role of adult advisors, Elsa demonstrates that adults must relinquish much of their power in the interaction and work to build

a tone of trust among adults and students (Cervone, 2002). The goal of Unity of Youth was the process of developing youth leadership, much more so than accomplishing any specific task.

The combination of Unity of Youth's individual campaigns led to what the group considered its biggest victory—a shift in discursive politics at Hillside. The result of the blossoming of youth leadership at Hillside High, Elsa explained, was "a school culture change of the role of young people, even to the point that students sat on the principal's selection committee." Regina Johnson, a student leader of Unity of Youth, described the change-making process as educating themselves about issues, organizing their peers, and communicating their goals. Through this process, the group pushed against the institutional inertia of the school and worked to make changes. Regina explained, "You have to challenge authority at one time of your life. Just because they're older doesn't mean they get it. You have to keep on trying over and over. There's always an answer to everything."

Unity of Youth's location outside of the educational institution permitted the group not only to tackle school-specific problems but also to voice their opinions on community and statewide issues as well. Hillside Unity of Youth members met monthly with youth from other Unity of Youth sites. Together, they tackled such issues as securing free bus passes for students in the county, informing students of the state's high school exit exam and why many believed it to be unjust, and participating in community marches to object to budget cuts at the district and state level, to protest the Iraq war, and to oppose efforts to increase criminal penalties against youth.

Unity of Youth members asserted that the group benefited from keeping its collective identity separate from Hillside. Student members of Unity of Youth worried not only that a teacher would not have enough time for the group but also that the group would not be able to address many injustices that they identified if it was advised by an adult affiliated with the system. When asked about whether Unity of Youth would have been successful as a school club, group member Regina Johnson stated, "I think it would be more censored." She said that she had heard rumors of a teacher trying to start a similar club in the school prior to Unity of Youth's work and the teacher being fired the following year. Whether or not these rumors were true, Regina strongly believed that one of the strengths of the group was its independence from the school.

When asked about whether a teacher could be in charge of Unity of Youth, adult advisor Elsa Managua agreed that if the group had operated as a school club, it would have suffered from the lack of a dedicated adult ally who could give the group the support that it needed. She commented, "That takes a lot of

planning and time. And they don't have that. Most of the campus clubs [which are all run by teachers] aren't really in existence. They might meet once every other week or maybe they'll meet to get prepared for something. But they're [not] consistently meeting to talk about what students need." Elsa believed that Hillside had many caring teachers who would be interested in such a task, but they did not have the time that would be required to work on youth voice and empowerment.

Locating itself outside of the school system meant, however, that the group needed to establish legitimacy within the system. Elsa explained that:

[Initially it] was a struggle. A lot of administrators were very resistant to the idea that young people can promote these kinds of changes. They saw them [Unity of Youth] as just revving up people as opposed to really [identifying] what students were needing to succeed and having the schools come up with structures to address them.

Unlike Student Forum, which had some rapport with insiders from the start by initiating from within the system and also by having a trusted teacher heading up the group, Unity of Youth had to build a support system within the school.

Unity of Youth understood the importance of appealing to the values of decision makers within the school. Unity of Youth accomplished this task by demonstrating similarities between youth- and adult-concerns about the school. Elsa explained:

[When] you asked [youth] what they need to succeed, it's really on the same page that what a lot of the faculty members were thinking—additional services, additional tutoring services, wanting a collaboration of services. This produced a school-community collaborative because they were recognizing that to get to the real causes of some of the problems, this school needed to have more resources [for] students.

When teachers and administrators saw that young people wanted to work on many of the same issues, many school personnel were accepting of Unity of Youth's efforts and served as allies for the group.

Eventually efforts to build trust resulted in a strong working relationship with the teachers and administration. Hillside saw that Unity of Youth members gained important skills, and they worked with teachers to make important changes in the school. Based on the group's efforts, school personnel started identifying Unity of Youth members as true leaders in the school. Elsa explained that this leadership role came from speaking of the needs of all students rather than a select slice of the school. She commented:

There's a good relationship between the administrative staff and teachers and the Youth Together students. I think most of them identify them as student leaders more than they identify some of the student government leaders, because the Unity of Youth students come to them with issues that all students are facing, [instead of] just advancing some campus get together or something like that.

An example of a pressing need facing all students was the need to improve the condition of the bathrooms, based on a survey of 500 students in the school. Nearly all students identified the school bathrooms as an extremely pressing concern. According to Unity of Youth Member, Marissa Martinez:

> Most people were saying that they wanted clean bathrooms. So we threw out the idea, "This is a problem and how are we going to go about the problem . . . as students?" Because it's the students that are making the bathroom dirty. But we [also] don't have doors on our bathrooms and the doors were always locked so we can't get in. We presented [the findings of our survey] to a principal . . . We told her this is what we need and this is what students need. And it's not just us; it's the whole school. We're just representing them.

By using data as evidence of student perspectives, the group was able to show the administration that they were representing the views of the student body and demonstrate the level of concern.

Unity of Youth became such a voice in the school they decided to hold a retreat for the student government to train them on how to assume a greater leadership role in the school. Graciela Soliz, a Unity of Youth member, explained:

> We're working on like getting the student government together [to have a retreat so that we can sit] down and talk about the issues with the student government, [including] how they're running things around school and [how] student government should represent the voice of all the students. But some students feel as though they're not being represented. That the only thing that student government kind of looks at is into the parties and all the unnecessary things when they're really supposed to be like being more aware of what's going on.

As a result of the dialogues with student government, Unity of Youth not only established themselves as student leaders, they also worked to build the leadership of their peers as well.

The successes of Unity of Youth suggest that student voice can be the loudest when raised from outside of the system. Student voice initiatives that position themselves outside of school auspices, such as in community-based organizations, have a greater ability to confront injustices within schools and to raise concerns about institutional practices, while students working within schools have little authority to conduct activities without the sanction of school authorities for legal and political reasons (Mitra, 2005a). The strength of youth leadership in Unity of Youth contrasts the barriers that Student Forum youth faced as an organization positioned fully inside Whitman High School. Despite the group's many successes, Whitman students faced definite limits in terms of the amount of power and authority that they could assume. For example, school regulations drastically limited the scope of an effort to design a peer tutorial system because students could not convene during school hours without adult supervision. Any time the group wanted to have a tutor available, an adult

needed to be present to supervise the tutor's activity. The roles that the group defined for students could not be fulfilled, and the school was unwilling to negotiate this restriction (Mitra, 2005a). Future research on the types of changes possible from the inside versus the outside of school walls will help to inform the field on the scope and limits of student voice activities.

THE CHALLENGES AND BENEFITS OF STUDENT VOICE STRATEGIES

While the three examples of student voice presented in this chapter offer a range of student roles, one form of student voice is notably missing from this chapter—autonomous student projects. Few instances exist of such efforts in which students initiate an effort and assume responsibility for its activities. When student-run initiatives do occur, they tend to happen within a broader umbrella of collaboration and support from adults, such as the students at Whitman or Unity of Youth, the strongest example of youth leadership presented here in this chapter. Yet, even in successful examples of student-led partnerships, adults needed to enable students to conduct the work. In most cases, empowering students requires adults to be willing to relinquish some of their control.

The lack of examples of autonomous student groups suggests that there are limits to the types of roles and voice that students can assume within the school walls. Often the institutional and normative features of schooling prevent substantial student power. The institutional constraints of schools also require adults and youth to spend a great deal of their time ensuring the basic survival of their student voice activities (Mitra, 2005a). Groups working to increase student voice in schools must find a way to remain focused on enacting their vision of change while at the same time taking steps to ensure the preservation of their group so they can continue the work that they started (Mitra, 2005b). It is difficult, however, for a group to challenge an institution about the ownership of decision making and authority while also having to ensure its own existence.

Given the challenges of increasing student leadership, schools may find that listening to students is a natural first step in introducing student voice into their reform work. It is the least threatening form of youth participation, and it offers great rewards to the school in terms of encouraging school personnel to challenge their current assumptions about the problems and solutions available to them. The examples in this chapter suggest, however, that listening to students is insufficient as an endpoint of student voice. If increasing student voice truly means sharing the ownership of school decision making with

students, then youth must do more than speak their minds about problems; they must have the opportunity to lead the way toward innovative solutions.

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JOE L. KINCHELOE

CLARIFYING THE PURPOSE OF ENGAGING STUDENTS AS RESEARCHERS

Student research is a powerful pedagogical and intellectual tool. Engaged in research activities, students learn and polish the traditional skills we value in the curriculum: reading, writing, arithmetic, listening, interpreting, and thinking. In addition, they learn fieldwork skills: observing, photographing, videotaping, note-taking, and life history collecting. They are genuinely engaged because in this process they share stories of everyday life, their hopes, their fears, their joys, and their sadness; they explore one another's dreams and the factors that have interfered with those dreams. Working closely with teachers to construct interpretations of various events and their relationships to the community with its larger social, cultural, and political influences, students learn to expose the structures that construct their lived worlds, their locations in the social hierarchy of their peer groups, their romantic relationships, their vocational aspirations, their relationships with teachers. Thus, beyond developing their basic academic skills, students as researchers learn to derive meaning from themselves and the world around them and become empowered through this work.

Indeed, it is this dimension of research—student research in particular—that makes it so dangerous in twenty-first century education. It is the collision of the educational, cognitive, and political power of student research with contemporary ideological conditions that is the concern of this chapter. In a repressive political era where education is closely monitored for possible transgressive activity, student research has been repositioned as oppositional action. It is oppositional in that it is an open-ended form of curriculum and knowledge production. Such open-endedness is unacceptable in a right-wing knowledge climate where all educational activities and knowledges encountered must be carefully monitored in order to avoid the development of perspectives critical of the prevailing ideological impulse. Thus, advocates of student research need to understand the context in which contemporary student research takes place and the purposes of such activity in such a highly charged, ideologically inscribed educational context. Elements of complexity emerge as we begin to understand the importance and power of student research in the regressive era in which we operate.

Writing from a critical perspective, I maintain that in the first decade of the twenty-first century with the attempt of right-wing forces to capture schools and the educational process defined as cultural pedagogy—e.g., media—the ability to conduct research becomes more important than ever. With prescribed curricula, "No Child Left Behind," and scripted lessons all designed to teach students and teachers a standardized body of official knowledge, student ability to engage in knowledge production becomes a democratic survival skill. In this twenty-first century, neo-colonial context this chapter asks what constitutes a rigorous mode of student research that cultivates the intellect while sophisticating student capacity to identify and confront ideological constructs. Thus, the question—why do we engage students as researchers?—takes on new dimensions in the contemporary era.

Knowledge in a Neo-Colonial Era

After George W. Bush assumed the presidency and especially after 9–11, this colonialist—albeit in a neo-colonialist guise—impulse became more powerful than ever. In a recent book Shirley Steinberg and I edited entitled, *The Miseducation of the West: How the Schools and Media Distort Our Understanding of the Islamic World* (2004), we maintain that an important aspect of America's neo-colonialist project involves controlling knowledge in a way that induces the public to think that America's role in the world is always benevolent and democratic. A closer examination reveals that a corporatized media and a federal school reform strategy have attempted to erase a wide range of American actions from the public's consciousness. While this is particularly true in relation to American action in Islamic nations around the world, it is also true in a variety of venues at home and abroad. With the number of individuals and corporations who own information and its dispersal shrinking every year, we are now officially engaged in a crisis of knowledge. Student research in such a context becomes profoundly disconcerting and threatening to those responsible for the colonial control of knowledge. Indeed, student research is an act of resistance in such a regressive politics of knowledge (Kincheloe, 2005b).

The climate of deceit that has been created produces misinformation and erases knowledge that might contradict such deception. For example, federal law 'No Child Left Behind's' (NCLB) mandated "adequate yearly progress" formulas—how we measure school performance—are so unclear and blurred that it seems to many observers their real goal is the construction of confusion and failure (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 2005). Under these accountability guidelines, as many as three out of four schools will be deemed not to be making sufficient progress. Included in this group will be some of the best public schools in the country (see Goodson & Foote, 2001a and 2001b, for their study

of one such school and the role student research played in the effort to fight such guidelines). Such schools will be publicly embarrassed by government censure of their inadequate performance, leading more people to conclude that public schools are failing. The effort to weaken or end public schooling is an important step in the larger right-wing politics of knowledge. Schools will be one less place that transgressive, unofficial knowledge can be produced or accessed. The struggle for the public schools is a central battleground in the knowledge wars of the twenty-first century.

Whose Knowledge is it? Taking Back the Control of Information

Who owns knowledge? What are the motives of those who own knowledge? Why are there so few alternatives to official interpretations of the world on TV and in the school curriculum? Why are perspectives that differ viewed not simply as diverse knowledges but dangerous ideas? And why are pedagogical strategies based on the active engagement of students as researchers so blatantly missing in contemporary educational reforms? In a neo-colonial America the answers to these questions are quite disturbing. The study of such questions should be central to any system of schooling in a democratic society. In the middle of the first decade of the twenty-first century, however, many view such studies as expressions of anti-Americanism. Critical teachers—indeed, any educator who supports a rigorous curriculum—must work to challenge the American public's conventional wisdom about the politics of knowledge. As we survey questions of educational goals at this period of history, addressing the question of the politics of knowledge becomes a central concern for the future of both democratic schooling and democracy itself.

Thus, the neo-colonial recovery movement—the recovery of the dominance of white, male perspectives perceived to have been overthrown by the Civil Rights Movement and multicultural education—continues to shape and distort what teachers must contend with in the lived world of contemporary schools (Gresson, 2004). In light of the preceding insights, many scholars maintain that teachers must understand clearly the ways unequal colonial relations are constructed and extended in schooling practices. In this context, critical classroom teachers seek multiple knowledges and diverse perspectives to reshape their classrooms—the teacher's and the students' abilities to conduct research is central to this objective. Such teachers as researchers understand that many educators from the mainstream hold a cultural and socio-economic class affinity with many of their more successful students. Because of this connection, these students become the chosen ones who are provided special privileges and the benefit of a more complex and textured curriculum (Fenwick, 2000). This is another way that marginalized students operating in a neo-colonial school

system are denied access to the intellectual tools of dominant culture—Bruner's (1996) "cultural amplifiers"—and, thus, are punished for the problems they bring with them to school (Kincheloe, 2005b).

In the present era of neo-colonial standardized curricula and top-down standards these concerns with equity and rigorous knowledge work fall on deaf ears (Lester, 2001; Lather, 2003). In this situation when educational leaders fail to consider difference in its human and knowledge-related forms, schools too often operate to stupidify, to construct a power-compliant form of consciousness. The ability to conduct rigorous primary and secondary research serves as an antidote to such a hegemonic education. In a transgressive context teachers help students develop the skills and the space to do research, interpret it, and use it. Critical teachers acquaint students with secondary research skills in libraries, book and magazine outlets, and the Internet. In the same way, they acquaint students with primary research methods, including historical, ethnographic, semiotic, hermeneutic, phenomenological, textual, and other processes of producing original, unhegemonized knowledge (The Memory Hole, 2002; Hartman, 2002).

Such abilities take on a new urgency in the contemporary climate of deceit with its corporatized knowledges found both in school and in the electronic hyperreality. The ability to engage in such types of research provides students with cognitive skills important in all phases of life. It grants them a sense of historicity (understanding the way they are positioned in history and culture) and a contextual appreciation of learning that no other skill can furnish. As a result, student researchers experience the empowerment that many pedagogies can only reference in the abstract. Student researchers are empowered by what they can do and what they know (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 1998). Indeed, doors are opened to new ways of seeing that expand the cognitive envelope and move students and their teachers to new levels of insight.

Detached Pedagogy

When teachers and students are not encouraged to engage in such research, teaching and learning are less immediate, less connected to the conditions of the community, less involved with what motivates students, less concerned with moral and ethical issues in the life of the school, less connected with other bodies of knowledge produced in different situations. Moreover, the neo-colonial pedagogy articulated in top-down, test-driven, technical standards remove schooling even further from the socio-economic and cultural changes surrounding it. As the information society changes the nature of jobs and the tools required for them, not to mention the need for new citizenship skills in a hegemonic knowledge order, teachers and students drift along in low-level

memory work far removed from the commerce of everyday life. A critical research-based pedagogy understands the context of socio-economic, political, and cultural change, so that teachers and students can keep ahead of it and help direct it in positive, democratic, and just ways (Blacker, 1995; Bartolome, 1996; Blades, 1997; Carson & Sumara, 1997; Ellis, 1998; Apple, 1999).

Educational reforms based on test-focused content standards remove teachers and students from engagement with and input into the compelling problems of the day. This is a fatal pedagogical mistake as it sets up a dichotomy between school and the "real world." Such a division will always undermine motivation, as teachers and students come to see the mandated activities of school as trivial and irrelevant. Such an observation should not be taken as an argument for a non-historical, presentist education. The point is not that we should ignore the past and various traditions of knowledge produced by human beings in a variety of cultures around the world. The concern is that a rigorous research-based pedagogy operates to help teachers and students integrate these knowledges and skills into an understanding of current affairs and the "changing nature of change" in the electronic context of the new century (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2004). The subtle ability to make this connection is one of the most important and complicated aspects of a rigorous critical pedagogy.

To integrate these understandings educators must appreciate the way the neo-colonial world has changed in the last few decades and in the twenty-first century (Ali, 2002). The rate of socio-economic and cultural change has accelerated, and in this process identities are no longer as stable as individuals are bombarded with information to the point of incomprehensibility. Traditional forms of problem solving where variables are limited and are assumed to act in predictable ways are less useful in an era marked by the complexity of multiple causality and, as many have termed it, chaos. With neo-colonial globalization and new forms of information production and communication, individuals in various fields have been confronted with more ill-structured and divergent problems, cultural misunderstandings and value conflicts, and problems of power inequities. It is apparent that a rigorous education would include an understanding of this new context and the forms of knowledge, research skills, and cognitive abilities needed to deal with it successfully.

The era of images and pictorial representations ushered in by television has never been adequately addressed—if addressed at all—by schools. Media literacy, a set of skills so central to citizenship and an understanding of the contemporary world, is rarely observed in schools (Kellner, 1995; Kincheloe, 2001). When such imagery is not integrated with hypertext and cyber-virtuality, schools fall even further behind cultural and informational change and the ways they are used to win consent to an inequitable status quo. Those students who are

conversant with such informational dynamics often learn about them on their non-school time. While their insights and abilities often border on genius, there are still many aspects of the contemporary, techno-electronic, political landscape that are missed by such students. Nevertheless, the technological abilities obtained by such students—often economically privileged with access to computer equipment at home—exacerbates the gulf between the haves and have nots in alarming ways. Technical standards that emphasize memorization of data are devised as if we are still living in an oral culture. The cognitive and pedagogical processes required by such hegemonic standards hearken back to medieval schooling where students memorized texts because there was so little literature in print.

In the context of cyberspace we possess less and less knowledge of the cultural location, the human contributions, the socio-political and economic interests that shape information. In those few classrooms where students are asked who produced the data they downloaded off the Internet the night before, they are often at a loss to answer such a query. They have never considered such a research question or its multi-dimensional implications. Information in such situations has lost its borders; it moves and flows in the non-linear and instantaneous ways that human thought operates. Traditional forms of knowledge as it is organized in books and official interpretations are undermined in this new context. A subversive element implicitly operates that challenges the informational status quo but at the same time allows power wielders who control informational pipelines to covertly promote data that serves their economic, social, and political interests. Obviously, such a dangerous reality demands new forms of knowledge work, education, and cognition—tasks that can only be accomplished by students who are adept researchers. In an era where the power of economic institutions—especially in relation to control of information—has risen to unprecedented heights, the development of our ability to delineate the hidden interests of the knowledge of visual media and cyber-technology is crucial to the future of democracy (V. Carter, 1998; R. Carter, 2004). Such realities shape and re-shape the purpose of student research.

CREATING CRITICAL, COUNTER-HEGEMONIC CLASSROOMS WITH STUDENT RESEARCH

Myles Horton, my fellow Tennesseean and founder of East Tennessee's Highlander Center, argued that students and teachers need to learn how to find answers to the problems that confront them. In his simple, but not simplistic, manner, Horton delineated the central theme of the critical student research promoted here: students and teachers should be collaborators in inquiry into

the obstacles that block the achievement of their hopes and dreams. Teachers who facilitate the delicate task of engaging students as researchers must develop an informed and compelling method of involving students in an analysis and clarification of their personal hopes and dreams. Horton argued that teachers needed to share their theories of where they are going with students, so students could decide how to respond to the purposes of the classroom. If students did not agree with the direction the teacher and other members of the class were going, then alternative paths could be devised. The important concepts at work in such a context involve both the teacher's efforts to help students formulate a purpose for their research and education in general and the student's right to reject such a formulation (Horton & Freire, 1990; Steinberg & Kincheloe, 1998).

As Horton put it in his talking book with Freire, *We Make the Road by Walking*, the basis of my pedagogy is grounded on "people learning from each other." As he explained: "You don't need to know the answer. You can help people get the answers. You have to know something; they know something. You have to respect their knowledge, which they don't respect, and help them to respect their knowledge" (p. 55).

Later in the book Freire picks up on Horton's theme and expands it in relation to the purpose of student research in critical classrooms:

When the students come, of course, they bring with them, inside of them, in their bodies, in their lives, they bring their hopes, despair, expectations, knowledge, which they got by living, by fighting, by becoming frustrated. Undoubtedly they don't come here empty. They arrive here full of things. In most of the cases, they bring with them opinions about the world, about life. They bring with them their knowledge at the level of common sense, and they have the right to go beyond this level of knowledge. At the same time—I want to be very clear; in order to avoid being understood as falling into a certain scientificism—there are levels of knowledge about the facts they already know, which unveil other ways of knowing, which can give us much more exact knowledge about the facts. This is a right that the people have, and I call it the right to know better what they already know. Knowing better means precisely going beyond the common sense in order to begin to discover the reason for the facts. (pp. 156–57)

Both Freire and Horton worked to engage their students in "going beyond common sense in order to begin to discover the reason for the facts." This is a central dimension of their contribution to those of us interested in educating students as researchers. In an interview I conducted with a woman from Tennessee who had attended Horton's Highlander Center, I asked her numerous questions about the school's curriculum and the emphasis on research. Her primary interest in going to the school revolved around her and her family's work in the coal mines in the southern Appalachians and their efforts to organize workers to fight for better working conditions and benefits for miners. Several of the men in her family had

died or were dying of Black Lung disease, contracted by the long term exposure to coal dust. She spoke of how she learned to read, write, and research at Highlander:

When I first came to the school I couldn't read or write. Myles Horton knew that I was interested in learning how to read and write so I could be better equipped to help with organizing the miners. With this in mind he and several other teachers used newspaper and magazine stories about mining as my primers. I learned quickly with these materials and then moved on to a variety of research projects that involved union organizing and class action suits against socially irresponsible corporations. I met a few other students who had similar interests to mine. Together we began to conduct secondary research about these matters, teaching not only one another but also the teachers at the center about what we learned. Soon we were traveling back up to Campbell County [Tennessee] and gathering information about health problems of miners in that area. We learned about interviewing and transcribing our data from Myles and several of the teachers. After collecting our information, we learned how to code it and organize it so we could write it up. A lot of the information we put together was used by lawyers to help make their case against the coal companies. We got pretty good at this type of research. I was flattered when the school asked some of the other researchers and me to come back to New Market [the location of the Highlander Center] and teach research to other students.

Horton's insights and practice are extremely important in an era as ideologically contentious as the present one. To understand the value of critical student research in the first decade of the twenty-first century, we have to understand the omnipresence of the previously described colonizing pedagogies. Democratic principles, the quest for social justice, and the belief in a pedagogical experience that promotes diverse perspectives demands an understanding of educational purpose and method in light of this regressive politics of knowledge (Kincheloe, 2005b). Critical teachers refuse to accept standardized, externally developed, scripted curricula demanded by right-wing educational reforms that appeal to the lowest common denominator of teacher and student ability. Critical teachers maintain that students should study the world around them, in the process learning who they are and what has shaped them. In this context, students are challenged to analyze and interpret data, conduct research, and develop a love for scholarship that studies things that matter. For example, critical middle school science teachers in this counter-hegemonic context see their goals as cultivating a love for science, developing student interest in finding more and more uses for science in their lives, and producing a passion for students to know more about the subject.

One of my doctoral students at Penn State University was a middle school science teacher who taught in a small Pennsylvania town located near abandoned steel mills. The campus of her school bordered a small river that a few miles upstream flowed by the mills. While covering a unit on the elements, the young teacher helped structure a series of research projects where students

searched for various elements that could be found around their town and in their everyday lives. One student suggested that they test the river to see what elements could be found in the water. When they did, the teacher and her class found small amounts of chromium, copper, nickel, zinc, and mercury in the river water. Curious as to why such elements would be in the water, the teacher and students developed a research project to explore where the pollutants came from and what possible effects they might have on the community.

In the process of the research they found out about the steel mills and the ways the elements were released into the river in the course of steel production. Upon further investigation they found that several environmental groups were looking into the lingering effects of the mills. The students invited spokespeople from the groups to come to school where the eighth graders shared their information with activists. The local media picked up on the students' research and it was featured in newspapers and on local TV stations. The teacher reported that she had never seen students so excited about school and science. "I will never teach science to this age group again," she told me, "without infusing numerous opportunities for them to engage in scientific and other forms of research. Nothing else can motivate students to learn science to this extent."

In such a research context, Freire (1970) and Shor (1992) have studied curriculum development, employing the concept of "generative theme." The generative theme is a topic taken from students' lived experience that is compelling and controversial enough to elicit their excitement and commitment to future learning and research. Such themes are saturated with affect, emotion, and meaning because they engage the fears, anxieties, hopes, and dreams of both students and their teachers. Generative themes arise at the point where the personal lives of students intersect with the larger society and the globalized world.

Freire addresses this issue specifically in his dialogical book with Shor, *A Pedagogy of Liberation: Dialogues on Transforming Education* (Shor & Freire, 1987). The effort to develop and employ generative themes for the purpose of engaging students in critical research is undermined in American schools, he asserted. Such sabotage takes place when a dichotomy is constructed between "reading the words and reading the world." Freire explains:

I see this as one of the main obstacles here in America for practicing liberating education, trying to get a critical grasp of the objects under study. What do I mean by the dichotomy between reading the words and reading the world? My impression is that the world of American education, the school, is increasing the separation of the words we read and the world we live in. In such a dichotomy, the world of reading is only the world of the schooling process, a closed world, cut off from the world where we have experiences but do not read about those experiences. This

schooling world where we read words that relate less and less to our concrete experiences outside has become more and more specialized in the bad sense of this word. In reading words, school becomes a special place that teaches us to read only school-words, not reality-words. The other world, the world of facts, the world of life, the world in which events are very alive, the world of struggles, the world of discrimination and economic crisis (all these things are there!) do not make contact with students in school through the words that school asks students to read. You can think of this dichotomy as one kind of "culture of silence" imposed on students. School reading is silent about the world of experience and the world of experience is silenced, without its own critical texts. (p. 135)

Here Freire lays out a central rationale for students as critical researchers. Here students connect with the world, they discern the ideas and structures behind the facts, they make connections between the word and the world. As one of my students who had participated in a class research project on sex education in the local schools wrote in her reflective journal near the end of the project:

When you told us at the beginning of the term that the class was going to do research on a topic that we would choose, I thought why would we do that. Why would a social studies methods class do research on some possibly unrelated topic? It never occurred to me that doing such research would connect us to the very reason that people go to school in the first place: to learn to learn about the world. I hated the project at first. I didn't care about sex education. But then one day when I was listening to an opponent of sex education talking about how the local schools were teaching elementary students how to perform oral sex, it hit me how important it was to understand how the world operated. And, unfortunately, most of the time we don't learn about that in regular classes. Here was a woman with a lot of influence in the city and state publicly lying about what sex education was all about. And I knew she was lying because I had done my research on what sex education in Caddo Parish [Louisiana] involved. If the people listening to her had not done their research, they might believe her. And then it hit me again. That's what happens all the time and not just with local people talking about sex education. That's what happens at the national level. Good citizens have to be researchers. If schools want to graduate good citizens, then they have to teach them how to conduct research. It all made sense to me.

One can observe the similarities between this student's epiphanies, Freire's generative themes, and Dewey's (1916) progressive education. In the early decades of the twentieth century Dewey advised teachers to build their class-room lessons around the life experiences of students. Only by beginning with these experiences, Dewey maintained, can we ever reach higher forms of knowledge and cognition. Starting with student life experiences and devising generative themes that connect to them, critical teachers can help students to question their experiences and to ponder the important points where those experiences intersect with larger social, political, scientific, aesthetic, and literary concerns.

For example, beginning with a generative theme taken from students' fears of terrorism in the U.S., a teacher and her students could construct a curriculum for a semester around the reasons for terrorism against America in the first

decade of the twenty-first century. In this context students could explore the origins of the Muslim rage toward the United States fermenting in many areas of the world. Is it as simple as George W. Bush explained it after 9–11? "They [the terrorists] hate our freedom." Are Islamic terrorists motivated by simply an irrational religious fanaticism? What do we find when we study the colonial histories of many Muslim countries? What is the American relationship to these colonial histories? Is it anti-American, as many claim, to study American imperialism in the Islamic world and the actions that fan the flames of Islamic anger?

In light of this generative theme and these questions, student researchers could develop historical curricula that explore the relationships between Islamic countries and the U.S. They could develop lessons that explore the human, physical, political, and economic geography of particular areas. In this context they could explore literature, novels and short stories that depict particular elements of life in these settings. Based on their research such students could develop political science lessons that study the different political positions of government officials in relation to responding to terrorist threats. Activities within these lessons are limited only by the teacher's and students' imaginations. Not only would such lessons engage student interest but students would also gain valuable research, interpretative, and analytical skills. In addition they would learn not only about the topic at hand but the value and uses of disciplines such as history, geography, literature, political science, anthropology, cultural studies, etc. . . . In the test-driven, standardized, and scripted classrooms of the present era students learn that school is not connected to the world around them. As students endure such classrooms, they relegate their enthusiasm and passion to other non-academic dimensions of their lives.

Such generative themes and the lessons they support help students not only acquire knowledge but learn about who they are and where they stand on the issues of the day. A counter-hegemonic classroom frees students from the indignity of being told whom they are and what they should know. It gives them the right to direct the flow of such inquiries on their own terms. This does not mean that students make all the decisions about what they should learn and simply teach themselves. Instead, it means that students make some of these decisions in negotiation with an expert teacher who constantly works to help them develop their analytical and interpretive abilities, their research skills, and their sense of identity as empowered, democratic citizens. In this context students gain the capacity to distinguish between oppressive and liberatory ways of seeing the world and themselves. In this way students are able to identify forms of faux-neutrality that permeate mainstream schooling and the larger society's politics of knowledge. Here they are empowered to pick out the

distortions, unexamined assumptions, and hidden philosophical beliefs that shape the official standardized curriculum of the contemporary epoch.

Thus, student inquiry helps construct the core skills of the counter-hegemonic classroom. Students with such skills are able to identify the fingerprints of dominant power on the pages of particular textbooks and in the requirements of mandated curricula. They deploy a literacy of power. With such skills they unmask the ways that ostensibly commonsense modes of seeing undermine their own and other people's best interests. Teachers and student researchers operating with these counter-hegemonic skills are undoubtedly dangerous—threats to the status quo. Indeed, they are the types of scholars who question the problematic ways that students are categorized, differences between students are represented, educational purposes are defined, schools are organized, and relationships between communities and schools are developed. Obviously, in a politically contentious era, these are dangerous questions (Kincheloe, 2005b).

Canadian educator Kathleen Berry (1998) writes of extending children's initial wonder about the world via student research. As student researchers analyze these mainstream hegemonic representations previously discussed, they "reclaim wonder" in a manner involving the illumination of the taken-for-granted. Dewey (1916) focused our attention on such a process when he argued that individuals should operate on the basis of a reflective action that disembeds moral, ethical, and political issues from mundane thinking. As student researchers pursue such a reflective relationship to their everyday experiences, they gain the ability to explore the hidden forces that have shaped their lives (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 1998).

Berry specifies this student-as-researcher process in her chapter on using drama in the classroom in *Classroom Teaching: An Introduction* (Kincheloe, 2005). Here she describes the various ways students (and teachers) can assume a role of a historical, literary or kind of figure in classroom settings. Students prepare themselves for such roles by carefully researching the individual and the context in which he or she operated. In this way, Berry's work provides a creative twist to most conceptions of student as researcher. As Berry (2005) writes:

In many ways, drama can be used in any curriculum area as an exciting means to engage students of all ages. Many educators think that drama is an academic subject to be studied in itself or that only teachers well-versed or experienced in theater work can use drama. This chapter attempts to demonstrate that if we rethink the purposes and practices of drama as a teaching tool, anyone can and should use it no matter their background or subject area. If teachers rethink the theoretical purposes for which drama can be used, then it follows that they must rethink the multitude of applications. Confidence to employ drama as a way of teaching does not come easy. However, once teachers rethink the purposes of using drama—and with practical information on what dramatic conventions are available to support their thinking—the possibilities to energize teaching and offer students new ways of constructing knowledge about any subject are limitless. (p. 261)

Just as Berry thinks of students reclaiming wonder with their research-based student-in-role, students as researchers relearn the ways they have come to view the world around them. Indeed, such students gain the ability to awaken themselves from a hegemonic dream with its unexamined landscape of social knowledge and consciousness construction. In their newly awakened state, critical student researchers begin to see schools as human creations with meanings and possibilities lurking beneath surface appearances. Their ability to grasp these understandings moves them to a new level of consciousness, a cognitive domain where knowledge intersects with moral imperatives resulting in previously unimagined activities (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 1998).

In counter-hegemonic classrooms teachers who cultivate student research reframe the ways that school looks at students, in the process discovering student talents invisible to everyone at school. Here teachers use such talents as bases of opportunity to which they can connect academic skills and affective dynamics. As a middle school and high school teacher I did this numerous times, making use of students' interests and talents in everything from motorcycles to rock music. In these situations I would have the student develop a reading/resource list and devise a curriculum that could be used to teach other students and teachers about the topics in question. Such students learned so much, developed better reading and writing skills, and often gained a new relationship with both learning and schooling. For once they were the experts, teaching those around them about something they understood better than anyone else.

Such pedagogical methods consistently helped students see their lives in school in new and more positive ways. Often the students I engaged in this process were not the students who loved being at school. Many times they were students who were not happy to be there. I remember Tony, a middle school student I taught in the 1970s. Tony hated school but loved motorcycles. He was a tough kid who had experienced a hard life and had too much on his mind to worry too much about school. Other teachers saw Tony as a "hoodlum" and sought to control him at any cost. I took Tony's interest in motorcycles and made it the center of his work in my language arts class. Tony read articles, books, and any material he could get his hands on about motorcycles. When I asked him to develop a motorcycle curriculum for the other students, he thought I was kidding. Once convinced that I was serious he put his heart and soul into the project. He was an excellent teacher and answered questions with great patience, given his extensive expertise on the subject.

Tony wrote essays on the topic that I used to help him with technical and syntactical dimensions of his writing. He prepared a term paper on how he developed his love of motorcycles from his deceased father and how he hoped

to build a career around them in his life. The paper was a superior piece of work. When I called Tony's mother to tell her about the brilliance of his work, she told me she was tired of teachers blaming Tony for everything and hung up on me before I could tell her about the paper. A couple of days later after Tony had told her about the reason for my call, she came to school and apologized. She cried as she told me about how hard it had been to raise Tony as a single parent and how much he had hated school. She thanked me profusely for making his life at school happier and how much he talked about our class when he was at home.

Not only did I never have a problem with Tony, he was one of my best, funniest, most helpful, and most committed students. Continuing his work on motorcycles as a generative theme, Tony wrote a paper on the politics of gasoline near the end of the school year that amazed me. Conducting research on U.S. foreign policy in relation to the countries in Oil Producing Exporting Countries (OPEC), Tony developed a larger political understanding of why the peoples of oil producing countries were resentful of Western policies toward them in relation to the history of oil production. He spoke to the class about the need for the U.S. and other Western nations to deal with such nations fairly. Indeed, he warned, presciently, that a failure to do so would lead to great troubles between the U.S. and countries such as Iraq, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, and Nigeria (Kincheloe, 2005b).

In the process of working on the paper he quite obviously developed profound political, ideological, and geographical insights. I think it is no exaggeration to say that his worldview was changed. Here was an economically marginalized student with little contact with anyone who had much interest in academic matters. Using Freire's notion of generative themes and refusing to take seriously what standardized tests told me about his ability, I was able to create a classroom setting that allowed Tony to alter his frameworks of understanding. The benefits of counter-hegemonic classrooms are infinite and limited only by our imagination and the intrusions of power wielders.

Students as Researchers and Meta-learning

Thus, in such a frightening era where power deploys knowledge in ways unimaginable only a couple of generations ago, teachers and students must become researchers of the information forced upon them at school and at play. In this context I am advocating a form of meta-learning, defined simply as a process of always monitoring the assumptions, hidden rules, and expectations of the formal and informal educational processes. In such meta-learning teachers and students stand back from the process and research the benefits and liabilities of engaging in particular forms of learning. Concurrently, they

imagine new, better, and more democratic ways of constructing the learning process. Teachers and students work hard to develop criteria for judging the value and usefulness of their learning. Using such criteria they research diverse disciplines of knowledge and, of course, subjugated knowledges that can be used to vivify and expose the assumptions of the mandated curricula forced upon them. Even in a repressive right-wing knowledge climate critical teachers and students can turn such indoctrination pedagogies on themselves by bringing these questions about knowledge production, research, and meta-learning into the classroom. It is amazing what can happen when a teacher helps students research the official curriculum.

As students become more sophisticated in this research-based meta-learning, they become rigorous students of disciplines. In the right wing politics of knowledge such efforts are irrelevant—just give the teachers and students information, then monitor how well they teach it and learn it. Critical teachers and students as researchers become analysts of the discourses of disciplines. A discourse is defined as a constellation of hidden historical rules that govern what can be and cannot be said and who can speak and who must listen. Discursive practices are present in technical processes, institutions, modes of behavior, and, of course, disciplines of knowledge. Discourses shape how we operate in the world as human agents, how we construct our consciousness, and what we consider true. Teachers and students who research disciplines of knowledge in this meta-analytical context identify the discourses that have shaped the discipline's dominant ways of designing research, collecting data, interpreting (both consciously and unconsciously) information, constructing narratives, and evaluating and critiquing scholarship.

Awareness of these dynamics creates a meta-consciousness of the ways unexamined assumptions shape both research in the discipline in general and the validated knowledges that emerge in this process. This is the type of rigorous, research-grounded learning that needs to be taking place in schools ravaged by the right wing neo-colonial agenda. Teachers and students with this historically informed discursive understanding of a discipline know a field in the context of how it has been used in the world and who used it and for what purposes. In such a context students understand diverse aspects of a discipline, in the process coming to understand the cognitive, epistemological, political, and pedagogical limitations of a field of study and how it can be advanced to a new level of rigor.

Such learning constitutes a profound act of rigor in the struggle for intellectual development and political consciousness. Indeed, what teachers and students are researching here involves a discipline's rules of construction. Always aware of the complexity permeating knowledge production, our critical pedagogy understands

that in order to survive, disciplines had to embrace particular features and structures at specific historical points in their development. Often such dimensions live on in new epochs of disciplinary history, serving no pragmatic purpose other than to fulfill the demands of unconscious tradition. When the teachers' and students' historical discursive research uncovers such anachronistic dynamics, they can be challenged as part of the effort to facilitate more rigorous and pragmatic scholarship, pedagogy, and learning.

In this context critical teachers and students come to understand how certain moral positions, particular modes of public behavior, specific systems of belief, and dominant ideologies were produced by certain disciplinary discourses and knowledge traditions. Such insights are profoundly liberating to teachers and students as they enable such scholars to make better-informed decisions about how they fashion their personal, moral, vocational, and civic lives. So often it is in these ignored discursive practices of disciplines that scholars come to grasp the way power operates to oppress and regulate. Learning to engage in such forms of research is a central ingredient of the antidote needed to subvert the right-wing educational agenda.

Such meta-understandings of how knowledge is produced, cultural ways of seeing are constructed, and the status quo is molded are central dimensions of becoming an educated person. Moreover, such insights are keys to our ability to move beyond the oppressive present, to escape the ghosts of history that undermine our efforts for just and humane action. In such an educational context the value of such an education depends on what it empowers us to do. Teacher and student researchers in a critical education create a form of conceptual distance between themselves and their learning that allows them to evaluate how their learning does or does not empower them. Does the learning help them shape worthy personal goals and then facilitate their accomplishment? Does it enable them to work better with other people in collective efforts for personal and social change? Does it facilitate their effort to understand the distortions of the neo-colonial knowledge project?

The Life-changing Dimensions of Student Research and the Meta-learning it Promotes

Thus, research and meta-learning in the critical sense offered here move students to experience the world in qualitatively different ways. In such an education students discern a change in their relationship to the world—a change that holds profound social, epistemological, political, ethical, aesthetic, and ontological (having to do with our being in the world, who we are) consequences. Thus, critical teachers do not simply deliver knowledge to students but reflect on the types of situations in which students encounter knowledge.

If all knowledge is situated—meaning that it emerges in particular contexts and is intimately connected to those contexts—then the context in which teachers and students work with and produce knowledge is a important aspect of the acts of teaching and learning.

For example, do we encounter knowledge in a way that is connected primarily to preparation for a standardized test or in an effort to better understand a phenomenon that has a profound impact on our life? In my life as a scholar, my situatedness as a rural Tennesseean from the mountains of southern Appalachia has had a profound impact on my relationship to the knowledges I have encountered. In my choice of studies I chose to research and write a history thesis and a doctoral dissertation on fundamentalist Christianity and its social, political, and educational effects. Such student research was intimately related to my identity and the deepest realms of my consciousness given my personal interactions with fundamentalism in my childhood. Such situatedness provided me not only profound motivation to study the topic, but it also provided a conceptual matrix, a mattering map on which to position what I was learning. The critical education promoted here seeks to find such dynamics in the lives of all students in the pedagogical effort to make learning meaningful and a source of passion and commitment. This is a central purpose of a research-oriented progressive pedagogy.

Thus, students in this critical pedagogical context are ultimately for teaching themselves, interpreting and producing their own knowledges. Regressive critics of progressive pedagogies have been quick to scoff at this proposition, resorting in the process to a misleading representation of what such self-directed learning actually involves. To set the record straight, such a form of teaching and learning takes far more work and a higher level of expertise on the part of the teacher than traditional transmission pedagogies. To engage the student in such a self-directed process, adept teachers must not only develop deep understandings of students but must also possess high level scholarly/research skills and a wide body of diverse knowledges. The teacher must be able to exercise profound pedagogical skills that cultivate the student's disposition to develop such self-directed abilities.

In this complex process such teachers must spend countless hours helping students to connect their personal histories to diverse knowledges but also engage the student in developing conceptual frameworks in which to make sense of such connections. Such frameworks are central to this learning process, for it is around them that the purpose for learning and for that matter living takes shape. Without such a sense of purpose the goals of a research-based, critical pedagogy cannot be achieved. Indeed, everything in the critical curriculum leads down the yellow brick road to the Emerald City of purpose.

When learners act with the benefits of this ever-evolving, elastic sense of purpose, they begin to discern the whole of the forest rather than simply the isolated trees. It is an amazing moment in the lives of teachers and students when the epiphany of purpose grabs a student and shakes her very soul (Larson, 1995; Hoban & Erickson, 1998; Fenwick, 2000; Reason & Bradbury, 2000; Thomson, 2001)). This is the money shot of a critical pedagogy.

Deprofessionalized teachers who are unfamiliar with the process of rigorous research and a dumbed down curriculum do not contribute to the complex requirements of a successful pedagogy. The multiple abilities, the multilogical insights required for such a pedagogy demand a rigorous mode of professional education where the expectations are high and the demands are challenging. Learning in this context is not simply an individual activity that takes place inside the head of an isolated student. Instead, it is a nuanced and situated form of interaction that engages in process and produces knowledges that change who we are. Learning in this critical, situated context cannot be separated from ontology—our being. Our identity always exists in relationship to our learning, our researching—knowledge and identity are inseparable. After engaging in certain acts of learning and researching, therefore, I can never be the same. With this in mind we come to appreciate that knowledge is not a thing. It is, instead, a relational process that emerges in the intersection of a wide variety of forces. It is a relationship connecting self, other people, power, and the world with particular conceptual frameworks and specific acts of research.

Thus, knowledge is more complex than we originally thought—indeed, the lived world is more complex than we imagined. And because of this often duplicitous complexity, a new mode of pedagogy and new understandings of teaching and learning are necessary. Such new understandings help us understand the role of knowledge and its production in our individual lives and in the larger social order. Educators talk about knowledge and build institutions for transmitting it, but rarely do they pause to consider the impact it makes in the world. These are the substantive dimensions of education in a democratic society. Once we have asked and attempted to answer them, we simply cannot return to the horsies and duckies of the right-wing politics of knowledge and the education it constructs. The universe implicit within these regressive and presently dominant forms of epistemology and pedagogy is a simple-minded place. Such a conception, I believe, insults the complexity and even the sanctity of creation. It certainly degrades the human beings that inhabit it. The effort to get beyond such reductionist, power-illiterate, parochial, unjust, and anti-intellectual orientations is an objective worth fighting for in this bizarre new century. This is merely one reason why student research is so important.

Critical Ontology and Student Research: Inquiry into Selfhood

The notion of critical ontology (ontology is the branch of philosophy that explores what it means to be in the world, human being) insists that individuals and groups of people embrace the existential imperative to research themselves, to understand the nature of their being-in-the-world. In this context teachers explore what it means to be human and to negotiate the social and ideological forces that shape their consciousness. In light of our critical knowledge of power, students as researchers pursue a key dimension of critical ontology—a way of being that is aware of the ways power shapes us, the ways we see the world, and the ways we perceive our role as teachers. When students—and their teachers—possess such understandings, they are better prepared to support or critique what schools are doing and evaluate the goals they are promoting. In this context students become political agents who research their own practices and their own belief systems. In so doing they develop their own persona, not one that has been insidiously constructed by tacit exposure to the machinations of oppressive power so dominant in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

To gain this literacy of power (Macedo, 1994), students and teachers must transcend simplistic forms of reflection and move to specific questions about whose interests are being served by particular forms of pedagogy and curriculum development. How am I complicit in these political activities? Do I want to contribute to the political agenda being promoted by the existing school organization? Critical student researchers learn that no teaching, curriculum development, or knowledge production is value-free, no language is politically neutral, and no meaning-making process is objective. In this context they understand that the persona they create is committed to something, to the valuing of some politically inscribed educational purpose (McLaren, 2000). Thus, human "being" itself is never a disinterested dynamic and must always be self-monitored for the ways it has been shaped by power.

Thus, student researchers embracing a critical ontology pursue human agency—the disposition and capacity to act on the world in ways that involve self-direction and the pursuit of democratic and egalitarian principles of community formation. A critical ontology insists that humans possess inalienable rights to knowledge and insight into knowledge production, to intellectual development, to empowerment, and to political agency in a democratic society. When student researchers understand these ontological dynamics and work toward the political goals they portend, they have laid the foundation on which other aspects of their education can be constructed. They have signaled to those around them that social justice must be integrated into every aspect of education—even the construction

of selfhood. With this sense of agency they are better prepared to sidestep the technical rationalism and the forces of race, class, gender, and sexual oppression that constantly work to shape education in the U.S. (Getzel, 1997; Grimmett, 1999; Edwards, 2000; Horn, 2000, 2001, 2004; Segall, 2002).

This is the goal-oriented dimension of critical ontology—the political agency of critical students and teachers. The goal orientation is never simplistic. It is much more of a hermeneutic dynamic that questions the notion of fixed goals even as it pursues them. Educators aware of this critical ontology always understand that different contexts demand different goals and that seen in light of different horizons goals will take on different forms. The analysis of these different contexts becomes a central dimension of a critical ontological form of student research (Block, 1995; Morris, Doll, & Pinar, 1999; Edwards, 2000; Gordon, 2001).

In my own teaching I have worked to engage students in critical ontological research. In such a context, students study the socio-cultural, ideological climates in which they have been raised and the ways that such contexts have shaped their own subjectivity, their own being-in-the-world. One of my students, Regina Barnard, provides an example of such research as she explores her ontological formation in Hell's Kitchen.

Where I grew up in Hell's Kitchen and lived for over twenty years, restaurant row existed then and it was somewhat affordable, and now twenty something years later it is geared for tourists who can afford it. Botanicas also called "folk pharmacies" and candy stores have been replaced with quaint boutique-like restaurants and coffee shops. The Laundromats that once housed a full audience of people of color and many children, have now been replaced by white yuppies who "drop off" their wash rather than wash their clothing themselves. A French restaurant offering non-pronounceable dishes to its original community of Spanish speakers replaced "greasy spoon" Chinese restaurants that were my favorite because of their price and their neighborhood friendliness. Handball courts have turned into dog runs. Hooker hangouts are now wineries and lofts for wine tasting and cigar smoking sessions. These small spaces and corners within a well-known city made up most of my childhood, adolescent, and teenage years of creating subcultures.

All of us had academic nightmares that we could not beat during the day or at night when it was time to attack homework. I for one had the toughest time learning how to tell time. My mother bought me a cardboard clock with two giant red hands, and she worked with me everyday and every free moment she had. I still could not get it right. Yet, I was never late. None of the girls were good in math. In fact, it was the class we struggled with the most. There was no sense of us memorizing the numbers and where they fit in a problem, but we knew each word in every song, and when to use our child-like vibratos, and when to pitch it high or low. We know how to lace our sneakers straight across instead of crisscrossed, we knew how to read Right On! magazine, we knew how much the magazine would cost the group, and how much each person would need to chip in to buy it, but we could not add to save our academic lives.

Lucky for me reading became my partner during my Kitchen childhood. As I read I also watched from my window as almost all of my girlfriends became mothers before they were old enough to vote. I watched as populations of adults developed some type of drug or alcohol problem. By the

time I reached high school, I had read everything that Zora Neale Hurston and Langston Hughes had ever written. Rarely would their texts be taught in school.

Why does school not reflect the personal and learned experiences of youth of color? Why does the traditional form of intellectualism refuse to engage the organic intellectualism that students may bring with them? Many schools, of course, have incorporated dialogues about multiculturalism and diversity as a bridge that connects young students of color to curricula that represent them. Yet, rarely are students asked the simplest of questions: Who are you? What makes you you? What do you know? What did you know before you came to school and what do you know now?

Regina's student research involves more than simply autobiography, as she goes on to connect the formation of her subjectivity to diverse ideological, cultural, and social encounters. Her self-consciousness about the nature of critical ontological research helps guide her explorations. As she understands that she is a unique individual, she is concurrently aware of the social dimensions of her selfhood. In her case, her research leads her into an exploration of numerous connections that ultimately help shape her life work. Thus, ontological knowledge cannot be separated from student experience. Indeed, some might define experience as knowledge translated into action (Ferreira & Alexandre, 2000). Critical student researchers are encouraged to compare ontological knowledge to experiential knowledge, thinking about the relationship between who they are and what they do as friends, lovers, citizens, and scholars.

Critical ontology is obsessed with new and better ways of being human, being with others, and the creation of environments where mutual growth of individuals is promoted and symbiotic learning relationships are cultivated. Such actions are highly political, involving the knowledge and disposition to escape from technicist modes of social control and knowledge production. The aspect of education that moved me to become a teacher and teacher educator involves this great escape and the subsequent move to a new ontological domain. With this in mind we can engage in a form of ontologically catalyzed research that results in a reconceptualization and remaking of our lives.

Students Researching Self-production in an Alienated Era

A critical ontology understands that self-production cannot be understood outside the context of power. In this context student researchers pursuing a critical ontology employ a critical mode of hermeneutics (the study of interpretation) and engage with texts for the purpose of gaining a new level of self-understanding. This question of gaining insight into personal identity is not a call to narcissism; indeed, it is quite the opposite. In this ontological context students as researchers learn to understand the oppressive forces that shape them so—especially in contemporary alienated Western culture—they can become less self-absorbed and individually oriented. In this context they learn to situate themselves historically

and socially. With such knowledge they are far better equipped to make conscious decisions about who they want to be and how they will deal with the ideological socialization processes of twenty-first century electronic societies—hegemony in hyperreality.

In what might be described as the tacit ontology of Cartesianism students are not encouraged to confront why they tend to think as they do about themselves, the world around them, and their relationship to that world (Kincheloe, 2003). In other words, students gain little insight into the forces that shape them—that is, that construct their consciousness, produce their subjectivity. Indeed, I would argue that in the scripted, test-driven pedagogies of the twenty-first century one of the central purposes of schooling involves precluding such ontological inquiry. In addition, this uncritical articulation of curriculum and pedagogy is virtually unconcerned with the consequences of thinking, as it views cognition as a process that takes place in a vacuum. Thinking in a new way always necessitates personal transformation; indeed, if enough people think in new ways, social transformation is inevitable.

One reason this situating of self often does not take place in contemporary schooling involves the fact that many of those who teach are denied the historical, philosophical, sociological, and cultural studies background to delineate what such an act might entail. Insights derived from these domains might have helped educators discern the ways that dominant power has subverted democratic impulses in a variety of venues including the political, epistemological, psychological, and the curricular and pedagogical. Increasingly dominated by private interests, these domains operated to construct the identities of individuals in ways that were conducive to the needs of dominant power wielders. There were concerted attempts to make individuals more compliant to the needs of corporations, more accepting of government by the market, globalized capitalism, free market ideologies, the irrelevance of the political domain, etc. . . . The ideological deployment of schools as sorting mechanisms for the new corporate order has gone unchallenged by practitioners unaware of these forces. Where the self fits in these power-driven dynamics is, of course, irrelevant in too many pedagogical venues.

Human efforts to make sense of self and the world are dominated by ideological forces that thwart our pursuit of individual goals. At the same time, particular forms of thinking and action reveal volition and a genuine motivation that transcends the confines of existing social forces. Social theorists have traditionally been guilty of not recognizing this ambiguity of consciousness construction, identity production, and social action. Not until the 1970s and 1980s with the influx of new theories of language analysis and cultural understanding did scholars appreciate the way power was embedded in language and

knowledge and the implications of such inscriptions in the production of the self. Human beings are initiated into language communities where they share bodies of knowledge, epistemologies, and the cognitive styles that accompany them. These are powerful forces in the shaping of who we are. Thus, the manner in which we come to think about selfhood and pedagogy is inseparable from these language communities. Indeed, the nature of the curriculum we devise is inseparable from them. A critical ontology understands these dynamics; it understands that the sociohistorical dimensions of self-production are often manifested on the terrain of language. Thus, student researchers in this context begin to study the linguistic dimensions of how their identities have been insidiously constructed (Gee, 1996; Gee, Hull, & Lankshear, 1996; Knobel, 1999).

As argued above, the schemas that guide a culture and its schooling and help produce subjectivity are too infrequently examined in the hyperrational schools of the twenty-first century. It was the recognition of this same absence in the Italy of the 1920s that social theorist Antonio Gramsci (1988) had in mind when he argued that philosophy should be viewed as a form of self-criticism. Gramsci asserted that the starting point for any higher understanding of self involves the consciousness of oneself as a product of sociohistorical forces. A critical philosophy, he wrote, involves the ability of its adherents to criticize the ideological frames that they use to make sense of the world. I watch my colleagues and myself struggle as teachers of a complex ontology, as we attempt to engage our students in Gramsci's pedagogical effort to understand themselves in sociohistorical context. The work is never easy as we complain and moan about our students' lack of preparation for engagement in such theoretical and introspective analysis. Teachers who engage a complex ontological curriculum must be patient and empathetic with their twenty-first century students. Our students have very few opportunities in the contemporary politics of knowledge with its media and corporately influenced schooling to gain experiences that would equip them for such a task. Thus, the need for ontological forms of student research has never been greater.

In very specific terms, a complex ontology is profoundly concerned with the production of self in the context of the influence of power blocs in contemporary society. Such concern reveals itself in a critical questioning of the social, cultural, political, economic, epistemological, and linguistic structures that shape human consciousness as well as the historical contexts that gave birth to the structures. Such ontological analysis helps students explore the sociohistorical and political dimensions of schooling, the kind of meanings that are constructed in classrooms, and how these meaning are translated into the production of their consciousness.

Proponents of an ontologically impoverished curriculum often speak of student empowerment as if it were a simple process that can be accomplished by a couple of creative learning activities. One thing our ideological critique of self-production tells us is that the self is a complex, ambiguous, and contradictory entity pushed and pulled by a potpourri of forces. The idea that the self can be reconstructed and empowered without rigorous historical study, linguistic analysis, and an understanding of social construction is a trivialization of the goals of a critical ontology. Thus, student research is a lynchpin of a more rigorous education that is committed to producing self-conscious scholars who have a complex understanding of the relationship between self and world.

Student research informed by a complex ontology asks the question: How do we move beyond simply uncovering the sources of consciousness construction in our larger attempt to reconstruct the self in a critical manner? Critical teachers must help their students search in as many locations as possible for alternate discourses, ways of thinking and being that expand the envelopes of possibility. In this context teachers explore literature, history, popular culture, and ways of forging community in previously devalued, subjugated knowledges. In this context teachers develop their own and their students' social and aesthetic imaginations. Here we imagine what we might become by recovering and reinterpreting what we once were. The excitement of student research as ontological quest is powerful (Kincheloe, 2005a).

CONCLUSION: A SOUTHERN EXAMPLE

Several years ago when I was teaching in the South, I became intensely aware of the lack of knowledge of both my white and black students of African-American institutions in the community surrounding our university. As we discussed issues surrounding the politics of knowledge and ways of making use of student research in classrooms, I began to search for black cultural institutions students could research. Such research might hold profound ontological consequences for all students as it brought them face to face with the racial dimensions of knowledge production and the construction of consciousness. Why have we never studied these types of institutions in elementary, secondary, or higher education, I asked my students. How might we bring such institutions into our teaching? What role would such knowledge play in the curriculum?

With these questions in mind and with the help of several African-American students in my social studies methods course, my students and I became very interested in a black nightclub that had recently been closed in our city. As a class we obtained permission to visit the nightclub and began to learn that it possessed a rich history of black rhythm and blues. As we learned more about

the club, we realized that virtually every early rhythm and blues and soul innovator had played there. The members of the class were fascinated and in the spirit of my student-as-researcher-based course decided to explore the blues club's history as the class research project. Throughout the course, we constantly considered how a project of this type could be incorporated in elementary or secondary education. Thus, we were both researching the blues club and the use of student research in the teaching and learning process.

As we delved deeper into our research, we began to understand the role of the nightclub in the life of the black community in this southern city. Students interviewed individuals who worked there as bouncers, bartenders, managers, janitors, waiters, etc. As they designed and implemented their research, we studied the method of oral history. Other students went to the archives of local newspapers—including the African-American newspapers of the era. White students were amazed at the vibrant black culture documented by the African-American newspapers and how it was virtually ignored in the larger white newspapers. As students engaged in this archival research, we studied historiography and the ways that historians examined and evaluated documentary evidence. While many students were working in these primary forms of research, a couple of students were exploring secondary sources on black culture in the area in the middle decades of the twentieth century. They asked the question, what research had been conducted and published on the dynamic cultural production of the city and region's African-American residents during the late 1940s, 1950s, and the early 1960s? Finding very little, they interviewed scholars around the country asking why there was so little published research on the topic.

Still other students researched the music and musicians who performed in the area. Connecting with local musical historians, they were able to meet and interview a few of the still-living performers in the city. These elderly musicians were flattered by our interest in their genius and helped us in numerous ways—sometimes even playing the guitar and harmonica and singing songs they had performed in the nightclub. It was a powerful experience for all of us that taught us about the music, the social and artistic role of the nightclub in the community, the subjugated history of the city's African-American community, and the nature of race and racism in the South during the middle of the twentieth century. Students engaged in conversations and encounters about race unlike any they had previously experienced.

At the end of the term the student researchers organized a community forum where they presented their research to a group of invited guests. The audience was riveted by the student presentations. They had collected a body of information that would otherwise have been lost. In addition to their oral and

written presentations, the students had collected pictures of the nightclub and its performers and patrons. One resident lent the students her collection of posters announcing upcoming acts. Their presentation of the pictures and posters was accompanied by music from old recordings of some of the artists of the era. The student presentation was a powerful act of racial solidarity in a city that was still racked by racism and racial injustice. As fascinating and important as the students' research on the nightclub was, in the context of my discussion of critical ontology and students as researchers nothing was more important than the insight the student researchers gained into themselves and the production of their own racial consciousness.

As a teacher researcher of my students, I took field notes on the benefits many of the students derived from being a part of the research project. Watching the students throughout the experience, I understood that none of them, black or white, had ever studied the genius of the African-American community. This had a profound effect on the students as they came to understand compelling lessons about the social construction of knowledge and their own consciousnesses. They began to realize that the mainstream, Eurocentric curriculum they had confronted throughout their formal education had never framed Africa-American life in such a way. In this context numerous white students had private conversations with me about new insights they were gaining into the ways their racial consciousness had been produced within a tacit knowledge and educational framework of white supremacy.

In one of those conversations one of my white students talked about how the research project had induced her to confront her racial consciousness.

I'm really spinning from everything that's happened to me during this project. I've been raised to believe that white people are superior to colored people and I guess I've just accepted that all my life. I've never thought about it much, guess I never had to. But here I was having to talk to black people and ask them questions about race. I was scared to death before the first interview. My husband advised me to drop out of the class and take it sometime when you weren't teaching it. I talked to my minister and he told me the same thing. I don't know why I stayed. I guess I was just too interested in the project.

I've learned how I see myself and how I came to see myself as a white woman. I've always been comforted by the fact that I'm not black. It occurred to me during the interviews that I was looking down on the black people we talked to. I assumed that they were not as smart as me and didn't have the same kind of feelings that I did. When some of the people made brilliant observations about how race is in Louisiana, I was amazed. I could have never thought of it that way or said it in that way. I tried to talk to my husband about these things but he got really mad at me. He said I was under your power and I needed to get out of school and get my head straight. I don't know what I'm going to do. I feel like I'm at a crossroads in my life.

Kaitlan (pseudonym) was not the only student who expressed such sentiments. Many of the white students could never go back to a devaluing of the intellect

and talent of black people. An awareness of their own positionality as white people began to emerge, as their research induced them to think about their own racialized identities. All students began to appreciate their own historicity, their own lived identity in social, cultural, political, and economic context. In a social studies methods class, I could not have wished for a more important insight to develop. Through the research project they had come to realize the importance of social studies education in a way that was personal and yet social in scope. Social studies, routinely perceived as the least important aspect of the curriculum (Kincheloe, 2001), became profoundly relevant to the shaping of these students' lives in the pursuit of their research-based meta-learning.

In retrospect the student research project illustrated a number of the major themes of this chapter—the importance of student research in the effort to:

- *Produce dangerous and significant knowledges*—transcending the imposed, top-down curricula of authoritarian education in a way that brings local, anti-colonial, subjugated knowledges to the curriculum.
- *Take back the process of knowledge production from political, economic, and socio-cultural elites*—engaging in a critical politics of knowledge production that democratizes the community of knowledge producers. In this context students take their place as worthy producers of information about the world.
- *Challenge colonized/regulatory forms of education*—as knowledge producers students take an active role in classroom activities, in the process challenging colonial knowledges that are designed for hegemonic purposes, that is to win student consent to dominant power.
- *Develop new forms of meta-learning*—here student researchers are involved in learning activities that facilitate the development of cognitive sophistication (e.g., postformal thinking) (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1993; Kincheloe, Steinberg, & Hinchey, 1999; Kincheloe, Steinberg, & Villaverde, 1999). As postformalists, student researchers explore disciplinary knowledges and their power-inscribed omissions. Such explorations are central dynamics in the effort to cultivate their intellect.
- *Change students' lives for the better as they come to understand the ways power inscribes knowledge*—developing the ability to expose the ways knowledge as dominant ideology refracts one's view of self and world in ways that shape the larger socio-political order. In this context student researchers become far more insightful about the nature of knowledge and the process of its production.
- *Engage learners in a critical ontology*—appreciating the forces that have produced selfhood and consciousness. Here student researchers take control

of the self-production process in ways that explore the power of race, class, gender, sexuality, religion, etc. to shape subjectivity and one's relation to the world. In this way students are empowered to produce critical identities that engage in social action to produce justice and more egalitarian social relations in the world.

Thus, student research is a profoundly practical activity that helps critical teachers move beyond "what is" to "what could be." In an alienated, neo-colonial, hegemonized era such work has never been more difficult and important.

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PAT THOMSON

MAKING IT REAL: ENGAGING STUDENTS IN ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP PROJECTS

According to popular public intellectuals (Etzioni, 1993; Giddens, 1991; Putnam, 2000), community is eroding. In conditions of high modernity, local neighbourhoods lose sway, and families retreat behind their garden walls, into gated suburbs and polarized cities to live increasingly individuated, reflexive lives. Alarmed by such dystopic visions, contemporary policymakers have embraced the notion that communities must be rebuilt.

One of the obvious sites for such activity is schooling. In the name of strengthening school-community relationships, some school systems have initiated and supported: (1) service learning, in which students do charity work in the local community, and (2) vocational education, in which contacts with local businesses are established and work placements negotiated. Many national governments have also now instituted new courses in civics and citizenship, which seek to convince young people of the value of democracy, the workings of the state, and the benefits of the community life they can enjoy when they leave school.

In this chapter, I argue for the notion of 'active citizenship' as an ethical and pedagogical orientation to the classroom, to political education, and to school-community projects. In so doing, I go beyond the idea of citizenship education as learning about the origins and practices of democracy. I propose that students must engage with the *real politic* of democracy and I show, through one case study, that making classroom practice more open and participatory is integral to learning to do civic duties and to be a citizen (c.f. Delors, 1996). I suggest that when learning about citizenship shifts from reading and discussing a book to concrete experiences made possible by active citizenship approaches, then the notion of citizenship is 'made real.'

This argument refers to perspectives from a number of fields of study: (1) citizenship education (CE), in which empirical evidence about CE applications are debated; (2) health promoting schools, in which students' participation in school and classrooms is seen as both a means to and an end of the desired health outcomes; (3) student voice, in which the rights of children and young people to have a say in the nature and direction of their schooling is researched and theorized; (4) democratic education, in which the principles

and practices of working and making decisions together are elaborated; and (5) critical pedagogy, through which all students are engaged in meaningful and empowering activities. The case presented sits at the intersection of all of these fields of scholarship, but it speaks in particular to the ways in which ideas about CE might be broadened and strengthened.

I have had extensive involvement as a critical friend and researcher in projects that have used active citizenship approaches (Comber, Thomson, & Wells, 2001, 2002; Thomson, 2001; Thomson & Comber, 2003) and have conducted a meta analysis of student participation approaches in Australia (Thomson & Holdsworth, 2003). However, here I present a case study of a single project sponsored by a CE professional development program that shows how a teacher sets up and supports young people to engage in 'real projects.' In presenting the case study I sometimes use the words of young people involved, recognizing as I do so that they are not speaking for themselves but rather that I am choosing extracts of their conversations to represent what I understand them to have said at a particular time and place, to me, on tape.

I begin by considering citizenship education and go on to discuss the idea of 'active citizenship' and the kinds of approaches it supports.

CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

The federal Labor government in Australia conducted two Senate enquiries into citizenship education (Senate Standing Committee on Employment Education and Training, 1989, 1991). These reports focused on the apparently poor political literacy of young people and argued that this illiteracy would translate into an apathetic and alienated future society unless drastic action was taken. In response, the then Prime Minister Paul Keating established a Civics Expert Group whose report (1994) advocated a formal program of civic education in all Australian schools. The Keating government allocated some A\$25 million to this end. In 1996, when Labor lost power, the new conservative coalition headed by John Howard directed a further A\$17.5 million to the development of CE curriculum materials. In 1997, the Discovering Democracy program was launched.

Development of Australian CE was heavily influenced by 'identity politics' and the need for 'difference' to be recognized, valued, and included (Gutmann, 2003; Young, 2002). Connections were made between citizenship and expansive notions of human rights and multiculturalism and, therefore, the kinds of ethical and social behaviours necessary for Australian citizenship (Kennedy, 1997). This development included a strong push for what might be called a kind of civic virtue or decency, the practices of treating others as equals and acting to ensure

that social mores and institutions are just and fair. As Kymlicka (2001) puts it, "Liberal citizens must learn to interact in everyday settings on an equal basis with people for whom they might harbor prejudice" (p. 299). At the heart of CE, therefore, are not only important questions of values, such as equity, diversity, and inclusion, but also questions of rights and ethics.

CE can be seen as a significant way in which the "imaginary" of the nation (Anderson, 1983) is brought into the school and made material through textbooks, narratives, images, activities, and tests (Gordon, Holland, & Lahelma, 2000). Thus, critical questions—about the kind of world, nation, and community that is desirable and about who and what are 'citizens'—are integral to the ways in which teachers take up CE. Marri's (2005) U.S. study of three skilled social science teachers graphically illustrates how teachers' views of nation and citizen shaped how they interpreted and went beyond the official CE curriculum, using pedagogies in which there was dialogue, critical thinking, and the examination of multiple perspectives on contentious issues. Australian policymakers and curriculum developers took a little time to realize that teachers were the key to the success of CE.

A national evaluation (Erebus Consulting Group, 1999) of the impact of the Discovering Democracy initiative suggested that despite some innovative activity, the majority of Australian schools was slow to engage with the programme. More information about the ongoing political illiteracy of Australian young people (Mellor, 1998; Mellor, Kennedy, & Greenwood, 2001) fuelled policymakers' determination to intervene. They were absolutely convinced that CE was the best way to ensure that the next generation of citizens was orderly, productive, and engaged in civic and political processes (Kennedy, Jiminez, Mayer, Mellor, & Smith, 2003). Accordingly, a national professional development strategy for CE was designed and implemented during the triennial funding period 2001–2004.

Citizenship Education in Practice

According to Print and Coleman (2003), CE curriculum as conceptualized in policy documents generally has three components: (1) knowledge and understandings of civic participation, including the particular institutional forms of the specific nation in which it is taught; (2) skills and processes of participation; and (3) values. They suggest that the knowledge and understandings are to be acquired in the formal curriculum, while skills, processes, and values are most successfully learnt in the informal and extracurricular curriculum via involvement in governance, service learning, school-community projects, clubs and societies, and so on. This is a neat division and one that has some basis in the everyday reality of Australian schools.

The Print and Coleman (2003) formulation of knowledge in class and skills, processes, and values outside the formal curriculum is, however, somewhat troubled by international research undertaken on service learning, which is often ambivalent about its effects. Lawson (2001), for example, suggests that expectations that volunteering necessarily inculcates civic values are not always fulfilled. Her detailed research in three schools suggests that students saw volunteering as a short-term project, not a way of life, and as something done for external rewards and awards rather than emerging from a set of civic values. Lawson also noted the tendency of these three schools to place students seen as academic 'underachievers' into such programs as an alternative. This finding suggests that if such activities are to be part of CE, then they ought to be extended to all students, not just some.

Morris, John, and Halpern (2003) have conducted research that contradicts that of Lawson. While their study is also in the UK, it too has relevance for the Australian context. In a large survey of students in one UK local authority they noted the high proportion who were involved in community activities outside of school. Despite having a patchy exposure to the formal CE curriculum in school, the young people surveyed were engaged in a range of projects and programs that could be broadly described as citizenship. But, rather than suggest that such activities could become part of the extra curricular repertoire of schools, Morris et al. suggest that this widespread engagement could become the basis for reform of the formal CE curriculum.

This is precisely the move that is implicit in the notion of active citizenship. Rather than remain as part of the informal curriculum, active citizenship approaches bring such projects into the formal learning programme.

Active Citizenship: Having a Say, Making a Difference

The notion of 'active citizenship' has a long history in Australia. It is associated strongly with 'student participation' in student councils and forums and more widely in school governance. It has connections with efforts to 'democratize' schooling through creating classrooms in which students are engaged in making decisions about pedagogical and more general issues and processes. It has been taken up in community-based approaches to learning where students work with community agencies and community members. It covers engagement in social, cultural, and environmental activism. It also extends beyond the school and neighbourhood to involvement in local and state government policy-making.

Systemic support for student participation in curriculum has varied over the years. The most notable are arguably: the development of the idea of negotiated curriculum (Boomer, 1982; Boomer, Lester, Onore, & Cook, 1992) and portfolio-based assessment of student-negotiated projects (Brennan, White, & Owen, 2001); the development of formal, credit-bearing courses in Community Studies that require students to design and undertake projects in their local neighbour-hoods; the development of Student Action Teams (Holdsworth, Stafford, Stokes, & Tyler, 2001) and formal, accredited student involvement in policymaking at local, regional, and state levels.

There has also been significant and ongoing informal support for student participation. The newsletter "Connect," funded solely by subscription and published by Roger Holdsworth, has been in existence for twenty-five years. It has linked a loose professional network of educators, students, and ex-students who remain involved in programs that seek to engage students in school and community projects, in school governance, and in taking a more active part in learning.

Perhaps the practice that has been most persistent in Australian schools is that of negotiated curriculum. Here the work required to meet specified learning goals is negotiated, as are the activities, assignments and a mode of 'demonstration' (assesment) that will show that students have met the goals. Students are required to keep records of their work and to report regularly to their teacher during the progress of their project. While this practice some-times deteriorates into a series of trivial 'projects' in which students do not engage with important ideas, there continues to be experimentation with ways in which negotiation can support trans-disciplinary learning that is powerful, meaningful, relevant, and enjoyable. What connects negotiation with active citizenship is the emphasis on group process, through which groups of students learn to make decisions respectful of minority views, inclusive of all.

Why active citizenship?   Underpinning active citizenship approaches in the formal curriculum is a variety of views about the necessity for young people to take more active, 'real' roles in schools. Arguments that are offered include:

- Young people can learn about democracy and citizenship through a formal course of study, but they will learn to be constructive members of an Australian democracy if they have experience and practice in citizenship.
- The learnings in civics become more relevant when they are connected to actual, 'real life' democratic participation in activities. This means giving students "real things to do" (Holdsworth, 2000) rather than having them as token participants.

- The school is a social microcosm and it is therefore important that it function in ways that are congruent with what students are being taught in the formal curriculum. This means "good governance" (Pearl & Knight, 1999).
- Many young people are alienated both from society at large and from schools (Mellor, 1998). In order to re-engage students in schools, and therefore in wider society, schools must work on ways in which young people can be reconnected with the curriculum and involved in wider school and community activities (Semmens & Stokes, 1997).
- Young people are in fact already citizens (Wyn, 1995) whose rights to participate in decisions that affect them are daily violated in schools. According students more active roles is therefore to allow them to be functioning members of society (Brennan, White, & Owen, 2001).

Rob Watts (1995) suggests that active citizenship is about 'agency'—the capacity to act—in the public interests. As he puts it,

Agency is about people having access both in their schooling and in their jobs and their community lives to open and democratic structures and processes . . . Agency is about ensuring that people can work collectively with those who matter in their lives to prioritise and make decisions; and that all the relevant organisations and institutions will enhance their capacity and their right to control their own destinies. Any idea of citizenship-as-agency implies that we all must have the right both to participate and not to participate in community decision-making. Agency is about being listened to and treated with dignity, respect and mutuality, and it is about working and living in a non-authoritarian environment. (p. 101)

Watts proposes that through taking decisions and undertaking social action in school and communities through representative and other participatory processes, students develop both autonomy and social solidarities. 'Active citizenship' is thus about the enfranchisement of young people in the present and the promotion of collaborative modes of working and decision-making.

Active citizenship approaches   Active citizenship projects engage young people in a range of activities that involve them contributing their skills, time, and labour to ventures that make a difference to somebody else (usually an identifiable 'community'). These are not the same as community service projects where students typically do volunteer work on a regular basis in a project or service that already exists (e.g. reading to elderly people, doing gardening in a community park, running activities for small children). But active citizenship approaches share with community service projects a commitment to an ethic of care and the practice of collective, civic responsibility.

Active citizenship projects are also not the same as vocationally and/or entrepreneurially oriented projects in which students conceive of a project, initiate,

manage, and implement it (e.g. making T-shirts for sale at a local market). However, active citizenship approaches share with vocational and entrepreneurial projects the practices of student-led and managed activities that rely on creativity, team work, and persistence.

Thus, active citizenship combines the values and ethics of service learning with the agency and practices of enterprise education. Action citizenship means projects that do one or more of the following:

1. *Design and create a service for a community*.

Students might, for example, be engaged in cross-age or peer tutoring activities within their own or other schools. They might initiate and run film programs for neighbourhood children. They might plan and run an adventure activity program in a local child-care center.

2. *Design and create a resource for a community*.

Students might, for example, produce a community newspaper, website, directory, or resource guide. They might collect and publish a collection of oral histories. They could build a playground for local children, paint murals on buildings, or design and print posters advertising local events.

3. *Investigate and act on an issue facing a community*.

Students might, for example, research a social issue such as youth homelessness or school truancy, write a report of their findings, and present it to the relevant authority. They could investigate an aspect of the local environment and restore a wild habitat, initiate a program of water monitoring, or build an interpretive trail or wetland. They could become evaluators of local youth services and make recommendations for improvement.

Each of these activities involves young people in working as a group and engaging with people of different ages, interests, and views. Each involves them putting their own immediate self interests aside and working for a common good. It requires of them the following: to be organized, persistent, reliable, and trustworthy; to acquire or practice skills such as negotiation, information collection, analysis, and synthesis, and oral and written communication; and to learn whatever is particularly needed to complete their project. In completing these kinds of projects students find that they are 'seen' differently by the wider community (i.e. as citizens), and they also 'see' themselves as citizens. Active citizenship projects are thus important for constructing a sense of social efficacy and a positive identity within the school and wider community (Thomson, 2003, 2006; Thomson, McQuade, & Rochford, 2005a, 2005b).

I now connect the idea of active citizenship back to my earlier claims that being involved in hands-on civic activities produces 'real learning.' I then go on to argue that an important aspect of CE is the 'experience' of democratic practice.

'Real' Education

Research on schooling is replete with critiques of rote learning and mindless, repetitive classroom activities that students find alienating and tiresome (e.g. Smyth & Hattam, 2004; Smyth et al., 2000). The alternatives that are proposed very often focus on changing processes to become more participatory and on mobilizing students' experiences, interests, and community knowledges (Australian Curriculum Studies Association [ACSA], 1996; Boomer, 1999; Connell, 1995; Freebody, Ludwig, & Gunn, 1995). These pedagogical reforms are congruent with active citizenship, and they also have a strong precursor in the writings of John Dewey.

Dewey (1897) argued that education should be seen as a process for living and not as preparation for future living. He wrote that "the school must represent present life—life as real and vital to the child as that which he [sic] carries on in the home, in the neighbourhood, or on the playground" (p. 77). Education that failed to do this, Dewey suggested, was inadequate and was also bound to confine and dull the hearts and minds of students. The trouble with most schooling, in Dewey's view, was that most children did not experience the everyday world of the school as being 'real.' Instead, their days and weeks were filled with artificial and abstract tasks in soulless, didactic, and impersonal classrooms.

Dewey's words might be taken as simply urging hands-on and outside-of-classroom activities. The equation of engagement with hands-on thematic projects, and alienation with reading, bookwork, and extended writing, is not what Dewey intended, however. Dewey (1937) argued that the kind of 'real' projects he had in mind would be ones which required time—they were not one-off or short term. This time was so that the projects "raise[d] new questions, introduce[d] new and related undertakings and create[d] a demand for fresh knowledge" (p. 86). Such experiences would allow students to develop critical questions about the world and to learn to take a well-informed stand on issues that affect them.

Such projects are highly challenging and require considerable 'stick-ability' from students. They often involve high-risk occasions where students have to meet deadlines and act in front of critical others. They regularly require students to seek out information they do not have in order to do what they have planned. They demand that students select and evaluate information rather than simply regurgitate what they are told. The pedagogy required for this kind of student participation is characteristic of active citizenship.

Dewey also offered something that might alleviate the anxiety of those who might see active citizenship as a kind of social engineering. Dewey's philosophy of pragmatism cast experiential learning as the opposite of moralizing.

As Kaplan (2000) explains, we are not moulding character, according to this view, we are rather trying to create the conditions in which students can act in such a way that they learn how to control their habits and anticipate the consequences of certain choices (p. 379).

The teacher's role, therefore, is concerned with the structuring of experiences. It is also to foster conversations about experiences and activities that are challenging, problematic, engaging, and horizon-stretching. There is a congruence here between Dewey and Vygotsky (1978) because Vygotsky too argued for the importance of experience in the zone of proximal development via participation and dialogue. The teacher's task is not to inculcate or use 'transmission pedagogies' but rather to structure possibilities for students to become/learn/act.

Dewey argued that such practices were teaching children a way of living that was democratic. He defined democracy as "a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experiences" (1916, p. 87). He proposed that learning to live together went beyond the curriculum to the ways in which actual classrooms and schools operated. Like active citizenship approaches, Dewey suggested that classrooms and schools should be democratic.

Democratic Classrooms

There is a considerable literature on democratic education, some of it focused on philosophic underpinnings (Applebaum, 2003; Gutmann, 1987; Thayer-Bacon, 1996), educational policy and politics (Carr & Hartnett, 1996; Dickson, Halpin, Power, Telford, & Whitty, 2001; Radnor, Ball, & Vincent, 1997), principles for pedagogy and curriculum (Carlson & Apple, 1998; The New London Group, 1966), democratic schools (Apple & Beane, 1995; Meier, 1995), democratic leadership (Hatcher, 2005; Moos & Macbeath, 2004), democratic teacher education (Beyer, 1996), and so on. There is also research that indicates what obstructs the realisation of democracy, including the following: contradictions between discipline practices and pedagogical intentions (Gordon & Turner, 2004; Lewis, 1999); tokenism (Matthews & Limb, 2003); the micro-politics of reform (Datnow, 1998); unsympathetic school cultures (Westheimer, 1998); a critical pedagogy "will to truth" (Gore, 1993); and the impact of neoliberal policies and imposts (Carlson, 2005).

However, there is less writing that develops a grounded theory of the democratic classroom. Marri (2005) develops a framework for a multicultural democratic education that encompasses critical pedagogy, building community, and thorough disciplinary content, all of which are subject to multiple and critical perspectives. Pearl and Knight (1999) have collectively developed

a more elaborated theory. Knight (2001) suggests that the democratic classroom consists of several key characteristics:

1. It has a democratic authority within which the teacher is persuasive and prepared to negotiate.
2. It operates centripetally, that is, it seeks to include rather than exclude, by pulling all students into the centre.
3. It works with and on the production of important knowledge related to active social, economic, and cultural participation in communities and society more generally.
4. It has a rights basis: it embraces the right to free expression, privacy, due process, and of movement; participatory decision making is the norm.
5. Equality is debated and practiced.
6. There is an optimum environment for learning in which students can do the following: take risks; endure no unnecessary pain; make meaning; develop a sense of competence, belonging, and usefulness; experience hope, excitement, and ownership; and work creatively.

Knight argues that these things require an integration of conversation, more conventional academic activities, student-led research, and action.

Wood (1998) takes democratic education in a similar direction. He proposes that in addition to a democratic process in which students are engaged in making decisions in the classroom (p. 191), a curriculum for democratic engagement is also necessary. He suggests that such a curriculum includes:

1. Critical literacy, which gives students "personal and political facility with language," enabling them to "evaluate what is read and heard" and to name and construct models of "preferred social life" (p. 189).
2. Cultural capital, which uses students' own histories, lives, and surroundings to enhance their cultural awareness (p. 190).
3. Social alternatives through which students are offered choices to the status quo that add to the social good (p. 193).
4. Democratic values, in which students both debate and experience equality and community (p. 94).

The two frames offered by Pearl and Knight and by Wood provide a helpful way of thinking about active citizenship.

It is a tall order to incorporate all of these things into a single classroom, or indeed a single school. Bringing together content, process, values, tasks, and assessment in an emancipatory frame is certainly possible, but there are still few descriptions of what this looks like in practice in the situated Australian context.

I offer one case, an illustration of a classroom in which active citizenship projects were a key component of a negotiated curriculum and that exhibits

all of these characteristics to a greater or lesser degree. In this case the teacher, Heather, exercises democratic authority, seeks to include all students, works on and with important knowledge, uses participatory decision making within a rights framework, struggles with equality, and moves towards an optimum learning environment. Students learn aspects of what it means to be an active citizen, a person knowledgeable about the values and practices of democracy, who takes action with others to change something about their current context in order to produce benefit for the wider public good.

The case study draws on reports and award bids written by the teacher and students, class and school newsletters, research notes, and interviews with Heather and the students, undertaken as part of the Discovering Democracy Professional Development programme (action research component). The teacher and students have been anonymised as is customary research practice. However, this discussion is also ethically difficult since the work I report on is theirs, not mine.

ACACIA MEADOWS HIGH SCHOOL

Acacia Meadows is an outer city suburb that meanders up the foothills and valleys that pen the city of Adelaide, South Australia, onto a narrow coastal strip. The houses were built in the 1980s and bought by aspiring working families. While enjoying a high standard of living, many of the parents in this neighbourhood work long hours to meet high mortgages and to pay for the comforts of multiple car ownership, regular holidays, and the latest domestic appliances. An urban planner would describe this as a lower-middle-class suburb. Acacia Meadows High School was built to meet the needs of a new suburb, and it enjoys large grounds with substantial stands of native gum trees, which blur its boundaries with adjacent properties and the bush.

Classroom teacher Heather worked with two year 9 (13 year olds) middle school classes. She taught one of them Social Science and English and often combined lessons around thematic activities. Heather's annual teaching plan included two important active citizenship activities: (1) the restoration of a creek area within the school grounds as an educational and recreational resource for the school and wider community and (2) a cross-age tutoring project during "Discovering Democracy" week. However, Heather's focus was not on the two projects per se but rather on the democratic classroom as a site of active citizenship.

There were three important and related elements in the way that Heather's program operated:

1. a classroom in which students worked in teams and negotiated projects and activities to meet official curriculum goals and standards;
2. a curriculum that involved students in learning about civics, citizenship, and democracy; and
3. a series of outside-classroom social action projects, the largest of which were the "The Creek Project" and "Discovering Democracy Week Primary School Program."

The other class that Heather had was a small group of year 9 (13-year-old) boys who were not able to persist with foreign language study. They were removed from their mainstream class, and Heather was asked to do something meaningful with them. She chose to integrate them into the activities she was doing with her other class.

I now turn to the first of Heather's projects and use it to illustrate aspects of a democratic curriculum.

The Creek Project

Heather's reasons for introducing the creek project were based on her view that "active citizenship can and should begin with the school" and that through such projects students would be "given an understanding of government in their area." Students would also have to "work independently and cooperatively" (Heather, written report).

The students began their semester's work with a barbecue. They were responsible for organising the informal event. Heather says in conversation that she often "feeds students to get them 'on side' "; her reasons for stressing the importance of such occasions are strongly connected to her commitment to a more democratic pedagogy. She explains:

[Relationships] between teacher and student need to have boundaries set by mutual respect. Once these are established your personality traits and sense of humour can interrelate with the young people you teach. Given the opportunities to make decisions, discuss mistakes and errors in judgement and behaviour and have another go, students generally respond positively. As a teacher you have to be prepared to take risks. Your classroom will not be set up in well ordered rows, students will be moving around doing different things but on most occasions they will be engaged and enjoying their learning. Once this is in motion, poor behaviour is less frequent and often managed by other members in the class (Heather written report)

Both groups of students were highly motivated by seeing the possibilities of creek restoration. This was not an abstract school requirement but rather a real-life project with a purpose. Many of the students engaged with the project with considerable energy and passion because the conditions affecting the creek

area connected with a broader concern for the environment and heritage. As some of the students wrote:

> The creek is an important part of our community, and we want to make it a place that people can go to relax, and have fun, and learn. We want the whole community to be able to use it, not just a place we use as a school.

> The creek is in a really run down condition at the moment, because no one has been looking after it. There are weeds everywhere and the grass definitely needs to be mowed . . . We also aim to teach the school and the greater community about the Aboriginal heritage in the area, and how the creek is connected to it (K, V, A, M, M, and N; Discovering Democracy Award Submission)

The project was planned in and out of the classroom. Students moved from thinking about cleaning up the area to ideas about the uses to which the creek area could be put:

> To give us ideas about what kinds of things we can do to the creek, our class went for a walk down along the creek. We came up with some ideas about where we could have certain subjects and what we could do in the little area for that particular subject. Some of the ideas which we came up with were: the construction of an Amphitheatre for English, a little pond area for Science and an area for quiet reading also for English.

> We noticed that there was a lot of work needed to be done to the creek, e.g. getting rid of numerous weeds, cleaning up the area, finding out about flora and fauna and testing the water to make sure it isn't poisonous (K, V, A, M, M, and N; Discovering Democracy Award Submission)

The students used brain storming on the white board to record all of their ideas. They discussed each of the propositions and had a vote to decide which ones they would include in the project. Heather then asked the students to volunteer for each of the items voted for. In this way, teams of students took on various research tasks.

The students needed to find out about the original vegetation, how to get school approval for their project, and what happened to the creek outside the school property. Rather than just going to the library to do this research, students went to community sources of knowledge. They organised a series of interviews with key people, including an environmental scientist working for the local government authority (see Fig 1.), the Education Office from the national Aboriginal Cultural Centre, a teacher who was appointed to the school when it first opened, and the school Bursar (business manager). The school drama teacher also provided information about amphitheatres, which students incorporated into their thinking.

At the end of the first phase of the project, students had planned for a basic clean up. Weeds and litter were to be removed, and there was a proposal for further development of the area that included identifying ways in which sites could be used by each of the state mandated learning areas.

Questions we asked were:

What are the boundaries of the creek and what can and can't we do?
What are the safety regulations we should know?
What is the history of this creek?
What different plants and animals are in and around the creek?
What areas can we clear away?
What parts of the creek are we allowed to work with?
Do we need to get permission from anyone to do what we want to do?

From these questions some of the things we found were that we can't pull down fences which join onto neighbouring properties, we cannot block up the creek and that we really shouldn't dig right next to fences in case they fall down. He also gave us some useful places that we can contact like the Catchment Board who will give us permits and they will also look over our plans. He also told us that we could give him a ring and he could have somebody come down to the school to find out the flora and fauna that live here.

Student report to Heather

Figure 1. Interview with Local Environment Officer

One group of students documented the project to this point and entered their submission in the state "Discovering Democracy Award," in which they tied for first place. The class then moved on to the actual activity of creek clearing. They then elected a project management committee to steer the project (see Fig 2). Two teachers were invited to join the committee, which met after school.

The project team reported back to class meetings on a regular basis. The creek project required the students to acquire the following:

1. Cultural capital: knowledge about how the school and local government worked, understandings of local flora and fauna, and knowledge about Indigenous Australians.
2. Critical literacy: they had to read a range of texts about the locality and to write and speak persuasively to those in authority.
3. The ability to work on social alternatives: they were developing a public amenity not only for the school but also for the wider community.

Present: (names)

Apologies: (names)

Business:

Teacher 1: has trees which have been propagated by Year 8s

Teacher 2 has done work to assess creek for outdoor education possibilities: PE sweat track; Outdoor Ed. Bush skills; Sciences, Life Studies; technology; bridge building

Heather: we need to document what we are doing

Group brainstormed new direction to take:

Statistical work, bird houses, future website, Aboriginal heritage considerations. Ideas back to class for consideration.

Meeting closed at 3.50

Student minutes

Figure 2. Extract from the Minutes of the Creek Committee

4. Democratic values: they had to follow due process within the school as well as work together in small groups and as a whole class.

I suggest that the creek project is thus a good example of Wood's (1998) thesis of emancipatory, democratic curriculum.

In order to produce this kind of learning experience, Heather's pedagogical practice had to be democratic. I discuss her practice further after describing the second of Heather's class activities.

The Discovering Democracy Roadshow

Heather offered the class the opportunity to do something further with their learning about civics and democracy. She suggested that they might visit local primary schools during "Discovering Democracy" week to help the children to understand why democracy is important and what civics and citizenship mean.

Here is one student's report of the events:

During "Discovery Democracy" week, our class went around to some primary schools in our community. How we did this was that we split into groups of about four or five and designed and created plays about Democracy or being an Active Citizen in our community.

The group I was in made up a play . . . about being an active citizen in our community. The way we went about doing this was that we made up a list of volunteering jobs people do in our community. The play was about a little girl who needed to do a class project but she didn't know how

to do it. The good citizen fairy helped by walking her around the community where they saw a man who was very cold, living in the gutter (who was myself acting), and they got him some shoes and a nice warm blanket. The moral of the story was that anyone could help in the community, no matter how old or young. They can help by doing the smallest of things for people in need, like the homeless and the disadvantaged people in and around the community (AM Project Report)

The audience for the plays was children much younger than the class, and the Year 9s (13 year olds) had to spend quite some time thinking about how to translate complex ideas into something small children could understand. They explain:

We produced a play aiming to teach the Reception (the first year of school, 5 year olds) to year-3 (8-year-olds) kids about democracy. Our play was about a group of teddies that wanted to have a picnic and cook a BBQ. Two of the teddies had an argument because they both wanted to cook the BBQ. The teddies decided to have a vote so that they could decide fairly on who gets to cook the BBQ and so that everyone was able to have a say (AM Project Report)

Some of the class worked with upper primary students and employed more direct teaching strategies:

We taught them words, civics and citizenship, and played a memory game to see if they could remember what the words are . . .
And we gave out lollies too . . .
We like were big on lollies . . .
The teaching staff, they liked the lollies (AM interview transcript 2)

Some of the class found that they had to do a lot of additional research in order to complete their chosen project:

We . . . came up with the idea of teaching the Years 4–7 about preferential voting. To help us get started we realised we needed more information such as booklets, which were sent to us from the Australian Electoral Office, ballot papers as well as some ballot boxes.

I phoned a lady . . . from the Australian Electoral Office and she helped us a lot with what we needed and we arranged for her to come to our school to help us with our performance. She came out to our school a few days after I phoned her. She brought with her some prizes that she thought would be good to give to the kids when they answered our questions following the end of our 15 minute sessions. We thought that was just great. We went to four primary Schools, including my old school, to perform. It was great fun (AM interview transcript 2)

One group of students organised an assembly for their peers focused on citizenship. As they explain:

On the 23rd October (we) presented an assembly to the students of the Wattle Sub School telling them about what Democracy and Citizenship is and how they could be an active citizen in the community. Our teacher gave us three all a plan on how the assembly was meant to be run in order so we knew what to do. In the assembly, we invited some guests from around our community to come and tell us about what they do in our community and how to be an active citizen in

our community. The Salvation Army representative who was meant to be last in the assembly ended up being first because he had a funeral to go to and only had half an hour. Another of the guests who came was the Mayor who spoke to us about the work she and the Council does to be active citizens in our community. The Mayor also spoke to us about how lucky we were to have a democratic government in Australia and how advantaged we are to live here (AM Final Report)

The students identified a number of benefits from this activity. Some highlighted the importance of giving: "I had a lot of fun going around to all of the primary schools because I felt like we were doing something good for someone else and it was a different experience for us. It made me feel really good when one of the classes sent us a card and lollies saying thank you" (AM Final Report). Others said that it had extended their networks and their self-imposed boundaries: " 'Discovery Democracy Week' was a very fun week and one where I got to know people a lot more and worked with people I normally don't have contact with. Also, during the week I learnt heaps about democracy and did lots of things I usually wouldn't do or even contemplate getting involved in" (AM Final Report). Some students articulated the connections between curriculum and 'doing it for real': "So it was kind of like you learned more than they did about it, like you will never forget" (AM interview transcript 2).

The "Acacia Meadows Discovering Democracy Roadshow" suggests that students involved in active citizenship projects:

- are interested and engaged by activities that they find meaningful and rewarding;
- can and must learn to work and to make decisions together, and thus learn to appreciate other views, opinions, strengths, and weaknesses;
- use a variety of communicative forms with a range of differently aged people; and
- work to a schedule and complete a tangible product/task/event.

Roger Holdsworth (2004) argues that active citizenship projects can be seen as being of value to the participants because they are working on issues in ways that they choose, that make sense to them, and in and through which they are valued. Such projects are also highly regarded by the community in question, since members of the community are consulted about the issue worked on and can see and enjoy the benefits of students' efforts. At the same time the projects generate important academic benefits not only in civics and citizenship but also in other areas of importance. This outcome can clearly be seen in the ways that the students describe the benefits of participation in these two projects.

Heather argues that the basis of her practice is respect and inclusion. She describes her room and her pedagogy as a democratic classroom.

A Democratic Pedagogy

Heather articulates a commitment to inclusion, participation, and equality:

Mutual respect is a priority. Students' ideas and opinions must not be put down but given respect. This goes for student-student as well as teacher-student relationships. Diversity of opinion should be encouraged and discussed . . . It is important to let kids be involved in their education. They need to know where their education is leading and what it involves. This is really important for students who are disinclined (AM Final Report).

She maintains that a democratic classroom is one in which negotiation occurs and through which she exercises democratic authority:

I allow students to negotiate what they will be doing in their lessons. But I don't assume that they know the skills required in negotiation. It is up to the teacher to discuss and teach these skills. With negotiation students have a feeling of ownership and are responsible for their own learning. This process also involves students being involved in the assessment process. They need to be responsible for their learning and above all know how their efforts are assessed. By doing this different needs can be met. It also enables students to set goals for themselves. My role is to ensure that they set goals that they have to strive to achieve. They need to exert themselves so that they know that effort will ensure success (AM Final Report).

Heather typically begins a curriculum sequence by introducing the topic and the stated outcomes, teaching some key concepts and skills in a fairly conventional manner, and then setting the parameters of an activity through which students will learn the mandated knowledge and skills. This curriculum sequence includes a timeline, due date, expectations of quality, and any ideas she wants them to consider. Students then divide into groups or pairs, or they work as individuals. Heather works with all of these structures throughout the year and encourages students to work in different groups during the year. The group, pair, or individual develops an outline of what they will do to meet the stated outcomes and a proposal for how they will demonstrate their learning. This plan is then discussed with Heather and they negotiate changes. Very often students then present their plans to the whole class so that synergies and any cooperation between groups can be organised. Each group, pair, or individual then writes a detailed plan of activity and this is also checked with Heather and appropriate permissions given.

   Each of the plans is filed and, once students are actively working on their projects, Heather spends her time checking and assisting each group/pair/individual. She also requires students to write regular reports of their progress (see Fig 3). She is particularly careful about the ways in which the students move about the school. When they are involved in project work, they are often out and about—and well out of her sight. In Acacia Meadows this means that students must carry a permission note, but it also means some risk to the whole

classroom project. If students are seen to misbehave while unsupervised, then the senior staff in the school could potentially put a stop to the activity, if not the whole programme. Heather is also keen to ensure that the students do not "disgrace the school." When they have to make a telephone call to a member of the public, or if they have to go to speak to another staff member, Heather rehearses the group first. Sometimes she also goes with them to the office or phone. If they are emailing or writing a letter, she requires students to present a draft for discussion.

Unlike some other active citizenship projects, in this project Heather did not give the students a budget at the outset, but they were responsible for fundraising for the creek project and they did decide, as a class, how to spend the money they raised.

Heather keeps careful track of each of the groups' progress and intervenes if necessary. She does, however, allow them more autonomy if they are clearly able to handle their project and the interactions and relationships they need to

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The main topic we had was about fundraising and we explored different aspects of how we could raise money to help us do what we wanted. Some suggestions that we had was to have a chocolate run or a casual day, where we would make each student pay an amount of money.

A topic that was on everyone's minds was how much of the creek we actually owned and could work on. We queried Mrs B about this and she informed us that no specific person or group owns the creek because it is a public waterway. Once we had become aware of this information, we asked the question about how much of the creek we could work on. Mrs B told us that we could work on the whole section of the creek that runs through the school, which is approx. 500 meters.

A problem we thought we were going to face was not being able to get enough help to assist in constructing the Outdoor Learning Area. Mrs B suggested that we ask the school grounds committee for support in clearing the area near the creek and planting the trees. We also can ask the school community through the newsletter for help in arrange of jobs that need to be completed.

Student report to Heather

Figure 3. Negotiating with the School Bursar

establish to bring it to fulfilment. Heather says, "At all times it is up to the teacher to reward behaviour and strongly point out if students are not keeping up in their work plans" (AM Final Report).

Heather argues that it is important to teach young people how to manage group decision-making and resolve conflicts: "I believe it is really important to involve students in behaviour management and decision-making. Invariably they are the ones affected by poor behaviour and any decisions that are made. I have class meetings where students express their ideas and opinions. I allow students to run these sessions and teach the skills of good group work and decision making" (AM Final Report).

Heather thus ensures congruence between instruction and discipline. However, issues of behaviour that involve privacy are dealt with separately, and while students do decide on the class rules and punishments, it is Heather who decides when there is a problem that requires these student-made rules and punishments to be invoked.

Heather also required the students to communicate their plans for the creek to the whole school since giving information about changes to a public space was the kind of practice expected of local and state governments (see Fig 4).

Ensuring that the students engaged in some form of pubic accountability, Heather argues, is a further experience of acting as citizens in the here and now.

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1. Daily notice explaining to students what we are doing (names of students responsible)
2. Our school newsletter (names)
3. Representatives to visit governing council monthly meeting in September to explain what we are doing (names)
4. During Discovering Democracy week students will be speaking at the assembly.
5. Invite local newspaper to explain to them what we are doing (names).
6. Ultimately we would like to have web-page advertising to the wider community the work we have been doing for our project.

Student Creek Project File

Figure 4. Communication Plan for the Creek Project

But this is simply Heather's perspective. If her pedagogy is 'real,' then the students will also be able to give evidence of it.

The students' version   The students say that Heather exerts strong steerage at the outset of projects. Hers is not, then, a laissez-faire approach. One student explains, "It was her idea and then she asked us if we wanted to do it, and we agreed to it. Like we had the choice of either doing that or else written book-work" (AM transcript 1). But this scenario, they note, is different from their other classes: "The other ones are just sit down" (AM transcript 1).

Heather's students represented the learning benefits of her classroom practice as including the following:

Communication skills

And self confidence

We learn how to work with people too

Compromise

To teach as well . . .

We learnt heaps about values

Like set your own goals, because you've got your own work set, she tells you when it's done and you've got to figure out how you're going to do it, what time, how much effort . . .

Space your stuff out rather than doing it all on the last night . . . (AM interview transcript 1)

But it seemed that the boys in this class were not as convinced of the benefits of negotiation and democratic practice as the girls. The following excerpt illustrates this difference of perspective:

Female: We kind of like just don't sit down in the classroom and copy things down.

Male: I kind of miss that though, that learning . . .

Female: I love this way because I work better at home anyway.

Female: I like it because you can work at your own pace, like if you don't want to do that assignment, you can start the next one . . . and get more ideas sort of thing . . .

Female: We don't have many tests.

Male: They do show you what you've learnt though . . . I don't reckon you could do this in any other class.

Female: You're just being negative.

Female: Be open minded.

Female: You still have to do the work. (AM interview transcript 2)

The boys were also convinced that this was not a method that would work in all of their lessons, particularly maths and science. Another problem for them was the difficulty of working on several things at once:

Female: At the moment, like last week we had about six assignments, like they've got different due dates on them and she (Heather) says, "Go do whatever you need to do, everyone hand them all up at the end," so you don't have to sit down and do one of them in a week. You can have six weeks to do them. We had about a week to do each assignment.

Male: I'd rather do one assignment a week for six weeks.

Female: An assignment a week?

Female: I like the way she does it.

Female: I like it because you can work at your own pace, like if you don't want to do that one you can start the next one . . . and get more ideas sort of thing.

Male: Never! (AM transcript 3)

While in this class these differences had a gender dimension, this is not necessarily always the case. Teaching and learning through negotiation is not going to be acceptable to all students, particularly if it is the exception in a rather more autocratic school regime. This raises an interesting issue about democratic practice; if some students prefer to work in a more conventional way, the teacher must choose either to accommodate that or persevere in insisting that students work in a more negotiated fashion.

But the students also reported difficulties in getting groups to work properly. Some groups shared the work out equitably, while in other groups some students carried more of the workload than others. In the latter cases students relied on Heather noticing this imbalance and intervening. They generally did not volunteer this information since doing so would equate to 'telling tales.' In this case intervention actually meant Heather making sure the boys did their share. One male student explained, "The only thing she's kind of made us do . . . not made, but she kind of wanted these guys to do the assemblies. Like they hadn't put in as much as the girls . . ." (AM interview transcript 3). It is also important to note that in intervening Heather raised the important question of equity with the students. In doing so, she showed that her notion of democracy was not simply one of technical process but one that also contained strong values (c.f. Wood, 1998).

Students at Acacia Meadows were keen to do well. They relied on Heather to tell them whether their work was acceptable:

She listens to us. She is honest with us.

Researcher: . . . Like she tells you if your work is crap?

Yes she will. (AM interview transcript 2)

And while they were involved in self-assessment, it was Heather's mark and feedback that they valued most. What they valued even more, it seemed, was the quality of relationships that Heather established:

I think we need more teachers like that.

She kind of talks to us like equals, not like . . .

Not like looking down on us . . .

She talks to us as if we're teachers too—or something too (AM transcript 2)

Heather's students say that it is important for teachers generally to do the following:

to actually listen to the students

to listen to what they want to do

like just don't do stuff

. . if you do like something then you put more effort into it, and so make sure the students learn to like what they're doing (AM interview transcript 1)

That this list did not reflect the norm is testimony to the veracity of the research evidence already cited earlier in the chapter.

In the "Discovering Democracy Roadshow," I suggest, Heather's classroom exhibited many of the democratic pedagogical characteristics referred to by Pearl and Knight (1999). Heather consistently did the following:

1. exercised democratic authority by being persuasive and by negotiating;
2. worked centripetally, including all students in the range of activities and eschewing any kind of ability grouping;
3. sought to produce important knowledge related to active social, economic, and cultural participation in communities and society more generally—an effort that went beyond civics and political literacy to encompass other aspects of the social sciences and science;
4. insisted on participatory decision making as the norm;
5. practiced equality; and
6. created an environment in which students could take risks and make meaning.

While Heather would be the first to admit that this process was neither perfect nor smooth running at all times, she would suggest that she could not teach any other way. The congruence between her teaching content and process and the importance of hands-on experience to make things 'real' to the students had become an habituated practice.

I now offer some final thoughts on the connections between democratic curriculum, pedagogy, and active citizenship. I focus here again on the notion of 'real' and argue that it has to do with the 'internalization' of active citizenship.

MAKING IT REAL

In this chapter I have suggested that an 'active citizenship' approach is one that brings ethical practice, student initiative, creativity and energy, and agency and structure together in a productive mix. I have suggested, drawing on Dewey, that this approach brings together experience as the basis for learning with notions of democratic pedagogy and curriculum. The case narrative from Acacia Meadows illustrates how these three strands can be brought together in ways that afford students opportunities to do things they value, and that are valued by others, at the same time as there are tangible and broad learning outcomes. In conclusion, I will connect this bringing together more broadly to a principle for learning that is engaging, rich, and worthwhile.

The commonality between the writings on democratic education and active citizenship sits in the very simple idea that students cannot learn in the abstract about something that involves not only individual knowledge but also values, ethics, and collective behaviours. As the UNESCO Delors Report (1996) puts it, education is about "learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, and learning to be." That is, students cannot simply learn what citizenship entails from books, they have to experience it. Nor can students know about it simply by 'being' and 'doing'; they have to make explicit the intellectual bases for their actions and experiences. Furthermore, when they are engaged in being/doing citizen/ship, the practice needs to be meaningful in their terms.

Thus, if students are to learn about democracy, they need to be in a democratic environment and to practice democratic activities as well as to learn its history, mores, and institutional forms (c.f. Kennedy, 1997; Turnbull, 2003). If they are to learn about citizenship, then they need to know, be, and do in ways that make sense to them (c.f. health promoting schools in Simovska, 2004). In Heather's classroom, students read texts about democracy and citizenship, were in a context where democracy was practiced, and engaged in projects where they had to act as/be/do things that were characteristic of citizens living in a participatory democracy.

Students typically experience this combination of knowledge, social activism, and classroom practice as 'practicing what you preach.' In some projects they articulate a strong sense of identity as a democratic citizen. They generally refer to their sense of agency and ownership as well as the increased relevance and meaning of their school learning (Thomson, 2003).

Heather, the Acacia Meadows teacher, is clear about this. The bedrock of her classroom practice is the dialogic and reciprocal relationship she establishes with students. Creating such relationships does not mean that she gives up her

professional knowledge and authority and lets students do what they want. To the contrary, she teaches skills where they are needed, she gives students structures within and with which they can work, she makes sure that all of them are working consistently, and she chivvies them along when their work is not up to standard. She is able to do these things because she puts time into establishing relationships. But at the same time, she demands that students commit themselves to working democratically with each other and that they also follow a learning plan to which they commit and against which they assess themselves. Where it is appropriate, Heather integrates knowledge across subject areas and supports students to take risks, to bring theoretical and practical activities together, and to act in and for the school community.

When a democratic active citizenship curriculum and experience-based democratic pedagogy work together, what is formed is an active citizen. This is 'real' learning, formed from the following:

1. *Understandings about civics, citizenship, and democracy, together with a meta-language for describing the practices involved, plus learnings from other curriculum areas that are the focus for civic action.*

Acacia Park students were involved in a formal program of Civics and Citizenship education and developed relatively sophisticated knowledge of the Australian governance system. Other learnings were about the environment and Indigenous Australia. These were illustrations of the principles Wood (1998) outlines for a democratic curriculum.

2. *Experiences of democratic practice in their classroom and the school.*

Students at Acacia Park were able to use what they knew from the formal civic and citizenship curriculum to describe the ways that their classroom operated in comparison to others. These conformed to the principles set out by Pearl and Knight (1999) for a democratic pedagogy.

3. *Experiences of civic, community-based action.*

Students were able to articulate the importance of projects that would make a difference to their immediate locale. They had a strong sense of their projects as being not just local but also global. Both the creek project and the "Discovering Democracy Roadshow" sat within what I have outlined as active citizenship approaches earlier in the chapter.

Taken together, the following integrated model (see Fig 5) for active citizenship can also be seen as a 'community of democratic practice' in which:

• An active citizen, as an individual and as a collective, is always being formed.
• An active citizen is constructed in the company of others through a social and pedagogic practice where
  – there is mutual engagement in ongoing negotiated and participatory activities with mutual accountability;
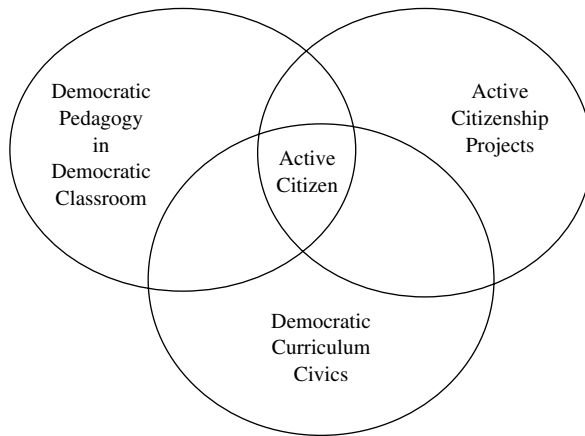
Figure 5. Making It Real: Learning to be an Active Citizen

— there is a joint enterprise that allows for diversity within common activities, builds relationships, and contributes to the greater good;
— there is a shared repertoire of democratic practice and meta language in which collaborative structures, collective stories, common tools, and shared artifacts are produced, used, and valued by participants and the wider community (adapted from Wenger, 1998).

Most importantly, projects and programs that aim to 'make it real' go further than working for engagement in school work. 'Making it real' approaches not only allow students to develop a sense of themselves and of their individual and collective worth but also allow them to connect this sense to their dreams and plans for the future. Such approaches are about a way of being and being alive in and to the world. Students internalize and 'own' the rationale for citizenship and are able to transfer it to a range of sites and activities. Through such approaches, students are, although perhaps not in quite the nostalgic sense proposed by social commentators, becoming citizens in the present.

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MICHELLE FINE, MARÍA ELENA TORRE, APRIL BURNS,
AND YASSER A. PAYNE

YOUTH RESEARCH/PARTICIPATORY METHODS
FOR REFORM

"Now I'd like you to look at the suspension data, and notice that Black males in high schools were twice as likely as White males to be suspended, and there are almost no differences between Black males and Black females. But for Whites, males are three times more likely to be suspended than females: 22% of Black males, 19% of Black females, 11% of White males and 4% of White females." Kareem Sergent, an African-American student attending a desegregated high school, detailed the racialized patterns of school suspensions to his largely White teaching faculty. Despite the arms crossed in the audience, he continued: "You know me, I spend a lot of time in the discipline room. It's really almost all Black males." Hesitant nods were followed by immediate explanations about how in June, "it gets Whiter," and "sometimes there are White kids, maybe when you're not there." Kareem turned to the charts projected on the screen, "You don' t have to believe me, but I speak for the hundreds of Black males who filled out this survey. We have to do something about it."

Frustrated with faculty unwilling to listen to his analysis of the discipline data, Kareem tried to use his personal relationship to the discipline room as a hook. When faculty resisted further, he took up the persona of the social scientist, reporting simply the evidence. He declared, calmly, that while they might choose to dismiss his particular case, they would nevertheless have to contend with hundreds of African-American young men who completed the survey and told us the same.

We spend too much time watching youth researchers trying to convince adults—policy makers, educators, community members—about the gross educational injustices they endure. We get too many requests to consult to school reform projects, already well underway, once the organizers think it would be "great to add student voice." Or we hear from reformers eager to convince the union, or business, or parents about the benefits of the reform and they want it presented in students' words. Our email inboxes are a virtual catalogue of invitations to 'gather student voices' as if they were Christmas tree decorations

on an already pre-determined reform for their own good. In our work we are looking for a few good adults, worthy and willing to listen to youth researchers who will dare to critique what is and demand what must be.

We construct this chapter to articulate the how, why, what, and who of deep participation by youth in educational and youth policy research and development. As you read above, Kareem is a young African-American student, a senior attending a public desegregated high school, asking his faculty for nothing less than respect and a sense of belonging. Now meet Kendra Urdang, a young White student, a junior also attending a public desegregated high school, who writes with passion and conviction about the racial imbalances that characterize her suburban high school:

> and in the classrooms, the imbalance is subtle,
>
> undercurrents in hallways.
>
> AP (Advanced Placement) classes on the top floor, special ed. in the basement.
>
> and although over half the faces in the yearbook
>
> are darker than mine,
>
> on the third floor, everyone looks like me.
>
> so it seems glass ceilings are often concrete.
>
> . . . .
>
> so let's stay quiet, ride this pseudo-underground railroad,
>
> this free ticket to funding from the board of ed.
>
> racism is only our problem if it makes the front page.
>
> although brown faces fill the hallways,
>
> administrators don't know their names,
>
> they are just the free ticket to funding,
>
> and this is not their school.

These young people represent the activist scholars of the next generation; young people who witness injustice in schools, are willing to research the capillaries of inequity, and work hard to redesign school structures, policies, and practices. We have spoken with, surveyed, collaborated with, and witnessed the performances of thousands of youth from across the U.S. Urban and suburban, across racial and ethnic lines, from diverse social classes and academic biographies, their critique and desires flow along the same simple lines of analysis. Young people in our nation's schools want *intellectual rigor*, in the form of qualified educators, challenging curriculum, and the supports to master the material; they want *respect*, for their varied identities, and not to be judged by the color of their skin, the fashion they don, the language they speak, the zip code in which they live; and they want to enjoy a sense of *belonging* to the moral community of deserving youth, not

treated as though disposable on the side of the road as the nation marches toward progress and standards (Opotow, 2002).

In our participatory research projects with hundreds of youth nationwide, from California, New York, New Jersey, Chicago, and Delaware, we have heard much about varied forms of injustice. Youth are concerned about the under-funding of their education and the over-funding of their criminalization (e.g. police surveillance, zero tolerance, and the long reach of the prison industrial complex into their communities). The cumulative consequences of policies of injustice have been well documented (Ayers, Ayers, Dohrn, & Jackson, 2001; Bloom, 2005; Haney, 2002; Kozol, 1991; Poe-Yamagata & Jones, 2000). As state policies undermine the educational possibilities in poor and working class communities, the pathways to military or prison grow more worn. In this nation, at this time, youth of poverty and youth of color are being gentrified out of the moral community of those deserving education, opportunities or the good life (Opotow, 2002). In their eyes, and in the eyes of their more privileged peers (Burns, 2004), the richest nation in the world seems determined, through policy and practice, to sacrifice the lives, minds, souls, and imaginations of youth—particularly of poor and working-class youth and youth of color.

But in the face of massive policy injustice, neither adults nor youth are sim-ply passive or compliant (Apple, 2001; Fanon, 1967; Smith, 1999). Working with activists, scholars, foundations, community-based organizations, and pro-gressive educators, in vibrant collectives dotting urban, suburban, and rural communities nationwide, we find collectives of youth research projects, bear-ing witness and demanding change (Cahill, 2004; Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002; Oakes et al., 1997).

YOUTH RESEARCH

Youth research projects typically center around issues of intimate, structural vio-lence: educational justice, access to quality healthcare, the criminalization of youth, gang violence, police brutality, race/gender/sexuality oppression, gentri-fication, and environmental issues. The goals extend from the exposition of local inequities with contextual specificity, to wide-lens coalition building with similarly situated youth nationally and globally. Tracking the historic and con-temporary lines of domination and resistance in an effort to remake social policy (Anyon, 1997; Burns, 2004; DuBois, 1990; Noguera, 2004; O'Connor, 1997; Wells, 1995; Wheelock et al., 2000), youth research is most commonly found within organizing campaigns run by young people in community organizations, non-profits and, in some instances, foundations. More recently, a growing num-ber of projects have been nurtured within colleges and universities (see *The*

Educational Opportunity Gap Project at The Graduate Center of the City of New York, The Youth Action Research Group at Georgetown University, and *the Institute for Democracy, Education, and Access at the University of California at Los Angeles*). In some of these projects the youth themselves are the architects of the research (as in Participatory Action Research), and in others youth perspectives form the core of the empirical material gathered and analyzed.

Freire (1982) eloquently argued, "The silenced are not just incidental to the curiosity of the researcher but are the masters of inquiry into the underlying causes of the events in their world. In this context research becomes a means of moving them beyond silence into a quest to proclaim the world" (p. 30). Repositioning youth as researchers rather than 'the researched' shifts the practice of researching *on* youth to *with* youth, a position that stands in sharp contrast to the current neo-liberal constructions of youth as dangerous, disengaged, blind consumers, lacking connection, apathetic.

We use the remainder of this essay to lift up this subterranean movement of Research Projects by and for youth, across the nation, as an emergent strategy for a mass movement of youth documenting, challenging, resisting, and revising social policies carved on their backs (see WhatKidsCanDo.com for a rich set of examples). In this piece we enter two such scenes of youth research, in which we have had the privilege of collaborating with youth to interrogate and re-shape educational policy and practice.

The first is a case of Williams v. California, a class action lawsuit in which poor and working-class youth were, as a class, suing the state of California for inadequate schools, under-certified educators, insufficient books and materials, decaying buildings, and less-than-sufficient intellectual preparation for college. Michelle was asked to be an expert witness testifying on the relation of decaying structures, uncertified educators, and inadequate curriculum and materials on students' psychological, social, and academic well being, and so we designed a study of California youth perspectives on educational justice.

The second project is a participatory action research project we designed to provide youth commentary on the victories and unfulfilled promise of *Brown v. Board of Education*. When a series of inner-ring suburban school districts gathered to consider evidence of an achievement gap and asked us to help them respond to the crisis, we enlisted a collection of youth researchers, drawn from varied segments of these communities, to design research on policies and practices that produce and exacerbate the gap. Together we produced a performance, a book, and a DVD called, *Echoes of Brown: Youth documenting and performing the Legacy of Brown v. Board of Education*, which has been published by Teachers College Press (Fine, Roberts, Torre, Bloom, Burns, Chajet, Guishard, Payne, & Perkins-Munn, 2004).

In both instances, youth analyses are the fundamental hinge upon which our work was premised. The research in each case blends qualitative and quantitative material, gathered by/with youth, to answer large questions about social (in)justice in schools. In the Williams case, youth were the fundamental informants, witnesses, victims, and activists captured by resource-limited schools. While the youth did not shape the research questions, gather the data, design the analysis, or determine the products, their social analyses, hopes, and critique lay at the heart of our work. In the *Echoes* work, the research questions were born from youth experience and inquiry; young people gathered the data, analyzed the results, determined the products, performed the analyses, and constructed the book, articles and set design for the performance. While the first project, Williams, was thoroughly youth informed, it was not foundationally participatory. In contrast, the second project, *Echoes*, was fully participatory by a collective of elders, youth, and mid-age researchers.

Across both cases, the works have been published and also performed in a lawsuit and on stage. Youth critique and desires—for rigor, belonging and respect—formed the basis for public scholarship. We enter each site, listening to details of design and listening for depth of youth analyses. Then we pull back, at the end of this essay, with cautions about what it means to engage youth critically as analysts of school reform and educational injustice.

CIVICS LESSONS/WILLIAMS V. CALIFORNIA

In the course of the legal preparation of Williams v. California, Michelle Fine was asked to testify as an expert witness on the relation of structural and academic conditions within the plaintiff schools and youths' psychological well being. More precisely, Michelle was invited to testify about the psychological and academic impact of structurally deficient facilities, high rates of teacher turnover and uncredentialed and/or unqualified faculty, and inadequate instructional materials. Michelle agreed to testify on the condition that doctoral students April Burns, Yasser A. Payne and María Elena Torre could come to California and survey as well as interview youth attending plaintiff schools about their educational experiences, aspirations, and the impact of these conditions on their psychological and academic well being. We arranged with the lawyers to set up focus groups of elementary, middle, and high school students from the plaintiff schools, contacted and selected via stratified random digit dialing within feeder neighborhoods. We agreed to tape all focus groups and provide the transcripts to all attorneys involved in the lawsuit.

A note on methods. To collect data from a broad and random range of students attending schools in the plaintiff class of Williams v. California, that

is, students attending profoundly under-resourced schools, the lawyers contacted survey research and jury research firms to conduct random digit dialing in affected neighborhoods, in order to generate the survey and focus group samples. Drawing off lists of eligible households, a series of a priori criteria were specified for selection: respondents need to be current students, not drop outs; respondents need to be reached via neighborhood telephone sampling with no friendship or snowball nominations; respondents should not be connected to, or made explicitly aware of, the litigation until after the interview; respondents should speak English well enough to participate in a group interview; respondents should not have severe cognitive disabilities that would interfere with such an interview; and parental consent was essential.

On average, approximately 400 calls were placed to generate a focus group of 10–12 young adults. The focus group sample, therefore, represents students who are educational survivors (not dropouts), randomly identified, and not selected from within peer or friendship patterns. Once the samples were established, a multi-method research design was undertaken:

- Eleven focus groups were facilitated with 101 youth attending plaintiff schools (one elementary, one middle, and nine high schools) in the San Francisco, Oakland, and Los Angeles areas, as well as a group (of peers) in Watsonville.
- Surveys were completed anonymously by the 86 middle and high school focus group members, prior to their involvement in the focus group discussion. The survey items drew from Constance Flanagan's (1998) work on civic engagement, Tony Bryk's (2004) work on belonging and school climate, as well as a series of items concerning academic aspirations and sense of academic preparedness.
- Eleven telephone interviews were held with graduates of California schools that fall within the plaintiff class. All of these graduates were, at the time of the interview, in college.

Survey-based gender and race/ethnicity data on 86 students indicate: 44 females and 42 males; 4 students who identify as White, 1 Biracial, 25 Latino/Hispanic, and 56 Black. Parental and student consent were obtained for all focus group participants. In a few cases in which there was no parental consent, participants were turned away. Participants were reimbursed for their participation.

Schools designed toward alienation. Toward the end of each focus group we circled the room, asking each student to suggest one issue we might raise with the judge about their school, or one suggestion for their ideal school.

Every day, every hour, talented students are being sacrificed . . . They're [the schools] destroying lives. (Maritza, speaking about her urban high school)

Another younger student, shy and withdrawn, whispered just loud enough for me and a few to hear her: "If I could have my ideal school, I guess I would have seats on the toilets and enough paper in the bathroom to clean yourself." (Abbreviated quote in Fine's notes, not transcript)

In this work we sought to understand how young people read existing race, ethnicity and class stratifications, as these stratifications organize the system we call public schooling (for an elaborated analysis of the expert report, see Fine, Burns, Payne, & Torre, 2004). The interview and survey material we gathered reveal with clarity and eloquence how these youth know, see, and speak the social injustices that constitute their public education. The material suggests further that these youth are yearning for schools of intellectual challenge, cultural respect, and a sense of inclusion. Instead, they attend buildings that bear brutal consequence for their educational practice, their civic engagements, and their economic trajectories. The text of alienation they 'read' in their school buildings, in the rapid-fire teacher turnover, in the absence of books and materials, in the administrative refusal to listen and remedy, sharpens an acute talent for critical consciousness, and indeed, saddles them with a 'reading problem.' For this site of development and learning—the school—is even more profoundly a site for betrayal. These conditions both reproduce and exacerbate emotional, civic, and academic troubles for youth already least privileged in our nation.

Schools, like other contexts of childhood and adolescence, are not simply the places where development happens. They are intimate places where youths construct identities, build a sense of self, read how society views them, develop the capacity to sustain relations, and forge the skills to initiate change. These are the contexts where youth grow or they shrink. Environmental psychologists Werner, Altman, and Brown (1992) argue: "[C]hildren are not separate from their actions or feelings, nor are they separate from other children or the physical, social and temporal circumstances that comprise unfolding events. They are so interconnected that one aspect can not be understood without the others . . . The street . . . is not separate from its inhabitants" (p. 125).

Buildings in disrepair are not, therefore, merely a distraction; they are identity producing and self-defining. Since the early part of the 20th century, psychologists and sociologists (DuBois, 1935; Fanon, 1967) have argued that children and youth develop a sense of self from the messages they gather from adults and peers, structures, and institutions around them. What the culture says about the child and his/her family and community comes to be internalized, in part, by that child. Children who are valued tend to be more positive in self-concept than those who are disparaged. This value may be communicated in what people say about and to them. But as powerful, the quality of the contexts in which they are growing speaks to youth about how they are viewed and valued. For better or worse, these voices come to form part of the core of how a child feels about him/herself and/or the extent to which s/he is valued by others. If surrounded by decay, disrepair, and filth, with a constantly shifting stream of adults in charge, and no adult intervention to protect children, a child may come to see him/herself as worthy of little more or at least that adults see him/her as unworthy.

Student Alondra Jones details the corrosive effects of a negative structural context on the developing selves of young students:

It makes me, you know what, in all honesty, I'm going to break something down to you. It make you feel less about yourself, you know, like you sitting here in a class where you have to stand up because there's not enough chairs and you see rats in the buildings, the bathrooms is nasty, you got to pay. And then you, like I said, I visited Mann Academy, and these students, if they want to sit on the floor, that's because they choose to. And that just makes me feel real less about myself because it's like the State don't care about public schools. If I have to sit there and stand in the class, they can't care about me. It's impossible. So in all honesty, it really makes me feel bad about myself.

Obviously, you probably can't understand where I'm coming from, but it really do. And I'm not the only person who feels that. It really make you feel like you really less than. And I already feel that way because I stay in a group home because of poverty. Why do I have to feel that when I go to school? No, there's some real weak stuff going on.

The cross-sectional evidence from elementary, middle, high school, and college students reveals, over time, the developmental implications of schooling *toward alienation*. The elementary school children we interviewed were filled with enthusiasm and excitement about their schools, learning, math, journals, and the acquisition of knowledge. Asked to draw their ideal schools, they drew pictures of pride and delight, envisioning and documenting a world spread open with possibilities. Periodically, in their focus group, a voice of fear would be spoken. When asked what they would like to change about their schools, the young children responded:

Bring a lot of security guards and stop the dogs. . . . And no big kids . . . teachers to respect . . . our teacher says we should stop fights because when we go outside, people just walk up to you and starting throwing bottles at you . . . stop the big kids from coming to beat up the little . . . stop grown ups, stop grown men from the little kids, because you never know who's l[ying] out there . . . our teachers to stop kids from throwing balls at your head . . . good lunches . . . bathrooms more cleaner . . . stop people from cussing, trying to beat you up, people telling lies . . . stop graffiti . . . more books and a bigger library.

Relatively unaware that wealthy or White students receive superior education, young children are, for the most part, delightfully enthusiastic about their own academic prospects. They ask simply for adults to protect them.

By middle school, the interviewed children sound somewhat more sophisticated if skeptical. In the middle school focus groups, you can hear distress about conditions of schooling and the absence of remedy. Most, nevertheless, believe that if only someone knew about the conditions of their schools, they would respond appropriately.

By high school, the students voice a deep, well-articulated, painfully sophisticated analysis that "no one cares" (Valenzuela, 1999). The high school students know that wealthy and White students are better off academically, and

they believe that the federal and state governments, the economy, and some of their teachers simply see them as outside the scope of deserving (Opotow, 2002). While even these older students hold onto a shred of hope, overall they view educational inequities as an extension of social disregard for poor and working-class students.

The students speak for a relentless will to be educated. Outraged that they are denied the material conditions for quality education, they are even more outraged that they are refused an audience from the State when they seek remedy. They want simply to be educated well and to belong in the circle of the deserving.

TO BE EDUCATED WELL . . .

I like lab period and algebra teacher . . . he makes you relax, tell you jokes, it kind of calms you off . . . That's what I like about my teachers, they all basically do that. (middle school boy)

Right now I have this one teacher that's like, he's my English teacher and he's like, really trying to help the students right now. We're looking into colleges and stuff. He's really trying to help us, like learn things, because it's like, he'll pull you out of class for a reason. It will be like to learn the stuff. (high school girl)

Across focus groups and surveys, the students were very clear that they want teachers who care and demand rigorous work. We asked the students, "What does a teacher who cares look like?" Students described a 'good teacher' as someone who holds high standards and helps students reach those standards. Someone who listens, asks questions and listens to student answers. Students were excited about teachers who want to know what students think. Some praised faculty who assign lots of homework, if they provide support and time to finish.

> GIRL: Like he said, we got a lot of substitutes right now . . . Some of them cap [put you down], some of them play football. That's not what we come to school for. So we got our teachers there that are pretty cool. But last year we had all our teachers. I love the good teachers, but the best ones are like.
>
> BOY: They change the whole school around
>
> GIRL: They change the whole school
>
> BOY: My favorite is all the good teachers.

These students know the difference between substitutes who play football and teachers who change the whole school around. They appreciate a caring teacher who is responsive when they are confused. A good teacher wants to

know the students and provides lots of red marks on their papers. Trouble is, few of these students encounter and enjoy good teachers on a regular basis. Most explain that they have had a range of teachers. Too many, however, have disappeared mid-year, are long term substitutes, or do not know their content areas.

In the plaintiff schools in Williams v. California, the percentage of fully certified teachers ranges from 13% to 50%. In the state of California, the percent of unqualified teachers is directly related to the percent of students of color and students eligible for free/reduced price meals, rising to an average of 24% non-credentialed teachers for schools where 91–100% students are eligible for free/reduced lunch. Teacher turnover rates are reported by some principals to be as high as 40% in a matter of two to three years (data drawn from Williams brief). By high school, the youth know that they are being denied a fair share of educational resources for their education and they express readily their outrage.

When I ask for help, and there's too many kids and I know the teacher can't pay attention to me, I'm ignored. That makes me mad. They blame kids when they can't fix things.

Well, at Tech it's not really that bad because they like — it is bad but they had like another school system inside of it called like Phi Beta, like all the smart kids, whatever and it's like no minorities in there. And they get all the good instruments and all the other stuff like engineering and they got all this stuff. And they like split them up and the like the rest of Tech, they got their own side of the school. So it's just kind of scandalous how they, you know, put everyone else, you know, on the other side of the school or just different classes.

Younger kids coming up in conditions like this, they can bring the problem of racism because most of the quote unquote good schools are majority Caucasian or whatever, like someone brought up about the pictures. There's so, if they look around they school and they say, "Well we basically all minorities. And they look at other schools and say why they getting treated better than us?" Well we, we all humans and we have been treated worse. So then that could bring some anger and then they just start lashing out at people, Caucasian people for no reasons, for all the wrong reasons.

These high school students also worry that they are academically handicapped by opportunities denied, ill equipped to attend a 'real' or 'serious' college, and embarrassed by limited vocabulary, math skills, and exposure. Lewis (2000) argues that the experience of shame requires a self-conscious comparison to others or a recognition of failing to live up to a standard. These students know well the 'lacks' that their education has instilled in them. They do not necessarily see themselves as less competent but, indeed, as less well educated. They are stung by the recognition and the fear that they cannot compete academically with students who have had more privileged schooling. As one young woman, now in high school, explained:

[If kids from a wealthy school came in here right now,]I wouldn't talk because they would be more sophisticated or something, and understand words I don't know and I don't want to be embarrassed. (Abbreviated quote in Fine's notes)

And it seems their fears about higher education may be well founded. We interviewed a small group of graduates from these schools who are now attending college. Given the high drop out rates of these schools and the few who go onto college, we thought that this sample of college-going students would represent some of the most academically successful graduates of their schools. But once they got to college, most were surprised to feel less competent than peers, and a number admitted to thoughts of dropping a course or dropping out of college.

I kept thinking they know more than I do. It seems like I had to do more than them, like I have to go to a lot of tutorial classes. What [my school] has offered me has made my transition to college really difficult. I'm pretty much intimidated in college . . . I keep thinking, "Am I going to make it?" (Female graduate, now at U.C. Berkeley)

The reflections of these graduates reveal the academic and psychological consequences of academic under-preparation, even for the stars of these schools:

High school didn't provide me with any AP (Advanced Placement) or honors classes so I was never exposed to college-level work. When I took calculus my first year in college, I couldn't compete. I ended up having to drop the class and take an easier math course. The expectations and standards at [school] were too low. Many students felt like they weren't being exposed to the education they needed. We could see what students at Lowell High were getting, all the AP classes and textbooks. But we had to share most of our books and some we couldn't even take home. (Male Graduate, Class of 2000, at UC Berkeley)

A high school graduate, now at UC Berkeley, explains:

I just wasn't at all prepared, like, compared to my sister. She's at UC Berkeley now but she went to Lowell. She was really prepared for college. Her school had lots of AP classes, she took five AP exams and passed four. My school only had two that I could take . . . I didn't know what to expect or about picking majors or anything. I got really discouraged when everyone around me was doing so well and knew what was going on. It was really hard for me. I had to drop out of more than half of my classes my first year. I thought about dropping out of school all together. Luckily I had the support of my friends—other students who graduated from [my school] who told me to stick it out, to just try to go slower . . . I was feeling like everyone else was doing so well. Why did Berkeley accept me?

These young women and men thought they were top students at their California high schools. Reflecting back on their high school years, these college students all admit that they were under-challenged. While they credit teachers and/or counselors who "really pushed me . . . taught me to keep an open mind and not to quit," they agree that teachers "could have given more work, they could have been harder on us." When asked, "What did you get from your high schools?" these young women and men report that high school was a context in which they developed a sense of persistence, learning to beat the odds, to struggle, even when no one was in their corner. One young woman, now attending community

college, explains: "In high school, I didn't feel any support, especially in terms of college going. I got some basics . . . but I don't feel prepared for college."

The structural inadequacies of their schools, combined with the belief that White and wealthy youth receive better, provoke a sense of anger in these students. Inequities seem "scandalous," targeted at "minorities," or designed to keep "some of us" on the "bottom." Anger is loosely directed at the government, the society, or sometimes at "Caucasians," revealing a cumulative sense of what Smith and Leach (2004) and Iyer, Leach and Crosby (2003) call "relative deprivation"—a substantial discrepancy between what people believe they deserve and what they actually receive; between what they have and what they want; between what they have and what they believe they deserve; between what they do not have and others do.

TO BELONG AMONG THE DESERVING

Not only were these young people devastated by their mis-education, they felt firmly disrespected by low expectations and then the explicit disregard for their voiced concerns. One young man, a high school student, explained his view of teachers' low expectations of him:

Teachers and just people in general underestimate youth, black youth. And they think I'm supposed to be speaking ebonics, hanging out on the streets, dealing drugs and stuff. But and then when you get in schools and then you go overboard with your assignments because when you first go to school, you really don't know how the teachers grade, even though they give you their rubrics and their plain things to tell you how they score and grade you. With me, I always want to do the best I can. So if they tell me to write a three-page essay, I write a fifteen page essay. So I do and then it's like, well, where'd you get this from? Did you copy out of a book? . . . They're always underestimating your ability to work . . .

This young man senses teachers' underestimation of his abilities and challenges to the work he had produced. Research by Delpit (1995), Steele (1992), and most recently De Luca & Rosenbaum (2002) conclude that teacher expectations and teacher treatment of youth are critical predictors of academic performance. A tenth-grade girl explains what many alluded to:

I'm in 10th grade. And what I like about my school, or what I don't like about my school is how they teach us like animals, like they cage us up and like they keep putting more gates and more locks and stuff and then they expect us to act like humans and I feel like if you treat us like animals that's how we going to act. . . .

Another student, in another focus group, offered: "Yes, they be like putting all the bad kids in one school, that's just like putting, you know, just like putting them in jail. They going to be crazy . . ."

In a series of comments, a number of students expressed concern that educators "treat[] us like inmates" or think they are "coming in to teach killers." Poor and working-class youth, immigrant youth and youth of color who attend inadequate public schools routinely say that some teachers do not care, that schools do not educate, and that they feel resultant anger, stress, and anxiety (Fine, 1991; Valenzuela, 1999; Wasley, Fine, King, and Powell, 1999). These California youth were no exception. As one young man in high school described his concern:

Because before we had a teacher for like the first three weeks of our multi-culture class and then the teacher didn't have all her credentials so she couldn't continue to teach. And since then we've had like ten different substitutes. And none of them have taught us anything. We just basically do what we wanted in class. We wrote letters, all the class wrote letters to people and they never responded. We still don't have a teacher.

What was striking and distinct about the California youth, however, was the powerful sense of betrayal that these youths expressed about those audiences who refused to listen. It was not simply the case that these youth, like so many youth across America in under-resourced schools, were denied adequate education and felt helpless. Many of the youth had, in the face of overwhelming odds, tried to secure help. They had spoken up, protested, asked for a 'real' teacher, or raised an academic concern. What broke their spirits was that few adults listened and even fewer acted. The students found themselves placed outside the borders of the moral community of the deserving (Opotow, 2002). One young woman in a focus group offered:

The teachers, they are there and then they are not there. One minute they're there, they're there for a while week, and then they gone next week. And you try to find out where the teacher, and they say, "We don't have a teacher." We outside the whole day, you just sit outside because there ain't nobody going to come through. We ask the security guards to bring us the principal over there. They tell us to wait and they leave. And don't come back. They forget about us. We ain't getting no education by sitting outside.

Students in another high school focus group were most agitated as they contrasted how their schools ignored their requests for quality education but responded (if superficially) when the State investigated school policies and practices:

We all walked out, 'cause of the conditions, but they didn't care. They didn't even come out. They sent the police. The police made a line and pushed us back in. Don't you think the principal should have come out to hear what we were upset over? But when the state is coming in, they paint, they fix up the building. They don't care about us, the students, just the state or the city.

These youth describe a doubled experience of disappointment and betrayal. Disappointed by the relative absence of quality faculty and materials, they feel

helpless to master rigorous academic material and powerless to solicit effective help. Were that not enough, when these youth do complain, grieve, or challenge the educational inequities they endure, they confront a wall of silence, an institutional lack of respect.

Poor and working-class youth of color are reading these conditions of their schools as evidence of their social disposability and evidence of public betrayal. These young women and men critically analyze social arrangements of class and race stratification and come to understand (but not accept) their place in the social hierarchy. Like children who learn to love in homes scarred by violence, these young women and men are being asked to learn in contexts of humiliation, betrayal, and disrespect. It would be inaccurate to say that youth are learning nothing in urban schools of concentrated poverty. Neither fully internalizing this evidence nor fully resisting it, these children are learning their perceived worth in the social hierarchy. Looking for challenge, respect, and belonging, they gain instead a profound civics lesson that may well burn a hole in their collective souls. In the early part of the 21st century, schools of poverty and alienation transform engaged and enthused youth into young women and men who believe that the nation, adults, and the public sphere have abandoned and betrayed them, in the denial of quality education, democracy, the promise of equality.

Postscript: Williams v. California was settled in August, 2004. Governor Schwarzenegger told *The Capital Morning Report* on June 30, 2004, "It's terrible. It should never have happened. Every child is guaranteed to get equal education, equal quality teachers, equal textbooks, homework materials, all of this stuff out to be equal, but it hasn't been. And this is why the State was sued. And it was crazy for the State to then go out and hire an outside firm and fight the lawsuit . . . So, of course, we are settling that lawsuit."

ECHOES OF BROWN: YOUTH DOCUMENTING AND PERFORMING THE LEGACY OF BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION

Turning from West to East coast, from segregated schools to presumably desegregated schools, from judicial policy to public performance, we consider now another project designed to elicit youth analyses of educational inequity. While the Williams case, in terms of methodology, was basically traditional, although deeply youth-informed, the *Echoes* project moves into the terrain of participatory action research (Reason & Bradbury, 2001). Again you will hear yearning for rigor, respect, and belonging, rippling among youth across the nation.

In the Fall of 2001, a group of suburban school superintendents of desegregated districts gathered to discuss the disaggregated *Achievement Gap* data provided by the states of New Jersey and New York. As is true nationally, in

these desegregated districts, the test score gaps between Asian-American, White-American, African-American, and Latino students were disturbing. Eager to understand the roots and remedies for the gap, Superintendent Sherry King of Mamaroneck New York invited Michelle and colleagues from the Graduate Center to join the research team. We agreed, under the condition that we could collaborate with a broad range of students from suburban and urban schools to create a multi-year participatory action research project.

Over the course of three years of youth inquiry, through a series of research camps, more than 100 youth from urban and suburban high schools in New York and New Jersey joined researchers from the Graduate Center of the City University to study youth perspectives on racial and class based (in)justice in schools and the nation. We worked in the schools long enough to help identify a core of youth drawn from all corners of the school to serve as youth researchers—from special education, English as a Second Language, the Gay/Straight Alliances, discipline rooms, Student Councils, and advanced placement classes. We designed a multi-generational, multi-district, urban-suburban database of youth and elder experiences, tracing the history of struggle for desegregation from *Brown* to date and social science evidence of contemporary educational opportunities and inequities analyzed by race, ethnicity, and class (Fine, Roberts, Torre, Bloom, Burns, Chajet, Guishard, Payne, & Perkins-Munn, 2004; Fine, Bloom, Burns, Chajet, Guishard, Payne, & Torre, 2005).

At our first session the youth from six suburban high schools and three urban schools immediately challenged the frame of the research: "When you call it an achievement gap, that means it's our fault. The real problem is an opportunity gap—let's place the responsibility where it belongs—in society and in the schools."

And so we changed the name to the *Opportunity Gap Project*. Students participated in a series of research camps, each held for two days at a time in community and/or university settings. Deconstructing who can do research, what constitutes research and who benefits, they were immersed in methods training and social justice theory. The students learned how to conduct interviews, focus groups, and participant observations; to design surveys and organize archival analyses. They listened to speakers who discussed the history of race and class struggles in public education, the history of the *Brown* decision, civil rights movements and struggles for educational justice for students with disabilities, second language learners, lesbian/gay/bi/trans and queer youth. Many students received high school credits (when a course on participatory research was offered in their schools) and 42 received college credit for their research work.

At the first research camp we designed a survey to assess high school students views of Race and Class (In)Justice in Schools and the Nation. The youth

researchers were given the 'wrong draft' of the survey and they dedicated the weekend to its revision, inserting cartoons, open ended questions like, "What's the most powerful thing a teacher said to you?" and sensitive Likert scale items like, "Sometimes I think I'll never make it" or "I would like to be in advanced classes, but I don't think I'm smart enough." Over the next few months, we translated the survey into Spanish, French-Creole and Braille, and distributed it to ninth and twelfth graders in 13 urban and suburban districts. At the second and third camp, another group of youth researchers from the same schools (with some overlap) analyzed the qualitative and quantitative data from 9,174 surveys, 24 focus groups, and 32 individual interviews with youth.

Across the three years, we studied the history of *Brown*, Emmett Till, Ella Baker, Bayard Rustin, finance inequity, tracking, battles over buses and bilingualism, the unprecedented academic success of the small schools movement, new schools for lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender students, the joys, the dangers and 'not-yets' of integration. We read on the growth of the prison industrial complex at the expense of public education, and we reviewed how, systematically, federal policy has left so many poor and working-class children behind. We collected data from the large-scale survey moving across suburban and urban schools and also rich material from a set of local, mini-research projects.

Together we created an empirical map of the Racial, Ethnic and Class (In)Justices in secondary public schools. We documented structures and policies that produce inequity and those spaces within schools and communities in which educators and youth have joined to create extraordinary collaborations, despite the odds. We wrote scholarly and popular articles, delivered professional and neighborhood talks. We traveled the nation to gather insights, to listen to young people, and to provoke policy, practice and change with our research.

Our research, conducted across some of the wealthiest and poorest schools in the nation, confirms what others have found: a series of well-established policies and practices assure and deepen the gap. The more separate America's schools are racially and economically, the more stratified they become in achievement. In our empirical reports on these data we refer to these ongoing sites of policy struggle as Six Degrees of Segregation:
- urban/suburban finance inequity,
- the systematic dismantling of desegregation,
- the racially coded academic tracking that organizes most desegregated schools,
- students' differential experiences of respect and supports in schools,
- the class-, race-, and ethnicity-based consequences of high-stakes testing, and
- the remarkably disparate patterns of suspensions and disciplinary actions.

Buoyed by our research findings and participatory process, during 2003 we conducted many feedback sessions in schools (like the opening scene with

Kareem) and communities throughout the suburban communities circling New York City, and we presented our material to groups of educators and policy makers throughout the country. But we met far too many adults who refused to listen to young people's complex renderings of *Brown's* victories and continuing struggles. We sat inside schools where it was clear that the Achievement Gap—the latest face of Segregation—was built fundamentally into the structures, ideologies, and practices of these schools. We found ourselves trapped by obsessive questions pointing to poor youth and youth of color—What's wrong with them? Even in the same school building, we have a gap? But if we stop tracking how else can we teach students at their natural levels?

And so, in the summer of 2003, with the anniversary of *Brown* approaching, we decided to move to performance as public scholarship and extend our Social Justice and Social Research camps into a Social Justice and the Arts Institute. We brought together a diverse group of young people ages 13–21, recruited from the same schools and beyond, with community elders, social scientists, spoken-word artists, dancers, choreographers, and a video crew to collectively pour through data from the *Educational Opportunity Gap Project*; to learn about the legal, social, and political history of segregation and integration of public schools; and create *Echoes*, a performance of poetry and movement to contribute to the commemoratory conversation of the 50th anniversary of Brown versus Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas.

The 13 youth came from wealth and poverty and the middle; communities in the suburbs surrounding New York City and within the city; Advanced Placement classes and Special Education classrooms. We joined Christians, Jews, Muslims, and youth with no religious affiliation; those of European, African, Caribbean, Palestinian, Latino, and blended ancestries. Some of the young people headed for the Ivy League and some who have spent time in juvenile facilities. We recruited youth interested in writing, performing, and/or social justice from youth groups and public schools in the greater New York metropolitan area, including northern New Jersey. We also interviewed a series of elders who had been active in the civil rights movement and spliced their interviews with the spoken word performance of the youth.

In an empirical/performance experiment that bridged over time, geography, culture, and generation, we plaited political history, personal experience, research, and knowledge gathered from two generations building lives on both sides of *Brown*, and to mark the 50th anniversary of the court decision, we performed *Echoes of Brown* for an audience of over 800 on May 17, 2004. As a culminating product, we published a DVD/book of the work, including all the elder interviews, a video of the Social Justice and the Arts Institute, youth spoken word, detailed commentary by the adult and youth researchers and educators working on educational justice in desegregated schools, and a summary of the research, *Echoes: The*

Legacy of Brown v. Board of Education, Fifty Years Later (Fine, Roberts, Torre, Bloom, Burns, Chajet, Guishard, Payne, & Perkins-Munn, 2004).

To give you a sense of the material the youth produced and performed, we take you into one scene during the Institute that provoked one of the more powerful pieces written at the painful intersections of yearning for intellectual challenge, respect, and belonging.

During the summer institute, feminist lawyer Carol Tracy helped the youth researchers/performers historicize the impact of the *Brown* decision on civil rights, feminism, disability rights, and the gay/lesbian movement. Tracy explicated how the *Brown* decision opened doors for girls across racial/ethnic groups, students with disabilities, and gay/lesbian/bi/trans students.

One afternoon we were discussing the new Harvey Milk School, a public high school opening that summer designed expressly for lesbian, gay, bi, and trans students. The youth researchers/performers peppered the conversation with questions about difference, special treatment, integration vs. segregation—"Is this progress . . . a school for lesbian and gay students? Or is this a step backward into segregation again?" The debate was lively, although most agreed that segregating gay and lesbian students was a throw back, and instead, that "all schools should be working on issues of homophobia."

But then Amir Billops spoke up. An African-American youth researcher who attends a desegregated suburban school, Amir had shared his deep disappointment with the unmet promises of his desegregated high school. But at this point in the conversation, Amir was inspired to 'come out' as a former special education student.

When we were talking about the dancer [Kathryn Dunham] and how she walked off the stage in the South during the 1940s because Blacks were in the balcony, I realized that happens today, with me and my friends. At my high school they put the special education kids in the balcony, away from the "normal" kids. They (meaning gay/lesbian students) may need a separate school just to be free of the taunting. Putting people in the same building doesn't automatically take care of the problem.

Amir's poem, "Classification," reveals the connections he made from history, and with the lesbian/gay/trans students at the Harvey Milk School:

Possessing this label they gave me,

I swallowed the stigma and felt the pain of being seen in a room with six people.

Yeah, it fell upon me and the pain was like stones raining down on me.

From the day where school assemblies seemed segregated

and I had to watch my girl Krystal from balconies . . .

Away from the 'normal' kids

to the days where I found myself fulfilling self-fulfilled prophecies.

See I received the label of 'special education'

and it sat on my back like a mountain being lifted by an ant—it just can't happen.

It was my mind's master.

It told me I was dumb, I didn't know how to act in a normal class.

I needed two teachers to fully grasp the concepts touched upon in class,

and my classification will never allow me to exceed track two.

So what is it that I do-

so many occasions when the classification caused me to break into tears?

It was my frustration.

My reaction to teachers speaking down to me saying I was classified

and it was all my fault.

Had me truly believing that inferiority was my classification.

Cause I still didn't know, and the pain WAS DEEP. The pain–OH GOD! THE PAIN!

The ridicule, the constant taunting, laughing when they passed me by.

Amir had been working with us for more than a year, as a youth researcher in his high school and then as a spoken-word artist and performer in the Institute. In writing this piece, Amir drew on his experiences as an African-American student in a desegregated school, having spent too many years within special education classes. He pulled from three years of our cross-site research findings on challenge/respect/belonging, the history of *Brown*, and what he had learned about the dancer Kathryn Dunham. With all these strings in hand and mind, Amir tried to justify a separate school for gay/lesbian/bisexual and transgendered youth in a climate where the price of integration is paid in taunting and physical abuse. In this context of thick critical inquiry, Amir's voice, experience, and rage were embroidered into historic patterns of domination and exclusion, contemporary evidence of youth of color yearning for rigor, respect, and belonging. Amir spoke because he knew that, "I had to speak for the others because the silence, oh the silence, is just as bad."

NO LONGER SEEING FLAT/FINAL NOTES ON YOUTH RESEARCH

Question to a youth researcher from an evaluation researcher: How did it feel to be involved in participatory research on these topics? Doesn't it just depress you to see all these injustices?

Youth researcher: Well, not really. I knew about racism and these problems long before I started this work. But investigating how it is that schools in the suburbs have more resources and more money to spend on their students than city schools—learning first hand how politicians think about students like me—has changed me permanently. Being a researcher, I see the world differently . . . now I see it beyond the flat.

Once youth are in the room as researchers—youth in varied bodies, with wildly divergent biographies and experiences—questions about who is the expert, what is the problem, where are the interventions, and who is our audience are all troubled. Researchers committed to building youth as critical collaborators into reform projects need to think through the following questions: Who is in the room when research questions are being framed? Who is missing? If everyone is in AP and Honors classes, will the questions reach far enough to excavate issues important to the lives of those in special education? If we only involve the students of color who are acceptable to the administration, how will our work be distorted? If the school principal or faculty hand pick the researchers, will all quarters of the school be heard? Will drop outs get a hearing? Will students who are angry and alienated? Recent immigrants? Have we heard from the outliers? The rebels? The dissenters? The quiet students filled with thoughts, who sit mute and watch? And privileged youth included in the mix, the very ones who benefit from existing social arrangements but also recognize the profound inequities upon which their success floats?

Have we created a safe space where students can disagree with each other, and even themselves, can modify their views and not take up positions they think they are supposed to voice? We close, then, with some cautions . . .

A caution on 'voice': When designing our research, we struggled with how to help youth contextualize and historicize what feels like their personal experience. We were not interested in simply producing a space for youth voice to narrate their personal and idiosyncratic lives. Drawing from Patricia Hill Collins (1998) we assisted as the young people placed their experiences critically in a sea of knowledge drawn from history and contemporary politics. That is, we were interested in challenging and de-individualizing youths' sense of their lives as "just me . . . it's nothing special," disconnected from history and peers. We sought to rekindle the connections of their lives across generation and zip code to the patterns of history and contemporary politics. Hoping they would discover the sharp intersections where lives of privilege and oppression meet, we designed the work toward collective responsibility to speak back to social policy.

Thus, for example, when we asked the youth in California to represent themselves and their peers to a hypothetical judge—as when Kareem presented the discipline data—they understood the historic and political capillaries that connect their personal experience to a deeply structured set of racialized and class inequities. Voice cannot be co-opted as a personal individualized story, as if about choice, autonomy, freedom from structures, or a self that can be disconnected from history and politics. Youth in the court case and in the

performance came to understand the politics of voice, audience, persuasion, and their role in a collective social movement. In both cases, they came to see themselves in a long line of historic activists and, indeed, as making history, even if they felt like victims.

A word on possibility. When working with youth, we are particularly careful that our research focuses on documenting historic and contemporary patterns of discrimination and injustice and also on those historic and contemporary fissures in the system where social movements thrive, where struggles for justice begin to breath, where resistance is evident. We feel a moral obligation to help young people remember and imagine a time when movements of protest were alive, energized, and filled with a sense of possibility. We do not believe that youth grow depressed from studying or discussing oppression, but we do worry that they could become more demoralized if the study of oppression is decoupled from the history of resistance.

Youth today are deprived of critical history; as important, they are bereft of images of protest of meaning, longevity, and victory. We consider it morally and intellectually crucial to include evidence of possibility and opportunities for youth action. As we worked with youth to map the contours of historic and contemporary oppression, we invited them to address the court in California about the positive and troubling aspects of their schooling; we positioned them as advocates for quality education; we asked them to frame arguments for the judge that Michelle would lip-synch for them in court. In the *Echoes* project, youth interviewed elders in the Northeast who had been active in struggles for educational civil rights, visited educational organizing groups, and grew, themselves, to be youth researchers, advocates and organizers in the campaign for fiscal equity, the struggle against high-stakes testing, and the fight for racially integrated, detracked classrooms. Documenting oppression with youth is significant, but it borders on unethical if decoupled from the study of resistance, possibility, and 'what could be.'

A note on privilege: Much youth research happens in segregated settings of concentrated and cumulative injustice. In these spaces, participatory research can help young people see the common structural conditions with which they collectively (and privately) contend. We offer, however, an additional image here, in which youth of relative privilege are also incorporated into the research design because injustice is a structural problem, not a problem for those most adversely affected. That is, privileged youth need to understand their positions of power and responsibility (Burns, 2004) and need to be called upon as potential allies across lines of race, ethnicity, class, and zip codes. Youth research projects that gather a broad collective of young people become chemically charged with the varied standpoints gathered in the same

space. These projects not only reveal the systematic patterns of historic inequity, they also nurture collective youth agency in which disadvantaged and privileged youth can come together to demand change.

Reflections on audience: The Kareem story is familiar. A young person of color dares to raise a question about local injustice and the audience freezes in denial. We have witnessed moments when adults embrace such a young person and moments when they shun him. We invite educators and researchers engaged with youth research to scout out audiences of worth, that is, audiences who deserve to hear and will respect and engage the brilliance and passion of youth researchers. We ask further that you find moments to smuggle youth analyses and critique into the halls of policy, courtrooms, and community-based organizations. We encourage you to work closely with youth researchers to anticipate the resistance and never to be taken by surprise. And we hope you will assure that the adult researchers/educators are always more vulnerable than the youth.

Youth research is becoming very popular these days. It is most important, then, that the political and epistemological rootings of youth research are strong or the tip to becoming superficial and patronizing is too predictable. From our stance, we see four critical elements: deep participation by youth in the fundamental design of the project; broad range of differences embodied by youth and adults; democratic practices in place and always in reflective check; and that action(s) are strategic. Depending on the project, youth may decide to work alone or with adults, in one community or across county lines. They may design research that seeks to change local conditions or simply expose injustice. They may seek to collaborate with representatives within the institution under scrutiny or reveal the systemic inequities brewing within. As a result, research products may vary—from performance to scholarly documents; websites (see WhatKidsCanDo.com) to organizing campaigns; 1–800-tell-all phone numbers to presentations at professional conferences. Regardless of settings, context, politics, and players, youth inspired and designed research readies the embers to ignite social change, locally or more broadly, in individuals, groups, or institutions (Appadurai, 2004). With youth at the center, social research can be a valuable tool in organizing, educating, and building skills, communities, and practice for reform. Tahani Salah, one of the youth researchers/performers, made a plea to the audience on May 17, 2004, which we simply reiterate here:

> Diversity is our beauty and integration our blood
>
> as it flows down the roads that we walk on screaming,
>
> The people united shall never be defeated.

With reason centuries old

It's now time for our revolution

The children of today cannot love our tomorrow

if the leaders of today do not.

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ALISON COOK-SATHER

TRANSLATING RESEARCHERS: RE-IMAGINING THE WORK OF INVESTIGATING STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES IN SCHOOL

"Our own being is modified by each occurrence of comprehensive appropriation."

—Steiner, 1998, p. 315

"As we translate, we are translated."

—Cook-Sather, 2006a, p. 74

Researchers who seriously engage in the work of seeking out, taking up, and re-presenting students' experiences of school not only translate what they gather but are also translated by it. Through researching and composing rich and varied accounts of how students in Australia, Canada, England, Ghana, Ireland, Pakistan, and the United States participate in and make sense of, develop within, and shape what happens in classrooms and schools, the authors of chapters included in this handbook observe, analyze, and present their findings in new ways and, through doing so, they transform themselves as researchers. At the same time, through the attitudes and approaches they embrace, they open themselves and their work to being transformed by young people—their perspectives, priorities, and discourse. All of the chapters in this volume share a basic premise that serves as a catalyst for these transformations: that interpretations and representations of students' experiences, perspectives, and identities must be informed by students themselves, and, furthermore, that the process of being informed is a matter both of acting and of being acted upon. In this final chapter I explicate how, in order for such informing to occur, we as researchers must translate—and allow to be translated—our attitudes, approaches, and, indeed, ourselves.

As an interpretive framework, "translation" reveals and even magnifies the language- and culture-based nature of the unfixed and ongoing processes of student experience that must be studied through similarly unfixed and ongoing processes of perception, interpretation, and representation. While "translate" is most often understood as making a new version of something by rendering it in one's own or another's language, it is not that part of the term's meaning that

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I am primarily concerned with here. Rather, I emphasize the term's more nuanced forms, where it means to bear, remove, or change from one place or condition to another; to change the form, expression, or mode of expression of, so as to interpret or make tangible, and thus to carry over from one medium or sphere into another; or to change completely, to transform (*Webster's New International Dictionary*, 2nd Edition). In short, I define translation here as a never-finished process of change that enables something—a text, an experience, a lesson, a setting, a person, or a group—to be newly accessible to comprehension and communication. The work the chapter authors do is most certainly about re-rendering terms, changing conditions and forms, and transforming understandings and selves. Writing about that work within the interpretive framework that the above definitions of translation provide not only illuminates the qualities of the present studies but also offers some guiding principles for future work that aims to explore and present students' experiences of school. Translation in the sense I use it in this chapter shows how revision and transformation of the terms we use to evoke ideas, identities, roles, and the institution of school, as well as the qualitative research methods we use to study those, both require and create translating researchers. As I will emphasize throughout this chapter, across all of these translations, something of previous versions remains and informs the new and more resonant versions.

Many other interpretive frameworks might also have been illuminating, and I draw on some of them throughout my discussion as they relate to translation, but I feel that "translate" is richer, more provocative, and more generative—it invites and facilitates deeper analysis and reconceptualization—than terms such as "transform," "revise," or "change." Although translation is a form of transformation, it insists, as indicated above, that something of the former version is retained in the new version: in a good translation, something of the original must always remain (see Agosín, 2000; Benjamin, 2000; Santos, 2000). Therefore, translation highlights what is preserved or carried over from former versions of ideas, practices, and selves—a particularly important issue in educational research, since we are dealing with people and practices with lived and relevant histories. Although translation is a form of revision, it is one informed not only by re-seeing but also by re-understanding and thus—because in changing what one knows one changes who one is—becoming a different person. Therefore, translation has the potential to highlight not only what is seen and understood in a new way but also how that re-seeing entails redefining one's self and one's relationship to what is seen (see Hoffman, 1989; Stefan, 2000; Steiner, 1998). And although translation is a form of change, it is a specific form, one that foregrounds language, culture, relationships, and representations—the stuff of qualitative research.

A translation is "at once duplication, revision, and recreation, with meaning lost, preserved, and created anew" (Cook-Sather, 2006a, p. 28). As a framework, translation deepens and complicates our understanding of research as a process of interpretation that must be particularly attentive to language, lived (context-specific) experience, and representation because the people and the experiences those people have are themselves neither fixed nor fixable—they are, rather, ever changing, like language and the contexts within which and the purposes for which it is used. In learning about a new culture of any kind, one must learn a new way of thinking and a new language, develop an understanding of new practices, and form new kinds of relationships and modes of engagement based on those. In a word, one's self along with one's words must be translated if one wishes actually to engage with the unfamiliar rather than simply redefine it according to the givens of one's own outlook.

Because the chapters in this volume approach students' experiences of school with the particular goal of accessing not only students' experiences but also their interpretations of those experiences, and because students speak a variety of different languages (even within English) and live in different—yet overlapping and constantly changing—worlds of relationships and practices than the adults who study them, the chapters in this volume challenge us to shift our interpretive frame as well as the language and approaches we employ within that frame. "Translation" illuminates the challenges and possibilities of this shift because it describes how we engage actively in learning to see, understand, and interact differently, how we represent that seeing, understanding, and interaction differently, and how we become new versions of ourselves through these processes. As translator Gregory Rabassa (1989) argues is true of all translations, the translation of researchers' understandings and selves in relation to educational knowledge and to students is a complex, indeterminate, unfinishable process (see also Cook-Sather, 2006a). I offer this discussion as part of an ongoing conversation and process of translation of qualitative research practice and of qualitative researchers.

I do not in this final chapter revisit each chapter in the Handbook and reiterate the arguments made, nor do I recapitulate the discussion offered in Chapter One regarding the background, basis, and trends in research on students' experiences of school. In using the interpretive framework translation provides, I do not mean to suggest that chapter authors themselves argue for these or other kinds of translation, although some do explicitly. Rather, I offer a re-reading of Handbook chapters that highlights the following specific challenges: to translate our understanding of particular terms that evoke ideas, identities, roles, and institutions that are often the focus of our analyses regarding classrooms and schools, and to translate qualitative approaches to studying the experiences

students have in relation to these terms. Both forms of translation demand and support translating researchers—new versions of our researching selves that produce and present new versions of students' experiences of school.

I begin with an exploration of some of the key terms we use to describe and analyze the experiences of students in school. These terms carry with them established definitions—both explicit, dictionary and more implicit, lived definitions—that shape and are shaped by myriad, often deeply ingrained assumptions and have direct implications for how we act and interact. The word "term" itself always has to do with limiting the extent of things—of time, of space, of meaning—and thus, to translate terms is to reconsider the limits associated with them, to redefine boundaries, to re-imagine what might be included in an understanding of an idea, identity, role, or institution, and to re-orient practice based on those revisions. Starting with the most basic form of translation, then—a linguistic re-reading and re-rendering—I analyze in the following four subsections several terms used to define and describe ideas, identities, roles, and schools as they influence young people's educational experiences. As will become clear, this linguistic analysis points immediately to the more nuanced forms of translation I mention in the opening pages of the chapter. The point Ballenger (this volume) makes about academic language applies here to the language used to describe and research schools: the words are "not new words but old ones with new resonances, new connections, new commitments." Translations.

The chapters in this handbook highlight and invite us to translate terms that evoke large, abstract concepts, such as "fair" and "unfair" as students experience them and as they shape student experiences. They also challenge us to render more complex translations of words that signal social identities as they are formed in schools, such as "boy," "girl," and "non-native speaker." In addition, they challenge us to reconsider through students' experiences and perspectives terms that point to broad categories of institutional role, such as "mentor," "teacher," and "student." Finally, chapters ask us to translate the term "school" and the institution and set of practices it evokes through the experiences and interpretive frames students provide. Many chapters simultaneously challenge us to translate one, two, or more of these terms, but in the following discussion I generally focus on only one per chapter. While our translations of these terms as readers—which are informed by how the terms are defined, experienced, and analyzed by students and in turn by how the researchers who studied the students

represent those analyses—constitute a linguistic form of translation, such translation is closely tied both with methodological translations and with more metaphorical translations of ways of being that redefining terms entails and that I discuss more fully in a subsequent section. Thus, the various definitions of translation are always in play even when one or another is temporarily foregrounded. In this section, I emphasize how when we re-understand and re-render words in context, we are ourselves changed by this process because the process of re-understanding terms is inextricably intertwined with the process of re-understanding, and re-composing, our selves.

Translating Ideas

Although I could focus on many terms highlighted or touched upon in this volume's chapters, I focus on a single pair—"fair" and "unfair"—to make my point about the importance of translating particular ideas that describe and define students' experiences of school. The terms "fair" and "unfair" are evoked by young people and by adults to refer both to individual and to social "rightness"—on the one hand, an individual's sense of what is equitable and, on the other, a more social sense of conforming to established conventions. While many adults may often feel confident that they have a clear sense of fairness as an idea, when we attend closely to student discussions and descriptions of fairness and unfairness, we can transform our understanding of the idea of fairness, our interpretations of young people's ideas of fairness, and how school practices frame fairness. I draw on four of the Handbooks' chapters to illustrate these points: " 'Some Things Are Fair, Some Things Are Not Fair, and Some Things Are Not, NOT Fair': Young Children's Experiences of 'Unfairness' in School," by Helen Demetriou and Bev Hopper; "The Role of Personal Standards in Second Graders' Moral and Academic Engagement," by Theresa Thorkildsen; "How Students Learn About Right and Wrong in the First Year of a Pakistani Private School," by Nilofar Vazir; and "Stressed-Out Students—SOS: Youth Perspectives on Changing School Climates," by Mollie Galloway, Denise Pope, and Jerusha Osberg.

   In their chapter, " 'Some Things Are Fair, Some Things Are Not Fair, and Some Things Are Not, NOT Fair': Young Children's Experiences of 'Unfairness' in School," Helen Demetriou and Bev Hopper explicitly invite us to change our understanding of "fairness" and "unfairness" in light of how six- to ten-year-old children in a rural and an urban school in England experience and make sense of their schooling within the frames these notions provide. Students evoke the term "unfair" to characterize a wide range of events and experiences, some of which reflect their moral principles ("Teachers should talk to people first and tell them—not just punish them, but talk first and tell them not to do it—they should give them a warning")—and some of which reflect experiences they dislike or

are disappointed by ("It's unfair sometimes in assembly when I want to do something and somebody else gets chosen"). Many of the incidents students describe refer to imbalances in relationship (and thus power), interruption of an inclination, and violation of a right—including the inclination and right to engage productively in their work. How students define the terms "fair" and "unfair" and make sense of their schooling in light of them shapes how they participate in school. As Demetriou and Hopper point out, "The implications of this research . . . are of both national and international significance; reflect a sense of agency and management on the part of the pupil; offer guidance for teachers; and have a direct impact on pupils' perceptions of school."

In "The Role of Personal Standards in Second Graders' Moral and Academic Engagement," Theresa Thorkildsen offers an example of exactly these kinds of implications. Because larger, cultural constructs like fairness influence how students understand and participate in cultural practices, or taboos, we need to re-understand the notion of fairness in light of student perceptions, the various interpretations they bring to those perceptions, and the actions they take as a result. The practice of cheating in school offers a case in point. Drawing on her study of seven-year-old children in the United States, Thorkildsen writes:

> Behavior that teachers might define as cheating, for example, is sometimes understood by children as an attempt to master new material, in large part because students do not understand how testing goals are undermined by their actions (Thorkildsen & Nicholls, 1991). They can also assume that simple equality in educational outcomes is so important to fairness that collaboration on tests is necessary for ensuring justice in the classroom (Thorkildsen, 1989a, 1993, Thorkildsen & Schmahl, 1997). Taken together, these findings suggest that educators who focus only on children's adherence to classroom expectations may misconstrue what, to children, seem like noble, moral intentions.

Thorkildsen's example illustrates that when they "cheat," young people may be focusing on "simple equality in educational outcomes," thereby referencing a larger issue of fairness than any single moment of evaluation can eclipse.

Further complicating interpretations of fairness is the fact that there are ways in which practices, such as cheating, have actually become institutionalized because of the pressure on students to succeed in school and beyond. This phenomenon manifests itself early in some school contexts. For instance, Nilofar Vazir explains in her chapter, "How Students Learn About Right and Wrong in the First Year of a Pakistani Private School," that in the primary school in which she observed, first-year students learn quickly that they may not help each other if they are having difficulty with a particular task. In such situations, Vazir explains, "the students attempt to help each other by creating their own norms, such as giving cues in a soft voice, or writing the correct

word on the table and quickly erasing it." Students "cheat" in these ways because, in their view:

> . . . collaboration both improves the quality of their work and supports and extends their network of friends. At the same time, the students are wary of their teachers' concerns about sharing work and thus are careful not to get caught doing wrong. In such situations, their social and moral selves collide with academic aspirations. The students are torn between listening to the teacher and doing what their hearts tell them to do.

Vazir's work offers us insight into how students struggle to find fair and right ways of being in school that at once heed adults' requirements and expectations and respect their own sense of what is fair and just.

The issue of fairness, specifically in reference to cheating, also manifests itself later in students' schooling, when students have extended the nascent kind of understanding of school expectations Vazir describes. Presenting the experiences of high-achieving, suburban high school students in the United States, Mollie Galloway, Denise Pope, and Jerusha Osberg explain in "Stressed-Out Students—SOS: Youth Perspectives on Changing School Climates" that students have redefined cheating as a necessity. The authors quote one student, who says:

> "The reason why people are cheating or are abusing the system is because they feel the need that if everyone else is cheating . . . or padding their résumé, that if they don't, then they're screwed . . . it's not necessarily that we're compromising our own values; it's like you're compromising for like a just reason."

This student demonstrates a clear understanding of a social, and specifically school-based, convention—cheating is wrong—at the same time as he offers a rationale for the practice of cheating, one that redefines right, wrong, and fair.

While the researchers mentioned above approach their study of young people's experiences from within different theoretical perspectives and in different contexts, their findings, based on closely attending to students' descriptions of their experiences, converge in an insistence on complicating common adult understandings of the principles that guide student interpretations and practices and become encoded in terms such as "fairness" and "right" or "wrong." With translated understandings of fairness and associated terms we can see as educators that it is in part the ways we structure schools around adult control and student competition that exacerbate students' sense of individual and collective injustice, to which they respond in logical, creative, and often sophisticated ways. Our response, then, as adults should not be to punish individual or groups of students but rather to reconceptualize the system within which those students labor to succeed or, sometimes, simply survive.

As this brief discussion of highly charged terms suggests, how adults translate ideas such as "fairness" shapes the representations of student learning we compose (and publish) and in turn shapes the learning opportunities we and other educators provide or advocate for students. If our translations are not only informed but also guided by students' perspectives and words, they are more likely to resonate for students when those linguistic translations take the form of practices, and they are more likely to provide students with supportive structures within which they can succeed in the multiple and various ways that we as adults claim they should and that many of them desire as well.

Translating Identities

Like large abstract terms, such as "fairness," that permeate cultures and play out in particular ways in school settings, terms that point to broad categories of social identity that reach beyond the confines of school require yet another kind of translation. There are certainly assumptions associated with these categories, and they tend to be reductive, monolithic, and limiting (as terms and as constructs) of understanding and of possibilities for being. "Boy" and "girl" are two constructs that some chapter authors explore and complicate, asking us as readers to translate our understandings of these categories of social identity. Two chapters focus on gender as a social construct: " 'Boys Will Be Boys' . . . But in What Ways? Social Class and the Development of Young Boys' Schooling Identities," by Paul Connolly, and "Schooling, Normalisation, and Gendered Bodies: Adolescent Boys' and Girls' Experiences of Gender and Schooling," by Wayne Martino and Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli.

Paul Connolly explains in his chapter, " 'Boys Will Be Boys' . . . But in What Ways? Social Class and the Development of Young Boys' Schooling Identities," that "while 'boys will be boys' . . . it is clear . . . that there are very different ways that particular groups of boys have of being boys." Connolly's explicit goal in studying the experiences of one group of five- and six-year-old boys who attend school in a working-class area and another group who attend school in an affluent, middle-class neighborhood, both in Ireland, is to "uncover some of the ways in which these two groups of boys have already come to assume very different schooling identities."

Connolly reminds us that the boys he studied "inhabit very different social worlds," and while there may be some "overriding characteristics that they share and that allow for the use of the term 'masculinity' to describe the dominant sub-cultures of both groups . . . how these general characteristics are translated into practice differ enormously for particular groups of boys." Connolly suggests that the dominant forms of masculinity for the middle-class boys "tend to be internally expressed with an emphasis on the acquisition and

competent display of specialist knowledge and technical skills" whereas the dominant forms of masculinity among the working-class boys "tend to be more externally expressed through an emphasis on the successful demonstration of strength and physical skills." Connolly emphasizes that while these may have been the dominant forms, there were "significant variations among both groups of boys in relation to the particular types of masculinity that they tended to adopt" and that the boys' different kinds of behaviors "are neither essential nor necessary and thus both can only be understood within the specific social and economic contexts from which they derive."

Connolly's chapter asks us to translate "boy" in far more diverse and varied ways than the single, supposedly inclusive term would evoke. He insists that one way we need to do that translation is to look beyond single dimensions of diversity, such as gender or class, and develop "a more thorough-going programme of work that encourages young boys and girls to critically engage with the issue of gender and to reflect upon and deconstruct existing dominant forms of masculinity and femininity". Pursuing such a program of work, Connolly suggests, would allow students—and us as researchers—to "begin to construct alternative and more holistic and inclusive ways of being boys and girls." Thus, like other chapter authors who call for us to attend more closely to students' experiences and perspectives and to invite students to be partners in defining the challenges they face and the opportunities they desire, Connolly asks us not only to translate our understanding of the broad social category of "boy" to allow for more breadth than is often permitted, he invites us to translate ourselves by repositioning students within our interpretive efforts.

Wayne Martino and Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli, in "Schooling, Normalisation, and Gendered Bodies: Adolescent Boys' and Girls' Experiences of Gender and Schooling," make a similar argument but one that includes the experiences of both boys and girls. They write:

Dominant discourses construct boys and girls as two homogenous groups in need of particular, and uniform, kinds of interventions (see Martino et al., 2004; 2005; Jones & Myhill, 2004). The boys and girls themselves, however, tell a much more complex story and challenge us to consider very different implications for addressing gender conformity and, more broadly, diversity in schools.

Based on the various experiences the boys and girls in Martino and Pallotta-Chiarolli's study articulate, the chapter authors assert that, "There is an urgent need for educators in schools to address these dimensions of enforced normalisation that negatively impact the social, emotional, and intellectual well-being of both girls and boys." The caution against normalization that Martino and Pallotta-Chiarolli offer is the same caution I offer against letting established terms go untranslated. Normalization is about fixing, freezing, and imposing ways of

meaning and ways of being on others. An insistence on ongoing translation has the potential to unfix and release students and those with whom they work into more meaningful and livable—and life-affirming—understandings and practices.

While untranslated notions and renderings of gender as a social category make certain kinds of assumptions about students and their experiences, untranslated notions and renderings of race and ethnicity make others. Focusing on racial, cultural, and linguistic identities as they intersect with schooling, several chapter authors illuminate how issues of language and self are explicitly, as well as inextricably, intertwined, since all of the chapters with this focus explore the experiences of students who are learning a second or third language as well as learning to be different versions of themselves in new contexts. I draw on two of these chapters: "Portraits of Self and Identity Constructions: Three Chinese Girls' Trilingual Textual Powers," by Xiao Lan Curdt-Christiansen and Mary H. Maguire, and "Finding Their Way: ESL Immigrant/Refugee Students in a Toronto High School," by Grace Feuerverger and Elisabeth Richards.

In "Portraits of Self and Identity Constructions: Three Chinese Girls' Trilingual Textual Powers," Xiao Lan Curdt-Christiansen and Mary H. Maguire portray nine-year-old girls struggling with who they are in different languages, relationships, and language contexts in and out of school. Using an interpretive frame that employs some of the same terminology as that of translation, Curdt-Christiansen and Maguire suggest that:

The constructions of self emerging in the girls' written texts in English, French, and Chinese indicate that the girls take up the act of writing to index personal meanings and positionings that are at times similar and on other occasions quite different. Language and learning environments play complex, intertwined roles in this construction of self that are at times quite obvious and other times less so, if not elusive.

In looking across the girls' cases, Curdt-Christiansen and Maguire point to the fact that some of the girls' written texts reveal "a shared identity as Chinese and a collective sense of self that reaffirms the girls' cultural ties to and identification with their Chinese families." Other texts "challenge their mainstream English and French teachers' discursive practices in their local public schools in which opportunities for writing are limited or perceived to be boring." Still other texts, particularly those that are "self-initiated, reveal a creativity that contrasts with their school-produced texts." The "discursive identities" these three tri-lingual girls produce can be, in Curdt-Christiansen and Maguire's terms, "imposed, chosen, contested, or resisted." Regardless of the choices they make, these girls cannot be easily categorized or labeled, and, strikingly, they do not use the labels used to describe them in schools, such as "Allophone," "immigrant," and or "second language learners."

In gaining a deeper understanding of the three girls' identities as represented in their writing, Curdt-Christiansen and Maguire, like the girls they studied, are engaged in processes of apprehension and production, of interpretation and presentation—processes through which the self as well as understanding are transformed. In emphasizing the complexity of the processes of self composition and self representation in which the young women are engaged, Curdt-Christiansen and Maguire invite us to attend not only to this particular instance of students' school experiences but also to bring that attention to other students in other positions and contexts.

In "Finding Their Way: ESL Immigrant/Refugee Students in a Toronto High School," Grace Feuerverger and Elisabeth Richards describe "the fragile existence of high school immigrant and refugee students" who are "living on the margins in an urban, multicultural society like that of Toronto." They focus on the students' experiences as they engage in "the process of creating and re-creating multiple social identities, negotiations and aspirations for the future in school and in the wider society." Feuerverger and Richards suggest that the students with whom they spoke were engaged in ongoing attempts "to reconstruct the solitary spaces of 'in-betweeness' " where they found themselves—in between cultures, languages, and identities—into "more robust versions of their cultural selves." They were always in the processes of "interrogating, disrupting, and ultimately restructuring the notion of 'outsiderness' " within what Feuerverger and Richards characterize as "the two extremes of 'outsiderness.' " At one extreme, "outsiderness" is "a negative force (sense of victimhood or deprivation)," and at the other extreme, it is "a positive force (sense of agency and hope) in their lives."

Feuerverger and Richards make it clear that neither these categories nor the processes in which the students were engaged were fixed; rather, "the boundaries between these perceptions of 'outsiderness' were extremely porous, and the students would move dialectically back and forth between the negative and positive dimensions of their lived experiences, often fluctuating between the two." Their lived experiences, complex identities, and critical perspectives on both made these students at once uniquely well positioned and uniquely challenged to succeed in school and society. In capturing excerpts from the students' stories, Feuerverger and Richards offer us insight into how these students navigate their lives. Just as I argue in using the framework of translation to analyze the chapters in this handbook, calling for translations of both familiar and new terms and selves, Feuerverger and Richards argue that, "Now more than ever before, it is crucial to learn how to accommodate the 'stranger' and his or her own language and culture in our societies."

One of the important points the authors of both these chapters make is how much "strangeness" can teach us—and that this teaching is essential. Poet and

translator David Constantine (2004) argues the same about the necessity of translation of poetry: "The continual shock of the foreign is absolutely indispensable" (p. 25) not only for what it teaches us about "the other" but also for what it teaches us about ourselves. Indeed, Proefriedt (1990) argues that, "The immigrant, the outsider, the person moving from one society to another and, importantly, undergoing the experience in a reflective fashion, becomes the model for what it means to be educated in the modern world." He suggests that this is the case because "what is needed henceforth is a capacity to measure the values of one society against another, to embrace the radical decentering of the world brought home by the movement from one culture to another" (pp. 87–88). What Proefriedt is describing here is a process of translation—particularly important if we are to work against the homogenizing force of global commerce and the increasing divide between rich and poor.

A theme that runs throughout these accounts, and that is highlighted by the analytical frame that translation provides, is that any interpretation of identity must be informed by multiple sources and undertaken from various angles. The numerous dimensions of diversity that go into composing an identity are a manifestation of the multifaceted nature of being a socio-cultural entity, and while all must be taken into account when rendering an interpretation and representation, what these chapters highlight is the importance of the generally missing dimension: the perspective and experience of the young person claiming or being labeled with a particular identity.

Translating Roles

As we have seen thus far, the translation of words that refer to large, conceptual categories, such as "fairness," emphasizes a reconsideration of how we interpret principles that guide participation in school contexts, and the translation of culturally constructed categories, such as identity, calls for a reconsideration of how we interpret who students are to themselves and to others. In this subsection, I focus on how the translation of terms that refer to institutional roles—such as "mentor," "teacher," and "student"—foregrounds a redefining of responsibilities and relationships within classroom and school contexts. Terms that evoke roles, like those that evoke principles and identities, have preconceived limits or parameters that are assumed and often unquestioned; set meanings become inscribed in fixed terms. Thus, roles have a way of shifting from parts one can play to permanent states (see Cook-Sather, 2006b and 2001). Translation is a way out of this fixedness. The call to revisit and translate roles is in part a call to uncover those assumptions and question conventional definitions and to move from that questioning to a reinterpretation. It is especially useful to think of role redefinition as translation because this interpretive

framework both emphasizes the shift from one "form" to another and highlights how something of previous versions remains within the new understanding and implications embodied in the new version.

Although the role of mentor is not a fixture of all school settings, it highlights issues relevant to role definition within schools. Throughout their chapter in this volume focused on mentoring, "Mentors for Students in Elementary School: The Promise and Possibilities," Julia Ellis, José L da Costa, Carol Leroy, and Carol Anne Janzen invite us as readers to translate our understanding of the mentor role in light of student descriptions of their experiences of mentoring. While most interpretive frameworks brought to bear on mentoring highlight the importance of emotional connections between mentor and mentee as they focus on academic work, Ellis et al. contend that "by attending to what students said about their experience of mentors or mentorship sessions, we have become acutely aware of the role that play or playful interaction can have for mentors and students." This aspect of mentoring challenges us to translate not only the term but also the ways we structure mentor roles, mentoring opportunities, and mentor program evaluations. It asks that we reconsider the basic purpose and focus of the mentoring relationship, and it asks that we do so as a result of considering the students' experiences of and perspectives on that relationship.

Ellis et al. offer a way of thinking about the translation of the role of mentor that highlights how the term can be genuinely and meaningfully re-informed by students' experiences and perspectives:

> While a cynical view might be that students simply want to play rather than work, we would argue that students know that playful activity can facilitate a wide range of welcome and valuable interactions with the mentors who have come to them as gifts. From a strong foundation of knowing each other well, being able to read each other's responses, and being friends, a mentor and student can also work more comfortably and effectively with various learning or growth needs the student may have.

This translation or change in the limits of what the term "mentor" includes implies that we should focus in extra-classroom contexts (and perhaps intra-classroom contexts as well) more on caring, respectful relationships to support learning and less on traditional, academic emphases (which often simply follow from the former focus). Like the translation of the ideas and identities discussed in the previous subsections, this translation has more general implications for how we as researchers and practitioners elicit and respond to student experiences: We must be willing not only to change the meaning of terms but also to reconsider the assumptions that informed those meanings in the first place and, in turn, the roles and opportunities we create and support in schools. Here too, however, I am not advocating that previous understandings and versions of the role of mentor be eliminated; rather, I am suggesting that

a new version of the role be conceptualized and enacted based in part on students' experiences and perspectives.

This kind of translation has immediate and far-reaching implications for an institutional role more central to schools than mentor—that of teacher. While many chapters in this volume address both explicitly and implicitly students' perspectives on how we need to translate the role of teacher, I focus on three chapters here, which draw on research conducted in England, the United States, and Australia, respectively: Jean Rudduck's "Student Voice, Student Engagement, and School Reform," Bruce Wilson and Dick Corbett's "Students' Perspectives on Good Teaching: Implications for Adult Reform Behavior," and John Smyth's "Toward the Pedagogically Engaged School: Listening to Student Voice as a Positive Response to Disengagement and 'Dropping Out'?" In all three chapters, we find appeals from students for the kind of teachers that researchers have also called for, but the qualities of a good teacher take on different meaning when articulated by students—from their perspectives, in their terms.

In her chapter, Rudduck summarizes student perspectives on how teachers should embody their role:

They don't go on about things (like how much better other classes are or how much better your older brothers and sisters are); they don't shout; they don't make fun of you or humiliate you in front of others; they are not sarcastic or vindictive; they do not speak to you in an irritating tone of voice; they respect students so that students can respect them; they will let students have a say and will listen to them; they explain things and will go through things you don't understand without making you feel small; they believe students when students tell them something (e.g., when students say they don't understand something, good teachers don't say: "If you'd been paying attention then you'd understand"); they treat students as individuals rather than just one of the mass.

This list, gathered, as Rudduck explains, "from students of all ages, in different kinds of schools, in different parts of [England]," shares many of the underlying premises of the list of qualities Wilson and Corbett gathered from underachieving students of color in urban middle and high schools in the United States. The list of qualities that Wilson and Corbett provide create a role description of a teacher who:

"stayed on students" to complete assignments; was able to control student behavior without ignoring the lesson; went out of his/her way to provide help; explained things until the "light bulb went on" for the whole class; provided students with a variety of activities through which to learn; and understood students' situations and factored that into their lessons.

Both lists emphasize respect for students as people, attention to students' individual learning needs, and, with both those qualities in mind, the ability to present material in a way that students can grasp. They both place teachers in the role of supportive guide who travels with students as opposed to dictator

who directs students from afar, but teachers are guides who are open to gaining "insight into what learning and the conditions of learning look like from the perspective of different students or groups of students" (Rudduck, this volume). John Smyth offers a similar argument based on interviews conducted with Australian youth who chose to leave school. He explains:

> Didactic forms of teacher-directed learning are invariably seen by students as being exclusionary and having the effect of marginalizing what they regard as relevant in their lives. When teaching included them as co-constructors of learning, then students saw this as a more general hallmark of respectfulness—of them as learners and as young people making a transition to adulthood.

In their chapter in this volume, "Using Students' Voices to Inform and Evaluate Secondary School Reform," Susan Yonezawa and Makeba Jones present the perspectives of students enrolled in urban schools in a city on the west cost of the United States that further corroborate these claims.

While the qualities of teacher mentioned here are ubiquitous in the literature on teacher effectiveness, it is different to hear those qualities described in students' terms. It is one thing to say, in the abstract, that the role of the teacher includes the ability to take students' situations into account and factor that into their lessons; it is quite another to say, as one student in Wilson and Corbett's study does: "I guess a teacher don't got to be nice, but they got to be respectful." Thus, the translation of the role of teacher may be largely a matter of shifting perspective on the qualities widely recognized as essential to the role and understanding those qualities in students' terms. It, too, is a form of duplication, revision, and recreation.

Finally, while many chapters are, in various and multiple ways, about translating the role of student, four chapters specify different roles students could play within school—roles that could become an integral part of structural positions and relationships in schools and in so doing transform in multiple ways students'—and others'—experiences of school. The four chapters, based on work done in the United States, Australia, and England, include: Joe L Kincheloe's "Clarifying the Purpose of Engaging Students as Researchers," Pat Thomson's "Making It Real: Engaging Students in Active Citizenship Projects," Sara Bragg's " 'It's Not About Systems, It's About Relationships': Building a Listening Culture in a Primary School," and Bill Nicholl's " 'I've Decided To Change and It's Just Really Hard To, Like, Show the Teachers That.'"

Many students become stuck within certain roles that they construct for themselves but that are also constructed for them through social dynamics within schools and larger society. Translation is a way out of that stuckness; it is particularly useful in considering the role of student because it lets

movement happen from one version of learner to another. It lets us redefine the term "student" and the terms under and according to which students learn. One of the most common roles into which students are cast by schools is the role of passive recipient of others' (primarily teachers' and textbooks') knowledge. A number of researchers and practitioners have translated this role into a more active and engaged one by creating opportunities for students to construct their own knowledge and understanding and, through that knowledge construction, construct themselves. In her chapter in this volume, Rudduck highlights the need for translation of student role that complements the needs for a translation of the teacher role: students must shift "in school from, as Hodgkin puts it, 'passive objects' to 'active players.' " Such a shift, as discussed throughout this chapter, constitutes a change "in the teacher-student relationship from one that is tightly hierarchical to one that is more collaborative and that allows both teacher and student to move beyond conventional roles to develop a stronger sense of partnership" (Rudduck, this volume). When students are translated and translate themselves from passive recipients to more active agents, they are not entirely taken out of the role of student; rather, what students can do from within the role is redefined, re-rendered—it is a matter of redefining the term(s) and the form those terms take. With such a redefinition, something is lost (the virtually complete power and authority of the teacher and his or her assumed control of educational content and processes), something is gained (a reinvigoration of the process of learning by infusing it with the insights and participation of students), and something is created anew (relationships, knowledge, understandings).

Focusing on how students' roles within the existing structures of schools need to be translated, Joe L. Kincheloe argues, in "Clarifying the Purpose of Engaging Students as Researchers," for the importance of positioning students as critical researchers within their studies as opposed to passive recipients of dominant forms of knowledge. This repositioning requires teachers to reposition themselves as well, as Kincheloe himself did when he invited students to "develop a reading/resource list and devise a curriculum that could be used to teach other students and teachers about the topics in question." Within such an approach, students not only "learned so much, developed better reading and writing skills, and often gained a new relationship with both learning and schooling," they were also, for once, "the experts, teaching those around them about something they understood better than anyone else." Kincheloe asserts that, beyond developing their basic academic skills, students as researchers learn to derive meaning from themselves and the world around them and become empowered through this work; within the interpretive frame I am using for this chapter, they translate content and experiences they encounter into what Kincheloe calls "dangerous

and significant knowledges" and in so doing they "take back the process of knowledge production from political, economic, and socio-cultural elites." On one level this process can change students' individual lives for the better as they come to understand the ways power inscribes knowledge; on a larger scale, such a process can "challenge colonized/regulatory forms of education" and thus has even more extensive implications for the role of student.

In her chapter, "Making It Real: Engaging Students in Active Citizenship Projects," Pat Thomson offers another alternative to students as passive recipients of knowledge, arguing for "the notion of 'active citizenship' as an ethical and pedagogical orientation to the classroom, to political education, and to school-community projects. In so doing," she explains, "I go beyond the idea of citizenship education as learning *about* the origins and practices of democracy. I propose that students must engage with the realpolitik of democracy". Thomson shows through one case study "that making classroom practice more open and participatory is integral to learning *to do* civic duties and *to be* a citizen (c.f. Delors, 1996)." The classroom, pedagogical practices, and activities Thomson presents "allow students to develop a sense of themselves and of their individual and collective worth but also allow them to connect this sense to their dreams and plans for the future." Such approaches, Thomson argues, "are about a way of being and being alive in and to the world. Students internalise and 'own' the rationale for citizenship and are able to transfer it to a range of sites and activities." In other words, students translate themselves, and teachers and schools must also translate themselves to support students' transformations. They must also recognize the import of each person's experience and journey of self-composition; they must work from an enriched sense of personhood.

Sara Bragg, in her chapter, " 'It's Not About Systems, It's About Relationships': Building a Listening Culture in a Primary School," presents multiple versions of the story of how a Deputy Head in an English primary school provided structures and opportunities for young children to take an active role in reshaping their school culture and practices. Bragg describes a range of practices from letting children choose their own learning activities for the first half hour of their school day, to inviting students to identify ways that their school could be improved, to students having a say in what textbooks they used, to encouraging students to research and write about events at their school for a new magazine, to including students in the process of setting targets for the school development plan, to asking students to generate questions to use in interviewing applicants for teaching positions, to positioning students as teachers of one another within the school and others outside the school. All of these efforts repositioned students or redefined their role "as responsible, capable, and caring—roles more often reserved for teachers or for specified

categories of children (such as class monitors)." By redefining the student role, the teachers and students were also able to "redefine the traditional boundaries between 'teachers' and 'students.'"

Proposing a role that requires a different kind of structurally challenging form of translation, Bill Nicholl, in "'I've Decided To Change and It's Just Really Hard To, Like, Show the Teachers That,'" offers an example of what happens when students who are perceived to be "negative leaders" are given the opportunity to redefine themselves by taking on different roles and responsibilities within schools. As Nicholl explains:

> The "transformational idea" behind the project was to make space in school for disengaged or disengaging students to use talents relating, strongly or loosely, to an arts subject in the curriculum . . . that were not fully recognised within the school curriculum. The students were given the opportunity to be "student teachers" and to plan and lead one or more teaching sessions (called "teaching episodes") with younger students.

Thus, the role created by the research team that facilitated the project was not an entirely new role—that of teacher—but a translation of that familiar role, changed because embodied by someone who does not generally occupy it.

Assuming the role of teacher among peers changes the learning experience for all involved as well as the "teacher's" sense of teachers. One younger student who experienced being taught by a peer said, "It was really good the way she did [it] . . . on the board she would write it a lot slower so you could understand it and everything. And she come round to everyone and helped them if they needed help." Having formerly been a student who dismissed teachers' efforts to design lessons, and having had for this project to design one herself, the student who taught the lesson said, "I can understand now why my teachers react the way they do with me." The deeper understanding of the role of teacher the students achieved, and their explanations of that deeper understanding, have the potential to inform our understanding as adults of what students value and find engaging in learning experiences, and we in turn can devote more thought to how to provide those things.

These examples of translation of roles highlight the importance of un-fixing definitions, of widening the parameters of terms such as "mentor," "teacher," and "student." They offer particularly vivid illustrations of the fact that within such translations something of previous versions remain and yet the new versions are, at the same time, quite different. The richer, more resonant versions of mentor, teacher, and student the chapter authors and the students with whom they worked generated offer us not only concrete examples of particular translations of these roles but also more general insight into the process of translating roles.

Translating Institutions and Institutional Practices

The final term that I posit as in need of translation is the term used to name the context in which the ideas, identities, and roles I have discussed are shaped and enacted: school. In some ways the most fixed—and thus limiting—term, "school" as it is portrayed across the countries represented in Handbook chapters is a remarkably inflexible institution (as perhaps flexible institution is an oxymoron). As Fine et al. (this volume) make explicit:

> Schools . . . are not simply the places where development happens. They are intimate places where youths construct identities, build a sense of self, read how society views them, develop the capacity to sustain relations, and forge the skills to initiate change. These are the contexts where youth grow or they shrink.

A number of contributors focus on specific structures and opportunities within schools that need to be translated from their traditional or standard forms. I draw on three chapters that make such arguments: "Dissolving Learning Boundaries: The Doing, Re-doing, and Undoing of School," by Donna Alvermann and A. Jonathan Eakle; "School Literacy and the Development of a Child Culture: Written Remnants of the 'Gusto of Life,' " by Anne Haas Dyson; and "Schooling in the Context of Difference: The Challenge of Post-Colonial Education in Ghana," by George J. Sefa Dei and Bathseba M. Opini. Other chapter authors argue for translating the entire entity of school into a different version of itself, such as "Building Student Voice for School Improvement," by Sharon Pekrul and Ben Levin, and "Using Students' Voices to Inform and Evaluate Secondary School Reform," by Susan Yonezawa and Makeba Jones. Translating this institution requires redefining terms that currently define the boundaries drawn in and by school.

Drawing on their work with young people outside of standard school contexts, Donna Alvermann and A. Jonathan Eakle, in "Dissolving Learning Boundaries: The Doing, Re-doing, and Undoing of School," suggest that we rethink the distinctions we make between in-school and out-of-school literacy practices. Alvermann and Eakle argue:

> It is in "doing, re-doing, and undoing school" in school and in out-of-school settings that youth are able to show through their actions, words, and products how textual engagement is achieved with little regard to boundaries across space, place, and time.

In making this argument, Alvermann and Eakle not only challenge us to change our notions of boundaries between contexts in which students engage in literacy practices, they also challenge us to rethink school as a bounded entity. It is the students' acts of composing across contexts and the adults' careful attention to those acts that prompt this call for translation.

Careful attention to students as agents composing their lives as well as texts, as demonstrated by Anne Haas Dyson in "School Literacy and the Development of a Child Culture: Written Remnants of the 'Gusto of Life,' " reveals how a researcher translates meaning making practices by watching children translate school literacy practices. Dyson focuses in her chapter on how "regulated (i.e., test-monitored)" literacy activities "are enacted—and transformed—by children." War games and plans for birthday parties in particular, as they are discussed among children in their writing times and as they inform the students' social relations and plans, provide examples of how, through imaginative play, "children confront real inclusion and exclusion and, in the imaginative world, explore possible selves in, at least currently, impossible situations." Thus, like Alvermann and Eakle, Dyson invites us to redefine traditional terms and practices associated with literacy and in so doing to translate our understandings of what students are doing and the way we structure classrooms and schools to support those practices.

George J. Sefa Dei and Bathseba M. Opini, in "Schooling in the Context of Difference: The Challenge of Post-Colonial Education in Ghana," argue that, "There are significant lessons to be learned from a critical examination of how students and educators in Ghana understand difference and diversity as well as the relevance of such understandings for schooling and education." They analyze how Ghanaian schools, colleges, and universities respond to difference and diversity within local school populations, and they suggest that creating inclusive schools is not about "equipment and fancy facilities" but rather about creating communities that recognize differences and support learning. Drawing on students' and teachers' perspectives on their experiences of school, Dei and Opini challenge us to rethink "the narrow understanding of national integration invoked through the discourse of 'neutral language' or 'monolingualism' " and to attend critically to the intersections between the various aspects of difference and their implications in schooling.

Rudduck's argument about school change, detailed in her chapter in this volume and elsewhere, throws into relief the usefulness of translation as an interpretive framework for thinking about changing the way we understand and structure schools. She argues that school reform is not about quick make-overs but is instead "about reviewing the deep structures of schooling that hold habitual ways of seeing in place." Seeing particular literacy practices as solely in-school or out-of-school activities, seeing school literacy practices and children writing about their lives as separate phenomena, and seeing language as a neutral medium are all examples of habitual ways of seeing. Translation requires and leads to a shifting of our frames of perception so we can re-see school and how learning happens within and without it. Ways of seeing—like

ways of naming or any other forms of interpretation—when they are well established and when people are accustomed to them, are very difficult to change. The authors discussed in this section thus far argue for transforming schools; they argue not for getting rid of the institution but rather for revising it—making it into a new version of itself more resonant and meaningful to students than previous versions. John Smyth's schema for the pedagogically engaged school, presented in his chapter, "Toward the Pedagogically Engaged School: Listening to Student Voice as a Positive Response to Disengagement and 'Dropping Out'?", offers another example of such a translation.

Because "flexible institution" may in fact be an oxymoron, efforts to translate schools into more resonant and meaningful versions of themselves meet with resistance. Some efforts seem to be succeeding despite resistance, such as the Manitoba School Improvement Project in Canada. In "Building Student Voice for School Improvement," Sharon Pekrul and Ben Levin present five principles according to which schools have worked to reform themselves: (1) Effective implementation of change requires participation by and buy-in from all those involved; students no less than teachers; (2) Students have unique knowledge and perspectives that can make reform efforts more successful and improve their implementation; (3) Students' views can help mobilise staff and parent opinion in favour of meaningful reform; (4) Constructivist learning, which is increasingly important to high standards reforms, requires a more active student role in schooling; and (5) Students are the producers of school outcomes, so their involvement is fundamental to all improvement.

In other contexts, efforts are less successful. Susan Yonezawa and Makeba Jones, in "Using Students' Voices to Inform and Evaluate Secondary School Reform," discuss what happens when an attempt at translation does not take on the deep, difficult task of redefining terms or seriously transforming selves. In this and other cases described by chapter authors, although students are consulted and have powerful, insightful perspectives to share, the majority of the adults involved in the reform efforts are not willing to translate their understandings, their practices, or themselves to the extent necessary to change the school structures. As Yonezawa and Jones put it:

> We recognize that there is a long way to go before the education establishment regularly accepts adolescents' viewpoints as anything more than either the ramblings of immature youth or statements from the endearing but naïve. It is our hope that by writing about the contributions that we believe students have made in conversations about and evaluations of educational reforms to which they have been subjected, researchers, policy makers, and educators can begin to see the promise of including students' voices in formative discussions of educational reform.

It becomes clear in my discussion of translating terms that linguistic forms of translation are always about more than just language—they are also about

translating ways of understanding the self and others, indeed, translating ways of being. The translation of ideas, identities, roles, and the institution of school explored in this section are illuminated and effected by researchers who translate their own roles, relationships, and approaches. The next section of the chapter focuses on the latter forms of translation.

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TRANSLATING QUALITATIVE APPROACHES
TO STUDYING STUDENTS

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Rudduck (this volume, 2002) argues that schools have changed less in their regimes and patterns of relationship than young people have changed. This critique applies to most research on schools as well—in one very specific way. Like teachers who develop and enact pedagogical beliefs and practices with little or no input from students, many researchers analyze student experiences and interpret and act on what they find without consulting students themselves regarding those experiences and their implications. Thus, most research focused on student experiences is conducted 'on' not 'with' students. The examples discussed in the previous section often either assumed or made explicit a moving beyond research 'on' to research 'with' students. In this discussion of how researchers translate their roles, relationships, and approaches, I elaborate on the basic and profound translation that occurs when we shift from research 'on' to 'with.'

  A shift from 'on' to 'with' requires and constitutes a change in the role of both researcher and student and a change of relationship between them. Research 'on' positions the researcher as distanced, authoritative—indeed, sole author of the meaning derived from qualitative research approaches such as observations of and interviews with students and others. Likewise, it positions students as subjects of study but not subjects in the more grammatical sense— as primary actors or what Delamont (1976) calls "protagonists." Research 'with' calls upon both researchers and students to conceptualize themselves, to act, and to interact differently than what many are used to in school or in research relationships that are more hierarchical and distanced. We see this change both evidenced and pointed to in the previous discussion of terms. In the discussion of fairness, we see researchers re-understanding the term in light of students' analyses of it and rethinking who students, teachers, and researchers are—and what school is—in relation to "fair" practices and how the participants and context interact given the translation of the term. In the discussion of identities, we see similar arguments for complicating understanding, not only through discerning and exploring the complex ways that students construct their identities but also through inviting students "to critically engage with the

issue" of identity development (Connolly, this volume). In the discussion of roles, we see the definitions of mentor, teacher, and student changed, and thus the relationships among people assuming or cast in these roles changes. The nature of the change in the examples included is toward more complex understandings, more complicated and fluid roles, and more connected, collaborative, human relationships. Particularly important to this discussion is the change in student identity and relationship from one of receptivity and passivity to one of greater authority and agency. And finally, in the discussion of the school, researchers illuminate various ways to redefine institutional boundaries and school practices, all of which require and entail changes of identity and relationship.

In the following five subsections, I discuss five different forms of translation undertaken by researchers engaged in qualitative approaches to studying students' experiences of school that allow for and support the kinds of translation discussed above as well as other kinds. On one level, it is misleading to separate these forms of translation out one from another, since they are in practice inextricably connected. But for the purposes of discussion, I do so. To remind readers how inextricable these forms of translation are from one another, I refer to other forms within my discussion of each one. The five forms of translation I discuss are the following: a revision of who is considered a worthy informant and even co-interpreter within qualitative research into students' experiences of school; a shift in frame of reference for the research; a change in the attitude researchers bring to their study of students' experiences; a different use of the basic, established methods of qualitative research; and a redefinition of some of the premises and practices of qualitative research methods. Taken together, these revisions, changes, and redefinitions constitute translations of those being studied, of qualitative approaches to studying them, and of those doing the studying.

Translating Students into Informants and Co-Interpreters

Existing qualitative research approaches have within them the potential for the kind of translation of who is considered a worthy informant that I discuss here, aiming, as they do, to evoke and render rich, complex, variously informed representations of lived experience, which can only be produced after long, engaged, variously informed observations and interactions. And yet within research in and on schools, students have been strikingly absent from the pool of informants. As Nilofar Vazir points out in her chapter in this volume, educational research—in Pakistan in particular but elsewhere as well—has not "used more

in-depth and extended qualitative designs to document student experiences in classrooms and schools." If the basic qualitative research question—" 'What is happening here?' "—is always accompanied by another question—" 'And what do those happenings mean to those who are engaged in them?' "(Erickson, 2005)—then there has, in fact, been little qualitative research into student experiences conducted, since students have not traditionally been considered relevant or worthy informants—those with interpretive perspectives worth accessing and representing. The work presented in this collection of chapters translates the ethnographic commitment to the belief that "participants are the best informants of their own lives" (Feuerverger & Richards, this volume); it applies this commitment to students, and in so doing, it re-defines the processes, products, and practitioners of qualitative research; it takes up and enacts in various ways—through re-informed uses of language, meaning-making practices, and forms of representation—the changes of identity and relationship that research 'with' requires.

The research into students' experiences presented here not only responds to what Erickson (2005) claims we need more generally in educational research—"wisdom, insight, courtesy, empathy for the people we study (both in the ways in which we collect data and in the ways in which we characterize those people in our reporting), and scholarly care in the analysis of evidence and in reporting"—but also represents translations of our notion of informant, such that students become worthy informants and sometimes even co-meaning-makers in the educational research process. In making this argument I draw in particular on the definition of translation that highlights a change from one "place" or condition to another—a re-placing of students within the research process such that their identities, roles, and responsibilities are differently understood and supported. This change of place occasions changes of identity of student and researcher and changes of relationship between student and researcher. Such a translation is an enactment of the claim Oldfather (1995) made over ten years ago: that "learning from student voices . . . requires major shifts on the part of teachers, students, and researchers in relationships and in ways of thinking and feeling about the issues of knowledge, language, power, and self" (p. 87).

In some cases, chapter authors argue and act on the notion that students' role as informant can include more active and direct responsibilities for interpretation as well. Paul Connolly asserts in his chapter that there is "a need to place much greater emphasis on the agency and competence of young children and the active role they play in making sense of their social worlds and responding accordingly." The terms "agency," "competence," and "active role" signal the change of identity and relationship called for in research 'with,' in which students are not only worthy informants but also sometimes co-interpreters.

Dana Mitra provides a vivid illustration of the difference between research 'on' and research 'with' in her chapter in this volume, "Student Voice in School Reform: From Listening to Leadership." In this chapter Mitra contrasts a research approach that "consists of adults seeking student perspectives and then interpreting the meaning of the student data" with a research approach that positions students as active interpreters. In the first instance, "adult researchers analyze student responses by transforming their responses into analytic themes and drawing conclusions from their assumptions"—an approach, Mitra argues, that "is particularly problematic when adult researchers attempt to fit youth responses into preset categories." Gallagher and Lortie (this volume) describe this process as "our raced, classed, gendered translations of [students'] ideas." Within such approaches, adults' translations are not sufficiently informed—specifically, not by student interpretations of their own experiences and perspectives. By contrast, a collaborative approach to research and reform, Mitra explains, has "adults and youth working together to share in the planning and decision making in their endeavors." Student participation in this kind of reform includes "translating student explanations into language that adults would understand." Here the ultimate translations—the representations of what is learned through the research—are co-constructed by students and researchers, and thus they are more fully informed by student interpretations of their own experiences and perspectives. Furthermore, they reflect how the research process has "interrupt[ed] traditional hierarchical research arrangements," as Gallagher and Lortie (this volume) put it.

Within the terms of this discussion, then, positioning students as informants and co-interpreters requires both a translation of those students—a change in their "form" and "place"—and a translation of those learning from them, who also then experience a change of form and place. These two kinds of translation require and occasion a different research process and product.

Translating the Frame of Reference

The translation of students into informants and co-interpreters and the translation of researchers into differently informed scholars imply as well a translation of the frame of reference from within which students' experiences of school are analyzed. Erickson and Shultz (1992) pointed to the need for such reframing over ten years ago when they wrote: "If the student is visible at all in a research study she is usually viewed from the perspective of adult educator's interests and ways of seeing" (p. 467). If students' experiences are viewed from the adult perspective, it is that perspective that provides the frame of reference, which in turn leads to what Martino and Pallotta-Chiarolli (this volume) call "adult-centric constructions of youth" and their experiences. Max

van Manen, Jerry McClelland, and Jane Plihal, in their chapter included in this volume, "Naming Student Experience and Experiencing Student Naming," capture in regard to teaching the revision I am calling for, and that Erickson and Shultz called for, in reference to research. They write: "A teacher may believe that he is caring about a student whom he teaches, but if the student does not *experience* the teacher's act as caring then the teacher's belief is less relevant than what the student experiences." The change in frame of reference that van Manen et al. articulate is profound; they argue for shifting the interpretive frame and focus of analysis from the teacher's beliefs and intentions—and I add, by analogy, the researcher's beliefs and intentions—to the students' experiences. This shift in frame of reference also requires and entails a change of identity and relationship; it requires the repositioning of student as informant and sometimes co-interpreter, which entails a repositioning of the researcher, and it then requires that both student and researcher learn to look through a different frame at the students' experience. It is, thus, necessarily a form of research 'with' because without the student's frame of reference, within this kind of research, there would be no frame.

I offer here just a few examples of translated frames of reference included in this volume's chapters. As opposed to framing a study to document school achievement pressures from adults' perspectives—according to how adults see the pressures and their effects—Mollie Galloway, Denise Pope, and Jerusha Osberg, in "Stressed-Out Students—SOS: Youth Perspectives on Changing School Climates," worked to promote a better understanding of high achieving, suburban, U.S. students' experiences when they face achievement pressures. In "Toward the Pedagogically Engaged School: Listening to Student Voice as a Positive Response to Disengagement and 'Dropping Out'?", John Smyth presents us with the words of students who drop out of school in Australia, who tell us "what is dysfunctional about much of what transpires in schooling . . . and how schooling might be different for them." And in "Students' Perspectives on Good Teaching: Implications for Adult Reform Behavior," Bruce Wilson and Dick Corbett invite us to listen to the "remarkably consistent and elegantly simple" ways that low-achieving, urban U.S. students describe what they need in school.

In all of these examples, it is the students' explanations of their experiences that informed the construction of the researchers' interpretive frames. Galloway, Pope, and Osberg explain that they undertook their study "with the intention of gathering students' perspectives on academic stress and empowering students to become change agents in their schools." Smyth explains that the schema he presents for the pedagogically engaged school "was developed entirely from listening to the voices of young people who had made the decision

to terminate their schooling." And Wilson and Corbett explain, "When we say 'students wanted' these qualities [in teachers] present in their classrooms, we mean that the overwhelming majority of students reiterated these characteristics at every opportunity in the interviews over the three-year period." These researchers illustrate what it means to adopt a frame of reference within which students have "agency," "competence," and an "active role" (Connolly, this volume) in identifying and analyzing the existing conditions of school as they experience them and in making recommendations regarding how those conditions need to change.

Like the translation of students into informants and co-interpreters, this form of translation requires that adults relinquish their claim to be primary knowers about and interpreters of the learning experience—i.e., the ones with all the knowledge, power, and authority. It also requires that both teachers and researchers look hard at and make new sense of the gaps between what we think we offer students and what students experience receiving in school; as Ellsworth (1997) points out, what we teach is rarely what students learn, but schools nevertheless persist in focusing on curriculum and pedagogy (approaching learning from teacher- or theory-centric frames)—most recently as they align with various standardized measures of performance—as opposed to taking a real look at what students actually experience and learn. In addition, it requires us to concede that students may know as well if not better than we do how—under what circumstances and in what ways—if not what content, they need to learn. And finally, it requires that we rethink the notion that we can come up with a fixed answer or approach to creating classrooms and schools that support student learning. The change of students' place and condition emphasized above has these kinds of implications for changes in how we as researchers conceptualize ourselves, what we observe in classrooms, how we interpret and render what we see, and the changes in classrooms and schools we call for.

Translating the Researcher Attitude

A change in researcher attitude is both a prerequisite for and a result of positioning students as informants and co-interpreters and having those informants provide the frame of reference for research into students' experiences of school. To effect such repositioning and such a shift in frame of reference, we must be willing and able to be open, unfixed, change-able—not simply receptive to new information that fits within familiar frames but rather open to translation of and in response to students' experiences and perspectives. This open and receptive attitude is embraced by most qualitative researchers, but what makes it different in this case is the informants and frames of reference to which the researchers are open and receptive.

In her chapter included in this volume, "The Role of Personal Standards in Second Graders' Moral and Academic Engagement," Theresa Thorkildsen offers a clear description of the attitude necessary for such translation. She describes herself as "remaining consistently curious about how children view the world." The words "consistently," "curious," and "view" are equally important here: "consistently" implies ongoing, continuous, steady; "curious" suggests engagement, receptivity, and attention; and "view" illustrates my previous point about frame of reference. Cynthia Ballenger, in her chapter, "Teaching as Research: Puzzling over Words with Fourth Graders," calls this attitude "puzzling"—a stance that embodies an openness, a willingness to learn and change one's understandings and sense of self based on that understanding. This connection between who one is and what one understands is central to the present discussion of translation. Because shifts in ways of thinking and feeling about issues of knowledge, language, power, and self require and entail profound changes in understanding and relationship, they require profound changes in one's sense of self. To be open this way to young people as authorities and as interpreters is to redefine the relationship between young people and adults and, as a result, to redefine what classrooms and schools, as well as educational research, should look and sound like.

A curious or puzzling attitude is recognizable as one employed by teachers committed to constructivist (Davis & Sumara, 2002; Dewey, 1964; Duckworth, 1987) and critical (Freire, 1998, 1990; McLaren, 1989; Shor, 1992) approaches to learning—a commitment that facilitates students' translations of knowledge and of themselves (Cook-Sather, 2006a). Thus, we are familiar with the constructivist call that teachers "follow the learner." I am suggesting that researchers, too, follow the learner—an approach at first awkward to adopt given the intense attachment to expertise fostered in many of us by our graduate training and reinforced by the profoundly hierarchical quality of the institutions in which most of us work. I am arguing, nevertheless, that researchers be open to the same kind of learning to which teachers who embrace constructivist models of learning are open because as we learn we change in important and necessary ways—what we do, what we listen for, and how we respond all change as we consider students in a different place in relation to education and in relation to analyses of it. As constructivist educators acknowledge, to learn is always to be in motion. And because learning is ongoing, there is a perpetual need to reinterpret students' experiences of that learning.

This form of translation illustrates what is preserved as well as what is changed in translation. Adopting the kind of attitude discussed here does not require or entail researchers relinquishing authority, expertise, and agency in the research process. Rather, it puts these into different relationship with students'

authority, expertise, and agency. Translating the researcher attitude into a version of the one described above allows researchers to become different kinds of interpreters, changing and changed by the relationships and understandings made possible through that translation.

Translating the Basic, Established Methods of Qualitative Research

In the context of the redefinition of student as informant and co-interpreter, shift in frame of reference, and change in attitude outlined above, uses of established qualitative research methods must also be translated. Handbook chapter authors use various qualitative research methods that become, through their use within this context and through an interpretation of them within the framework translation provides, new versions of themselves. In Section One, "How Students Participate in and Make Sense of Life in Classrooms and Schools," authors use phenomenological inquiry, interview and/or observation, case study, survey/large scale interview, and teacher research; in Section Two, "Who Students Are and How They Develop in Classrooms and Schools," authors use case study, ethnographic study, life history, narrative inquiry, and survey/large scale interview; and in Section Three, "How Students Are Actively Involved in Shaping Their Own Learning Opportunities and in the Improvement of What Happens in Classrooms and Schools," authors use analysis/critical review, case study, ethnographic study, and action research.

The contributors are quite specific about how they translate these qualitative research approaches into versions of methods appropriate to and necessary for the specific purpose of capturing and conveying student experiences of school. Some focus on translating particular aspects of the methods themselves, and others address not only the methods but also the positions and roles that researcher and researched assume. I offer five examples here: Beth Rubin's "Differences in Transition: Diverse Students' Navigating the First Year of High School," Kathleen Gallagher and Philip Lortie's "Building Theories of Their Lives: Youth Engaged in Drama Research," Theresa Thorkildsen's "The Role of Personal Standards in Second Graders' Moral and Academic Engagement," Dana Mitra's "Student Voice in School Reform: From Listening to Leadership," and Michelle Fine, María Elena Torre, April Burns, and Yasser A Payne's "Youth Research/ Participatory Methods for Reform."

In "Differences in Transition: Diverse Students' Navigating the First Year of High School," Beth Rubin explains that she uses "a method grounded in both the interpretive and critical research paradigms, with particular emphasis on eliciting the perspectives of the students themselves." Here Rubin uses established qualitative approaches but within them she foregrounds students'

perspectives—a move far from established. Analyzing the ninth-grade year from the students' perspectives and in terms of multiple aspects of their experiences—what Rubin terms "social 'freedom,'" "academic 'freedom,'" and "racial polarization"—affords Rubin the opportunity to access and analyze with students "the multidimensional nature of those experiences." Rubin's methodological approach thus allows her to discern, interpret, and represent a much more complex, lived experience than other methods might allow; Rubin illustrates how the different aspects of students' experiences of their ninth-grade year "were experienced differently and navigated uniquely by each of the five students profiled in the chapter, with different consequences."

In "Building Theories of Their Lives: Youth Engaged in Drama Research," Kathleen Gallagher and Philip Lortie also use but complicate standard qualitative research methods. They take field notes and conduct interviews with the youth in a Toronto school, yet they also engage students as co-investigators by, among other approaches, inviting the students to "devise their own interview protocols, which they would then use to interview one another." In these and other ways Gallagher and Lortie reposition themselves and students as "interactive co-participants" in various dramatic media and in the research process, and through a discussion of their "(dramatic) engagement," they explore how "youth are engaged in a process of theorizing or myth-debunking about their own lives." Gallagher and Lortie explain:

Unlike the more traditional methods of qualitative research, our analogous theatre world would open up, we hoped, the possibility for critical engagement among students themselves, a world that would make possible the generation of theory through spontaneous talk, critical watching, and engaged action. Students are always living by and challenging theories; our drama work provided a context in which their theories could be articulated, tested, and reformulated.

Two chapters offer examples of engaging students as co-interpreters of data. In "Student Voice in School Reform: From Listening to Leadership," Dana Mitra describes a research effort that "involve[d] students in data analysis, in addition to their serving as a source of data." She explains: "The youth and adults worked together to develop a shared language and a set of skills that created a shared knowledge base and understanding from which the group could communicate and proceed with their activities." Here adults and students are collaborators in creating categories of and criteria for analysis as well as ways of talking about them. Discussing a different moment in the research process and a different approach to working with students, Theresa Thorkildsen, in her chapter, "The Role of Personal Standards in Second Graders' Moral and Academic Engagement," explains how, "regardless of our inquiry methods, we shared our observations directly with those involved in the generation of

particular conclusions. Children and their families read the details of our case studies and interview respondents heard us check and cross-check our understanding of their ideas." Positioning young people as co-interpreters not only ensures a deeper understanding of informants' ideas and makes it more likely that representations of those ideas will be truer to the informants' experiences, it also disrupts the traditional hierarchy of knowledge and imbalance in agency in much research (see Oldfather et al., 1999).

A final example comes from "Youth Research/Participatory Methods for Reform," a chapter written by Michelle Fine, María Elena Torre, April Burns, and Yasser A. Payne. Further translating qualitative research approaches, Fine and her coauthors directly take up the challenge of shifting from research 'on' to research 'with' as also described and practiced by Fielding (2001b, 2004b) and others who have advocated and created opportunities for students as researchers. Fine et al. describe deep participation by youth in educational and policy research and development in their chapter, and they argue explicitly that "repositioning youth as researchers rather than the 'researched' shifts the practice of researching *on* youth to *with* youth." Clearly illustrating the translation not only in who constitutes a legitimate informant and interpreter but also in frame of reference and researcher attitude, Fine et al. explain that the research in each case presented in their chapter blends "qualitative and quantitative material, gathered by/with youth, to answer large questions about social (in)justice in schools" and, most importantly, that "youth analyses are the fundamental hinge upon which our work was premised." Fine et al. describe various ways in which they were engaged in "deconstructing who can do research, what constitutes research and who benefits." Here, most vividly, a translation of agency is captured in the single preposition "with."

These examples illustrate how various parts of the research process are conducted with students as opposed to on them, as would be the case were it only the researchers gathering and interpreting data. A mutually informing and trusting relationship is necessary for such a process to unfold—what Feuerverger and Richards (this volume) call "a strong interactive relationship" between researchers and participants—and the identities of both researcher and student are complicated in the process. Through this relationship and translated use of qualitative research methods, richer, more resonant versions of findings, as well as identities, emerge.

Translating Guiding Premises of Qualitative Research

When researchers translate students, research attitudes, interpretive frames, and methodological approaches in the ways described above, they open themselves to unanticipated and unexpected findings and dilemmas not only

regarding students' experiences but also regarding the research approach or process itself. Beyond translating the clearly named forms of qualitative research, such as those listed above, such that they constitute research 'with' as opposed to 'on' students, these chapter authors often translate the invisible or unacknowledged forces that inform any research approach, such as assumptions and expectations, as well as the constituents of particular research approaches that identify as qualitative—for instance, listening. These examples illustrate vividly how something of previous versions must always remain in a translation. Assumptions and expectations are basic human tendencies. But the interpretive framework translation provides makes the research approaches that are inevitably informed by these tendencies into a more ongoing, indeed unfinishable, process as opposed to contributing to the conceptualization of a study as improving vision and practice once and for all. In other words, translation provides a way of dealing with the necessarily ongoing nature of assuming, expecting, and listening by making them conceivable as more conscious, deliberate, and continually revised processes.

The assumptions and expectations adults bring to researching students' experiences can limit what we find if we as researchers do not let ourselves and our assumptions and expectations be challenged. While all qualitative researchers would embrace this assertion, to have young people challenge assumptions and expectations and to have researchers listen and respond to those challenges is a new phenomenon. The shift in interpretive frame and the open, curious, puzzling attitude several chapter authors describe above can facilitate researchers recognizing and moving beyond their assumptions and expectations to gain insight into what students experience and think.

Assumptions are powerful examples of preconceived and fixed notions, but they are particularly dangerous because they have become, by and large, unconscious. They act like a frame or filter, only letting in certain impressions. If, however, researchers let students' words illuminate existing assumptions, then what those researchers can apprehend changes. In "Portraits of Self and Identity Constructions: Three Chinese Girls' Trilingual Textual Powers," Curdt-Christiansen and Maguire explain, in reference to the young women whose experiences they studied, that "constructing a writing identity and presenting a self in multiple languages is not the seamless or bounded socialization process we initially assumed." This finding is particularly relevant to the present discussion of translation because Curdt-Christiansen and Maguire point to the dangers of "seamless" and "bounded" phenomena—phenomena that translation has the potential to disrupt and transform. Through questioning and moving beyond assumptions, prompted by students' words, these researchers translate themselves—they engage in translations of the research process, the research product

(including findings, written records, and impact), and the research instrument (the self), all of which require and entail a changed relationship with the researched.

Like assumptions, expectations impose prescribed and fixed, albeit generally more conscious, limits on what can be observed and heard. Offering an example of how students can disrupt expectations, Cynthia Ballenger writes:

> We have come to see that it is especially important to consider and re-consider the ideas and talk of those children whose learning is less transparent to the educators involved, that is, children whose ideas are puzzling, who do not seem to be doing well. . . . The children's assumptions, their habits of thought and their ways with words are often not what we expect.

Ballenger indicates that an ongoing processes of considering and re-considering is necessary to push past expectations. It can be very challenging to take the time and deliberative attitude Ballenger calls for when faced with a feeling of urgency and failure in responding to a struggling child. The process of translation such time and deliberation enable can feel slow, uncomfortable, and highly uncertain. And yet when researchers let students' words and descriptions of their experiences inform their interpretations, those researchers can interpret or make tangible, and thus carry over from one medium or sphere into another, what they see and hear. And as these researchers find, such interpretations can be richer, more resonant, and more meaningful—for students, for researchers, and for readers of research.

In research that aims to access the perspectives of informants, listening is key. The fact of listening to students is, as I have already mentioned, a translation of the qualitative research commitment to listening to informants. But beyond, or perhaps because of, the shift in power dynamics and perspective that listening entails when researchers listen to students, what it means to listen itself becomes translated. Referring to this form of translation, Thorkildsen writes, "We did not anticipate how fundamentally our informants could change our understanding of what it means to listen" (see also Dahl, 1995). Likewise, Gallagher and Lortie explain in their chapter how a particular form of interviewing within a sustained improvisation in their drama research "allows researchers to consider carefully what 'listening to' might mean." A standard feature of a qualitative approach— listening—takes on new meanings, manifestations, and results when the listener and the speaker occupy different positions than they usually do and when a relationship and dialogue that generally does not exist is suddenly brought into existence. Listening itself becomes a form of translation both of what is heard and of the hearer.

Thus, the methodological translations in which these researchers engage render some of the basic premises of qualitative research practice different

versions of themselves. Some aspects of previous versions remain—assumptions and expectations remain in play, and listening remains a central feature of the research approach—but they are questioned, enriched, and complicated as influences and processes, their meaning is considered and re-considered, and the results are more resonant as well as rendered more open to further interpretation and revision.

Translating the Presentation of Research Findings

Literary critic George Steiner (1998) argues that any act of communication is a translation. In his words: "*human communication equals translation*" (p. 49, emphasis in the original). The presentation of findings is thus also a form of translation—specifically, a change rendered in the form, expression, or mode of expression of, so as to interpret or make tangible, and thus to carry over from one medium or sphere into another. The repositioned student, different frame of reference and researcher attitude, and set of methodological revisions described above must be represented in a way that shows a different process of observation, interaction, and interpretation and that strives to produce words and selves that "will have a meaning . . . will have a sound" (Agosín, 2000, p. 57)—what Walter Benjamin called an "echo of the original" (2000, p. 20).

Sara Bragg, in her chapter, " 'It's Not About Systems, It's About Relationships': Building a Listening Culture in a Primary School," gives us one example of an approach to representation that makes explicit the forms of translation undertaken in the research process. She offers a number of narrative strands in her chapter—a relatively linear, optimistic story of the reform work one Deputy Head, Alison Peacock, did with students at her school; an exploration over the same time frame of the responses of some of the other teachers at the school, as refracted through Peacock's voice, which reveals the tensions and difficulties in this work; a third section that brings together both teachers and students again; and a short afterword in which Peacock reflects on subsequent developments. Bragg suggests that with her chapter and its particular presentation her aim is "to produce not a model of 'how to' conduct student voice [work in schools] but rather greater insight into its various meanings and a rich account of a collective process shared by teachers and students, in order that we may be able to learn *from* it." One way to facilitate better "learning from" is to offer multiple versions of a single story—multiple translations of what "happened" and what sense might be made of it (see Wolf, *A Thrice Told Tale*, for another example). Bragg's artistry in designing the representation of her findings—indeed, of calling into question findings as finished, rather than as sites for further learning

and change—puts into practice the postmodern theory that has taught us to expect multiple rather than master narratives.

Julia Ellis, José L da Costa, Carol Leroy, and Carol Anne Janzen, in their chapter, "Mentors for Students in Elementary School: The Promise and Possibilities," offer another example of how researchers might make explicit in—and help catalyze by—their presentation of findings the ongoing process of translation. In their analysis they include sections called "Re-reading, Re-writing" within which they offer further interpretation of students' experiences prompted by having attended and re-attended to what students said about those experiences. Rabassa (1989) argues that "a translation is never finished" (p. 7); the approach Ellis et al. take acknowledges that fact, and it highlights the ongoing, recursive process of interpretation as embodied in re-iterations, each a new version of the previous ones.

In the ways I have outlined above, the researchers in this volume have defined themselves in relation to their informants and contexts differently from other qualitative researchers; they have translated themselves into learners from students by translating the way they position students, how students' experiences are studied, and how interpretations of those experiences are represented. So when Bob Bullough, in "Ali: Becoming a Student—A Life History," asserts that the purpose of his research is "better understanding the process of becoming a student," he means that he has positioned himself to listen to the twelve-year-old student's description of his experience rather than set out to present an adult's interpretation from outside that experience. The "better understanding" for which Bullough strives must also be presented from a different angle and in different terms. Bullough employs life history, interviews, and observations, like many qualitative researchers, but by striving to convey Ali's experience of school from Ali's perspective, Bullough is able to present a rich, complex, sometimes difficult intersection of cultural, personal, religious, and academic forces on the playground, in the classroom, and on the school bus—as Ali experiences this intersection. Struggling with navigating this intersection, Ali often acknowledges that he has made "mistakes" within the new cultural and institutional frame in which he finds himself: " 'I am sorry. I didn't know that it was the wrong thing to do. I know that punching you should be suspended for, so you can suspend me. I am sorry.' " He also, however, learns to navigate the intersection with success.

The approaches discussed in this section constitute a subtle but powerful set of translations. The methods are familiar to qualitative researchers, but the repositioning of students and researchers in the research process means that

those methods and those using and participating in them become different versions of themselves—produced within different relationships and productive of different identities.

IMPLICATIONS OF AND FOR TRANSLATING RESEARCHERS

I have argued in this chapter that in order to access and represent students' experiences of school, researchers need to translate terms, practices, and ourselves in ways that let the learning opportunities and analyses we offer be informed and guided by as well as meaningful to students. Translation as an interpretive frame helps us think productively about how we might change the ways we study, position, analyze, and represent students' experiences of school because it helps us to "break with the taken-for-granted" (Greene, 2001, p. 5). In this final section, I offer a summary of the qualities of the translating researcher that both recapitulates the forms of translation I have discussed throughout the chapter and indicates some possible directions for future research 'with' students focused on their experiences of school. I present this summary not to create a composite image of the ideal researcher but rather to outline the qualities of a version of the translating researcher that has emerged and is represented in these chapters and that should be further reinterpreted, revised, and enacted over time. Key to my use of "translating" here and throughout the chapter is the notion that a translating researcher is always at once translating what he or she observes and translating him- or herself.

- A translating researcher seeks out and works to translate terms that signal powerful ideas associated with schools. The example I highlight in this final chapter illuminates how young people use the term "fairness," how their understanding of the term may differ from ours as adults, and how their different understanding leads to participation in schools that warrants different adult interpretations and support. I do not suggest that we replace adult definitions of fairness with student definitions but rather that we let the term be more variously defined, more complicated, less fixed. I urge researchers to identify, interrogate, and translate other such ideas that evoke educational (and, more generally, social) values, structures, and practices.
- A translating researcher calls into question simple, fixed, or established understandings and invites a more nuanced, variously informed, and more respectful interpretation of identities, such as "boy," "girl," or "non-native." Such researchers work with students toward a better understanding of how those identities get constructed both by those who hold them and by those who study those who hold them. Resisting monolithic categories, normalization, and simplistic notions of identity formation, translating researchers

challenge us to come to understand that any interpretation of identity must be informed by multiple sources and undertaken from various angles and to reconsider in particular the perspective and experience of the young person claiming or being labeled with a particular identity. As with translations of ideas, translations of identity are not about replacing one version with another but rather about informing new versions with old and with new meanings.

- A translating researcher strives to redefine institutional roles and thus responsibilities and relationships within classroom and school contexts. The roles of mentor, teacher, and student warrant particular kinds of translation— shifts from one "form" (of mentor, teacher, or student) to another with something of previous versions remaining within the new. This translation does not entail the replacement of one set of relationships and responsibilities with another but rather requires a reconsideration of the basic purpose and focus of the relationships assumed and implied by particular roles. The key translations highlighted in the chapters have in common an emphasis on more human, connected, empowering relationships. Administrator, parent, and counselor are roles I do not discuss but might also warrant translation.

- A translating researcher strives to translate as well the context within which the ideas, identities, and roles I have discussed are shaped and enacted: school. Because it is an institution, this term and entity is the most fixed—and thus limiting, the most inflexible, the most in need of translation. Chapter authors challenge us in various ways to rethink school as a bounded entity, to understand difference and diversity in new ways, to review the "deep structures of schooling that hold habitual ways of seeing in place" (Rudduck, this volume). Because ways of framing—boundaries, differences, ways of seeing—have a direct bearing not only on what can be seen but also on what can happen within those frames, we need a new version of school that is at once more resonant and meaningful than previous versions and more open and inclusive. Chapter authors provide us with guidelines for how to enact such a translation and important insights into why it is so challenging to do so.

- A translating researcher works not only to complicate existing understandings—of ideas, identities, roles, and institutions—but also strives to redistribute power and agency among participants in education and educational research. These are threatening challenges for those who would preserve the status quo, but the risk of not facing them is, I suggest, greater than the risk of taking them on. As educators and those who engage in formal analyses of education, educational researchers are particularly well positioned to engage in and call for translations that have the potential to change not only the nature of the researcher-researched relationship but also the research process and findings and, less directly, the ways schools and participation within them are structured.

- A translating researcher strives to re-imagine and re-enact the ethnographic commitment to the belief that "participants are the best informants of their own lives" (Feuerverger & Richards, this volume) by conceptualizing and positioning students as worthy informants and sometimes even co-meaning-makers in the educational research process. This translation is a change for students from one "place" or condition—the one observed and analyzed—to another, as well as a change for researchers from one "place" or condition to another; both student and researcher are re-placed within the research process with different versions of themselves—mutually informed transformations of identities, roles, and responsibilities.
- A translating researcher endeavors to shift the interpretive frame and focus of analysis from the researcher's beliefs and intentions to the students' experiences and interpretations. Specifically, this translation is about letting students' explanations of their experiences shape the researchers' interpretive frames and requires that as adults we relinquish our claim to be the sole or even primary knowers about and interpreters of students' learning experiences. Rather than foregrounding in a research project our own interests and ways of seeing, translating researchers aim to foreground students' interests and ways of seeing.
- A translating researcher brings to her research an attitude that is open to translation of and in response to students' experiences and perspectives. "Consistently curious" and "puzzling" are two terms that signal this attitude, and they point to a willingness to learn and change not only one's understandings but also one's sense of self based on that understanding. Like teachers who embrace constructivist models of learning, researchers who are open in this way "follow the learner." To be open like this to young people is to redefine the relationship between young people and adults and, as a result, classrooms, schools, and research in both.
- A translating researcher need not invent new qualitative research methods but can rather translate established qualitative research approaches into versions of those methods appropriate to and necessary for the specific purpose of capturing and conveying students' experiences of school. The basic change is to foreground the experiences and perspectives of students, but to do that researchers must understand themselves differently in relation to students as informants and to the information or knowledge being gathered in order to address the basic qualitative research questions, "What is happening here?" and "What do those happenings mean to those who are engaged in them?" The same argument some anthropologists make regarding research in virtual settings applies here: that we need not "invent completely new analytical approaches" but should rather "bring to bear our existing expertise on human

communication and culture . . . [through] . . . adapting ethnographic methods" (Wilson & Peterson, 2002, p. 462, 461).

- A translating researcher attempts to open himself to unanticipated and unexpected findings and dilemmas not only regarding students' experiences but also regarding the research approach or process itself. Specifically, such researchers translate the invisible or unacknowledged forces that inform any research approach, such as assumptions and expectations, as well as the constituents of particular research approaches that identify as qualitative, such as listening. Although we cannot—and should not—eliminate assumptions and expectations, we can make the research approaches that are inevitably informed by these tendencies into ongoing, unfinishable processes. Letting young people challenge researchers' assumptions and expectations and have those challenges accepted as well as letting students "change our understanding of what it means to listen" (Thorkildsen, this volume) constitute forms of translation of the basic premises of qualitative research practice into different versions of themselves.

- A translating researcher seeks ways to represent both the processes and the products of research into student experiences such that the presentation reflects in form as well as content the different approaches taken and the different understanding generated. There must be a balance in translating: on the one hand "the artistic impulse to take over a text, to overcome its otherness and force its assimilation to one's own language" and on the other "that scruple which begs to preserve the integrity of that otherness" (Santos, 2000, p. 13). Telling multiple versions of a story, including sections called "Re-reading, Re-writing" or other sections that make explicit and detail an ongoing process of reinterpretation and re-rendering, and, in particular, including and, as much as possible, foregrounding students' own words are among the approaches that make representations of research into student experience different from more standard representations of qualitative research.

- A translating researcher works to change conditions and forms and to transform understandings and selves. The translating researchers featured in this volume offer concrete examples of how qualitative research might be re-understood and practiced as a never-finished process of change that enables experiences, settings, and people to be newly accessible to comprehension and communication. They offer as well concrete examples of how the researchers become different versions of themselves through engaging in these revisions. As Gallagher and Lortie advocate and enact, such a research orientation "argues for new methodological risks . . . that cause us (researchers) to productively lose our confidence in those oft-cited

'common characteristics' of youth . . ., which can fix us, unwittingly, in developmental theories that—themselves—militate against the co-construction of knowledge."

- A translating researcher has to face many of the same issues practitioners face when attempting to reposition students and themselves in classrooms and schools. Of the five such issues that Rudduck (this volume) identifies— time, institutional commitment, anxiety generated by the change in power relations, authenticity, and inclusion—the last three are particularly salient to researchers. Like teachers who might feel threatened by the loss of their power and authority necessary to afford students some of their own power and authority, some researchers might be loath, consciously or unconsciously, to relinquish their interpretive power and authority. Opening research processes and products to more active student participation also raises questions of authenticity. This issue highlights the concerns some researchers have about trusting students as authorities: "How authentic is [student] voice and how do we know?" query MacBeath, Myers, and Demetriou (2001, p. 80). And finally, the issue of inclusion highlights questions of who gets consulted or studied: Are only certain students' experiences accessed and documented and therefore are representations of students' experiences of school skewed?

- A translating researcher faces a somewhat ironic if not contradictory force: the conserving influence of some students themselves. The more radical or transformative forms of translation can find resistance or rejection among students who do not necessarily embrace the kind of empowered place advocated for them by some of these translating researchers. This ironic situation may not be a result of students who are used to their more passive place in the system being unable to rise above their historically subservient lot in (school) life. Rather, some students consciously choose this more conservative location (based largely on their view of schools and teachers). In these circumstances then, researchers who are faithful to researching 'with' may be constrained in their more transformative intent by their commitment to negotiate a shared interpretive space; their views would be tempered by the need to find some kind of agreed perspective with students who may not share their more democratic and equitable goals. This challenge and potential conflict is analogous to that posed by some theorists: that liberatory pedagogy can be impositional.

- A translating researcher embraces the purposes of the three orientations outlined in Chapter One of this handbook, seeking to better capture the dynamic complexities of students' lives in classrooms and schools. Such researchers are committed to knowing students in all their complexity; as Demetriou and

Hopper put it succinctly in their chapter: "Children are not a homogeneous group." Because students' experiences and perspectives are constructed, individually varied, situated or contextually bounded, and negotiated in the socio-political realities of classroom and school life, translating researchers acknowledge and act on the understanding that research into student experiences must find ways—methodological and attitudinal—of accessing that complexity. In presenting their findings with students, translating researchers put forth complicated and changing portrayals as opposed to fixed or categorized images. And finally, but perhaps most importantly, translating researchers not only listen to what students have to say, but they also, as Dennis Thiessen puts it in Chapter One, "listen for when students 'have a say' in what classrooms and schools do on their behalf. Such research examines where, under what circumstances, in what form, and to what degree the voices of students matter to decisions about how schools work and improve."

- A translating researcher strives to develop an awareness of the choices she has regarding how much of former versions of herself to keep as she forges new versions. There is always play and movement is the rendering of herself, different choices made in different moments and contexts that highlight how the researcher herself is always changing and evolving as a meaning-maker.

Translation as I discuss it here can be a source of rejuvenation, growth, and development—a profoundly life-affirming experience for all involved. It takes one step further a critique of the transmission model of learning and the external expert model of researcher. If education "is a process of enabling a person to become different" (Greene, 2001, p. 5), and engaging in research is undertaking a form of education, then engaging in research should enable a person to become different. Indeed, Lather (1986) measures the validity of research according to " 'the degree to which the research process reorients, focuses, and energizes participants toward knowing reality in order to transform it' " (p. 272, quoted in Gallagher & Lortie, this volume). Change and growth are not only the hallmarks of survival but also of vitality. Poet and translator David Constantine's claim about language holds true for any vital thing: it is living "only in so far as it can move and change" (1999, p. 15). So too for research and the researchers who engage in it.

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