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Running Head: TEACHER-RESEARCHER

How do I, a teacher-researcher, contribute to knowledge of teacher learning and practice
in teacher education as I explore my values through self-study?

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Abstract

Stories told of and by teacher-researchers hold the potential to inform members of both academic and school communities with concerns about teaching and learning. The author's self-study and an embedded case study constitute this thesis. The latter is an instrumental, single-case (Stake, 1998), seeking to offer insight into teacher learning. It is framed by theories of cognition (Sternberg, 1998), adult learning (Mezirow, 1991), narrative (Gudmundsdottir, 1995), teacher-research (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999), and self-study (Hamilton, 1998). This thesis presents my experience as a teacher-researcher engaging in self-study, asking:

- What do I care about in education? (Whitehead, 1993).

In conducting my inquiry, I have become interested in knowing the following:

- What have I learned?
- How do I represent my learning?
- How shall I take my learning forward?

Learning is understood to mean “the process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience in order to guide future action” (Mezirow, 1998, p. 6), and is seen in terms of improvement to professional practice. In examining the self-study report of my colleague, Nancy, the question

- How is learning evidenced in the narrative report of the teacher-researcher engaging in self-study?

is addressed. A claim is made that, as teachers engage with questions about what they care about in education, they are learning. Data for my self-study include narrative accounts, artifacts, and images. Data for the embedded case include a co-constructed narrative account, photographs, a tape-recorded conversation, and interview and concept map collected between January 2000 and July 2003. Narrative data in the embedded case study were subjected to inductive and deductive analyses. Confirmatory evidence was sought in the conversation and interview, which were analyzed similarly, and the concept map, which was interrogated deductively. It may be seen that the stories of teacher-researchers inquiring into practice offer evidence of transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991), which may initiate and constitute living educational theory (Whitehead, 1993), and provide insights to those with interests in teacher education.

Sommaire

Des récits racontés par les professeurs-chercheurs révèlent que l'enseignant détient le pouvoir de diffuser aux membres des établissements scolaires et de la communauté, ses préoccupations quant aux stratégies d'enseignement et d'apprentissage. Ce travail porte sur une étude personnelle à laquelle s'enchasse un cas d'étude. Ce cas particulier (Stake, 1998) vise à faire développer une perception de l'apprentissage chez l'enseignant. La présente étude comprend des repères théoriques sur la connaissance, (Sternberg, 1998), des moyens d'apprentissage chez l'adulte, (Mezirow, 1991), une partie de récit de vie, (Gudmundsdottir, 1995), une recherche d'enseignant (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999), et d'une quête personnelle (Hamilton, 1998). Cette thèse témoigne du bagage expérientiel de la professeure-chercheuse dont la démarche personnelle porte essentiellement sur les points suivants:

- Quelle sont mes priorités en éducation?

En cours de recherches, d'autres questions ont émergé, à savoir:

- Qu'ai-je appris?
- Comment s'illustrent mes apprentissages?

L'apprentissage signifie "the process of using prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience in order to guide future action" (Mezirow, 1998, p. 6), et vise l'amélioration de la pratique professionnelle. En examinant le travail de recherche de ma collègue Nancy, une question a surgi:

- Comment s'illustre de façon concrète le processus d'apprentissage du professeur-chercheur engagé dans sa propre recherche?

Lorsque l'enseignant s'interroge sur ses priorités relativement à l'éducation, on affirme qu'il y a véritablement apprentissage. Mes données comprennent des récits narratifs, des artefacts et des images. Quant aux données reliées au cas d'étude, elles résultent d'un travail en duo comprenant un récit narratif, des photographies, l'enregistrement d'une conversation, d'une entrevue et le montage d'un schéma organisationnel, s'échelonnant du mois de janvier 2000 au mois du juillet 2003. Les résultats de ce cas d'étude ont été soumis à des analyses inductives et déductives. Des preuves fondées à partir de la conversation et de l'entrevue ont été analysées de façon similaire tandis que le schéma organisationnel a été soumis à une analyse déductive.

On semble dire que les récits des professeurs-chercheurs qui font une introspection personnelle de leur pratique représentent la preuve d'un apprentissage en mutation (Mezirow, 1991) qui pourrait mener à l'élaboration d'une théorie sur l'apprentissage. Le fait d'avoir recours au travail sur l'histoire de vie comme instrument de formation, pourrait mener à une théorie vivante de l'éducation (Whitehead, 1993), laquelle servirait de balise, de source d'inspiration à tous ceux et celles qui ont à coeur l'éducation et le processus d'apprentissage.

Acknowledgments



Figure 1. My father and mother who brought me to The River.

This thesis is an act of hope, gratitude and love, and I am deeply indebted to many: my parents, who encouraged exploration and adventure in the lives of their children; my companion on the river, Nancy Jean Snow, for her story, and the courage to make it public; my academic advisor Mark Aulls, and committee members Gillian Bramwell of McGill University and Jack Whitehead of the University of Bath—incomparable teachers, without whom I would not have found my place on The River; Fran Halliday, with fond memories, for her inspiration; Jack Adams, Ernestine Arseneau, Andrea Austen, Catherine Best, Art Farinha, Louis Larouche, Philip Ling, Louise McMullin, Tammy Romanuk, Shirley Smith, Les Szabados, and Joanne Turcotte for sharing expertise and time; and my students who, over thirty-four years, have encouraged me to become the teacher I hope to be.

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FRAMING THE SITUATION

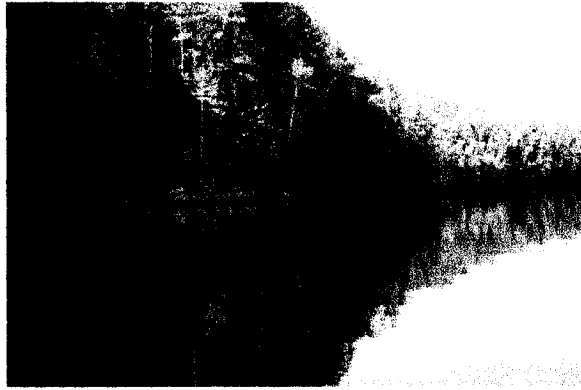


Figure 2: The Mattawa River

The River

I have been seduced by The River—

The lore, the mystery, the hope.

It is here that I do my work.

The work is hard, bridges flimsy, untrustworthy

Currents swift, carry or constrain me on my journey

Winds drive me onward, frantic and purposeful

Or desert me altogether

Becalmed, I am thoughtful.

I have lived through seasons on The River,

Icebound in winter, drifting fearlessly, mindlessly in spring

Sun silver-flecked waters of summer catch me up and

I ride diamond-crested waves to the dappled light of shore.

In autumn, I know contemplation and change.

Chapter 1

Surveying the Landscape

The true pilot cares nothing about anything on earth but the river.

—Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi*

I shall begin by contextualizing my inquiry. After making a presentation on teacher-research to administrators and directors of my school board, I wrote:

My principal walked me out to my car, and the asphalt hurled heat skyward. I wavered. Unsure. The butterflies hovered, circled and departed, and I understood something. The teacher doing research works The River. I know this now. We touch both banks. We drift and roll and weave, and bring two shores together. Theory. Practice. Administrators and kids. Ideals and reals surge and swell. It's rough sometimes. Dark. Cold. Fierce. And lonely. But, sometimes that River sparkles and splashes. Exhilarated and ebullient. Purposeful. There is the potential to drift. To run aground, to drown. But not today. A current of untested determination challenged the undertow. On the way home, I raced before the wind. (McBride, 1999)

It occurs to me that the river valley navigated by the teacher-researcher ought to be framed by theories, contingent research methodologies, and significant findings embedded within a framework of a psychology of instruction, and that this field ought to include the experiences, theory-based classroom practices, and values evidenced in the personal living theory (Whitehead, 1993) of the teacher. These are the boards and ballast from which the teacher-researcher conceives and constructs a craft. But just what is a psychology of instruction that will support the learning of the teacher, and how does the educational psychologist explain such learning? To answer these questions, is to attempt to tame The River. I shall trim my sail, head into the wind, and attempt to do so here because discourse on teacher learning and a rapprochement between school and research communities is essential.

Instructional psychology attempts to capture part of a broad landscape, one that I survey from my vantage point of teacher—first and last—on The River. Education

constitutes that landscape, and as I move downriver with the current, I witness the ancient rolling hills of philosophical thought where Plato, Rousseau and Russell once walked. These give way to younger peaks, the products of theory and research in psychology, the domain of William James, Piaget, and Skinner, and other renowned scholars. The accomplishments of those concerned with educational psychology, Thorndike and Dewey, and later Ann Brown, Jerome Bruner, Walter Doyle among many others are anchored securely within the valleys between. Lower down, and closer to the shore, in the pale, spring-green fields, I see the emerging psychology of instruction founded in the work of Gagné, Dick, Glaser, Resnick and Sternberg to name just a few. But the lines between the regions of the landscape blur because “educational psychology is a mediating discipline with a rich history rooted in philosophy, physiology, and psychology” (Walberg & Haertel, 1992, p. 16), a “discipline . . . building bridges between the science of psychology and the art of education” (Hilgard, 1996, p. 990). It is within this terrain that instructional psychology nestles. However, one may well ask just where an understanding of the learning of the teacher might be found midst this rich, and storied landscape.

Where the River Might Lead

There are times when The River seems to roll very slowly. Robert Donmoyer (1996), in his introduction to a protracted debate among proponents of various perspectives of cognition in successive issues of the *Educational Researcher*, laments popular ambivalence “about the potential of institutions—including schools—to promote learning” (Donmoyer, 1996, p. 4), and he identifies Huck Finn as one of the unschooled heroes of American culture. It is disheartening to know that heroes are unschooled, and I find it interesting that the exemplars of what is wrong are drawn from stories that reflect a gentler image of life than that of the zone where the war between factions of researchers with concerns about cognition and instruction is fought (Anderson, & Herr, 1999; Anderson, Reder, & Simon, 1995, 1996, 1998; Cobb, & Bowers, 1999; Donmoyer, 1996, 1997; Greeno, 1989, 1997). I sense that the real victims of that war are not the academics and researchers with bruised egos and battered epistemologies. Rather, the toll is taken on the graduates of institutions that have been unable to promote learning for the barefoot boys and girls, the Huckleberry Finns. I believe that it behooves all researchers with

concerns about teaching and learning—educators and academics alike—to put the needs of those teaching and learning in schools first, because knowledge of sound instructional practice is sorely needed, and I believe that the teacher-researcher conducting inquiry on practice may have legitimate knowledge to contribute to discussions of teaching and learning.

Chapter 2

The Teacher-Researcher

Softly as a cloud we go,
 Sky above and sky below,
 Down the river

—Archibald Lampman, *Morning on the Lievre*

In order to understand teacher professionalism and professional development, it becomes necessary to provide a framework for conceptualizing the learning done by the teacher engaged in an attempt to improve practice. For the purpose of this study, teacher learning is explored in terms of

- Teacher cognition
- Adult learning theory
- Narrative inquiry, and
- Self-study.

It is assumed that learning is a social act, that knowledge is relative to the learning context, and that it is embedded in language (Mezirow, 2000). It is also assumed that the representation of the learning may be constituted within a framework of narrative inquiry (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999), and teacher self-study (Cole & Knowles, 1995; Hamilton, 1998). Understanding teacher learning is important to the teacher and to those who may guide the teacher on the way to becoming a professional educator—researchers and teacher-educators. Foremost, it is essential for teachers to understand their learning for it is then that the realization of the necessity of career-long professional development will become evident. It is also vital that the teacher's understanding be on a personal/individual level, at the level of the self. The process of looking from the self, outward to the work done in the classroom provides a medium to hold the experiences of teaching and learning. The story that the teacher tells becomes both the medium and the product. It is an invaluable representation of the knowledge of the self. In the words of Jerome Bruner:

A self is probably the most impressive work of art we ever produce, surely the most intricate. For we create not just one self-making story but many of them, rather like T.S. Eliot's rhyme "We prepare a face to meet / The faces that we meet." The job is to get them all into one identity, and to get them lined up over time. (Bruner, 2002, p. 14)

For the teacher, self-study research on practice may lead to that work of art.

Teacher Cognition

The knowledge of the teacher has generated considerable research interest. Cognitive theories (Berliner, 1988; Glaser, 1985; Marshall, 1995; Sternberg, 1998) provide one perspective, explaining knowledge as representations of products of problem solving processes. Human cognitive activity is understood to be goal-directed and knowledge-driven, knowledge being conceptualized as representations available for use through information processing operations (Newell, Rosenbloom, & Laird, 1989). Large, complex units of knowledge may be understood as schema (Anderson, 1990; Best, 1995; Marshall, 1995). Accumulated, assimilated, organized groups of concepts (Spiro, 1977) representing information of varying degrees of complexity are constructed from experience (Eysenck, 1994). Schema will govern the way the individual processes information in guiding the attention, selection, encoding and storage processes, and will provide a framework for search and retrieval. Additionally, schema may support planning and problem solving activities. In the case of a novel event, one for which no schema exist, or when existing knowledge does not provide an adequate interpretation of an experience, schema are said to have a prescriptive or corrective function (Best, 1995). Deaux and Wrightsman (1988) have devised a flow chart to represent operations of schema (Figure 3), which include perception, comprehension, interpretation and memory, all mediated by an active knowledge structure. Schema may be said to be activated when some feature of the environment is perceived, comprehended and interpreted implicating corresponding stored information.

All teachers know something about teaching and learning. In other words, each holds retrievable mental representations of phenomena relevant to the participants and events within their particular realm, stored as information about features of their particular context. Mental representations held by the teacher may be understood to be in

the form of schema representing explicit, declarative, domain-specific, and implicit, procedural, field-specific knowledge (Sternberg, 1998) which support teaching and learning, and which function as a working model of what is known, and when and how to use the knowledge (Johnson-Laird, 1989; Marshall, 1995).

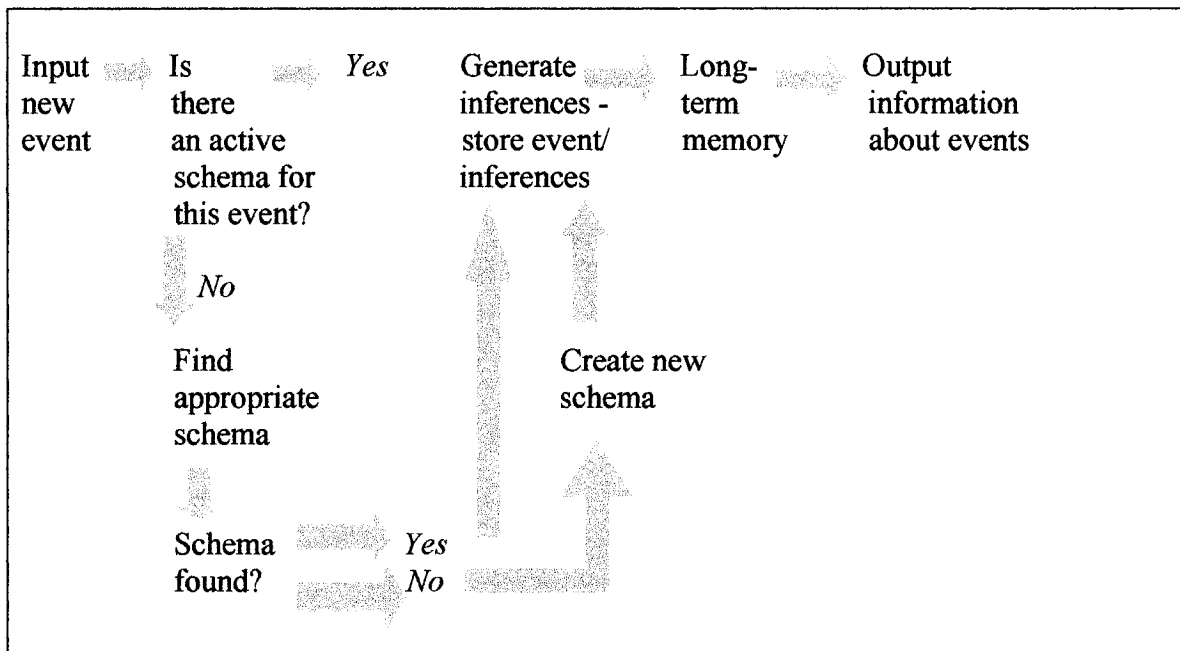


Figure 3. Schema operations flow chart (Deaux & Wrightsman, 1988).

Teachers may then be assumed to be guided in practice by particular representations of what they know (Nias, 1987). These allow them to recognize, interpret and respond to elements of the instructional context. However, it may not always be the case that practitioners are guided in practice by their knowledge, and such occasions pose problems. The teacher may, at times, encounter situations of incongruity, where there is a mismatch between what is known and planned, and what is experienced in instructional contexts. So that information perceived in the environment may be understood, it must be interactive, consistent with schema that already exist in order that there be the possibility that it be integrated (Spiro, 1977). When it happens that information cannot be assimilated or accommodated (Strike & Posner, 1985), there exist conditions for possible

problem solving activity, which may result in the restructuring of the teacher's knowledge.

Problem solving (Figure 4) has been defined as goal-directed cognitive processing occurring in situations where there may be no obvious solution (Mayer & Wittrock, 1996). The processing may be inferred from changes to overt behaviors (Mayer & Wittrock, 1996). Problem solving may or may not be situation-specific, but in any case, it is understood to mean cognitive activity (Hayes & Simon, 1974) geared to diminishing the difference between the representation of an initial state and a goal state.

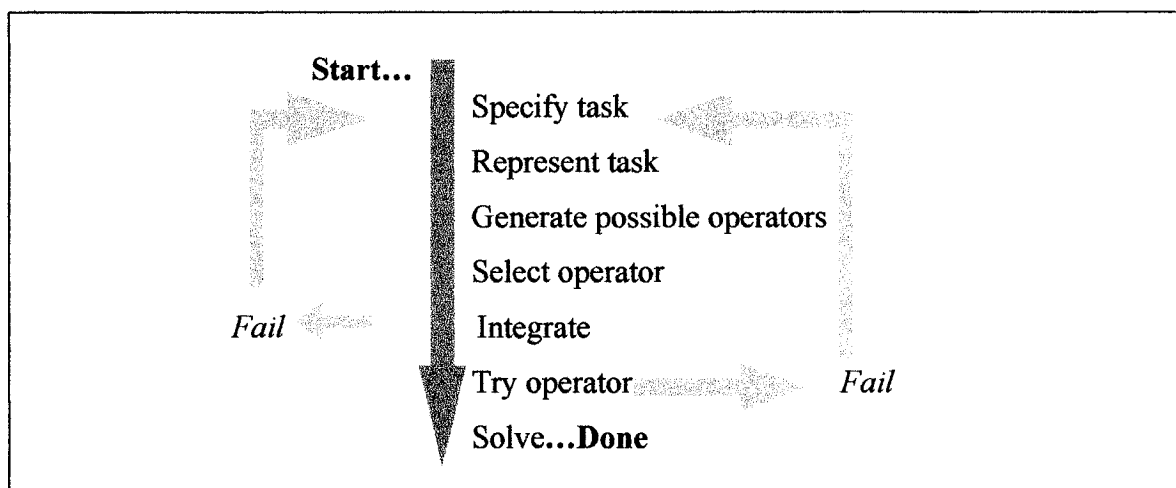


Figure 4. Problem solving model (Hayes & Simon, 1974).

Problem solving for the teacher involves tackling, primarily, ill-defined problems. The complex instructional environment contains tremendous amounts of information that may or may not be consistent with the teacher's schema (Nias, 1987), and provides ample opportunity for the teacher to engage in problem solving, both routine and non-routine. Teachers have been described as "rational professionals, who . . . make judgments and carry out decisions in an uncertain complex environment . . . behaving rationally with respect to the simplified models of reality they construct" (Shavelson, 1983, p. 392). One major task for the teacher is to solve problems arising in practice. Problem and solution are a function of the complex conditions of the instructional context and the knowledge of the teacher. Responses to both familiar and unfamiliar situations necessitate the reformulation of representations, which with experience, may become increasingly

complex and may contribute to the teacher's efficiency and effectiveness, and which may also provide evidence of the learning of the teacher.

A study. Franke, Carpenter, Levi and Fennema (2001), in a study entitled *Capturing teachers' generative change: A follow-up study of professional development in mathematics*, investigate teacher learning from a cognitive perspective. Interview and classroom observation data were collected on twenty-two teachers four years after a professional development intervention in which the investigators sought evidence of generative learning. The professional development program, Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI), fostered the teachers' understanding of children's mathematical thinking through the construction of developmental models. Such models are assumed to provide a framework for organizing teacher's knowledge, which, in turn, provides a framework for the creation of the teacher's new knowledge. The follow-up focused on "how teachers attended to and used children's thinking and how the teachers perceived their own change" (p. 660). Results indicate that all teachers "maintained some level of GCI implementation" (p. 664), and "support for using student thinking as the basis for professional development . . . engaging teachers in generative change" (p. 685):

Generative growth occurred for teachers who perceived themselves as learners, creating their own understandings about the development of student thinking . . . In listening to their students and then talking about it with their colleagues, teachers are not simply sharing; they are building principled knowledge on which to base their ongoing instructional decisions (p. 685).

In this study teachers are seen to be generative learners engaged in problem-posing and problem solving, constructing highly structured knowledge for use in practice (Franke, Carpenter, Levi, & Fennema, 2001).

Teacher learning and Adult Learning Theory

The learning in which the adult engages has been broadly defined as a process of change or potential for change (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991) that may be accomplished in both non-formal, as well as formal (Bonk & Kim, 1998) learning contexts. Formal learning is understood to be that which may result in, and from, activities undertaken by teachers engaged in organized professional development programs, or in institutions of higher learning, where propositional knowledge is intentionally sought. Non-formal

learning is implicit to practice and may be reactive, unplanned, and occurring as a consequence of the learner's spontaneous response to an immediate situation. The resultant knowledge, which may be propositional or tacit in form, may enable future action (Eraut, 2000), and when applied (Fenstermacher, 1994), may provide evidence of learning.

In discussing foundational ideas of adult learning, Merriam and Caffarella (1991) group theories according to underlying assumptions, and their power to shed light on learning processes and facilitate the planning and enactment of instruction. Categories include behaviorist, cognitivist, social, and humanist. Within the behaviorist tradition attention is paid to overt behavior, which is assumed to be a response to environmental stimuli, a perspective that separates knowledge from learning (Hofer & Pintrich, 1997). Epistemological issues are central to cognitivist, social, and humanist theories of learning. The cognitivist point-of-view focuses on the internal processing, storage and retrieval of information resulting from perceptions of environmental stimuli, that is, on mental representations of what is known. Implications for those concerned with adult learning may be found in discussions of meaningful learning, learning how to learn, and learning style—all learner-controlled functions (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991). Social learning theory suggests that context is central to learning occurring as a possible consequence of the individual's interaction within an environment. Finally, learning from a humanist perspective looks beyond cognitive and behavioral processes into the affective domain. This orientation is evidenced in theories of adult learners stressing self-directed and experiential learning.

Contemporary theories of adult learning may be grouped according to objectivist or interpretist paradigm. In the case of the former, it is assumed that learning corresponds to events in an objective reality where observed behavior reflects what is learned. An interpretist paradigm emphasizes the importance of the individual's cognitive structures (Mezirow, in Sutherland, 1998). It is assumed that "reality is a social construct" and "languages sustain and rationalize relationships and favor some patterns of culture over others" (Mezirow, in Sutherland, 1998, p. 6). Thus, learning is a matter of obtaining mutuality of meaning as knowledge is constructed. An interpretist paradigm characterizes

transformative theories of learning and provides those concerned with explaining or facilitating the process with a conceptual framework from within which to work.

Teacher Learning and Learning as Transformation

The transformative nature of adult learning has been widely investigated (Mezirow, 1975, 1991a). Mezirow's particular rendition provides a framework for understanding meaningful teacher professional development. Elements of Mezirow's theory of perspective transformation (Figure 5) include meaning perspectives and schemes, culture and codes, experience and reflection, and incremental and epochal learning.

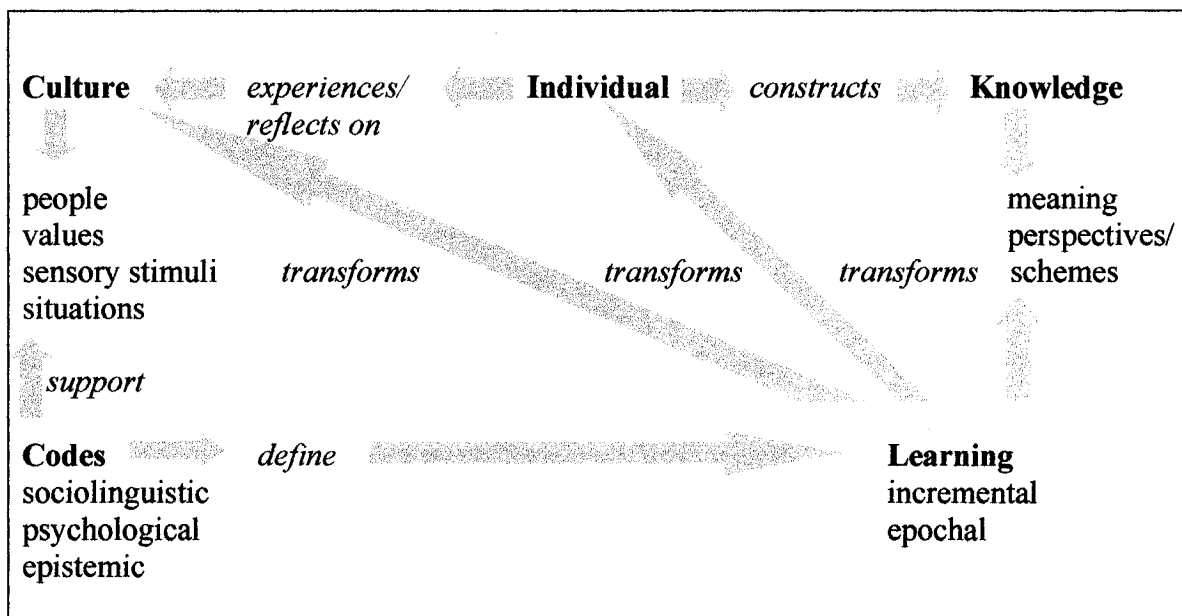


Figure 5. Elements of a model of perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1991).

Knowledge is understood in terms of meaning perspectives and meaning schemes (Mezirow, 1991a, 1994, 1998). *Meaning perspectives* are framed by the individual's predispositions, assumptions and expectations, while *meaning schemes* are constituted by concepts, beliefs, judgments and feelings. Knowing involves the active construction of meaning on the part of the learner as culture is experienced and reflected upon (Mezirow, 1991a, 1994, 1998). *Culture* is prescribed by people, values, and sensory stimuli, and is supported by a network of codes—sociolinguistic, psychological and epistemic. *Sociolinguistic codes* include norms, ideologies, and language. Personality and prior

learning govern *psychological codes*. *Epistemic codes* are delimited by learning preference or style. Learning occurs as the individual constructs new knowledge, and is the result of interpretation of experience within a culture (Mezirow, 1991a, 1994, 1998).

The learner experiences a disorienting dilemma which may initiate a process of examination of assumptions, acknowledgement of disequilibrium, planning and enacting change, and adjusting to a new perspective. Learning resulting in transformed meaning schemes is described as incremental, while that resulting in altered meaning perspectives is defined as epochal (Mezirow, 1991a). Mezirow asserts that adults learn as they engage in discourse and will, ideally:

Have accurate and complete information, (be) free from . . . self-deception, have the ability to weigh evidence and evaluate arguments . . . be critically reflective, open to alternative perspectives . . . and will accept informed, objective, and rational consensus as a legitimate test of validity. (Mezirow, 1991a, p. 199)

Adult learning involves passing through the phases of disorientation, search for meaning and peace, self-acceptance, and reintegration (Mezirow, 1991a). Understanding adult learning as the “mental construction of experience and the changes therein . . . resulting from praxis (or) reflection and action” (Merriam, 1998, p. 7) holds the possibility of a framework for the exploration of the learning of teachers constructing professional knowledge.

A study. In a study entitled *Teacher study groups: Contexts for transformative learning and action*, author Elizabeth Saavedra (1996), reports on how “study groups” (p. 271) provide opportunities for teacher learning through the process of problem posing and solution. Six teachers involved in a two-year study, worked from a critical theory perspective as they investigated ethnic, socio-cultural, and economic issues through the transformation of “professional culture” (p. 271). The study group became the context for “emancipatory learning” (p. 271) for teachers working in settings that did not reflect their particular backgrounds. “From this perspective, education is conceptualized as a vehicle for promoting social justice by challenging the social, political, and institutional structures that situate large groups of students at a disadvantage” (p. 271). Through “critically examin(ing) relations of power and their own interactions and intersections

with the institutional structures . . . a group of teachers authored their own *transformations*” (p. 272, emphasis original):

Teacher transformation is understood to mean change which occurs through the creation of critical and reflective social contexts that place teachers at the center of their own learning . . . (where they) can confront their own cultural, social, and political identities and the situations that have shaped and continually shape the expression of those identities . . . Teachers are viewed as empowered intellectuals who are seeking knowledge and understanding of their roles and abilities through collective reflection . . . Teachers engage in the process of creating and shifting knowledge, meanings, ideologies, and practices, and thus transform themselves and the conditions of their lives. (p. 272)

The study group became an opportunity for “critical dialogue . . . permit(ing) collaboration and planning with peers, provid(ing) a supportive context for teachers to experiment with ideas and innovative practices and to share these experiences” (p. 273). Saavedra maintains that conditions that will foster the teacher’s transformative learning include:

- A dialogic context
- Identity and voice
- Ownership and agency
- Dissonance and conflict
- Mediatonal events and demonstrations
- Reflection, action and generation
- Self-assessment and evaluation
- Reflective practice and recreating teaching

Designing a study-group in order to facilitate transformative learning allowed the teachers to see themselves in the dual roles of educator and learner, something that they had not found in earlier professional development experiences. Saavedra concludes that within a study-group:

Learning and teaching may become interdependent complexities that occur through interactions in which meanings are constructed and negotiated. Learning and teaching (are) no longer considered one-dimensional behaviors, but

multidimensional manifestations of beliefs, context dynamics, sociopolitical and cultural forces, and intellectual purpose. (p. 276)

In the words of one of the participants: “It is one thing to recognize (a) reality; it is wholly another to internalize it and act accordingly” (p. 276).

Teacher-research and Self-study

The teacher’s learning ought to be discovered at the merging of theory and practice. As increasing numbers of professional educators engage in the process of research on practice, and as academics research the phenomenon, a multitude of definitions have appeared in the literature. Generally speaking, teacher-research is accepted as being some form of practitioner-driven, critical problem solving, conducted in a systematic manner. Teacher-researchers may be working on one project collaboratively, or they may be involved in individual projects. Characteristics found across the spectrum of models of teacher-research include:

- Recognition of a need to reflect on teaching and learning
- Systematic framing of questions, collection and analysis of data
- Recognition of an need to act on reflection
- Evaluation of subsequent changes to practices
- Recognition of a need to share the work of reflecting and acting in a public arena.

(Elliot, 1994; McNiff, 1993; Whitehead, 1993)

Teachers may investigate issues of curriculum, context, learners, learning, and at their best, teaching and research will work in a dynamic and synchronous relationship. That is, the practitioner undertaking authentic research cannot do one without engaging in the other, and the outcome ought to be transformation of practice (Silcock, 1994).

Self-study is a particular paradigm within the teacher-research tradition. Adopting a form of autobiography or auto-ethnography, the practitioner engages in the study of practice through beliefs and values that frame a personal lens on practice (Cole & Knowles, 1995; Hamilton, 1998; Hollingsworth & Sockett, 1994; McNiff, 1993; Whitehead, 1993). Self-study is understood to mean research by teachers “who systematically bring to bear . . . their past experiences, understandings, scholarly perspectives, and theoretical frames to make sense of the experiences within which they are engaged . . . Data are collected from and about the self to promote self-development

and change” (Hamilton, 1998, p. 111). The outcome of such an endeavor may be the teacher’s living educational theory (Whitehead, 1993).

The teacher conducting research on practice may possibly be characterized as an adult learner capable of determining the need for learning, recognizing what needs to be learned, and the appropriate venue for doing so (Clark, 1992). One theory of teacher-research (Figure 6) that serves to frame such work proposes a self-reflective spiral in which the teacher moves from experiencing a problem and imagining a solution, to enacting the imagined solution, and evaluating and subsequently, modifying actions (Whitehead 1993).

- I experience a problem because my educational values are negated
- I imagine a solution
- I act in the direction of the imagined solution
- I evaluate the actions
- I modify my actions/ideas in the light of my evaluations

Figure 6. A model for educational practice (Whitehead, 1993).

The teacher-researcher’s values are at the centre of an intentional process that is characterized by systematic research (McNiff, Lomax & Whitehead, 1996). A key feature of this theory is a commitment to improvement of professional practice, not simply to change. This may be facilitated by the scaffolding by the teacher-educator in a zone of proximal reflection (Reiman, 1999).

A study. In a study authored by teacher-researcher Karen Hale Hankins, entitled *Cacophony to Symphony: Memoirs in teacher research* (1998), the writing of memoirs is used in order to:

Make some sense of the cacophonous days with (her) three special students, Nat, Loretta, and Rodney, who had all been damaged *in-utero* by crack cocaine or alcohol . . . The past seemed to wrap itself around (her) present-day questions, and as the number of memoirs grew, (her) journal became a place for uncovering the significant. (p. 81)

The research is guided by two overarching questions:

- How might the needs of the special students best be met?
- When a child comes . . . pre-labeled, stamped “lower socioeconomic, African American,” how does that affect . . . expectations for that child? (p. 90)

In publishing her report, Hankins shares the “impact that recording her past had on (her) teaching” (p. 81), and makes a claim to “a voice in the definition of research” (p. 81). She concludes that an understanding of the students’ lives was accomplished through an exploration and understanding of her own life. This involved unearthing childhood memories—some painful—through journaling. In her journals Hankins wrote about ideas and events that she had been admonished not to talk about when younger. She uses “Just don’t talk about it” (p. 83) as a refrain as she identifies and confronts issues in the children’s lives for which she found parallels in her own. These included her family’s struggle with a handicapped child, an alcoholic grandfather, and the racial problems of a community in the southern United States in the 1960s. Through her study, Hankins comes to see herself, “the teacher, walking in and out of the same pain and joy, and in and out of the same socially constructed alienation” (p. 93) as that of her students, and when their “problems were most confusing, an image from (her) own family often appeared next to (her) observations of their disturbing behavior” (p. 94). The process of reflecting and writing also allowed her to come to understand herself as a researcher:

As I understand the idea of the researcher as instrument, it behooves me to know that instrument and to know it well, especially when the instrument is me. Writing memoirs while I documented the present helped me to know myself better and to understand Nat, Loretta, and Rodney better as a result. When I began to “chunk” the text of these memoirs into common themes, two themes emerged: prejudice and family denial. (p. 84)

Finally, Hankins writes “when I saw (my students) as part of myself, in some measure as part of my own story, my expectations for them rose, as did my ability to reshape my craft for them” (p. 87).

Representing the Teacher-Researcher’s Learning

It is assumed that knowledge constructed by the teacher reflects learning. As well, it is assumed that knowledge is constructed as a consequence of interaction within a

context. Teacher learning may be observed and measured in formal learning settings, or it may be embedded in everyday activities, thus becoming more difficult to recognize. In either case, language, which conveys information and describes reality (Holstein & Gubrium, 1998), and language activity which transmits meaning—engaged in and shared with significant others—provides a context within which to locate evidence of instructional problems, solutions, and consequent teacher learning.

The teacher sharing knowledge about teaching and learning becomes a participant in a discourse community (Allen & Shockley, 1996; Bruer, 1993; Holstein & Gubrium, 1998) with a particular implicit tradition and conditions for interaction of the cognitive and the social. The instructional context (Anderson & Burns, 1989), then, provides a locale where teacher cognition may be understood by self and others who share a reality (Holstein & Gubrium, 1998). Integral to the discourse tradition are the narratives of practice (Calfee & Berliner, 1996; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, 1999, 2000), which integrate concepts and contexts, and which may be considered a protocol (Calfee & Berliner, 1996). The protocol is the record that serves the purpose of research and:

May be in written, audio, or video formats, analyzed at a micro or macro level . . . (It is) the record of what transpired . . . (providing) a foundation for making categories, assigning numbers and testing hypotheses, for interpreting a statistical analysis and assessing a theoretical model. (Calfee & Berliner, 1996, p. 3)

One scholarly tradition construes the ensemble of discourse and story as narrative (Gudmundsdottir, 1995), and provides a means of understanding language, behavior and culture. A narrative may be defined as a:

Series of verbal, symbolic or behavioral *acts* sequenced for the purpose of telling someone else that something has happened. Thus, the social context in which the narrative is related, the narrator's reason for telling it, the narrator's narrative competence, and the nature of the audience are all important elements in developing an understanding of the narrative. (p. 25, emphasis original)

Probably our most rudimentary method of sense-making, narrative has been used for the purpose of clarification, illustration, or explanation by various communities throughout our human past (Honderich, 1995). It has been said that "all human science has a narrative quality" (van Mannen, 1990, p. 115), and outside the domain of the hard

sciences, narrative has traditionally provided human beings with the means of knowing or making sense of things, as “humans are storytelling organisms who, individually and socially, lead storied lives” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2). We create and study narrative reports in order to learn how the world is experienced.

Case history, biography, life history, and sociological studies of curriculum in schools are some of the instances in which narrative has been used to make sense of school contexts (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). As such, the narrative, is a phenomenon, “a rhetorical device for expressing sentiments” (Carter, 1993, p. 5), with a particular constitution which includes:

- (a) A situation involving some predicament, conflict, or struggle; (b) an animate protagonist who engages in the situation for a purpose; (c) a sequence with implied causality (i.e. a plot) during which the predicament is resolved in some fashion. (p. 6, parentheses original)

However, in another sense, narrative is a method of inquiry (Carter, 1993; Casey, 1992; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, 2000), a mode of knowing with power to inform (Carter, 1993). The process of narrative inquiry involves the telling and retelling of stories or anecdotes. The researcher’s purpose is to describe and ascribe meaning to participants’ perceptions, and communicate these to others, to allow an audience to come to know, or to share material not readily accessible.

Narratology provides a theory of texts (Bal, 1994) and a description of narrative systems that afford the researcher a concrete and systematic way of dealing with narrative acts. Such systems are understood as being sets of principles for structuring material in a story, which may include the events, time and duration of the story, the actors, locations and relationships among all of these, and the point-of-view of the narrator. Analysis of narrative according to these principles can be reported directly, analyzed and interpreted, or it may be used as a foundation for assumptions, which may then be substantiated on the basis of other data in order to provide a more elaborate description of an experience. Narratives of teachers’ experiences may be subjected to such analyses. The purpose of the teacher, and in particular the teacher conducting research on practice, in constructing a narrative may be to make explicit what is known or to identify where there may be a need for knowledge. Teacher-researcher accounts may represent practitioners as having

knowledge of themselves, school contexts, content, learners, learning and teaching (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). They may “give meaning and convey a sense of experience, counter empirical modes of inquiry . . . portray their specialized ways of knowing . . . and promote expertise in teaching” (Behar-Horenstein & Morgan, 1995, p. 147).

A study. A narrative inquiry entitled *Listening to the Children on the Landscape*, authored by Janice Huber (1999), explores the “in-classroom place on the professional knowledge landscape of schools” (p. 10). Huber, a teacher-researcher, and her junior teaching partner focused their efforts on “the personal gifts each child brought from his or her life to (the) classroom community and how these gifts shaped (their) in-classroom place” (p. 11), which was formulated “around the metaphor of a garden . . . highlight(ing) the individuality of each child and help(ing) them to see his or her place and responsibility as a gardener within (the) community” (p. 11). Careful planning of classroom spaces and experiences led to “impressions that . . . intentions of building a caring classroom community had been both successful and uneventful” (p. 12). This was, however, a “cover story” (p. 12), masking “discontinuities . . . between these planned curriculum experiences and the stories . . . some of the children (were) living out within (the) classroom context” (p. 13). The discontinuities are explored through Huber’s construction of her narrative, which includes aspects of the narratives of the students in her class. The latter were brought into the classroom through curricular innovation. The teacher and her partner introduced “support circles” (p. 17). These provided the students with an opportunity for:

Storytelling and figuring out (which) soon began to cross the boundary marked by (the) children and our in-classroom place, to include stories of children from other classrooms, events occurring across the landscape of (the) school, as well as stories shaped through their out-of-school experiences. (p. 17)

The stories brought to the circle served to take teachers and students “deeper into the underground” (p. 18) of the landscape. The story told by a student returning to school after the death of a grandparent:

Grabbed us, causing the boundaries that had once constrained our storytelling to become less visible. We were immediately taken to a landscape that although not

unrecognizable, was somewhat unfamiliar territory. The telling of this story dramatically changed our classroom landscape for the remainder of the school year. (p. 18)

The support circle, introduced to facilitate the resolution of conflicts among students and the building of community, became central to the classroom landscape:

Stories shifted from . . . surface stories . . . to stories about the very personal, real issues and concerns we were all living through. Concerns such as death, divorce, unemployment, and family difficulties to wonderings or theories about how and why events in the physical and manufactured world occur as they do became important threads in our conversations . . . uncovering important self-truths . . . Listening to the stories we told shifted our understanding. (p. 19)

EMERGENCE OF A PROBLEM



Figure 7. The Mattawa River.

The River Has Two Banks After All

Comfort slides away beneath me, stays behind, and away.

Whitecaps slapslapslap the hull.

Defenseless, my dinghy and I tack and tack and tack again

Straining sheet and sail, bucking a wall of wind and wave after wave after wave of

Watery apprehension--

Until we beach.

I stand, uncertainly, at an unfamiliar water's edge

Where lurking, hidden Others take shape and sound

And the aftertaste of The River spray sweetens on my lips.

Chapter 3

Teacher Learning

. . . seas of tranquility they sort of nod
when you look at them as if to say
in a little while it won't exist
not even on postcards

—Anselm Hollo, *Classroom*

In 1995 the National Center for Research on Teacher Learning published a report entitled *Realizing New Learning for All Students: A framework for the professional development of Kentucky teachers* (McDiarmid, 1995), in which the learning of teachers facing school reform is discussed. Teacher learning is defined as a “progression . . . teachers undergo on their way to transforming their practice” (p. 12). The progression is broken down into levels and “involves not only ‘unlearning’ some things teachers and others have thought were good or at least standard practice, but figuring out what reform goals mean and look like in the classroom and school” (p. 12, emphasis original). The phases include:

- Awareness
- Understanding
- Reflective self-awareness

Conditions that will support teacher learning include:

- A community of colleagues
- Administrative support and leadership
- Support in the classroom
- Opportunities to observe and experience new ways of teaching and learning
- New ways of understanding the subjects they teach.

As well, teachers are seen to need to engage in critical self-evaluation. Finally, it was understood that teachers needed time, funding and appropriate policies to support their learning. The ideas presented in the report are thoughtful and fairly comprehensive.

What must be learned and how the learning may be fostered are explored. However, the authors of the report neglect to offer an explanation of how the teacher learns.

Too often teachers seem content to teach and leave learning to their students. Having completed teacher training, few teachers continue to learn in a fashion that would permit outcomes to be observed as improvement to practice. According to Hoban (2002):

There is a paradox embedded in our teaching profession—in a rapidly changing society, teachers are often reluctant to change their practices . . . many teachers fall into a repetitive pattern of teaching in the conventional way in which they were taught in school. (p. 1)

While many teachers are seen as not engaging in meaningful learning, others participate in professional development activities where they learn new process skills, which may allow them to introduce innovations into their classrooms. However, it is assumed in such cases that the teacher has both the desire and the prior knowledge necessary for learning to take place. Still others may engage in learning that begins with personal concerns, which lead them to novel practices, concerns about implementation, and learner outcomes (Hoban, 2002). These cases are few, and fewer still become life-long learners. Understanding teacher learning is not a simple task. “Naively, it is thought that teacher learning is a linear step-by-step process, independent of who teachers are, the culture of their schools and the experiences they bring to a request for change” (Hoban, 2002, p. 2). Nevertheless, I am left to wonder why, if there is knowledge emanating from the research community, advancements are not being made in teacher learning. Almost thirty years ago, it was observed that the history of teacher learning and professional development was not “characterized by steady progress based on advances in . . . knowledge and understanding” (Guskey, 1986, p. 5); rather “the history of staff development is characterized primarily by disorder, conflict, and criticism” (p. 5). Why, if “we consider the goal of education to be preparing students to be lifelong intentional learners” (Putnam & Borko, 2000, p. 4), and we understand that “education is centrally concerned with learning” (Wilson & Wilson, 1998, p. 357)—an idea that “delimits the subject-matter of educational research” (p. 357)—do we not seem to know more about teacher learning?

A Theory of Adult Learning

A theory of adult learning ought to serve to explain and support teacher learning. Mezirow (1991) defines learning as a process of transformation. He proposes that “perspective transformation can form the cornerstone of a theory of learning that is unique to adults” (Merriam, 1989a, p. 163), and he defines perspective transformation as:

The alteration or modification of meaning perspectives that are those psychological structures within which we define our relationships and ourselves. It is the reconstruction of our personal frame of reference, our self-concept, goals, and criteria for evaluating change. (Merriam, 1989a, p. 163)

In a grounded theory study of 153 women returning to post-secondary studies in a range of academic areas in four American states (Mezirow, 1975), the concept of perspective transformation was framed and the phases—disorientation through reintegration—illuminated. Women’s college reentry programs were investigated through participant observation, interviews and document analysis. The purpose of the study was to “establish the modal patterns and innovations of:

- (1) Organizational and administrative practice,
- (1) Curricular and social interaction, and
- (3) The characteristics of those involved, especially the students” (Mezirow, 1975, p. 56).

Programs studied included those found in urban, suburban and rural settings and included participants with working-, middle-, upper-middle-class, and ethnic minority, as well as Caucasian, backgrounds. A hypothesis about learner transformation emerged from field data leading to interview studies and a nationwide telephone survey. Subsequent to the foundational work of Mezirow, studies have served to confirm, question and elaborate these findings using diverse methodologies in a range of contexts (Taylor, 1997, 1998). These include studies of a wide variety of adult populations including kidney transplant recipients (Clevinger, 1993), doctoral theological students (Bailey, 1996), HIV positive adults (Courtney, Merriam, & Reeves, 1998), and, among others, teachers (Saavedra, 1995).

I believe that a general theory of adult learning may be useful in understanding teacher learning as evidenced in narratives of critical self-reflection, which may be

reported as self-study of professional practice. As well, evidence of teacher learning located within a formal theoretical framework may serve to raise the teacher-researcher's narrative to the status of inquiry (Barnes, 1998) within the educational research community.

Constraining the Reports of Teacher-Researchers

In terms of various paradigms (Creswell, 1998), teacher inquiry presents itself as a hybrid, possibly incorporating several aspects, conventions, language, and subject matter of qualitative inquiry. Creswell identifies five research traditions—biography, ethnography, and phenomenological, grounded theory and case studies.

Interpretive autobiographical and biographical research, “the study of an individual and her or his experience . . . that describes turning point moments in an individual's life” (Creswell, 1998, p. 47) lends definition to the work of teacher-researchers, including those engaging in self-study. It is assumed that the research will be highly value-laden, that reality is shared by the researcher and significant others, that knowledge is co-constructed, and that this knowledge may contribute to, and shape, theory and knowledge in the human sciences. The teacher-researcher may adopt methods of a phenomenological perspective in order to explore and describe the lived experience of individuals, or of members of a particular group for the purpose of extracting meaning (Creswell, 1998). The reader of the report will gain an understanding of the “essential, invariant structure (or essence) of the experience, recognizing that the single, unifying meaning of the experience exists” (p. 55). The descriptive power of ethnography may appeal to the teacher conducting research on practice. Or, aspects of case study methodology may be adopted in order to explore “a program, an event, an activity, or individuals . . . bounded by time and space . . . within its setting” (p. 61). Finally, elements of a grounded theory approach may be employed by the teacher-researcher wishing to propose “a plausible relationship among concepts and sets of concepts” (p. 56). However, conditions imposed by this perspective, such as the setting aside of theoretical predispositions, may prove daunting.

I would propose conceptualizing teacher-research as follows: engaged in inquiry, the teacher studies and interprets the meanings of behavior, language and interactions of members of a group sharing a school culture. The study will usually be framed by

purposive sampling. Plans for the study will be tailored to experience, and questions that explore the meaning of that experience. It will reflect contextual, cultural, personal, and institutional themes witnessed through observation, documentation, and discourse. Data may be gathered over a number of years, subjected to specific steps in data analysis, report major events in a group's shared experience or in an individual's life, and result in a chronology. Comprehensive description of the experience in the voice of the teacher-researcher, and those of others, will provide explanations and possible multiple meanings through analysis, detailed description, and/or interpretation. The process may reveal an image of an individual or group that includes general meanings, the views of participants, and the researcher's interpretation, along with a plan for action and a report of change. Should the teacher-researcher attempt to set aside theoretical preconceptions, the content and process knowledge constructed by the teacher-researcher holds the possibility of emergent theory. Finally, the ensuing report ought to bear evidence of the learning of the teacher-researcher, and that evidence made public.

Examining the Reports of Teacher-Researchers

The trustworthiness and usefulness of the work of the teacher-researcher must be established for others. Eisner (1991) posits that "all experience derived from text is transactive, (and) we can ask what it is about text that is likely to make it believable" (Eisner, 1991, p. 53) by using three criteria in order to determine whether or not an account has a ring-of-truth:

- Is the text coherent?
- Is there a possibility for consensus among those who experience the text?
- Is there an element of instrumental utility to the text?

Questions about credibility, shared meaning and utility among practitioners and academics may thus be addressed. Working with these ideas implies that "we cannot secure an ontologically objective view of the world" (Eisner, 1991, p. 60). Rather, the process of knowing is transactional, and what we know is "mediated by what we bring to the world as we achieve experience . . . and what we use to convey our experience" (p. 60).

A conceptualization of teacher-research as qualitative inquiry provides criteria for selection and critique of studies reviewed here. Each has been selected because there is a

ring-of-truth to the reports. However, because it has been said that the subject matter of research in education ought to be learning (Wilson, & Wilson, 1998), evidence of the learning of the practitioner engaged in self-study research on practice will be sought as the following question is addressed:

- How is learning evidenced in the report of the teacher engaging in self-study?

Mezirow (1998, p. 6) defines learning as “the process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one’s experience.” Learning is understood to occur through the elaboration or transformation of existing meaning schemes or perspectives as a consequence of critical reflection, producing reflective insights. Learning may be either instrumental, resulting in the ability “to control or manipulate the environment or other people” (p. 8); or communicative, that is “learning what others mean when they communicate . . . often involving feelings, intentions, values, and moral issues” (p. 8). Either instrumental or communicative learning ought to lead to a decision on the part of the learner to take action. For my purpose in this study, a report of research on practice would provide documentation of the process of critical reflection. Evidence of the teacher-researcher’s learning is understood to mean verification of the planning, enacting and evaluating of change to teaching practice following a period of critical reflection. Finally, teaching practice is constituted as the teacher-researcher’s environment, people, and meanings held by people within that environment.

Studies: The academics. As an ensemble, ideas about qualitative inquiry, conditions for establishing rigor and the purpose of inquiry in education, and evidence of teacher learning, provide criteria for critiquing teacher-research reports. Reviewed here are examples of practitioner self-study with a stated goal of reporting reflection on practice for the purpose of improvement.

1. *Self-study of teacher education practices through the use of the faculty course portfolio*, Joan Gipe, (1998).

In a self-study involving the building of a professional portfolio Gipe (1998) reports results of an investigation into a dilemma faced in her teaching, one confronted in her work with pre-service teachers at the University of New Orleans:

My dilemma focused on a perception of my role as a course instructor to mean that I alone was in control of the course; that is, I alone must determine the goals, the readings, and the flow of each class. However, my teaching beliefs were in conflict with this perceived role. (Gipe, 1998, p. 140)

Gipe found herself questioning how she might give responsibility to students for their learning while maintaining control of teaching and learning. The dilemma motivated her to undertake and report a self-study. A social perspective that “conceives of the classroom as a group situation and conversation as the means for learning . . . (where) both cognitive and motivational variables must be considered” (p. 141) frames the theories that Gipe found herself “testing” (p. 141), in her self-study research.

Gipe constructed a course portfolio that included data on her beliefs, self-assessment, practical details of the course, and summaries of student performance and perceptions of the teaching and learning. Other data included action research projects on various topics, the development of ways to help pre-service teachers engage in peer evaluation being one example. Details of analyses are limited in the report to one such project, and no details of the students involved are given beyond identifying them as pre-service teachers whose individual and collective voices are absent in the report. Gipe reports some change in her students’ learning behaviors, although it is not clear, beyond a few examples, what changes were noted and the relevance of these. As a result of engaging in self-study, Gipe asserts that she felt motivated to “pursue a greater degree of agreement between values and practices” (p. 143). However, such statements do not constitute clear evidence of learning, but may simply be observations not necessarily leading to resolution of the dilemma and active, enduring change to practice.

2. *Harmony, conflict, and respect: An Asian-American educator’s self-study*, Linda Oda (1998).

Oda (1998) investigated how her Asian-American background influences her teaching and her students in her work as a teacher of multicultural and bilingual education courses at Weber State University (WSU) in Utah, and reported the results of her reflections. Oda wrote that the:

Purpose of this study was twofold: first to undertake a self-study that explored the effects of my own Asian-American cultural influences on my teacher education

classes, and second, to establish a foundation from which I could develop ways to help my students address multicultural issues. This self-study centers on analyzing key experiences in my personal and professional history that are unique to my cultural heritage in an effort to determine how my culture has affected my role as a teacher-educator. (Oda, 1998, p. 113)

The self-study was conducted within a familiar theoretical framework, a “theme within WSU Department of Education . . . ‘Teacher as Reflective Practitioner’ ” (p. 114). Data included transcriptions of audio taped lectures and class discussions, questionnaires administered to current and former undergraduate education students, and the researcher’s autobiographical records, the sum providing access to multiple perspectives. As Oda reports, data sources “allowed me to capture both my own words and the words of my students . . . I realized that I needed the students’ perspectives to understand whether my cultural background was apparent to students in our interactions” (p. 114). While she discussed outcomes of her students’ learning, there is little evidence of Oda having learned as a result of the inquiry. She concluded that she gained “insight into her current practices” (p. 122), and that this might “facilitate the next steps to (her) professional development” (p. 123). This may indicate an intention, but neither a plan for, nor evidence, of change.

3. *Reflecting critically on teaching to encourage critical reflection*, Nancy Hutchison, (1998).

Hutchison (1998) reported a “time of constant change” (Hutchison, 1998, p. 125) in her examination of pedagogical issues encountered in the construction of a case-based curriculum for pre-service teachers studying the education of exceptional learners at Queen’s University in Ontario. Multiple data sources include the researcher’s reflections, course evaluations presented formatively at Student Advisory Committee meetings or completed by students at end of term, and tape-recorded discussions with individual students. Hutchison makes well-supported claims to learning about her practice. These are reported in terms of documented changes to assignments, course organization and teaching, implemented as she saw “ways of making (her) teaching more consistent with (her) aims . . . These became the starting points for (her) efforts to teach differently”

(p. 128). Claims to change are well substantiated by verbatim excerpts from student reports. Hutchison describes her learning as a recursive process of reflection and action:

Back and forth I go, it seems, between the experienced and the theoretical and the experienced in a disjointed, recurrent and gradually enlightened way. Perhaps this is what it means to learn to teach—to learn to perceive and act by tacitly experiencing the specifics in a situation and in another situation and in another.

(p. 138)

In each of the three studies the researcher has attempted to make sense of professional experience. Each of the studies begins with a statement of recognition of the need to reflect on practice, and there is evidence of inquiry with some degree of input from others in the research context. Each teacher-researcher develops a plan of action designed to answer a particular question, and reports the collection and analysis of data reflecting events crucial to the professional development of the researcher within context-specific time frames. Reports reveal general meanings and emergent personal, living educational theory (Whitehead, 1993), and include detail that renders descriptions coherent, comprehensible and potentially useful to those outside the context.

However, in discussing the reports of Gipe, Hutchison, and Oda two issues must be raised. The first concerns the criteria that learning ought to be in evidence in the teacher-researcher's report. The reports of Oda and Gipe do not demonstrate movement beyond the reflective stage to active change to practice. Within the self-study paradigm the teacher, learner, and researcher are one, with the purpose of the inquiry being to learn about oneself in order to improve one's practice. However, claims to have learned do not constitute evidence.

A second issue may be found in methods employed by the researchers. Each of the studies reviewed here reports data sets with the possibility for triangulation. However, whether or how data were triangulated is not elaborated in the reports. Furthermore, Gipe and Oda provide no details of how data were analyzed. Hutchison reports her analysis of one data set, midterm course evaluations, and makes no mention of how this linked with data collected from other sources. A clear description of how data were analyzed and triangulated would strengthen the credibility of these studies.

That being said, I add a caveat. As a teacher-researcher, I have difficulty critiquing the work of others. In engaging in this exercise, I have confronted the lack of consensus within the research community as to the criteria for such criticism. I wonder whether it is not a contradiction, a violation of the assumption of the centrality of the *I* in self-study, in particular, to impose such criteria. It may possibly be more true to the spirit of teacher-research should the teacher-researcher determine and make public the criteria by which the merit of the study is to be judged, and by whom (McNiff, 1993).

Studies: The practitioners. Faculty members who teach and do research in teacher education programs published the reports discussed above. In this section reports resulting from inquiry conducted by teacher-researchers at work in Canadian elementary and secondary schools will be discussed.

1. *A story of Aaron*, Jan Antoniuk, (1998).

Antoniuk's narrative inquiry report gives an account of changes to her classroom practice guided by the talents and unique requirements of one of her special needs students. There is a clear recognition of the need to reflect on professional practices. She asked both global questions, and questions specific to the particular learner, Aaron:

How do we help children to discover and explore the things that are of significance to them, to pursue that which is of immediate importance to them? How do we create nurturing and supportive spaces? . . . How can I, as teacher, create such openings? (p. 8)

The teacher-researcher understood her student in terms of stories told of him as she "searched for alternative tellings, for new meaning" (p. 8), and asked:

Where were the other pieces, the stories that would help create an authentic picture of this child? And what about Aaron's view of the world he knows? How would *he* story his school experiences? What was *his* sense of place within his learning community? (p. 8)

The teacher's purpose then became that of including Aaron's voice in the creation of the learning context that would support his learning of "things that are of significance to (him), to pursue that which is of immediate importance to (him) . . . (in) nurturing and supportive spaces" (p. 8).

In the report, there is a clear recognition of the need to act on reflection, however, no evidence of systematic inquiry is given. Rather, the report is construed as an anecdote, and details of the process of creating the particular learning context and evaluating the success of the innovation are not made explicit. While an implicit plan for change and enactment of the plan may be found in the narrative, no details of a research process are given, and the experience of the learner, Aaron, is represented through brief verbatim quotes of statements he made and a few quoted from his peers. The report of the enactment of change is limited to the researcher's interpretation of contextual and personal themes. There is a ring-of-truth (Eisner, 1991) to the report, however, and the idea of "mutually construct(ing) a shared story" (p. 10) with a student holds possible direction for other practitioners engaged in inquiry on practice. Nevertheless, a claim to the teacher-researcher's learning is not supported by the report.

2. *The Voices Are Heard*, Betty MacKinnon, (1993).

Betty MacKinnon wrote of her recognition of a particular problem experienced by her students and documents the progress of successful attempts to implement change in her report entitled *The Voices are Heard* (1993). Her stated purpose was to develop an oral language curriculum that would be integrated into the language arts curriculum in a holistic manner. Before beginning, she asked her students:

How could we as a class go about meeting (the) Ministry (oral language) requirement but more importantly, how could we as a class learn the skills of speaking well, of motivating through speech, of presenting a position through speech and then, supporting that position, of having fun learning to speak in public either in small groups or to a larger group? (MacKinnon, 1993, p. 6)

The question was motivated by a reticence to speak publicly expressed by her senior high school students when surveyed for their input:

The message I received loud and clear was that they are very nervous about speaking to an entire group. They speak in public only rarely and very few feel comfortable doing so . . . They enjoy working in groups but being the only one speaking is a frightening experience. (MacKinnon, 1993, p. 5)

The goal of the inquiry became to develop "trust in (the) classroom setting" (MacKinnon, 1993, p. 1).

There is evidence of the teacher-researcher's thoughtful planning. Prior to beginning her study MacKinnon proposed a curriculum for four school terms, beginning with the reading of student writings and starting individual writing portfolios. Published works were added in the second term, and group work on drama and poetry readings in the third. It was proposed that in the last term students would be engaged in debates, poetry readings, dramatizations, storytelling and formal speeches.

Data were collected over most of a school year and are represented as the author's journal entries, where her observations of experiences of both herself and the learners are the objects of reflection. However, beyond the initial survey, the voice of the student is missing, and there are indications that the author herself might benefit from hearing it. In one entry she concluded the evaluation of a unit with:

Slowly, shy students started getting involved and, by the time the "oral" was over, all members of the class had presented at least one piece. Did they enjoy presenting? Yes, I think so. (MacKinnon, 1993, p. 9, emphasis original)

While it may be that her assumption of success is accurate, a clear indication of the student's perspective would support the claim, and could be made through the use of data collected from or with the class. As it is, the possibility of multiple meanings is not considered.

The report is a chronology of enacted change, and included occasions where innovations were made that had not been included in the original proposal. Changes to the proposed curriculum were made on the basis of observations of student responses to classroom activities. MacKinnon wrote: "The best laid plans of mice and men sometimes go awry, sometimes with good reason. At the outset of this project, I made plans for oral activities for all four terms. As I grew to know my students, I made changes" (MacKinnon, 1993, p. 6). Through planning, enacting and evaluating change to practice and learner outcomes, the teacher's practice may be seen to evolve, and it may be concluded that learning has taken place:

For many years in school (though I cringe to admit it now), I spent time quieting students, Now I am doing the reverse and am enjoying what my students are teaching each other and me—talk as a community of learners and teachers. (MacKinnon, 1993, p. 19)

The report, which was published by the Ministry of Education of Québec, placed the work of reflecting and acting in the public domain. It includes details of the classroom context and the teacher research context, and a coherent argument is made favoring the use of the enacted curriculum by the author and, possibly, others. In a final reflection, MacKinnon wrote:

For too long in classrooms teachers have encouraged students not to talk. We have to retrain both our students and ourselves. I tell my students the first day of class that we are all learners and we are all teachers. I believe that students have a lot to say and that their voices should be heard . . . It's an opportunity for teachers to let go and empower students. (MacKinnon, 1993, p. 21)

Nonetheless, it is unfortunate—and somewhat ironic—that the voice of the student-participant was not heard more clearly within an inquiry entitled *The Voices are Heard*.

3. *Tunngavik Homework Helpers: An action research project exploring a northern school-family partnership*, Elizabeth Kreuger & Jim Kreuger, (2003).

The stated purpose of this study was:

To document the development and evaluation of the Tunngavik Homework Helpers program, from the vantage points of the program coordinators, teachers, and parents who actively collaborated in its planning, development, and implementation. (Kreuger & Kreuger, 2003, p. 69)

The project involved the development of a homework project by teacher-researchers, teachers, and parents. The particular cultural group in this case included parents, children and teachers in the Aboriginal community of Nunavut in Northern Canada. The report represents systematic inquiry into the problem of a “tendency for parents to become less active in the schooling of their children after the early years” (Kreuger & Kreuger, 2003, p. 70), which was attributed to parents’ “intimidation by, alienation from, and ambivalence toward the education system” (Kreuger & Kreuger, 2003, p. 70).

The perspectives of all concerned may be found in the report on the inquiry, which began with shared belief statements:

1. We believe that homework should be challenging, interesting, skills-based, and fun if possible.
1. We believe that homework should be a regularly scheduled activity.

1. We believe that our children need our support with homework activities.
1. We believe that the school must provide support to parents regarding homework. (Kreuger & Kreuger, 2003, p. 71)

These served to guide the parent-teacher group in the development and evaluation of the pilot homework project. Evidence of the research process is clearly presented in the report in the schedule and methods of data collection and analysis. Various instruments developed by the teacher-researchers are described and verbatim data chunks serve to illustrate what was learned, how, and by whom. An example may be found in the *Expectations Survey* (Kreuger & Kreuger, 2003), developed in order to provide an understanding of hopes of all partners:

The results . . . showed that all three groups [parents, students, teachers] had high expectations and were confident and excited about beginning the program . . . “At times some parents can’t make it to school because of other duties. This will really help” and “Yes, I feel it’s going to help my child improve more” are characteristic comments from the survey. (Kreuger & Kreuger, 2003, p. 73, brackets mine)

The report details the enactment of change and includes the views of all members of the group along with the researchers’ interpretations. There is clear evidence of learning on the part of all concerned. Parents learned to collaborate with teachers and their children, to look at the strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes of their children, and to understand knowledge and skills that they were expected to master. The students learned the academic content of the workbooks developed for the program and to accept the responsibility for their homework. The teacher-researchers learned how to facilitate collaboration between home and school. They also learned, unexpectedly, about parents’ literacy levels and how these interfered with their ability to help their children with assignments in the Inuktitut (Aboriginal language) workbook. The depth of detail of the reported problem solving and knowledge generation process may well serve others with similar concerns.

Each of the teacher-researcher reports discussed here attempts to make sense of professional experience. In each case, a statement of recognition of the need to reflect on practice is made, and there is evidence of inquiry with varying degrees of input from

others in the research context. In the case of the latter two studies the teacher-researchers developed a plan of action designed to answer particular questions. Only the Kreuger and Kreuger study reports the collection and analysis of data that reflect crucial events and contextual elements. All reports reveal general meanings, but only MacKinnon, and Kreuger and Kreuger include detail that renders descriptions coherent, comprehensible and potentially useful to those outside the specific context. Finally, the criteria that learning ought to be in evidence in the teacher-researcher's report is met by MacKinnon and Kreuger and Kreuger, as they clearly demonstrate movement beyond the reflective stage to active change.

Conclusion

Green and McClelland (1999) remind us that the omission of a single perspective significantly changes what may come to be known about a given experience. The contribution of the voice of the teacher-researcher is essential if knowledge of teaching and learning in schools is to be considered complete. However, that voice must be clear and credible. If this is to be the case, we must conduct research on practice, and we must report evidence that practices are changed as a consequence of the inquiry. The question of how to engage the interest of members of an academic/research community in the work of the teacher-researcher remains, as does the opposite, how to engage teachers and teacher-researchers with the knowledge generated in academic settings. How to bring the two banks of my River together is my work, and I bring to it some knowledge of the issue of rigor in qualitative research, knowledge that leads me to interrogate the reports of those conducting research on practice—be they practitioners or academics—for evidence of learning. The development of criteria for use when considering teachers' research reports marks the beginning of my consideration of standards which may be used to determine whether or not teacher inquiry can stand alone in the face of criticism from multiple perspectives.

Chapter 4

My Work on The River

One cannot easily realize what a tremendous thing it is to know every trivial detail of twelve hundred miles of river and know it with absolute exactness.

—Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi*

Planning My Course

I long to see theory in practice, practice in theory, more academics learning through inquiry in classrooms, more teachers learning and researching at the university. A Huck Finn story with a happy ending. Much is being questioned and understood through the development and testing of theories in research in instructional psychology, giving cause for encouragement to those of us who believe in the power of potential contributions of the teacher-researcher to both school and university communities. Nonetheless, it is discouraging to know that researchers require a reminder that “while not all instructional psychologists are likely concerned about the immediate application of their research findings, it is worth bearing in mind that application is the appropriate endpoint for a research cycle, and often the beginning of the next” (Gagné & Dick, 1983, p. 290). The need for sound instructional practices is not new, nor is it likely to disappear. Hilgard (1996) laments that “new methods as studied by psychologists, yielded new knowledge, but it was not always ready to put into a form for the teacher to use. This has long been a problem in relating research to instruction” (p. 1001). Applications are key. Optimistically, Lee Shulman (1986) suggests that:

By combining . . . separate accounts of teaching from different families of researchers, accounts much like the tales of the early mariners regarding geographic wonders they encountered on their journeys, we can begin to fashion a broader picture of our phenomena. (p. 7)

As a teacher-researcher I have come to hold this metaphor foremost in my mind as I do the work of improving my practice. The image of many working from various perspectives to address problems encountered in teaching and learning may well direct

the future of instructional psychology. This may be a hope shared by those who write that instructional psychology can provide teachers:

With the knowledge of how to teach content as well as how to manage a classroom. As research becomes more useful to teachers, they in turn are more likely to become teacher-researchers, creating local theories and testing the validity of concepts in their own day-to-day teaching. (Pintrich, Cross, Kozma and McKeachie, 1986, p. 641)

The purpose of my research is to investigate teacher-research practices, making sense of how teachers learn, and of how they may use their knowledge and develop theory as a consequence. I believe that, in attending to this work, it may be possible for others with concerns about teacher learning and professional development to build robust theories of how teachers think, learn, and represent their learning.

The teacher, as object or consumer—or not—of theory and research, has inspired much criticism (Bennett, 1993; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Hensen, 1996; Hollingsworth & Sockett, 1994), authored by policy makers and experts from the academic community. As well, ample evidence of ineffective practices has been found in many classrooms. Opportunities are often taken to voice concerns, without necessarily focusing on the teachers' positive attributes (Clark, 1992):

The phrase professional development carries a great deal of negative undertone. It implies a process done to teachers; that teachers need to be forced into developing; that teachers have deficits in knowledge and skill that can be fixed by training; and that teachers are pretty much alike. (p. 75)

Taking another look, one might see that teachers are not, collectively, inactive and inept. In the words of one teacher:

I think that those of us who tend toward silent 'making do' often do not effectively resist the stupidities of policy and institution . . . We have not spoken enough. We need to speak not as 'raw data' but as analytical women (sic) who have rigorously considered their environment and are ready to add new interpretive frames (Threatt, Buchanan, Morgan, Strieb, Sugarman, Swenson, Teel, Tomlinson, 1994, pp. 232 & 234, quotation marks original).

Teachers conducting research on practice may, in fact, be learning. However, defining teacher-research has provided a problem to members of school and academic communities alike (Henson, 1996; Hollingsworth & Sockett, 1994; McMahon, 1999). Teachers understand teacher-research as good teaching, involving dynamic, formal, and systematic analysis of teaching and learning in classrooms (Threatt, Buchanan, Morgan, Strieb, Sugarman, Swenson, Teel, & Tomlinson, 1994). Initiated by curiosity, wonder, the need to examine, understand and know, teacher-research is seen as a process involving “an attempt to step back from what one is doing/seeing and to come to some analytical conclusions (however tentative) which one wishes to share with an audience outside the research setting” (p. 229, parentheses original). The purpose of the research may be improving pedagogy, understanding discrepancies between teacher values and teacher action, and exploring other research traditions and conceptions of knowledge in order to reconcile philosophical or practical differences. Teachers describe the process as “a way of thinking and acting stemming from uncertainty and an interest in learning more” (p. 242), leading to a:

Dynamic form of teacher development . . . (in which) learning about teaching is an ongoing process . . . a means to learn to teach—learning to look, ask questions, take risks, be open to inquiry . . . (in) an attempt to see and make visible what’s already going on. It’s a vehicle for teachers’ voices to be heard in order to inform practice—for the benefit of the students, as well as the professional development of the teachers. Teachers are put into the role of learners about the teaching/learning process. (p. 230-231)

It is, according to practitioners, a process that places the teacher in the role of “knowledge maker” (p. 244). Conditions for teacher-research may be found in the situation in which deliberate, incremental learning (Mezirow, 1991, 2000) is evidenced in improvement of the practitioner’s work, and involves enactment of an interlinking spiral of planning, acting, observing, reflecting, and re-planning. Self-reflection, self-evaluation and self-management are apparent in the framing of questions, data gathering, and decision-making by participants, who make their learning experience public (Alchtricter, 1990).

Maneuvering My Craft

My ongoing self-study (Hamilton, 1998) with an embedded single-case study (Stake, 1998) consisting of the narrative self-study report of my colleague, Nancy, constitutes this dissertation. A design map of the study may be found in Figure 8.

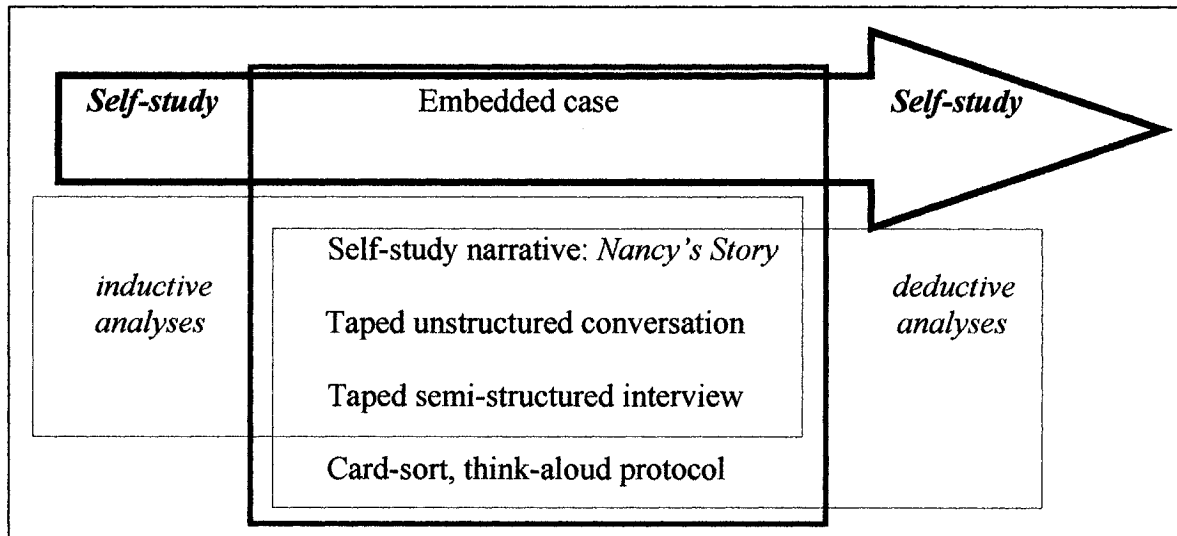


Figure 8. Thesis design map.

It is my belief that the stories told of and by teacher-researchers, framed as self-study (Hamilton, 1998), hold the potential to inform members of both the academic and school communities who have concerns about teaching practices, learning outcomes, and their relationship, in other words, that the stories of teacher-researchers conducting inquiry on practice hold the potential to constitute educational theory (Austin, 2001; Whitehead, 1993). I hope to encourage a merging of the two, too often, distinct communities of school and university through the shared understanding of the teacher-researcher's experience in offering my self-study with the embedded case study (Stake, 1998) to public scrutiny. I seek to present evidence of transformational learning (Mezirow, 1991) in narrative reports of our research experiences. Specifically, the question I seek to answer is:

- How is the learning of teacher-researcher engaged in self-study evidenced?

Chapter 5

My River

Ancient hills cradle Cartier's kingdom and a majestic river.

–Paul Minvielle, *The Scenic Wonders of Canada*

The Source

The development of teacher professionalism in the Province of Québec has been driven by the politics of church, state and syndical unit as the school system has emerged and evolved (Smith & Donahue, 1999), reflecting influences of French and British school systems. For 150 years, beginning early in the 17th century, the Catholic Church constructed and controlled the, primarily, elementary schools (Kahn, 1992). State intervention in 1760 marks the introduction of public education that continued to evolve as a non-uniform, confessional system until the creation of local Catholic and Protestant school boards was legislated in 1829. The passage of the *British North America Act* at the national level in 1867 provided protection for the established right to denominational schools and gave jurisdiction in matters of education to the provinces. However, it was not until the late 1960s that major reforms were initiated in all aspects of Québec's public school system, and local universities were handed the responsibility of developing and managing the means of training teachers (Smith, Foster, & Donahue, 1999).

In the earliest days of the profession “education was a work of charity and, above all, the work of the Church. Elementary instruction was given in a few village schools scattered over the rural regions, by itinerant school-masters, by some parish priests and, especially, by certain religious orders” (Smith & Donahue, 1999, p. 7). In the mid-nineteenth century, as a consequence of diminished subsidies from England and France, religious and lay teachers became difficult to find. However, at about the same time there was a recommendation in the *Durham Report* that normal schools be established and mandated to train teachers for employment in an evolving public school system. Legislation in 1856 gave authority to supervise the normal school and teacher certification to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, who chaired a council responsible for all aspects of teacher education. Nevertheless, it was not until 1953 that

standards of supervision and qualification were instituted (Smith & Donahue, 1999), and one year later teachers holding a diploma in education became eligible to enroll for a university degree in education.

The 1960s marked the beginning of education in Québec as we know it today, and this as a consequence of a Royal Commission of Inquiry, which led to *The Parent Report* (1963). Recommendations resulted in, among other things, a mandate to the universities to accept responsibility for the training of teachers and for related research. Regulations governing the licensing of teachers and their salaries also emanated from the work of the Commission. However, while professionalism was being encouraged on one hand, teachers became organized into syndical units and acquired the right to negotiate collective agreements and to strike, giving rise to “an ongoing climate of mutual mistrust (and) legalistic, petty, and either bellicose or defensive attitudes” (Smith & Donahue, 1999, p. 52).

Subsequent waves of reform have resulted in ongoing change including enrichment of teacher education programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels of the university, as well as expanded professional development opportunities at the school board level. Legislation between 1960 and the present has produced a gradual shift from a top-down to a bottom-up approach to teacher professionalism, until most recently, Ministry of Education innovations have called upon teachers to become “architects of the reform” (MEQ, 1999). The *Québec Education Plan* (MEQ, 2000), the latest reform, may provide interesting implications for teacher professional development when considered from the point-of-view of instructional psychology.

My Craft

For most of my career I have been a teacher of English in secondary school special education settings in the Province of Québec. This study presents my experience as a teacher, and my views and values as a teacher/researcher/learner on matters of paradigm and standards of validity for reports of teachers engaged in inquiry on practice as an issue of concern. In presenting my narrative account of becoming the teacher I hope to become, and examining a narrative report wherein my colleague, Nancy, tells of her experience as teacher-researcher, I hope to be able to make the claim that in engaging in inquiry on practice by addressing questions about what we care about in education, we

are learning; that the learning is transformational in nature; and, that learning occurs as we address problems, dilemmas, and contradictions to our values encountered in our work. To that end, I return to the classroom where I first began to reflect on my teaching practices, and from there, to trace my journey on The River.

My self-study data include a selection of narratives written over a period of eight years during which time I have struggled to become the teacher I hope to be. The earliest story, *Room Two, Year One* serves to contextualize subsequent narratives. The reader is invited to analyze my self-study seeking evidence of my learning, and to use the criteria of coherence, cohesiveness, and instrumental utility (see Chapter 3) to determine whether, in fact, my claim to learning through engaging in research on practice is substantiated. Questions that the reader may choose to seek to answer might be:

- Is there a ring-of-truth to the story?
- Does the study constitute valid research using the criteria of coherence, consensus and instrumental utility?
- Is there evidence of my learning in the study, and if so, how is it evidenced?

SEASONS ON THE RIVER I



Figure 9. The Ottawa River.

My Winter on The River

I know seasons on The River.

The first, Winter, a period of dormancy

Cold, bleak, static.

Instant and eternity

In one.

I

Felt, but did not recognize, the sting of scornful River air on my cheek.

Winter, a time to turn away from wind

Curl inward,

Sleep long sleeps, and dream.

My teacher dreams led me to The River

Leaving inertia, order and lost time behind

In a landscape carved from milky bone, crystal light, and naked trees.

And so my journey of becoming began.

Chapter 6

Beginning My Journey: Room Two, Year One–1996

The shores that grow chiller and dumber,
Wherever the ice-winds sob,
and the griefs of winter are heard.

—Wilfred Campbell, *The Winter Lakes*

Term One

Lorraine slid lower in her seat, propped her feet on the chair in front, her head on the desk behind, closed her eyes and slipped away on the warm, late-September air. Max sat alert, hands folded on a pile of books and binders, pencils sharpened, ready for whatever I had to dish out. Richard was muttering self-deprecating remarks to anyone who would listen; no one would, we had heard them all before. Darlene was engrossed in a novel. Carl turned away from the group to face the wall and sat rubbing his recently shaved head in embarrassed silence. Mary, Katherine and Deborah slid in just as the last bell sounded, having stretched out the time between classes with an extended stay in front of the mirror in the girls' washroom. Wordlessly, I hit the play button on the V.C.R. and retreated to my desk. The sound track with the Ronettes begging "won't you be my baby" and the slow-motion, black and white images of the dancers running behind the credits of the film did little to lift the feeling of oppression that had settled into Room Two since the beginning of the school year. The students did not seem to see anything on the screen in front of them. The segue into the Four Seasons' *Big Girls Don't Cry* and the appearance of a shiny, black, sixties-something Oldsmobile cruising around a curve in the highway, seemed to alert the boys to the fact that there might be something of interest for them in the film. The entrance of the tough, sexy lead actor brought the girls on side. Ten minutes into *Dirty Dancing* I relaxed and thought, "They are listening, they are watching, it's a start!"

My class was formed to accommodate a group of students classified as severely learning-disabled, all of whom spent an extra year in elementary school.

Standardized tests, administered during the first week of school revealed reading scores that placed these students four to six grades behind their peers. Informal testing in written composition showed that all but one of them could not, effectively, put a sentence together. We began by writing sentences on topics of the students' choosing, moving from simple but complete, to more complex.



Figure 10. Linda and Peter.

We then moved from the sentence to the five-sentence paragraph and finally, to the three-paragraph essay, all in a few weeks. I felt that it was time to start reading something with them, apart from their own writing, but I was at a loss as to just what materials were available and authorized that would appeal to such a mixed group of interests and abilities. I knew that curriculum guides for the secondary program bound me. I had also been told that I would be spending two academic years with the same class. In this I found some measure of hope. I thought that if I had them for two years, and at the end of that time they were supposed to be ready for grade nine, I should start with the grade nine book list.

When the bell rang at the end of that first fifty-minute period spent in front of the television, Baby was learning to dance with Johnny, and Penny was pregnant in the video. In the classroom, Lorraine was wide-awake and others were drumming fingers and feet. There was grumbling when I told them they would have to wait to find out what happened next. We began the following class with a discussion of the film. In particular, I

asked them about things that they had seen about which they already knew something or had some experience. The issues of pregnancy, abortion, lying to parents, going out with some one that did not meet with parental approval, and wealth and privilege, were all raised. Then we watched more of the movie. On the third day we had further discussion and completed the viewing with rave reviews. Now my work began in earnest.



Figure 11. Mimi.

My objective was to prepare them to read *Romeo and Juliet*, not when it appeared in the prescribed curriculum in the ninth grade, not next year, but as soon as the books arrived. I had made up my mind that I was not going to remediate. I was not going to teach reading. I was going to teach literature. I hoped that somehow—by osmosis perhaps—their reading skills would improve. I introduced the idea of theme. We examined issues in the film and in our everyday lives. I introduced the notion of conflict. We identified the various conflicts in the film and in our personal experiences. We looked at the strengths and weaknesses of the characters in the film and how these were related to the themes and conflicts in the story. Everyone had something to contribute. Everyone listened to everyone else. It was all too easy. I thought that it would not last. However, it

did. The excitement of achievement carried us through *West Side Story*, where we did interpretive readings, sang songs, and learned the dances of the Sharks and the Jets.

Darlene. Darlene was poised in her short, flared dancer's skirt and black leotard. Shiny curls bounced down her back. Her head was held high with confidence and anticipation. Her hands relaxed in her partner's grip. She listened for the music, the harsh, idiosyncratic sounds of horns, drums and snapping of fingers that identify the *West Side Story* score. She closed her eyes to the dust and clutter of Room Two, and whirled off to be Maria. Darlene began the school year late. She was placed in a foster home in late September, the move resulting in a change of school. She and her siblings had been abused. Darlene entered the class quiet and shy. She spent her free time browsing in the library and her class time buried in her books. Darlene escaped. We let her go.



Figure 12. Darlene.

Academically, she was functioning more than two grades below level. She read English and French, but wrote neither well, using spellings and structures from both languages interchangeably. However, Darlene was always in school, on time, sitting in the front row, apparently interested, if not eager to participate in the daily events of the classroom. In the end, she was center-stage, presenting her final project to the class and invited

guests. I had asked one of the other teachers to help me teach the class some dance steps recalled from the hops in the gyms of the fifties. We pushed back the desks, cranked up some early rock and put on a show. Darlene's response was to be the first to volunteer to dance with Mister Mordell, our guest instructor. Later, she proposed a combination of readings and dance as her assignment. Other students painted murals of the West Side, wrote essays and prepared skits on urban violence, racism and some of the problems of adolescence. The momentum lasted until the books arrived. We were ready for *Romeo and Juliet*.

Term Two

As I handed out copies of the text, I was aware that a funk was creeping into Room Two. Short, dark, damp days resulted in increased absences and a new moodiness in the group. Christmas was approaching quickly and I knew that we all needed a break from school and from each other, but I wanted to introduce Shakespeare and the play and try to tie it to *West Side Story* and *Dirty Dancing* before the holidays. I was feeling somewhat optimistic.

Richard. Richard's question jolted me back to the real world. "Is it a dirty book? My mother said the movie was, and *Romeo and Juliet* is a dirty book." Richard pulled back the zipper of his camouflage-colored pencil case to reveal rows of stubby pencils and bits of broken ruler. He selected first one pen, that no longer wrote, and then two others and tried to write his name in the front of the text. He was frustrated. I reminded him that he did not need to wait for his father's check to get supplies. He had a deal with the guidance counselor whereby he was given the school supplies that his mother could not afford to purchase. Reluctantly, Richard said that he would go down to guidance in the morning. I knew that he would go. He loved his man-to-mans with the counselor. I also knew that Richard would not ask for a new pen. I watched him as he shrugged his tall, muscular frame further into the child-sized desk. His experience in school had been unhappy. He had spent seven years in six different elementary schools, and in that time had been referred to many specialists for diagnosis and support, but nothing improved.



Figure 13. Richard.

When I searched his file for clues, I found reams of one-way correspondence with the home, inviting the parents to meetings that were never held. The one letter on file that was written by his mother reminded the school that Richard was to be called Peter: the name Richard reminded her of her now-absent husband. At home he was Peter. At school he was Richard. Academically, we did not have a handle on him yet.

I found myself wondering if I would have attempted teaching the play if I could have anticipated the problems that we were to encounter. I found parallel texts with Shakespeare's words on the left-hand page and modern English on the opposite side, matching the original line-by-line. While introducing the group to the book, I discovered that two students did not know their left from their right. When we went to the library to look for background information on the life and times of the playwright, there were more unhappy discoveries. None of my students had ever been introduced to the workings of the library, except Darlene, who was assigned the role of teacher and given a group to lead from the card catalogue to the reference shelf and the books that we needed. She was thrilled by the recognition and responsibility, and Katherine, Mary and Lorraine learned quickly from her instruction while I worked with the others.

After writing about Shakespeare's England and reading Charles and Mary Lamb's version of the story, we began to read the play. I had no idea how students of such low ability would handle the language, so I began reading aloud to them. I told them that there were two things that they must always do when reading; have a pencil in-hand for

underlining key words and putting question marks in the margins beside points that they wanted to return to for clarification, and use a finger or pencil for tracking while reading.



Figure 14. Liam.

We read line-by-line, scene-by-scene discussing as we went along, until we had finished Act I. They wrote about what they had read and heard, interpreting and summarizing on their own. They shared their writing and talked some more. It was late December, time to wish each other a Merry Christmas and go home. Throughout the holidays I found myself trying to puzzle out ways to make the reading easier. The vocabulary seemed to be just too difficult. At one point I considered abandoning the play, but I knew that this would have been a big disappointment for all of us and we could not afford a setback. Nothing was resolved when I returned to work in January.

Carl. Carl had the answer. He scooted behind me and into the classroom, tapping my shoulder—the far one—as he went by. Reflexively, I looked the wrong way to see who had touched me. He laughed, his big, crossed, brown eyes twinkling with delight, “Gotcha!” he cried. I laughed, too. We did this everyday. Carl loved to be the centre of things. To this end, he had entertained classes year after year with clever, clownish antics, until this year when he was suspended from school and the bus. His seemingly harmless

pranks had evolved into a pattern of disruptive behavior. Carl was trying hard to break out.

“How come you never let us read aloud?” he asked. Perched on my stool at the front of the class, I felt choked as I scrounged for an answer. I thought all the wrong things and I knew that they were the wrong things . . . “your skills are too weak, you’re not capable, it’s too hard . . .” I chose to lie. I answered that I was just about to ask for volunteers. Carl’s hand shot up.



Figure 15. Carl

The others, all but Lorraine, followed his lead. “Act II, scene i, *Romeo and Juliet*,” he faltered and then continued reading laboriously, in a monotone, through to the end of the first speech. The group, including Lorraine this time, responded by clapping, pounding their desks and shouting out the names of the parts that they wanted to read. Carl beamed at me and I beamed back. We were on the road to Verona.

Term Three

The smell of the popcorn tantalized the teachers in the staffroom, but I took the heaping bowls with me when I left for Room Two. I had just argued with the Department Head of English. She maintained that to show them the film was cheating. I sighed and reminded myself to fight that battle another day. We were about to watch Zeffirelli’s version of *Romeo and Juliet*, with popcorn and Cokes, just like at the cinema. We had read the play. We had discussed and understood the plot, theme, setting, characters and

conflict. We had shared our opinions. Now we were going to see the story through someone else's eyes, and hear Shakespeare's language. I had no doubt that this would be difficult, the dialogue would sound foreign, but I was confident now that they would meet the challenge and enjoy it. They did, watching in rapt silence. There were groans when the bell rang at the end of the period, breaking the spell. I assured them that we would continue the next day, and I recalled their response to *Dirty Dancing* and my feeling that the good things that were happening could not last. I recognized, then, that it, whatever it was, was lasting, but I still did not understand why.

In the next class we talked about the similarities and differences between the film and how we had imagined the story. We talked about the language. They did not seem to experience the difficulties that I anticipated. Rather, they were catching the flow of the dialogue and even picking up on the innuendo in the speeches in which Romeo's friends tease him about his romantic adventures. I planned to do readings from the original text. I gave them a choice of scenes, but they all wanted to do the balcony scene, with the boys volunteering to read Romeo twice because we had too many Juliets.

Max. Max peered myopically over the top of the camcorder. His hands shook furiously as he tried to steady the camera and focus on Carl and Deborah, perched on lab stools at the front of the room. When something caused the backdrop to flutter, Max flushed scarlet and demanded that someone keep it still. Romeo and Juliet looked hot and anxious but had no choice but to wait on the whim of our cameraman/producer/director.

Max was diagnosed severely learning-disabled very early in his schooling. However, nothing specific was ever determined to be the reason for his difficulties. He has always been a model student in terms of reliability, responsibility and determination. Max had had no experience with the video equipment but he was offered an opportunity to learn how to record and edit videos simply because he spent so much time at his schoolwork that he had little time to develop other talents. He quickly learned to charge and load the power pack, was tutored in tracking and panning, zooming and fading, cutting and dissolving. He knew the difference between establishing, exterior, interior and headshots. At that point, we were all locked in a freeze frame while Max regained his confidence. We waited. Finally, the tape was rolling. Carl and Deborah were living the

lives of two young teenagers who fell in love centuries ago. Max sat back on his stool, smiled and nodded at them.



Figure 16. Max.

My students enjoyed the assignment. They were poised and confident, handling the language, diction and expression with very little difficulty. They were ready for something more challenging. We decided that we would produce the play, realizing however, that a full-scale production with a small class, one teacher and the limitations of Room Two was not possible. We settled on puppets. We held auditions for the parts and the most sought after was that of William Shakespeare, our narrator. I had thought that this would be the most difficult part to cast because the narrator would be up front and visible, while the other players, the puppeteers would be hidden backstage. I was in for an even bigger surprise when Lorraine tried out for and won the coveted role.

Lorraine. Lorraine had decided at the end of sixth grade that she wanted to attend the large regional high school. Her parents had opted, instead, for our school, because of the smaller size and the nature of the program, two factors they felt would help meet their daughter's needs. In September, Lorraine announced that she would do no work until her parents agreed to let her change schools. She followed through on her threat, maintaining

an average in the low forties. They all dug in their heels and the stalemate continued as Lorraine fell further and further behind. Her poor skills, combined with a reluctance to participate, created a frustrating experience for Lorraine and for those who worked with her and it was finally decided at a planning meeting that placement for the following year would be either regular grade seven in our school or a transfer to the regional and into a lower stream. The decision would be left to the family. I was surprised when her parents let her make the decision, and that she decided to stay in our school. She began seeing the guidance counselor and together they have been working to strengthen Lorraine's commitment to her education. Still, I was terrified that she was in over her head in a lead role in *Romeo and Juliet*.

The room was darkened and two spots lit up the makeshift puppet theatre. Scott, the audiovisual technician from the school board who was helping Max with filming the play, softly said "Action!" Lorraine pulled herself up straight and began to recite, "A long time ago and far away in the town of Verona . . ." One week later, we were watching the polished version of the video that Scott and Max had edited, adding titles and credits. We watched our production critically. Praise and compliments were exchanged. At the end of the period there was a feeling of letdown as I collected the books and put them away. The class packed up their puppets and videos to take home. We were leaving Verona.

Term Four

Room Two faces south. The warmth of the spring sun and the warmth that had grown within the group combined to create a very comfortable environment within which to work and learn. This warmth, the success, the growth and the sheer happiness of it all could have lulled me, except that there was a gnawing worry that I still had to face, and I had to do so soon. The exam. It was less than three months away. I sat and listened to the drone of the paired reading that the class was doing and I despaired of ever seeing them ready for that day, when Mary burst out with "You only said that 'cause I'm black!" leaving the sheets of her story scuttling behind her as she fled from the room. I looked at Deborah for an explanation. She merely shrugged in return. I went out after Mary, surprised by the suddenness of the outburst. We had not seen this kind of stormy behavior for months now.

Mary. I could not see Mary from where I was standing in the hallway. I assumed that she had gone to the washroom or to Time-Out in the guidance office to cry and calm down. I returned to the class to read with Deborah, thinking that I'd send Katherine to look for her. I listened to Deborah injecting fragile life into the print that tells the story of the boy that dared to paint a picture of Christ as a black man. I was considering asking her what she thought might have set Mary off, when the figure of the Vice-principal crowded the doorway.



Figure 17. Mary and Al.

He asked for Mary and I went out into the corridor to speak with him. I was told that a wallet was taken from the girls' locker room at noon, and that Mary had been accused of the theft. She was in the locker room during the lunch hour and, as she did not play on the team that was dressing, had no reason for having been there. I listened to a long explanation-accusation-condemnation, and my heart sank. This was not the first incident of this kind that involved Mary, and I thought that perhaps a guilty conscience might have prompted the temper tantrum. Mary and her siblings had been abandoned by their parents, and lived in a foster home. Early in my relationship with Mary, I saw that she trusted no one. She trusted herself only to fail. Every success precipitated a string of failures, usually deliberate, self-inflicted catastrophes with serious consequences. I knocked as I entered the washroom. My voice bounced off the icy, tiled walls when I called her name. She responded with, "That bitch! It's not fair! I didn't take nothing!" I

sighed and slid down onto the floor beside her. We sat in cold silence for a long time. We held hands. I wondered how the others were managing with the Vice-principal. Mary started to cry gentle sobs and crawled into my lap.

* * *

We were writing again. We began the year putting words together, so tenuously, so hesitantly. We made sentences. We could not share them. Something might be revealed, something personal. So vulnerable. We continued to write all year. As I watched the group, heads down, bent to their tasks, I understood what that elusive *it* had been. Trust. Before anything could happen in Room Two, there had to be trust. Collectively and individually, the students had to feel that they could trust me.



Figure 18. Danny and Steve.

Trust me in my choices and decisions governing the day-to-day running of the classroom, choices of materials and activities, decisions about marks and remarks when they submitted their work. They had to know that they could trust me with their shortcomings, failures, weaknesses, and flaws. Also, they had to trust me to defend them in the hallways, office and staffroom when they experienced the negative, critical, discriminatory sting of the teachers, my colleagues, who maintain that someone must fail

and this is the role of the special ed. kid in the mainstream school. They had to know that I would be honest with them about their abilities and their disabilities and say, “Yes, you have a learning problem, and yes, you can succeed”, and that I would pull them up short when their confidence over-stepped their gains leading them onto dangerous ground. They had to trust each other, not just the people they knew when they entered the class in September, but every last member of the group. They had to be able to undo their emotional zippers and expose their greatest fears and deepest secrets before any real learning could take place. I do not know when it started, but I knew that the process of learning to trust was almost complete, nine months into our year together.

Katherine. Katherine looked up from her page to ask about materials for the construction of a primitive tent. I went over to sit and puzzle this out with her. She was a tall, graceful girl, beautiful, and really no longer a girl. She had a young woman’s presence. I did not think that Katherine was really learning-disabled. Instead, I think that she was shunted into a special class because she had brought her indigenous speech patterns with her when she moved from Nevis to Canada, patterns that proudly persisted in her written work and speech. Katherine had no trouble learning French. She had very little difficulty in math class. Her writing showed what the diagnostician referred to as a developmental lag. I thought it was more a reflection of Katherine’s proud and tenacious nature.

We discussed her question for a while and she settled on sticks and leather as construction materials. I asked her if I might read her story when she finished. A short while later she brought it to me. The class had been given the task of taking a theme from *Romeo and Juliet* and making it their own. I felt that Katherine had accomplished this, but I questioned her happy ending. She replied that no story of hers was going to have “no bad endin’s.” As I returned her draft to her, I asked if she would like help with her editing and she replied that she would like to work with Deborah when she finished writing her story.

Deborah. We had four days of steady rain. The effect of the bad weather seemed to have been to dangerously raise the level of excitement in the school. It was not pleasant. The pushing and shoving and foul language in the corridors had rarely been worse. Secretaries were complaining that too many students were getting hurt and

coming to the office in search of band-aids, ice packs and early dismissals. Administrators retreated to their offices and seemed only to venture out when students were in class and there was relative calm in the building. Placement meetings were just about finished, and it had been decided that Deborah would move to the mainstream in September. She was a hardworking, meticulous student, who benefited from strong support at home. She would need some propping next year, but should accept the help from the resource teacher willingly and continue to grow stronger. It was also felt that she would benefit from an expanded circle of peers. I suggested that she be given the opportunity to try life in a regular class before September.



Figure 19. Deborah.

I was told to arrange it with the regular teacher, which I did, agreeing to meet with him every other day to make sure that everything was as it ought to be. Deborah set out on Monday morning, armed with books, pens, and confidence. The rest of us waited in Room Two for news. We all missed her, without exception. She was charming, cheerful, and witty and had a winning smile that immediately engaged everyone. The reports from the English teacher were good. She was participating well, doing her homework and seemed to be enjoying herself. She came into Homework Club at noon and asked to borrow my copy of the film of *The Diary of Anne Frank*. I suggested that she bring a

group of her friends from the other class to Room Two for a special screening, which she did.

Her time in Mr. Howe's class was passing quickly, but I noticed that Deborah seemed tired. I resolved, as I went down the hall to the English classroom to check in with the teacher, to have a heart-to-heart with her at the end of the visit. He reported that she seemed to be having trouble reading *Anne Frank*, but that her comprehension seemed to be okay. This sounded like a contradiction to me, but I let it pass because I did not want to appear to question his methods or judgment. The teacher made no other comments. I asked about her behavior and homework. He reported that everything was fine and gave me three marks, all in the mid-seventies, to record in my mark book. As I left the room, I tripped over Deborah who was waiting for me in the corridor. "What did he say? He's so mean! Please, can't I come back in your room?" she insisted. This took me aback and I asked her what was going on. Deborah admitted that she found life in regular very stressful, that she didn't like or trust her teacher, and she feared that other students were laughing at her behind her back. I showed her the marks that I had just received and asked her what her peers could find to criticize. She replied that they all knew my students were dummies. I suggested that she stick to her two-week commitment and promised that we would sort out her fears when she returned to Room Two. She was not mollified. I would not let her quit. The final three days passed slowly. The following Monday Deborah was first into the class, having skipped the visit to the washroom that always took place in passing time. She was radiant! Her happiness at being back was obvious and I wondered how I would ever wean her or others in the group when the time for the mainstream came. She was eager to tell us about her experience. She did so in an animated, if negative way, omitting many good things that happened during the visit to the other class. When she finished and the others had gone to work on assignments on the myth of *Cupid and Psyche*, I invited her to write about her learning experiences in Mr. Howe's English class. She accepted:

My Learning Experience

In my life I have had lots of changes, and one of these changes was for me to go in a normal English class for a period of time. At first I was excited, because almost all my friends were in that class. My second reason was because I wanted

to make people, as in teachers, see how much I have improved over the year. The first day everyone honored me in the English class. At the time, and even before I went in that classroom I was scared of Mister Howe, because he goes to my church and I always see him there and thoughts rushed into my head, “I wonder what he really thinks of me?” After a couple of days in regular English, I realized that it was easy. Mister Howe’s class is always talking constantly. He would always tell everyone to, I quote “Shut-up!” but of course no one would listen to him. I find that this teacher has his days. One day he’s nice, the next day he’s mean. He forgets like crazy, and does not know how to run a classroom of 30 or more kids. Otherwise, the thing I liked about him is that he treated everyone as equals. But, one day I noticed that he made everyone read 2 or 3 paragraphs. He asked me to read, I only read one paragraph, and he changed me and told Allie to read. She read at least 3 paragraphs, I was extremely mad! All I know is that I never want to have that bizarre teacher again. Now that I am back in I.P.L., I feel like I’m on vacation, away from him. I didn’t really like it there. I was there mostly because my friends were there. Now that I’m back I feel that I’ve missed out on lots of things, (and I started to miss Miss McBride’s ugly face!) but other than that, I enjoyed my stay.

Year’s End

It was hot in Room Two, and too quiet. The students had left for the summer. Marks had been submitted—we had no failures on the exam—and I was working on a unit for September. *Married to the Mob*, leading into *Macbeth*. Power would be our theme. To start from something known, to probe more deeply the intricacies of the writer’s craft, and to introduce a new theme, seemed somehow to make sense. So, I dug up more stories, letters, videos, artifacts, and poems. The table fan did little to cool the heavy air. It served, instead, to blow the dust and papers and memories about. I sensed that something was missing from the year’s ending. We had said our good-byes, but there had been no real and absolute ending. This would be an interlude, this summer. We would resume in the autumn.

SEASONS ON THE RIVER II



Figure 20. The Magog River.

Spring on My River

The River in March is cold, foreboding.

Thick slopes of ice vanish into dormant galaxies, microcosms suspended in hope

Awaiting spring's warmth. And it will come, that day

When breathtaking cold gives way to the fragrance of the brackish brine.

Suspense.

Waiting for the first light on just the right day.

Warmth the catalyst, the sun's first faint tempting of a new morning

Glances off dark still water near the shore.

The chrysalis blisters, the captive, emerging, skates tentatively

And in an instant determines a lifetime's direction before flying away.

Others emerge into the still chill air, wings cemented

Fighting the seductive lure of the dark, the deep

Not waiting for the sun, and not able to return to the world known before.

These, The River carries forward and we struggle to fly.

Chapter 7

Running Aground

Just walk with me—down to the river

I'll pretend this boat is my life . . . I'll climb in.

—Robert Bly, *He Wanted to Live His Life Over*

Summer School 1999

My questions about my students' learning, and my trial and error efforts to find answers in Room Two, ultimately led me to seek solutions in a formal learning setting. Returning to McGill University, I took graduate courses emphasizing instructional psychology and applied cognitive theory. I sought out formal theories that would help me make sense of the context in which I worked, the characteristics of the learning disabled adolescents in my care, and the processes that facilitated or constrained their learning—theories that I could apply to my practice. Under the supervision of Dr. Mark Aulls, I was encouraged to explore critical theory and engage action research. I felt that I had found a mentor and a niche.

I completed my Master's degree with a study in which I surveyed staff and special needs students on their understandings and experiences of the effects of inclusive policies as applied in our school. The principal supported me in my research, becoming my stakeholder and implementing many of the changes suggested by participants in the survey. Embedded in the study was the case of one of my colleagues, a teacher who chose to change his practice in order to better serve the needs of students in an inclusive setting. We spent a year co-teaching/researching in one of his grade ten physical science sections, implementing the Johnsons' model of cooperative learning and looking for improvement in learner outcomes, both social and academic.

I moved on to my doctoral studies, where I had planned to look at inquiry curriculum and the learning disabled adolescent, however, mid-way through my coursework, I made the transformation from looking out at others to looking inward at myself as a teacher, learner and researcher. I experienced a significant shift in my

thinking, teaching and learning as a consequence of a summer interlude during which I audited a course at Bishop's University. Soon after, I wrote of the experience:

Like a tender lavender sprig tugged and slammed by the violent summer storms witnessed in Lennoxville this July, I've been whipped through a wind tunnel of intense learning. Two weeks after Summer School began I was tossed out—stunned—at the other end. Bruised, but not broken. Now, at home, I sit down to write, and try to make sense of it all. I am safe, yet there is a persistent uneasiness, a continuing, stirring draft that won't let me rest, won't let go. It carries a whispered potential. And, so, I straighten myself up and look at the new landscape into which I have landed. It is familiar, yet strange. There are elements of it that I have known forever. Others are new. This was Summer School 1999. The learning was deeply disturbing, and my story may read as an exaggeration, not believable to some. Perhaps, it cannot be credible except to those who lived it. I am one of the women who shared Fran's home for ten days, and I am one of the learners who studied Special Topics in Educational Leadership with Jack. Some of us did both.

My ten days were spent in four places. Room Two is where I have taught for so many years, and which I revisited, painfully, during Summer School, but only in my heart and mind. Jack's classroom is the arena where we were challenged, we stretched, we hurdled and stumbled, we laughed, we wept and we hugged. Fran's home is the soft, safe, pale pink place to which I gratefully retreated each evening. In between and at the end, I came home. Everywhere, I learned. We learned. We learned alone, and as we connected to others, we learned together. We learned about and with our students, colleagues and mentors, families and friends, strangers and intimates. Everywhere. We learned about ourselves, our values and our teaching, and our values in our teaching. We explored our claims. We exposed our passions and we confronted murky shadows. And, yes, we wept. Because I value my learning, I hope to make sense of it here.

Who would have suspected. "Initiating, Monitoring & Sustaining Classroom and School Improvement through Action Research" (Bishop's

University, 1999). Seems interesting. "This course has been designed" (Bishop's University, 1999). Planned. Thoughtful. Harmless. Safe. Like my classroom. "To provide the student with the opportunity" (Bishop's University, 1999). Another chance. Back to school again. Knowledge. Critical, liberating. "To participate in" (Bishop's University, 1999). Participation. We'll all be heard. Democratic. Like my classroom. "A detailed examination of recent developments in specific topics" (Bishop's University, 1999). We'll get to explore the new curriculum. But, aren't we working-to-rule? "Of educational leadership" (Bishop's University, 1999). So very important! "See Summer '99 Feature Attraction" (Bishop's University, 1999). It's the guy from the teacher-research conference who took on the man from the Ministry! "Instructor: Jack Whitehead" (Bishop's University, 1999). He's the one who said, "Send me some of your work" (J. Whitehead, personal communication, April, 1999). Into the void. "Mon., Tues., Wed., Thurs. 1:00-4:30 from July 5-17" (Bishop's University, 1999). Possible, if my husband can take over at home. He can. "Prerequisites: Permission of the department" (Bishop's University, 1999). I'll call Fran to find out how to get permission:

I am the department. I'll just put you on the list. Get your *Bordereau du Transfert*. Would you like to stay at my apartment? Gill will be here, and another woman, Laurie, a principal from Alberta." (F. Halliday, personal communication, June 1999)

Fran is so generous. With her time, her knowledge, and now, her space. I feel privileged. She has done so much for me, for my colleagues, my students. Inquiry for the kids, for the teachers. Plans, proposals, papers, presentations. Where does she find the time? Fran invented time. She is my friend. My critical friend. My husband says, "We could be going to the ocean, Maine or Prince Edward Island" (M. Boone, personal communication, June 1999). I am excited about going to Summer School.

Coming from the city, Lennoxville feels almost surreal in its serenity. The early air is warm, moist and hushed. Amethyst-edged mist hangs in the golden space between the trees as the car rolls down Belvedere Road toward the river. The spire on the chapel rises through the gold and beckons. Come. Learn. It is a

glorious, silent July morning, in a delightful setting. In the afternoon, in contrast, Jack's classroom in the Nicoll's building is a hard, untidy, hot/cold place. A persistent brass band practices and practices, and savage electrical storms and eighteen-wheelers lurch and screech outside. We, Jack and the students, the women, brought warmth, light and softness, and laid them down in that classroom. I had said "I consider myself an emerging teacher-researcher . . . research was not something that I could do or not do. Research was becoming a way of thinking, of looking at the world . . . not something that once begun I could decide to stop" (McBride, 1999, Unpublished raw data), and I came to Summer School to learn more about it.

What do we hope to learn from the course, we are asked. I reply with my standard. "I am interested in the gap between Theory and Practice. I want to know what's in that space. I suspect it has something to do with experience and interpretation" (McBride, 1999, Unpublished raw data). We've been told we will be learning about research diaries and the validation process. I don't know about the diaries, but, in my head, I hear old arguments from Mark about the essentials—Validity and Reliability and Generalizability. I get it. I see the need. If I am going to write a thesis. Then I hear Jack. Values and Claims and Evidence, and I sense that I am moving into another realm. I am curious. I am surprised that an article that I have been rereading is recommended for the course. Uncanny. Elliot Eisner. I feel at home. *The Promise and Perils of Alternative Forms of Data Representation* (Eisner, 1997). This course holds promise for me. Surely, there can be no peril here in Jack's classroom.

We are asked, as professional educators, what we care about in education. What are the standards of practice we live by? How do we hold ourselves accountable? That's easy. I respond as a teacher. I write:

In my work as a teacher I am accountable to my students, for it is the student that I value above all. I can be happy with the job I have done if my student is comfortable, safe and senses that I love and value each and every one. This doesn't happen often. Generally, there is a tension that exists in our classroom that is generated by the needs of the children and

my inability to read them. My inability is a function of many things. I may be preoccupied with issues of curriculum (formal), or bureaucracy, or the politics of the school. Sometimes I just get tired. But because I value the children, and their childhoods, there is a pull that brings me back to them. This it seems to me is the process of accountability in my work. It is collaborative. It drives me, and it drives the real learning—theirs, mine and ours—that takes place (McBride, 1999, Unpublished raw data).

For homework we are set the task of describing and explaining our own learning. I think my professional learning began with my delightful childhood. That is where I must begin:

This seems a big and vague project, and so I'll narrow my thinking by dealing with the description chronologically, in terms of when—now, earlier and in the beginning—and I'll follow with explanations of my learning as much as I understand it at this point. And I don't know how far I'll get today. In the beginning, or as early as I can remember, learning was happy, yet serious. It was fun. It seems there was no other purpose. Learning was about collecting polliwogs in a pickle jar and watching the young frogs emerge before returning them to the lake. It was about designing and building boats with our father, and, if they'd float, racing them in front of the wind.



Figure 21. Designing and building boats.

It was discovering the sweetness of pinky-sized cucumbers stolen from the vine, warm from the sun, dipped in puddles of salt held in grubby hands. Learning was collapsing in the heat and finding a tiny, pink newborn toad in the long, itchy grass. It was pioneering, creating a covered wagon with the Red Flyer, tomato stakes and remnants of bed sheets, hitching up the dog, and exploring the fields that ran beside the creek, disappearing until dinnertime or dark, if we missed the gong. It was realizing the magic of a jelly jar of fireflies late on a warm summer's night. Learning was curling into our mother's waist, in front of the fire and unearthing desert islands, pirates, an orphaned princess, a secret garden, as she taught us to cherish the word in print. We learned about the wind as we were flung down the lake on crystal February afternoons, wearing hand-me-down skates and carrying huge kites. Learning meant discovering pain, icy-blue pain, in our feet, while wading barefoot in the river in early March, searching for fragments of winter's mysteries left behind as the ice moved out from the shore. My childhood was charmed and this is the learning that I did.

(McBride, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

And, I explained my learning thus:

How to explain this? Learning was exploration and discovery. I experienced my world and came to understand how I was connected to it, where and how I fit in, and what I had to give back. I think at some very basic, intuitive level these early events were interpreted, and that was how experience was translated into knowledge. I think that as a child I valued knowledge for its own sake, and for a certain confidence, and the freedom that it gave. The more I learned the more independent I became. The next step in this sequence was to go to school. However, in July, before that could happen, my grandfather presented me with a shiny, new two-wheeled bicycle. Grade one began in September and my goal was to ride my bike to school. I practiced on the bumps and dips of the lawn all summer and I learned to ride. I rode my bike to school. This learning had a purpose. (McBride, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

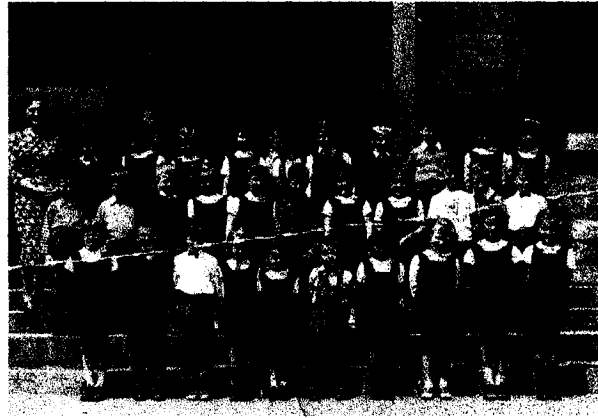


Figure 22. Grade one.

Jack wrote back to each of us. To me he wrote:

I was struck immediately by the power of your statement, "I am accountable to my students for it is the student that I value above all."

I'd like to be accountable to similar values where you say, "I can be happy with the job that I have done if my student is comfortable, safe and senses that I value each and everyone." I missed out love from your value/love and would like to explore this with the group. (J. Whitehead, personal communication, 1999)

Okay, let's explore it. We discussed this in class. Or did we? I'm not sure:

I'm wondering if you would like me to help you to construct a story which communicates the values which drive you and to see if we can share an understanding of your claim that these values drive the real learning—theirs, mine and ours. (J. Whitehead, personal communication, 1999)

Now I am unsure. Where is this leading? Stories could be lurking. Do I really want to know? To tell? Stall. Can I Trust? I answer:

I should like to accept your offer of help to . . . construct a story which communicates the values which drive me, and to see if there can be a shared understanding of my claim that these values drive the learning done by my students, the learning that I do, and the learning that my students

and I do together. But I think that to do this is not without risk, substantial risk. (McBride, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Careful, scared language. Can I Trust:

It might be simpler and safer to use this course time to develop something useful for the school board workshops. But I think that this other ought to be done first. It will test more than my claims. I will be testing a fundamental assumption about the work that I do—that my students derive benefit from my efforts. If this is not the case, I can have no business discussing action research with my colleagues or administrators. (McBride, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Risky. Tentative. Necessary:

Last night while I was thinking about what I would do here, I argued—with myself—that I could not act on your suggestion without knowing what was in the hole that I see between theory and practice, and the connection that I suspect exists in experience and interpretation. And then while talking with Fran, it occurred to me that in constructing the story I might see into that void. I am wondering if it is possible that, in writing this story, I might understand what happens between theory and practice, and if this understanding could become my living theory. And, what does living theory look like anyway? (McBride, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

I am wavering:

Finally, I questioned my reluctance to consider the path that you suggested. And I realized that it just might be that I'll discover that what I've been doing in my practice is all wrong. I could be confronted with a fact that I have not wanted, do not want to contemplate. Perhaps in loving and valuing my students, and acting on those feelings and values, I have exposed *them* along with the injustices that I perceive, rendering them yet more vulnerable. I am unsure of whether or not I am really capable of weighing the possibility. I am sure that I must try. I have never considered the notion of evidence before. I think I can possibly find evidence that supports my value claim, that my students are the core of my concern. But

will the positive outcomes that I have assumed be supported? I don't know. (McBride, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Wary, thoughtful language. Can I Trust? "So, yes, I would like to try to construct that story. And, yes, I welcome your help, gratefully" (McBride, 1999, Unpublished raw data). Scared. I remind myself to breathe. I crash. Swiftly. I am on my knees. Bruised. "I recognize your anguish" (J. Whitehead, personal communication, 1999). My anguish. The idea that I could be wrong, that I could wrong my students. "Into the abyss" (J. Whitehead, personal communication, 1999). I cannot go there. I must go there. I weep.

Jack's classroom is emptied of us from Thursday until Monday. It does not feel safe, and I am glad to leave. A colorless, glass jelly jar, left stark and empty. At home I sift through a decade of files and boxes. Stories, art, journals, tapes, letters, videos, photos, sketches. My family stays away, leery of my tears, my anguish, the cracks. I pull despair around my shoulders and hug it to me. It is the only solace I can find in the dark. As I sift, I weep and I wonder what I will learn. As I search I begin to see possibilities long denied. I could wrong my students, I suppose. No! Impossible! Just not possible. Because "I am a good teacher; hardworking, practiced, sound, accountable. My success has been celebrated. I have been thanked. I have been asked to speak to others. I have received an award. A good teacher indeed" (McBride, 1999, Unpublished raw data). I phone my friend Shirley, and we sit at my table and claw at conflicting ideas, confounding evidence, and clear contradiction. We do this for hours, sifting through photos, laughing, studying paintings and poems, sipping wine and weeping. Even in the dark I can see what I must do. I box my evidence and cart it back on to Lennoxville Sunday. I do not want to go back. I do not want to look.

"This course, designed for teachers who have had some experience inquiring into their own practice will focus on learning to look at what we do and learn from the looking" (Bishop's University, 1999). Looking. Into the space lit up by the firefly. Look fast. "Looking critically into, and learning from our own practice, can be both intimidating and exhilarating" (Bishop's University, 1999). No kidding:

Generating an understanding of our own theories of action that support our practice and making that knowledge public is often difficult for many modest educators. And yet . . . most teacher-researchers describe the process of inquiring into their own practice as . . . Energizing! Compelling! Personally and Professionally Satisfying! (Bishop's University, 1999).

So, this is what I have been doing. Energizing. I am weak.

Compelling. I cannot pull myself up. Satisfying. Just let it end. Look into the light. And what of our teacher. Who *is* Jack? Can I trust him, and does he embody his values:

I came to Bath in 1973, after six years as a secondary school teacher, determined to reconstruct the ways in which university academics talked, thought and wrote about educational theory. The dominant view of educational theory in 1973 was that it was constituted in philosophy, psychology, sociology and history of education. My alternative view, which I have called living educational theory, is that it is constituted by the descriptions and explanations which individual learners produce their own educational development as they answer questions of the kind, "How do I improve what I am doing?" (Bishop's University, 1999)

Talk, talk, talk. How do you live your values, Jack? "Doesn't lend itself to linguistic form" (J. Whitehead, personal communication, 1999). I am tired. At Summer School I whined "Sometimes I just get tired" (McBride, 1999, Unpublished raw data). Jack recognized that we all got tired. "You need time to write" (J. Whitehead, personal communication, 1999). Now, I am unsure again. Where is this leading? Stories are lurking just below and beyond. Do I really want to know? To tell? He's cutting us loose. I wrote my lament. And as I wrote, I curled slowly and fearfully, inward and downward.

I have never written like this before. I don't know if it is good writing. It is good for me. I am realizing that the writing calms me. The more I write, the better I feel. If I stop, the fear returns. And, so I write. In the afternoons I go to class. At four-thirty, I don't want it to end. I hang on to the group. The only safety I can

find is in that classroom and in the writing. But we're leaving early. Six thousand words. We need time to write and write and spin down and down.

In Jack's office I confess. My heart is pounding. Words come out of my mouth and I don't know where they are coming from anymore. I am frightened. I never wrote like this before. I feel sick, sick, sick. I don't think that I can teach again. Ever. I can't sleep. I don't know where this is going. There can be no purpose in my studies after this. I don't know what happens next. Tell me, Jack. Please. I curse, I cry, and I take his hand to keep myself from drowning. He lets me do that. I trust him.

Later, I am reminded of a favorite poem. It is about a teacher such as the one I would hope to be, the one I still and always hope to become. John Steinbeck (1955) wrote:

On a Former Teacher

In her classroom our speculations ranged the world.
 She aroused us to our book waving discussions.
 Every morning we came to her carrying new truths, new facts, new ideas
 Cupped and sheltered in our hands like captured fireflies.
 When she went away sadness came over us,
 But the light did not go out.
 She left her signature upon us.
 The literature of a teacher who writes on children's minds.
 I've had many teachers who taught us soon forgotten things,
 But only a few like her who created in me a new thing, a new attitude, a
 new hunger
 I suppose that to a large extent I am the unsigned manuscript of that
 teacher.

What deathless power lies in the hands of such a person.

Jack may be this teacher. We, the women, may be the manuscripts or the fireflies, if we wish to be. Again, learning is "realizing the magic of a jelly jar of fireflies late on a warm summer's night" (McBride, 1999, Unpublished raw data). The fear

is passing. I am beginning to feel safe in this new place in which I have landed. We brought warmth, light and softness, and laid them down in that classroom.

I finished my paper and presented it on the Friday. I wept again, but my tears were not the same. I did not taste the terror anymore. I cried for the end of the exquisite, bittersweet, pleasure/pain learning moment that was summer school. I ended my story with a letter to Jack. In the letter I tried to explain what I have seen in the bright light of his classroom. I believe that he created something new in each of us.

Working on the Underbelly of the Underdog

I did not recognize Room Two, and when I went there at summer school and I could not see myself as the teacher I believed myself to be. When I looked during summer school, I did not understand the teacher who wrote:

Working on the Underbelly of the Underdog

This is where I do my work. From the outside, the school is unassuming—low, red brick, bad windows, big trees, occasional graffiti, space and air. Oak Street is suburban and duly quiet. We know little of our immediate neighbors anymore; their children, many grads, have grown and gone. It is inside this hard, chestnut shell that the heart beats and breaks. This is where I do my work. It is inside this school that I have, over the past seventeen years, worked hard to become the teacher I long to be.



Figure 23. A hard chestnut shell.

For most of the last nine years I have taught in Room Two. It is a tiny, teeming space. This is the classroom that I left to begin a year of concentrated study, to go to summer school, to begin my vacation. Someone else will teach in Room Two next year, and I have no idea where I will be assigned upon my return to work. During my time in Room Two as a special ed. teacher, I have slowly become aware that all in our system is not equal. My kids are treated differently, not always fairly, and the injustices are not always open to view. Along the way I adopted Lewis Carroll's Mock Turtle as our mascot, my metaphor for my kids:

"I only took the regular course," said the Mock Turtle. "What was that?" inquired Alice. "Reeling and writhing, of course, to begin with," the Mock Turtle replied; "and the different branches of Arithmetic—Ambition, Distraction, Uglification and Derision" . . . "And how many hours a day do you do lessons?" said Alice . . . "Ten hours the first day," said the Mock Turtle: "nine the next, and so on." "What a curious plan!" exclaimed Alice. "That's why they're called lessons," the Gryphon remarked: "because they lessen from day to day." (Carroll, 1929, p. 117)

I have been a learner as long as I have been becoming a teacher, and in order to deal with the inequities I perceive, the reeling and writhing, I continually search for knowledge; better knowledge, the right knowledge. Critical knowledge. Liberating knowledge. To that end, I have spiraled in and out of the academic world taking courses, earning diplomas, certificates, and degrees. In my constant and ongoing search for knowledge, teaching and learning have become inseparable for me. There is an enduring tension in my practice, a reminder.

You are not there yet, there is more learning to do,

You have not yet become the teacher you hope to become.

When I left Room Two in June, I took years of boxed memories home with me. I also took with me a certainty that I was a good teacher—hardworking, practiced, sound, accountable. My success with my special needs students has been celebrated. I have been thanked. I have been asked to speak to others about what I do. I have received an award, deemed deserving by my peers. A good teacher, indeed. So, how is it that on the second day of this course I found myself in tears,

on my knees? I say, “I am accountable to my students for it is the student that I value above all. I can be happy with the job that I have done if my student is comfortable, safe, and senses that I love and value each and every one” (J. McBride, personal communication, 1999). My colleague understands my work as being to “protect and nurture (my) special education fledglings that have become trapped within an indifferent, if not occasionally hostile system.” (A. Languay, personal communication, 1997). I nurture and I surrender them to indifference and hostility when they leave Room Two.



(PAPT *Sentinel*, 1996)

Figure 24. A good teacher.

Perhaps I have been caught up in the metaphors; baby birds, mock turtles, sad dogs, and I have lost sight of the real. Or perhaps, I have never known the real. I am confronted by my arrogance. And now, with more energy and to greater depth, I must think about my value claims, think about my role and my practice, and of how I touch my students. I must do this thinking in terms of my students. Still and always mine. I have said that it is my values that drive our learning, that of my students, my own and our shared learning as well. I am questioning this now.

I think I began to think like a teacher-researcher when I was confronted with a new teaching assignment returning from maternity leave. I was given a special ed. class of learning disabled students. Discouraged when they came into what was referred to as the bobo class, they were despondent, unruly and most definitely at risk of dropping out by June. I seethed with resentment at a clear lack of interest and support on the part of my colleagues and the administration. I had no sense of myself as a teacher. I was not in control. I became cynical. I spent a summer brooding, rewinding and reviewing the events of the year. I heard it again.

*You are not there yet, there is more learning to do,
You have not yet become the teacher you hope to become.*



Figure 25. In the staffroom.

By fall, I understood a few things. I knew that if those students were to go to grade nine after one more year, I did not have the luxury of time to do a whole lot more remediation. I knew that I had to look forward to see what would be expected, instead of looking back at grade six to see what had been missed. When I looked for their strengths, I saw kids on the brink of disintegration. When I looked at my strengths, I realized that I could take charge if I opted to. Finally, I saw possibilities in basing my teaching on content and ideas that the kids really cared about. With more confidence than I had ever felt before I returned to school

in the fall, and by the end of the school year there was a palpable difference in my classroom as we engaged in learning together. The kids informed me, I responded to them. We negotiated. Something was working, but I knew neither what nor why. But by now I knew the drill.

You are not there yet, there is more learning to do,

You have not yet become the teacher you hope to become.

I decided that it was time, once again, to go back to university, and I began a Master's degree, where I finally began the work of understanding who I am as a teacher by developing my professional metaphor, learning of the value of a reflection, of critical response to my ideas, of conceptual knowledge made explicit through the study of theory and research, and of undertaking my first action research project. The next school year I began research for my degree. I wanted to expose some problems posed for our special ed. students in our mainstream setting.



Figure 26. Integration and isolation.

The principal became involved, and when I saw that many of the issues raised by the students and staff were addressed, I began to get a sense of the power of action research. As well, it was becoming clear to me that research was not something that I could do, or not do. Rather, research was becoming a way of thinking, a way of looking at the world, and it was not something that once begun,

I could decide to stop. I began to consider myself an emerging teacher-researcher. I reflected. I acted on my reflections. On and on. Still, there is that reminder,

You are not there yet, there is more learning to do,

You have not yet become the teacher you hope to become.

As a graduate student, I began to attend academic conferences at which, at times, I was interested. I felt that I learned. At other times I found the experience pointless for me, self-serving for the presenters, the experts. On the two occasions that I heard Elliot Eisner speak, I felt engaged, encouraged, and enriched. On both occasions he spoke to me, a teacher, with the heart and mind of an artist. He spoke to me with a clear understanding of life in my school. He brought our disparate worlds together in the notion that there are many ways of seeing, and there are many ways of representing what we see. I was enchanted with the idea of “exploring forms of communication that we do not normally use to represent what we have learned about the educational world” (Eisner, 1997, p. 5). My camera.

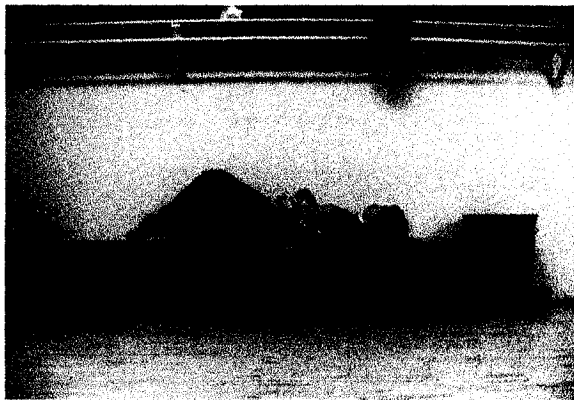


Figure 27. Time out.

My watercolors. Shoe boxes full of photographs, sketches, and miles of videotape. Could this be a “legitimate form of research?” (Eisner, 1997, p. 6), and, does that really matter to me? Have I not, perhaps, been more concerned with creating “a visual narrative that displays an array of values, not by describing them, but by depicting them” (Eisner, 1997, p. 6), so that others can see what I

see, what my Mock Turtles see? Is it possible that I might use my “visual musings to enlarge our understanding?” (Eisner, 1997, p. 8). And what about my own understanding? And, yes, how is it that on the second day of this course I found myself in tears, on my knees? I say “I am accountable to my students for it is the student that I value above all” (J. McBride, personal communication, 1999). I am credited with trying to protect and nurture my special education fledglings trapped within an, indifferent, hostile system. It is time to return to Room Two for another look, to look through my arrogance, because as a teacher

I am not there yet, there is more learning to do,

I have not yet become the teacher I hope to become.

I am looking for the Real and I am seeing Mike. In my work as a teacher I am accountable to him, for it is the student that I value above all.



Figure 28. Mike.

I can be happy with the job I have done if my student is comfortable, safe, and senses that I value each and every one. I know that most of my students feel safe in Room Two. They trust me with their flaws. When I say, “Try this”, they do. Tentatively. Willingly. Eventually, automatically. Mostly. I see this trust as a

measure of their sense of safety. This doesn't happen often. Generally, there is a tension that exists in our classroom that is generated by the needs of the children, and my inability to read them. The time and energy I need to negotiate with ten, fourteen, eighteen learning disabled kids is huge. Someone always gets less. My inability is a function of many things. I may be preoccupied with issues of curriculum, or bureaucracy, or the politics of the school. Sometimes I just get tired. But because I value the children, and their childhoods, there is a pull that brings me back to them. This it seems to me is the process of accountability in my work. It is collaborative. It drives me, and the real learning—theirs, mine, and ours—that takes place. But something is missing here. Have I done enough to justify my claim? There is a world outside our classroom door, indifferent, if not occasionally hostile, that I cannot ignore.

I can see Mike as he hunkers his heavy frame over his work. He is relaxed, and yet the intensity of his attention obliterates all else in a classroom where distractions are many. Room Two is a busy place. It is noisy, cluttered and crowded. But Mike is connected to his story and nothing else concerns him at this moment. He is comfortable. He feels safe:

My best experience I would say of all, Miss McBride's class. One day she came up to me and she told me, like, how, how good I am, how like, ah, your essays and stuff like, like how I expressed the words in my essays and stuff, how I write and that. She says I use a very good vocabulary and stuff (Mike, n.d., Unpublished raw data).

I know his story will be thoughtful and interesting to read. The hesitation in his speech poses no problem to pen and paper. From the vantage point of my desk in the corner, I am able to read that feeling in the softness of his bearing. There is a certain snugness to the circle created by the curve of his shoulders and arms as he envelops his creation. The features of his face reflect untroubled concentration. The fingers of his left hand splay across the page, defenseless. Not everyone sees Mike as I do. Beyond our classroom his fingers are drawn into tightly clenched fists. He is tall, heavy and imposing as he saunters down the corridor, away from Room Two. "One thing I would like to change about myself

is my behavior” (Mike, n.d., Unpublished raw data). His walk is slow, measured, threatening. He will not be caught smiling unless it is to laugh at another. Mike is a bully. He’s looking for his next victim. Last September Mike moved out of Room Two and into the mainstream. Not long after the start of the year there was trouble. “My favorite song is *When I go Away*” (Mike, n.d., Unpublished raw data). Mike was threatening a boy in seventh grade. This accelerated to violence. To terror. No one knew what to do about Mike. No one could understand why it was different in Room Two. “My favorite movie is *Bad Boys*” (Mike, n.d., Unpublished raw data).

No one has been able to stop him. No one can explain why he has been kicked out of class so often, why he has failed his courses, why he appears so unhappy. “The worst mistake I ever made was going to school (Mike, n.d., Unpublished raw data). So, how can I his teacher, say that I value, that I love this student? Where can I see my values played out as he experiences our school? Only in Room Two? Perhaps, just perhaps, I did not hear him say he was not ready to leave. Perhaps he did not say it in the right words. Perhaps he did not say it. Knew I might not hear. Would not hear. My energy was focused in Room Two, the celebrations inside that door. And Mike is not alone out there. Gary’s poem tells me this is so:

A man in a dark room
 With people
 Laughing at him
 He is pushed back
 In a corner
 Which is dark.
 He is crying
 And yelling at the people
 Don’t laugh at me!!!!
 It is not my fault.
 The people are saying

You had your chance. (Gary, n.d., Unpublished raw data)

And, Deborah's letter tells me so:

In my life I've had lots of changes, and one of these changes was for me to go into a normal English class, for a period of time. At first I was excited, because almost all of my friends were in that class. My second reason was because I wanted to make people, as in teachers to see how much I had improved over the year. (Deborah, n.d., Unpublished raw data)



Figure 29. A call.

I have not listened. I have not heard. So, that is how, on the second day of this course, I found myself in tears, on my knees. I say that I am accountable to my students for it is the student that I value above all. I can be happy with the job that I have done if my student is comfortable, safe, and senses that I love and value each and every one. I must spend more time outside Room Two. I must hear my students as they bring me reports of their struggles. Their apprehensions. Their catastrophes. Their failures. Their truths.

At the end of Summer School I wrote a letter to my teacher. I wrote:

Dear Jack,

Ten endless days ago, when I began your course, I had every confidence in my professional ability and integrity. I am well regarded. I have been told that I am good at what I do. I have had no problem accepting this idea. It was easy. It felt good. This morning I am clinging shakily to the underbelly. In doing as I was asked to do, in claiming educational values which are embodied in my practice and examining the evidence which will decide whether or not my explanation can be regarded as valid, I have had to confront my false assumption that in all I have done as a teacher my students are at the core of my concern. In the end, I have had to conclude that I have, indeed, exposed children to risk.

Saying that is not easy. Writing this paper has not been easy either. I have entered and explored new realms and tried new things in your wonderland, in order to make better sense of my work with my Mock Turtles. Still and always mine. In writing this paper, I have explored unfamiliar forms. As the story has unraveled, I have attempted to reflect the action research cycle in two ways. I have placed images in the text at points that I hope will illuminate the progress of my search for the knowledge that will allow me to be the teacher I hope to become. And I have tried to recreate the rhythm of the spiral by using a refrain throughout the paper as I spiraled to my unhappy conclusion.

*I am not there yet, there is more learning to do,
I have not yet become the teacher I hope to become.*

In writing this paper I have explored the use of image as more than decoration. I have tried to develop a unique visualization using photographs as illustration of my claim, and as evidence that topples my claim. I have used the sketch of Mike in the same way. As well, I have used my interpretation of Mike in the sketch to substantiate my belief in the inherent goodness of this child. And this to add emphasis to the urgency of the need to become the teacher I hope to become. I am not the artist that you credit me with being. I am just a teacher. And I do art. This is part of my work. I sketch in order to stay in touch with the child. The

childhood. The wonderful qualities of child and childhood that school does so much to erase. Sketching is a slow and thoughtful process for me. I sit. I consider the child and the particular circumstances that brought me there that day. Sketching takes me to the essence of the child. The goodness. It takes me away from mundane circumstances of daily life in a school. The bullying. The fights. The failures. It offers me the chance to portray a child like Mike in a light that is unfamiliar to many of my colleagues and his peers. There may be other reasons why I do this work, but they are not clear just yet.

Ten endless days ago, when I began your course, you offered to help me construct a story which communicates the values which drive me and to see if we could share an understanding of my claim that these values drive the real learning that my students and I do. I think that, with your help, I have begun the story and I know that it had to be written. It may be continued. I am grateful for your help. I know that it is important for teachers to write their stories, to face their contradictions as I am doing, to break down walls and open doors between classrooms. To share the stories. To help others know that it is important to do this. But it is painful. And I don't think you and I share any kind of an understanding as you suggested we might. I don't have one to share. If you do, tell me.

The course is finished and I am feeling a tremendous sense of loss. Something that I believed to be true, that I held my students in my heart, is gone. That myth supported me in my practice. It drove my purpose in going back to the university next year. I'm in a new place. I feel unsafe. I am experiencing first hand what my Mock Turtles do when they leave Room Two. I cut them loose. In writing I have cut myself loose. I am very, very frightened. Tomorrow I will take away new learning, new ways of learning, and I expect I'll find in myself a renewed commitment to my work as a teacher. I take away hope that I might really come to live my values as claimed. These have not changed. If I am going to be a teacher, I must be accountable to my students. I have not been trustworthy. It is the

student that I must value above all else. With this learning, I hope to become worthy of their trust.

Thanks for joining me on the underbelly for this short while.

Judy. (McBride, 2003)

SEASONS ON THE RIVER III

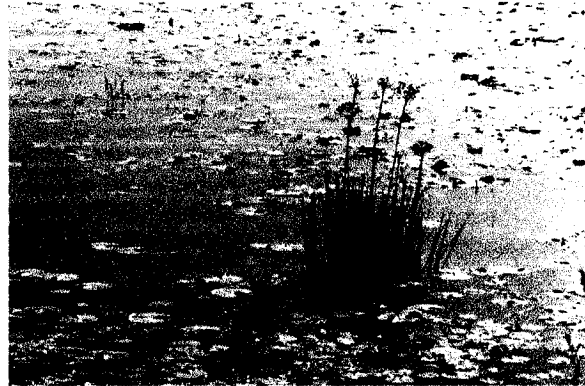


Figure 30. The Saint Lawrence River's edge.

My Summer on The River

Silver, sliver moon hangs in a faraway, blue-black sky

A compass point, no more

Eight forty-five, early August evening.

Giant, matronly willows

Proud, aging silhouettes, anchored in the mirror of River and sky

Voices and shadows pass, ghostly, among them.

Where ripple meets shore, thick smells of rotting life float.

Further out, sweet swift water. Summer sliding away.

Goose bumps rise on my skin as I cast off and away,

And away, and away, and away

Chapter 8

Afloat Again

Each night she marries the river, a bride
 promising herself to the one
 beside her

—Esta Spalding, *Canoe*

Casting Off

August is not my favorite time. In this stretch of change, I force myself to look for signs of life, laughter, hope. My garden is full of jaundiced, gone-to-seed perennials, school bus yellow Gallardia, sad Brown-eyed Susans. The lavender is finished, summer too, soon. School follows as surely as roadwork happens in summer and snowstorms in winter, and I experience the routine, instinctive dread of the impending harvest moon. So full of promise. So swiftly gone.

At home, after a walk, I settle in to write for a while, warm in my little space. But I am unsure. Hesitant. Timid with my words. My feelings and fingers falter. It is late in the day. Late in the summer. Early in a new adventure. I don't know whether I have nothing or everything to lose. I contemplate the leave-of-absence that I have been granted. Colleagues wonder. What will we do without you? They'll figure it out. Who will run the research group? Homework Club? Knowledge Fair? The Department? What about your Kids? They'll survive quite nicely. They did the last time. I'll be back. I have begun to work outside Room Two. I walked away, but I left a foot in the door, because

I am not there yet

There is more learning to do

Drifting Back

At Nancy's home, we are moving forward, moving back, with a sharing of papers, chatter, laughter. I was eager to attend the get together, to participate, to reconnect. I looked forward to the summer school reunion, as once again I found myself on the road to Lennoxville, on still another golden day, twisting through flat blue-green barley fields, and around ancient hills. Nancy prepared treats, chilled wine and was ready to share her

unfolding story with us. She arranged herself in the window seat, and the sun shone behind and through her as she read to us of her life. Her world. Her early experiences in childhood, the institution of her first, most profound teacher training. The telling of her story revealed some of her gifts. Her writing is soft and careful, powerful and evocative at the same time.

I left my notebook open on the coffee table and through the afternoon messages were left for our teacher:

Dear Jack . . .

Thank you so much for opening the doors to us. . . We have entered a new dimension. . . We have been willing to trust each other, to expose our inner selves . . . With each encounter we move beyond where we were before. . .

I am irrevocably alive and happy and secure in the company of these women.

(McBride, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

We laughed and sang and shared and committed to meeting again.

Recognizing the River

Loose again on an unfamiliar highway, I felt no trepidation as I drove out to Saint Jean. I enjoyed the stirring of a bright late-August early morning. Tinsel shimmer had not yet begun to glide up off the road. Wispy mist hung to the side in places. The traffic rolled, and the town swelled out of corn and hay fields, abruptly, at a turn where the highway intersected the river. Happily, the school was easy to find, and as I looped into the parking lot, I thought that it must have been built at about the same time as mine. It has the same low, indifferent, anonymous look to it. Better windows. No graffiti. No butterflies. Not a flutter. The Director of Schools offered to take my box of handouts. We smiled. I was welcomed. Greetings and sticky nametags. The Director-General will be late, we are told. Lost. The start of my workshop, delayed.

I twisted myself into a new place. I was making small talk with people I did not know. Never wanted to. Do not trust. But I must take my learning forward, work outside Room Two. Still, I was not nervous. Where were the butterflies? Can it be that I have some authority? Maybe, the butterflies were out dancing in the cornfields. Looking for the fireflies. Ghosts of July. Wouldn't bother with me. I thought that perhaps, I'd get

through the session without a catch in my voice, without the embarrassment of insecurity. Perhaps.

And so I began by saying that I consider myself a teacher-researcher. Sixty-five administrators stared back at me. They didn't want a workshop. I knew I would lose them if I lectured. I simply told my story. Put the overheads aside. Sat on the edge of the table. Looked for their eyes. I began to research my practice the year after I was assigned to teach an Individual Pathways to learning (I.P.L.) class. I continued. So far, so good. No one left the room, no private conversations, no one on a cell phone. Through doing action research, I came to sense that the teacher doing research could try to bridge the gap between what is understood by the research community and the day-to-day life in a classroom. They asked questions. Made comments. I sensed that all was going well. They were listening. It was in their eyes. I mentioned the importance of administrative support. I held my breath. "Perhaps you might like to frame your own research question. It might be something like *How might I best support teachers doing action research in my school?*" (J. McBride, personal communication, 1999). I breathed again. Questions. Encouragement. Flattery.

My principal walked me out to my car, and the asphalt hurled heat skyward. I wavered. Unsure. The butterflies hovered, circled and departed, and I understood something. The teacher doing research works The River. I know this now. We touch both banks. We drift and roll and weave, and bring two shores together. Theory. Practice. Administrators and kids. Ideals and Reals surge and swell. It's rough sometimes. Dark. Cold. Fierce. And lonely. But, sometimes that River sparkles and splashes. Exhilarated and ebullient. Purposeful. There is the potential to drift. To run aground, to drown. But not today. A current of untested determination challenged the undertow. On the way home, I raced before the wind.

I had two weeks to get ready for the fall semester, and I thought back to the challenge of Jack's words at the end of summer school. He wrote, "Your research could help reconstruct the field of educational psychology as a cognitive science" (J. Whitehead, personal communication, 1999), and I knew that I would not register for courses that did not serve my purpose. I wrote to my advisor, "I am experiencing a shift in the focus of my studies and my teaching" (J. McBride, personal communication,

1999). I wrote to the chair of the department. "I am writing to request modifications to the department's program requirements for PhD candidates" (J. McBride, personal communication, 1999). At the university I wrote "I must begin this paper by establishing my perspective. I am a teacher first and last" (J. McBride, personal communication, 1999). I returned to the university classroom where I began to consider and examine myself and others as adult learners. I began inquiries into the use of image as data in research on teaching and learning. I built a professional development model for introducing teachers to action research. I accepted invitations to participate in the planning of an action research module for pre-service teachers, to conduct workshops on action research for various school boards, and to present at the annual learning disabilities conference. I tossed out my dissertation proposal and refocused my research on teacher learning and the power of self-study, at the same time continuing to work with colleagues to develop ways of understanding and explaining the learning that we do as we continue our individual work, and construct our narratives. The River has two banks after all.

RESOLUTION



Figure 31. The Chateauguay River.

The River Redux

I am looking inward, looking out

Working within and beyond

Becoming a teacher, a pilot on my River.

Sailing forward, reaching back, working The River

I skip a keen-prowed, stalwart craft, cut crystal water, know fervor.

Sailing close-hauled, urged on by unyielding memories,

Faces behind.

No chart marks the pinprick on the horizon that is tomorrow

I know nothing of compass, sun, moon or stars

Markers that might guide me forward, beyond,

Only faces that blur on the receding shoreline

Blurring, receding, gone

Yet, waiting.

Waiting yet.

Chapter 9

Nancy, My Companion on the River

You build the bridge

I'll test it first

—Rod McKuen

Charting Her Journey

As I have continued the study of my practice, I have developed a deepening interest in teacher learning. Consequently, I have begun to look for evidence of learning in my own work and in that of my colleagues.



Figure 32. Companions on The River.

This interest has led to an inquiry into one of the latter's work on self-study (Hamilton, 1998), authored by Nancy, a teacher-researcher. The embedded single-case study (Stake, 1998) included here, is construed as a portrait (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997) of the teacher-researcher. It is framed by Nancy's narrative self-study report, *Nancy's Story* (Appendix A), a transcribed conversation on the topic of a videotape of aspects of her practice (Appendix M), and a semi-structured interview (Appendix P) with a concept map (Figures 47 and 48). The choice of the particular teacher-researcher is tied to our

shared experience of the summer school course in educational leadership in which Nancy was enrolled, and which I audited.

Data Collection and Analysis

In order to explore the idea of teacher learning, I have subjected the data collected by and from Nancy to inductive and deductive analyses. The primary unit of analysis (Yin, 1994) is the case. Data collected, reflecting her learning experiences, include:

- *Nancy's Story*, a co-constructed self-study (Hamilton, 1998) narrative (Nespor & Barylske, 1991; Clandinin & Connelly, 1998) consisting of various written artifacts including journal excerpts, poetry, and photographs which Nancy offered and which were arranged in a chronology, using Nespor and Barylske's (1991) structure
- The transcription of a conversation (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998) which took place following the viewing of videotape selected by Nancy as exemplifying her teaching practice, but which does not feature her at work in the classroom. Rather, she selected videotape produced by members of her senior economics class, which spotlights other students at work on inquiry projects in a grade nine geography class. Nancy appears once, briefly, and does not speak
- A transcribed interview (Fontana & Frey, 1998) in which Nancy articulates her conceptualizations, and relates some of her experiences of teaching, learning and researching, and her understanding of the relationship among these
- A card sort, think-aloud protocol and map of concepts (Novak & Gowan, 1984) discussed in the interview

Data were collected between January 2000 and July 2003 and sources triangulated (Yin, 1994) for the purpose of seeking corroboratory evidence of Nancy's learning. The embedded unit of analysis for each data source (Yin, 1994) is a verbal act, or a symbolic act (Gudmundsdottir, 1995). The narrative text, and conversation, interview and think-aloud protocols are considered verbal acts, and analyses were conducted at the level of the paragraph or topic shift within the paragraph. Symbolic acts include images inserted in the narrative report and Nancy's concept map. Member checking with Nancy followed each round of data collection, where agreement on protocols was sought; each round of analysis, for agreement on coding; and upon completion of the summary reports, seeking

agreement on interpretation. Finally, critical friends acting as external observers (Yin, 1994) evaluated the process and products using specified criteria (Appendices U and V).

Phase one. In phase one, following a holistic reading of the narrative, Nancy's Story, an inductive analysis was undertaken using an open coding strategy (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), at the level of the paragraph or the topic shift within the paragraph. In the case of the images, the unit of analysis became the symbolic/metaphoric value. A deductive analysis using pattern coding, employing a coding scheme (Figure 33) developed from the framework of Mezirow's theory of perspective transformation was conducted. Again, the unit of analysis was the paragraph or topic shift within the paragraph.

Phase Two. Data collected during the second phase include a transcribed conversation (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998) with Nancy who was asked to share a day-in-the-life video of her at work in her particular school context. In keeping with the spirit of teacher-research and self-study, that is that the work is directed by the teacher-researcher, I proposed neither guidelines nor constraints in the choice of video. During the ensuing conversation with Nancy in which the video was discussed, no a priori questions were used. Rather, these emerged from the content of the video as we viewed it together (Harper, 1998). Again, inductive and deductive analyses followed.

Phase Three. The third phase of data collection involved an interview with Nancy in which her conceptualization of teacher-research was discussed. The interview protocol included the following questions:

- How did you get into teaching, what have you taught, and to whom?
- What made you decide to undertake graduate studies?
- As a graduate student, what has your experience as a researcher been?
- How was your teaching influenced by your learning as a graduate student?
- How was your teaching influenced by research you read?
- How was your teaching influenced by your own research?
- Can you predict what your experience with research or as a researcher might be after graduate school?

- In light of the meaning you now hold for research and the manner in which you see yourself as a researcher, how might your teaching be affected should you return to practice?
- In light of the meaning you now hold for research and the manner in which you see yourself as a researcher, how might your interpretation of students' learning be affected?

Identical procedures for inductive and deductive analyses of the interview transcript were applied in this phase. The concept map was analyzed by interrogation asking how Nancy sees herself undertaking the activities of teaching, learning and researching, and whether there is interaction among the concepts.

Deductive Coding Scheme

Disorienting dilemma resulting in disequilibrium that acts as a catalyst, possibly

- ☐ acute internal/external personal crisis
- ☐ external event that provokes an internal dilemma
- ☐ external event that provokes internal disillusionment
- ☐ recognition that previous approaches and solutions are no longer adequate

Self-examination with feelings of fear, anger, guilt, and/or shame

Critical assessment of assumptions including

- ☐ presuppositions or assumptions in prior learning
- ☐ habitual and established patterns of expectation
- ☐ the established definition of a problem being addressed
- ☐ reasons for and consequences of what we do

Recognition that discontent and the process of transformation are shared seen in

- ☐ movement from the powerlessness of isolation
- ☐ movement to the formation of social coalitions and alliances

Exploration of options for new roles, relationships and/or actions

Planning a course of action

Acquisition of

- ☐ knowledge for implementing plans
- ☐ skills for implementing plans

Provisionally trying out new roles

Building

- ☐ competence in new roles and/or relationships
- ☐ self-confidence in new roles and/or relationships

Reintegration on the basis of conditions dictated by a new perspective

Adapted from Clark & Wilson, 1991; Mezirow, 1991, 2000; Taylor, 1997, 1998.

Figure 33. Deductive Analysis Coding Scheme.

Chapter 10

Evidence of Nancy's Learning

The Windward Leg: Inductive Analysis

An inductive analysis of the narrative, *Nancy's Story*, using an open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) technique resulted in an extensive and varied scheme of *in vivo* codes reflecting a wide range of concepts (Appendix B). A sample-coding sheet may be found In Appendix C. Concepts are summarized in the report that follows, as is the case with subsequent analyses. Because it has been asserted that one of the concerns of the researcher should be the voice of the researched, “trying to capture its texture and cadence, exploring its meaning and transporting its sound and message” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 99), substantial verbatim data chunks have been included.

Nancy's Story: Framing the Situation. Nancy shaped the story of her professional development with memories of early childhood lessons learned at home and in the community within which she grew up. She framed vignettes with the metaphor of the circle, which she used to explain her belief that we are “bound to one another spiritually” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data).



Figure 34. Happy phantoms.

A course in action research at Bishop's University triggered reminiscences of childhood activities and adventures in her hometown of Lennoxville, Québec. These memories are described as "happy phantoms" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data) manifest as picnics, hayrides, birthday parties, bobsled and skating excursions, and symbolize "sweet freedom . . . shining innocence . . . (and) enchantment" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). Photographic images of Nancy and her young friends give credence to recalled adventures.

Nancy's spirituality is attributed to her values and moral base, and these to her family home, particularly to her parents who relied on a tradition of storytelling in the rearing of their children in order that values be instilled and customs kept alive. Through their guidance, she came to value "integrity, honesty, justice, love, intellectual curiosity and freedom" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). Her values emerged as themes in the stories she chronicled. Recalling an atmosphere of care in her home, Nancy provided examples of lessons in life and love:

Everyone was welcome at my house. By the time my brothers and I were teenagers, our home had become a drop-in centre for young people as well as having the usual collection of adults. Grandma Annie Elizabeth lived in our house until she died. She had a stroke while she was with us and remained in an upstairs room with a caretaker. My brother, Cary, would read the Bible to Grandma every night even when she was sick and didn't know him. I sometimes sang to her. Her first caretaker was a big, jolly lady named Mrs. Lemay.



Figure 35. Learning about living and dying, respect and caring.

Her kids would come to visit her. Of course, Mum fed everybody and learned their stories. I played with the grandkids. Mrs. Lemay's daughter had married a black man. This was my first experience in knowing someone of a different race. My questions were answered about the situation in private. The man was kind and fun and was wonderful to Mrs. Lemay, who had had a terrible life. She had rescued her children from an alcoholic father and worked to bring them up. That was all that counted. Mum found Mrs. Lemay dead in Grandma's room one day. My brothers and I began to learn about living, dying and old age, respect and caring. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Emergence of a Problem. Using contrast, Nancy moved back and forth from stories of her present, interweaving these with recollections of earlier years. As she did so "tendrils of contradiction" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data) emerged as she recognized that values learned had not always been lived. For example, Nancy claimed to have been "brought up equal" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). However, in recounting events of her childhood, she unearthed a "double standard" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data) in her home.



Figure 36. Brought up equal.

This was exemplified in an account of an experience with neighborhood bullies. When they confronted Nancy on her way to her music lesson, her older brother was elected to accompany her on her way. Rather than walking her safely to the lesson, Cary taught

Nancy to fight back. Subsequently, when she defended her younger brother Douglas with her fists, the “valiant daughter” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data) was “punished—strapped for fighting” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), a behavior deemed appropriate for boys but not a “girl-child” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data).

Nancy recognized and confronted bullies in her work as a teacher, struggling throughout her career to find the most effective means to deal with unsympathetic administrators, colleagues and parents of her students. She wrote that she was once a “model teacher for the system” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), running an “orderly, disciplined classroom” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), her students achieving exceptionally well as she learned new teaching strategies and contributed to life in the school. She consistently tried to make change, yet she conceded that she “usually gave in when (she) created controversy” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). Through self-study Nancy realized that she had been “bullied into compliance” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data) by parents, students, administrators and colleagues.

Resolution. Nancy acknowledged in her narrative that she had not effectively confronted “the injustices, oppression and the lack of humanity of the (school) system” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data).

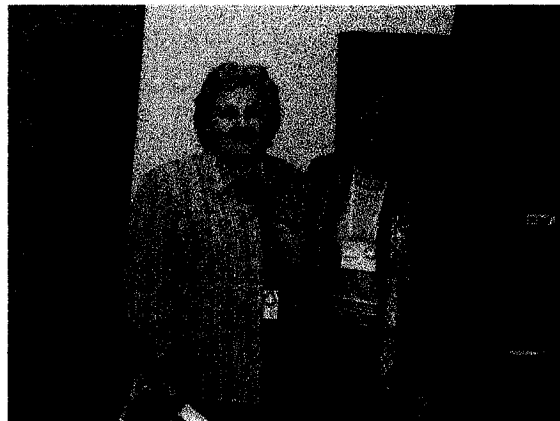


Figure 37. Co-researchers.

She had come to see the system as her “master” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). Nonetheless, the “just and democratic classroom” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

that Nancy strove for was realized in the latter years of her career. However, this was not accomplished without a great deal of personal pain. The feat required the collaboration of a co-researcher, a Professor of Education at Bishop's University. Working together, they developed a constructivist curriculum for Nancy's secondary III geography class. Here, Nancy's work on the development of a democratic classroom was completed, attributable to her experience as a teacher explicated through self-study, graduate studies, and collaborative action research.

Consequences. The theme of bullying persists in Nancy's narrative despite the report of a successful action research project. However, what is notable is Nancy's response to the authority exerted by others following the transformation of her practice. Professor Jack Whitehead, guided Nancy's initiation to self-study with the suggestion that she create a portfolio of her years of teaching "view(ing) (her) career in terms of (her) values and inherent contradictions" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data).



Figure 38. A newcomer to action research.

Much later, in a letter to Jack, Nancy wrote: "I retired from the schoolyard in June...emerged from the playground wearing my white gloves—that was my victory!" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). Nancy's learning is lifelong and progressive. Lessons begun in childhood, continue throughout her life. Dilemmas are resolved as Nancy recognized and responded to contradictions between her values, learned and lived. Her learning is evidenced as she found a way to live her values in her practice, in this

particular case, that of the democratic classroom. She accomplished this in spite of constraints imposed by a “paternalistic system” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), and administrators and colleagues perceived by Nancy as bullies working within the system.

Nancy returned over and over again to lessons learned earlier in order to take her learning forward. In the case of the incidents referred to above, particular lessons in decorum taught by her mother as she introduced Nancy to the world of classical music, attending concerts, wearing white gloves when she did, are reflected in Nancy’s explanation of the resolution of the problems encountered in the implementation of the inquiry curriculum in the secondary three geography class. The circle is completed with a photograph of Nancy taken shortly after her retirement. She is working on her continuing research at her computer wearing white gloves. This is the metaphor for a gracious triumph over her adversaries, the successful transformation and democratization of her classroom.

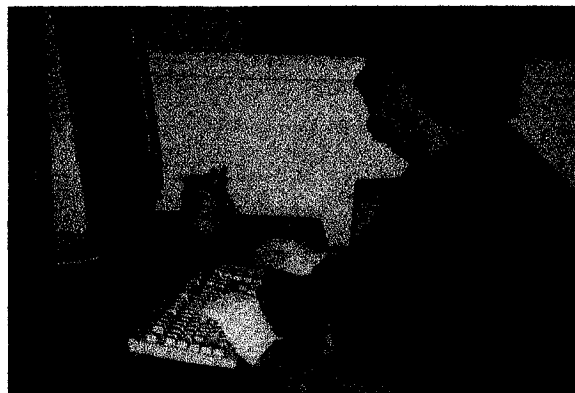


Figure 39. Wearing my white gloves.

Emergent Categories

In this analysis, *learning* becomes the core category (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) resulting from the initial open coding of *Nancy's Story*, as substantial evidence of personal and professional, formal and informal learning is presented. Three broad sub-categories provide differing perspectives for understanding Nancy’s learning: *self*, *other* and *imagery*. A subsequent analysis was done at the level of the paragraph or topic shift within the paragraph, and a scheme of broader range but more limited in size was generated (Appendix D).

Three categories of concepts were generated:

- Self-learning and values
- Learning in community with others
- Learning metaphors and symbols

Categorization of the concepts revealed three sub-plots within *Nancy's Story*: The categories were used in the construction of narratives-within:

- *Narrative of Self and Values* (Appendix E)
- *Narrative of Community and Other* (Appendix F)
- *Symbolic/metaphoric Narrative* (Appendix G)

Integral to each of the narratives-within are the components of narrative structure (Nespor & Barylske, 1991):

- Framing the situation
- Emergence of a problem
- Resolution
- Consequences

Each narrative-within represents one of the three categories and elements of each category were ordered into subsidiary relational categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

- Current
- Contradiction
- Change
- Consequence

These may be found in Appendix H. Applying relational categories to the inductive analysis above, Nancy's values become the *current* that underpins her learning, and are invariant throughout each narrative; *contradiction* may be seen when Nancy recognizes that she is working against her values in a paternalistic system that does not support the democratic classroom she envisions. *Change* is evidenced as Nancy begins the democratization of the geography class with the implementation of the *ReACT* model (Halliday, n.d.). Finally, the *consequence* is reported in two ways, as controversy resulting from the change, and as Nancy's satisfaction that she has been victorious in a confrontation and resolution of disputes with authoritarian others.

A model of the ordering of relational subcategories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) could be represented as follows:

Current + Contradiction > may lead to Change > may lead to Consequence

The relationship among the three broad categories—self and values, community and other, and imagery—may be found at the intersection with the subcategories: current, contradiction, change and consequence. Each narrative-within, and themes within these can be mapped onto the above model. As well, learning at the self/value level underpins the learning of self-with-other in various communities, and is, in turn, represented symbolically/metaphorically.

Narratives-within

Three narratives-within were analyzed at the level of the paragraph, or topic shift within a paragraph, resulting in codes that were categorized as being either current, contradiction, change or consequence, or combinations of these. A sample-coding sheet may be found in Appendix I. Nancy's *Narrative of Self and Values* may be understood as follows:

1. Framing the situation: Early in her narrative Nancy shared lessons learned with family members and friends, a function of her "healthy curiosity" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). She recalled bombarding her:

Parents with endless questions. They always answered as best they could. I never was afraid to ask a question or give my ideas. I was asked to modify, to rethink, reconsider and often heard 'No'. But I was given a voice, as was everyone in my house. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Voice became a current in *Nancy's Story*. Years later, as she reflected on her work and prepared to face the challenge of making changes to her practice that would challenge the "demands of a paternalistic system" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), Nancy was aware that her "voice must be heard insistently and calmly" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). She saw exercising her voice as fundamental to living her values when she asserted "dialogue is fundamental in building a society that is fair to all. Dissension is a building block of a democracy" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). One of her goals for her students was that they should "learn that there are circumstances when they

should stand apart from the crowd and should be respected when they do” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). Nancy modeled this behavior and gave an example:

My students know that I do this myself. We spoke last year about the fact that I was one of the few teachers out on the picket line. I explained my reasons as well as my understanding of the views of the other teachers. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

2. Emergence of a problem: Reflecting on her childhood led Nancy to conclude, however, that her voice was not always heard. The contradiction was evident as she recalled:

Dad brought me up to be equal to my brothers. I mowed lawns, shoveled fertilizer on the garden, took off double windows and had the same allowance and chance for an education. I often protested that Douglas and Cary were not asked to help with the cooking, housework or weeding. The boys ran the roto-tiller. Nancy and Mum weeded. Although I protested, nothing was done about it. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Hearing her inner voice Nancy questioned what had become a habit of compliance in her life, evident when she wrote:

Why do I allow myself to be bullied into compliance? I have had my moments when I was instrumental in making change, but I haven’t shouted loud enough, long enough, or persistently enough. I haven’t raged at the injustices, oppression and the lack of humanity of the system . . . Why? I know what it is like to be bullied, beaten up, hurt, left out, mocked and tormented. Why do I not do something about it? I can . . . Why didn’t I just quit? When in my career did this extreme conformity begin? (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

3. Resolution: Through self-study Nancy recognized her purpose as an educator as “helping and effecting changes for the disadvantaged and disenfranchised” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). Her goal was “to empower (her) students with knowledge and understanding of what they can do and that they should try to make a difference in the world” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), and she learned that her “voice must be heard calmly and insistentlly” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), if she was to achieve this end. Change brought controversy that rang through the final years of Nancy’s career.

Confrontations with colleagues and administrators were frequent as Nancy challenged the existing order of the school and curriculum as prescribed by the public school system. Finally, though, she was able to ask “How do I deal with the bullies? With love. Do I speak up? Yes, however, not always calmly” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data).

4. Consequences: Nancy came to value her voice as she engaged in the reflective process of self-study. She chastised herself for not having learned earlier how to speak up in defense of beliefs she holds, or having worked to foster effective use of voice in her students as she was learning these lessons herself. An encounter with her student, Casey, is one example. A student in her secondary three geography class, Casey, rebelled against the work involved in an inquiry classroom. As Nancy recalled, “I did not expect this resistance. Teachers are listening to a lot of anger about inquiry and about me. (The kids) blame me. I am losing patience. I feel threatened and offended by (Casey’s) attitude” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). However, on reflection, Nancy was able to write “I am just learning to understand Casey, because I am just learning to understand myself, and Casey is me. She will stand up for what she thinks” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data).

Nancy retired from the classroom in June 2002, yet she continues her graduate work in education at Bishop’s University. Taking what she has learned of the importance of giving voice to an other, she has undertaken a research project that will give voice to various people in her region, and she will be working in collaboration with a number of community agencies in order to contact interested participants and find the material resources she will require for the project. At the end of her study she wrote “I will finish my Master’s degree at Bishop’s. My exit project will entail working with the older people of the Eastern Townships in a course I will offer entitled *Writing My Life’s Story* (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data).

Nancy’s *Narrative of Community and Other* has been similarly analyzed.

1. Framing the situation: Concern for other and sense of community are evidenced throughout *Nancy’s Story*. This current emerged as Nancy made her values explicit and as she reflected on her attempts to live her values in her teaching practice. Her values of integrity, honesty, justice, love, freedom and intellectual curiosity were framed as a

Student Bill of Rights prior to beginning the action research project that will focus on the democratization of her classroom:

I had been mulling over how I could democratize my classroom the next year.

The following is a conversation between my ideals and my practice.

Student Bill of Rights

1. Each student should grow in awareness of his or her innate talents or strengths.
2. Each student has the right to be respected and valued.
3. Students should learn to accept how they differ from others and accept and respect differences in others.
4. Students should recognize and use their goodness and spirit.
5. Students should learn that there are circumstances when they should stand apart from the crowd and should be respected when they do.
6. Students should learn that it is each person's responsibility to share his or her talents and ideas with others, to help each other.
7. We must learn to laugh and share our good humor and the abundance that is in our lives. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

To begin the year, Nancy asked the students to write about what they care about in education. She put aside her usual lesson plan for the first day of school. In her journal Nancy wrote:

This time we write about our values and our stories. The students' ideas are poetic. They become my mandate for the year. I write their words into a poem.

Values

I believe school should be a happy place
 Where I can just be me, unique, healthy, beautiful;
 Or, I can discuss life with my friends.
 I will find opportunities and choices in this place
 Or find a helping hand and caring people who will help and comfort me.
 School is a place where we learn to trust each other, respect one another.
 I can find out how the library, how computers, will be useful in my studies.
 I will find out how to get somewhere in my life.
 I want to work with my friends in groups so

I can exchange ideas, talk things out, make new friends.
 School will teach me how to keep an open mind and a willing heart.
 I will be free.
 I will learn to take care of things I value,
 Feel safe. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

2. Emergence of a problem: In making her values explicit and considering how best to frame her work with her ideals, Nancy was confronted with the reality that, while long believing that she brought her values to her work, she had in fact been working in contradiction to her values. She wrote: "As I considered my values, I could see only an excellent technician, promoting the paternalistic system which I found so suffocating and menacing" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). Nancy's research question became "Will democratizing my classroom create student interest in history, and thus improve learning and marks on the MEQ examination?" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). She recalled hoping "to build a caring community of inquirers actively searching for their own truth" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data).

However, the reality of classroom life in a secondary school seriously constrained Nancy's work toward this ideal. The following vignettes from her research diary provide a clear picture of problems Nancy faced on a day-to-day basis:

Thirty-two history students tramped into class to join their teammates in their various groups. Some took their homework out, ready to start. Others chatted while I took attendance. Questions were answered as students made their way to their seats. Comments, gossip, smiles were exchanged. Groups settled down to their inquiry of documents pertaining to the 1837 Rebellion in Lower Canada. Richard, late, entered noisily, attempting to disrupt the class, which had become involved in their study. He whispered the latest news of the suicide attempts of two friends while looking me in the eye, defiant, angry, continuing to talk. Richard's power play . . . Because the classroom telephone is out of order, I must accompany him down the hall to the principal's office . . . Upon returning to our classroom, I find others tiredly lost . . . Nathan and Billy sat together in stony silence, eyes glazed. Nathan wore his blonde/black/copper locks gelled upward and outward, some tied with colored ribbon, others held in place with bobby pins.

He was dirty, disheveled, limply sprawled across his desk. Billy's head was down. He studied the carpet while rocking his chair backward and forward like a metronome—steady, rhythmic, purposeless movement. I wondered what they had taken . . . At recess I found Billy and Nathan lying on the carpet in front of an empty office with about eight others. Impassively they listen to me. Their numbness and desolation hurts and angers me . . . I turn and walk away. They slip into oblivion . . . I have not made contact with Maureen, so clever, so unhappy, so quiet and gentle. Her parents had suddenly divorced . . . the mother moving to Ontario with her son, Maureen remaining with her father to finish her school year. I know she misses her mother. She needs care and conversation right now . . . She left a note on her desk saying “I love history” and I wept inwardly . . . Suddenly I felt achingly miserable and inept. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

3. Resolution: Self-study and action research provided Nancy with the means to more closely align her values and her practice. She recalled, “the examination of values in my practice began a spiritual journey to clarity and vision” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). The interest and knowledge of a faculty member at Bishop's University, along with funding from the Québec Ministry of Education's Professional Development and Improvement Grant (PDIG) program provided Nancy with the supports she needed to successfully transform her classroom from traditional to constructivist. She recollected:

I was working with the tools of research: defining the problem, examining student work, observations of students, videotapes of lessons, audiotapes of conversations with students, keeping a research diary, taking photographs, doing case studies within the classroom. An MEQ grant with Diane Earl (pseudonym) gave me the opportunity to change my practice, to align my work with my values . . . Di and I worked to transform a highly knowledge-based Canadian geography course into a richness of concepts and ‘big’ questions. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data, parentheses added)

The result was described by Nancy as “an evolution from a highly traditional, authoritarian, content-oriented classroom” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), to an “inquiry” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), classroom based on the *ReACT* model (Halliday, n.d.) approaching her ideal of “a community of learners” (Snow, 1999,

Unpublished raw data), where she and her students “were negotiating, and for the most part, we were learning together” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). Nancy’s accomplishment is attributable to the collaborative action research project undertaken in conjunction with her critical friend, Professor Earl of Bishop’s University. Together, they presented the report of the project for public validation at ICTR 2002 in Vancouver, British Columbia where it was well received by members of a community of action researchers.

4. Consequences: Nancy attributed the successful transformation of her practice to one in alignment with her values to action research and self-study:

Self-study made me realize that I wanted a democratic classroom and I wanted a classroom where all children became a part of a community of scholars, in other words they could feel the power of learning. And that meant I had to walk away from content, walk away from normal ways of evaluating children, and walk away from an easier learning environment for kids. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data),

and:

Being a member of the action research group at Bishop’s summer school has had a profound effect on me. It’s made me acutely aware of the importance of a community of inquirers as a lifeline for one in one’s endeavors. The importance of being respected as a person with ideas and potential is an essential characteristic of being a member of a democratic society. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Nancy continues to live her value claim. Although now retired from the public school sector, she continues her self-study, her formal studies, and is presently planning her action-oriented life biography project for members of her community.

A third, *Symbolic/metaphoric Narrative*, lends itself to analysis in a like manner.

1. Framing the situation: Nancy’s learning is represented in her narrative as a “Quest” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), begun when she enrolled in a course on action research at Bishop’s University. This is a linear metaphor that may be traced throughout *Nancy’s Story* as she writes the account of her decision to change her practice and the actions taken as a consequence. Nancy wrote that “to examine values requires a

spiritual journey” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). In embarking on her self-study “a new journey had begun” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), where “personal values are road signs” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data).

The trajectory of Nancy’s learning is not straightforward however, and the image of the circle reflects the continual looping back to lessons learned earlier, in childhood or in her career as she attempted to make sense of her present. Harry Chapin’s (1990) *Circle Song* is used as a motif in the narrative, and is, as Nancy wrote “a simple expression of belief” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). The refrain, “All my life’s a circle . . . The years keep rolling by” (Chapin, 1990), is echoed in Nancy’s writing and in the lessons she learned. Nancy described her narrative as “the story of her circles” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), beginning with her “family circle” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), and continuing with stories of “circles of new friends (who) entered my world and gladdened my life with love and wisdom, remaining to support me . . . The soft circle encouraged my efforts to find truth in my journey” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). Thus the journey, sometimes straightforward, sometimes circuitous, provided the central metaphor or current in *Nancy’s Story*.

2. Emergence of a problem: Foreshadowing an extremely difficult year in the classroom that included ongoing confrontation with administrators, students and colleagues, as well as physical and psychological illness where she acknowledged her terror of “a dark thing sleeping inside” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), Nancy wrote on the first day of the fall term:

The first day seems surreal. It is uncomfortably hot and humid, each movement sticky with perspiration. The sun pours in the open window, eerily highlighting the back corner. Wasps fly into the classroom, circle dangerously before buzzing out again to hover menacingly against the hot glass. Bare walls and bulletin boards await the offerings of this year’s students. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

In writing her narrative, Nancy did not take the easy road. She encountered many “unnecessary and troubling thoughts . . . carried . . . since childhood” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data).



Figure 40. Paternalism.

In circling back to events in her childhood, Nancy revealed the foundation of her values and the sources of some of the difficulties she encountered in the transformation of her practice, facing contradictions between values and action. She wrote: “silver mirages from my past materialized, shimmered brilliantly, but when I reached to capture their truth, they dissolved into tendrils of contradiction . . . Shadows began to tinge my happy childhood memories” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), as she continued to “uncover secrets of (her) troubled psyche” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data, parentheses added). Nancy unearthed many fears, which ultimately left her feeling “wingless” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data) on her journey. At the journey’s most difficult Nancy wrote:

I Fear
What?
I am sad.
I cry no tears.
I am not enough.
Is this real?
Is it raining in December?
Or, is it snowing?
Cold.
Icy coldness flows in my veins.

I can't get warm.

Things come undone.

I am wingless. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

3. Resolution: The circle of friends and co-researchers that formed as a consequence of the action research course at Bishop's University provided continuing support to Nancy as she carried on her self-study and engaged in action research in her classroom. One group member "illuminated the path I wish to follow with tales of her experience, walked with me to the road and left me to wander back with part of my splintered self as a story" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data).

This reflects change, the notion of the community of learners that Nancy came to value, and which she began to see in her classroom with the implementation of the inquiry curriculum. The support that Nancy found in relations with colleagues and friends, supported her in her learning, both personal and professional. Returning to good health and to work in her classroom work from a medical leave, Nancy reflected metaphorically on this part of her journey:

The snow has melted in the front yard and almost in the back. A sharp March wind enables fall's dead, unraked leaves to teeter drunkenly across brown grass.



Figure 41. Awakening from a frozen trance.

A soft purple mist clings to skeleton trees indicating the stirrings of new life. In the eternal cycle of the seasons, everything must change. Soon soft warm breezes

will awaken the earth from its frozen trance. So, too have I moved from the stark emptiness of winter's bleakness to new heartbeats of truth, and a mysterious new destiny. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

The process of reflection inherent to self-study, and to action research as well, allowed Nancy to return to her roots and she realized "the dreams of my life's young mornings murmur enticingly to a return to those fresh ideas of long ago. I have come full circle" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data).

4. Consequences: Nancy did find some of the truths she sought on her journey which she describes as a "soul searching . . . to find better ways to teach my students, to help them become the centre of their own learning, to understand how I learn, and how the system and culture in which I live has shaped me" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). There is much evidence to support the claim that this has begun. However, the journey continued, as Nancy proceeds to the next phase of her research and continues her self-study. In sum, Nancy's learning may be evidenced throughout the narrative self-study report at intersections among self and values, other and community, and at the level of image between linear and circular symbols and metaphors that depict the trajectory of her learning. She acted on her values in defending her inquiry teaching and other matters. She succeeded in transforming her classroom into a community of inquiry, while maintaining equality in a democratic environment. She reflected on practice and acted on reflection. She reflected on values and issues, and acted to make her actions as an educator more consistent with her values. She learned of and from herself as she revisited childhood memories and the formative days of her career as a teacher.

Chapter 11

Nancy's Story, Deductive Analysis*The Leeward Leg*

In the process of analyzing *Nancy's Story* inductively it became evident that her learning was both personal and professional with crossover points where the personal impacted the professional. A second, holistic reading of the narrative readily revealed ample evidence of the phases of the process of transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991, 2000). A sample-coding sheet may be found in Appendix J. It appeared that two trajectories of learning were emerging. One analysis traced Nancy's professional development. A second tracked her personal learning in familiar, but more general contexts. Therefore, deductive analyses of *Nancy's Story* were conducted from the two perspectives and two narratives-within were extracted:

- *Nancy's Narrative of Professional Learning* (Appendix K)
- *Nancy's Narrative of Personal Learning* (Appendix L)

A coding scheme (Figure 33, page 108) was developed based on phases of perspective transformation (Clark & Wilson, 1991; Mezirow, 1991, 2000; Taylor, 1997, 1998), which include:

- A disorienting dilemma, "an acute internal/external personal crisis" (Taylor, 1997, p. 45), resulting in disequilibrium that acts as a catalyst, initiating the process of perspective transformation or learning. There may be an "external event that provokes an internal dilemma (or an) internal disillusionment whereby the participants recognize that previous approaches and solutions are no longer adequate" (Taylor, 1997, p. 45, parentheses added).
- Self-examination "with feelings of fear, anger, guilt or shame" (Mezirow, 2000, p. 22).
- Critical assessment of assumptions involving the "challenging the validity of presuppositions in prior learning . . . habitual and established patterns of expectation . . . the established definition of a problem being addressed . . . (or) the reasons for and consequences of what we do" (Mezirow, 1991, p. 12-13).

- Recognition that discontent, and the process of transformation or learning, are shared or associated, (Taylor, 1998, p. 8); this “may reflect . . . movement from the powerlessness of isolation to the more powerful formation of social coalitions and alliances” (Clark & Wilson, 1991, p. 78).
- Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, actions (Mezirow, 1991).
- Planning a course of action (Mezirow, 1991).
- Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing plans (Mezirow, 1991).
- Provisionally trying out new roles (Mezirow, 1991).
- Building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships (Mezirow, 1991).
- Reintegration, or reorientation, on the basis of conditions dictated by one’s new perspective, or learning (Mezirow, 1991).

Again, each narrative-within was configured following Nespore and Barylske’s (1991) definition of narrative structure, which includes framing a situation, emergence of a problem, resolution, and consequences.

Evidence of Learning in Nancy’s Narrative of Professional Learning

1. Framing the situation: Nancy was thrown off balance by a disorienting dilemma as she began to write of her practice.



Figure 42. A sense of purpose and hope.

In the beginning of her career, Nancy “burned with a sense of purpose and hope” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). Going unsuspecting, face-to-face, with old “demons” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data) and “tendrils of contradiction” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data) during the summer school course in action research left Nancy in a state of disequilibrium, and she wrote shakily of the beginning of the fall semester:

I was taken aback by school’s opening. “It’s too soon,” I cried inwardly, “I haven’t reached any understanding of my past. I haven’t found a comfort level with my findings.” Jagged edges still severed my cherished memories . . . My identity was in tatters. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

A vignette that set the stage for *Nancy’s Story* reported events provoking internal dilemma and disillusionment:

Nathan and Billy sat together in stony silence, eyes glazed. Nathan wore his blonde/black/copper locks gelled upward and outward, some tied with colored ribbon, others held in place with bobby pins. He was dirty, disheveled, limply sprawled across his desk. Billy’s head was down. He studied the carpet while rocking his chair backward and forward like a metronome—steady, rhythmic, purposeless movement. I wondered what they had taken . . . I have not made contact with Maureen, so clever, so unhappy, so quiet and gentle. Her parents had suddenly divorced . . . the mother moving to Ontario with her son, Maureen remaining with her father to finish her school year. I know she misses her mother. She needs care and conversation right now. She, too, is lost and lonely, but she has the courage to continue to do all the ‘right things’ and work through her problems. When we talk, it is about history and historical fiction. It is through stories that we can reach out and touch. She left a note on her desk saying “I love history” and I wept inwardly. She understood the dilemma posed by the other students, and comforted me through her pain. Suddenly I felt achingly miserable and inept. I had allowed the boys to dominate again . . . At recess I found Billy and Nathan lying on the carpet in front of an empty office with about eight others. Impassively they listen to me. Their numbness and desolation hurts and angers me. I want to slap some sense into them until their demons dissolve. They are just

babies really. Instead, I turn and walk away. They slip into oblivion . . . I felt strangely defeated, weary. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)



Figure 43. Defeated and weary.

Consequently, Nancy recognized the contradiction between her practice and her claimed value, the democratic classroom, that is, she recognized an inadequacy in her work as she wrote:

I have longed for a just and democratic classroom with negotiated compromises, as groups of students prepare for their place in society. It has taken me too long to relinquish control . . . I will have to let go of control. The vulnerability that is attached to this idea terrifies me . . . As I like to remain emotionally detached and in control, this will be a huge challenge. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

2. Emergence of a problem: Nancy began her self-study with a clear sense of purpose and a plan to write stories to “illustrate the contradictions between (her) practice and (her) values” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). She described the process as an excavation of her practice and an “awakening of conscience and soul” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). Self-examination sparked strong, adverse feelings in Nancy:

It was 1:00 a.m. on that hot July evening and a new journey had begun. Silver mirages from my past materialized, shimmered brilliantly, but when I reached to capture their truth, they dissolved into tendrils of contradiction. Anger, unresolved conflicts, hurts, resentment, unfulfilled ambitions surfaced into my psyche. I

howled inwardly, tears streaming from the rage I felt as I faced the truth. I tried to hide, to run from my cowardice and self-centeredness. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Nancy's account of feeling that she let a student down served to exemplify the process of self-examination and her contingent negative feelings:

Mel had just returned to economics class after the death of his mother. I wanted to give him a comforting hug, but instead I wondered if he would be embarrassed. I waited a minute too long. We all should have hugged Mel. In fact, I know if I had started the hug, it would have become a group thing. The others needed me to start. We probably would have wept, but so what? It was in this class where Mel found solace during his mother's final months. I knew Mel trusted me. He continued to come and chat, but a barrier had been put up. This is the most powerful and wrenching of my failures. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Further examination allowed Nancy to attribute the source of her disequilibrium to external sources:

Upon reflection, I realized that it was guilt, anger and sense of worthlessness that I encountered in confronting my contradictions. All of these years I had been serving a master I intellectually loathed—the paternalistic system—not fighting it, as I assumed I had for thirty-five years. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Self-examination allowed Nancy to recognize and question ingrained expectations, problems, motivation and outcomes of behaviors. Through critical assessment of her practice Nancy recognized that the “the school culture was changing rapidly leaving (her) to question (her) own values in light of (her) students' values, those of (her) colleagues and (her) administrators” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). She wondered whether she would “be able to offer anything of value to the teaching and school communities” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data).

3. Resolution: An outcome of the action research course was Nancy's recognition of a need to engage with others. She wrote:

Being a member of the action research group at Bishop's summer school has had a profound effect on me. It's made me acutely aware of the importance of a community of inquirers as a lifeline for one in one's endeavors. The importance

of being respected as a person with ideas and potential is an essential characteristic of being a member of a democratic society. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Nancy developed a sense of empowerment as she moved from the isolation of her painful awakening to the collegiality and warmth experienced at summer school and beyond. She concluded the first part of her narrative of her *Quest* saying:

I took a course in action research, and I've found my soul and a whole new wonderful group of friends. Jack Whitehead helped me to unlock a part of me that I did not know existed—the loving part of my nature—I have been aware of, but did not know how to express . . . A whole part of me has been starving too long. I find I am listening with my heart now, taking time for others. I wish to find out about them, how they're doing. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Finding her soul allowed Nancy to explore options for new relationships and direction in her practice. She embraced the idea of action research with zeal and determined to continue and extend the work begun at summer school. Nancy committed once again to her valuing of the democratic classroom:

I shall facilitate the way for the students to form a democratic and intelligently caring community of scholars who provide support and encouragement for each other and spur each other to excellence. I will become the facilitator, not the disciplinarian. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Furthermore, she determined not to be dominated by the paternalistic tradition of the school system, instead searched for new ideas about a woman's place in the school and community and actively researched new roles:

My confusion has led me to read about women's ways of coming to know, and the results of women's learning and working in paternalistic, male-controlled, aggressive and competitive institutions. The works of Carol Gilligan, Nel Noddings, Mary Belenky, and Rachel Kessler resonate in me. I understand how I have allowed myself to be bullied into compliance. I observe my fear clinically. Understanding and being aware does not mean there is resolution. It will take time. But I do see a different me in the classroom right now. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

As Nancy's perspective began to shift, she was able to make plans for changes to her practice, again working with the ideas of conducting research in her classroom while continuing her formal studies at the university. She reiterated her value claim in a *Student Bill of Rights*. Her stated goal became that of empowering her students:

With knowledge and understanding of what they can do and that they should try to make a difference in the world. The students will live in a democratic classroom in which ideas will be freely exchanged and differences of opinion respected. Students will become more confident as they are listened to, and what they have to say is carefully considered. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Having acquired some skill in action research at summer school, Nancy was ready to engage collaboratively with a member of the faculty of Bishop's University.

4. Consequences: Funded by the MEQ, the co-researchers worked to transform a content-based geography program to an inquiry curriculum. Nancy wrote confidently of the process: "I was working with the tools of research: defining the problem, examining student work, observations of students, videotapes of lessons, audiotapes of conversations with students, keeping a research diary, taking photographs, doing case studies within the classroom" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). All was not easy for Nancy in her new role. Students, parents and administrators challenged her. However, throughout the controversy she maintained her stance as an action researcher with a clear vision of the kind of classroom she values. *Nancy's Narrative of Professional Learning* concludes with her summation of her action research experience:

To me action research is more than reflection and the story of that reflection. It is a systematic inquiry into my practice. In studying my work as a teacher, I develop a question and try to find answers or to change my practice based on what I learn. I become more aware of my world, my actions in it and myself. I pose questions and seek answers based on the here and now, and I question my awareness. My personal values are my road signs. I write a reflective journal, make observations, and look for surprises and tensions in my daily practice. I watch videotapes and listen to tapes of student interviews. I look for patterns, for false assumptions. After all is said and done, I then write of my experiences as a story to explain, illuminate my life and my emotions. I reorganize, reassess, and realign my life

experiences in that story so that it is continually integrated into my life. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Nancy's narrative traces her shifting perspective on her professional self and practice, demonstrating clear evidence of her learning. However, the transformation is ongoing as Nancy continues her inquiry. This she described as "soul-searching" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), which guides her attempts to change. Nancy's work is purposeful and thoughtful, and she wrote: "As an action researcher, I unearth my living theories" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data).

Evidence of Learning in Nancy's Narrative of Personal Learning

1. Framing the situation: Evidence of a disorienting dilemma first emerged with Nancy's recollection and reconstruction of an incident early in her childhood. She recalled being busy picking flowers on the lawn of her home and being disturbed in her endeavors by a visiting neighbor. She wrote:

Frank spots me and lifts me into the air. I scream and struggle. He hugs me tighter, trying to calm me. I hit him with little clenched fists, the flowers tumbling away. He sets me down. I return to my shadow. Willful. Hateful. Afraid.

Alone . . . Dad allowed me to become. He did not think I had to take time from my web of exploration and daydreams to deal with adults. However, he should have hugged me. He should have helped me against the bullies. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

This recollection marked the beginning of a disequilibrium that may be seen to have persisted as an undercurrent through much of *Nancy's Story*. The process of recall, and in particular, of this incident, catalyzed a personal crisis that would come to affect many facets of Nancy's life.

Recalling and writing about her childhood began with "happy phantoms" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), however, other darker stories emerged leading Nancy to write that "jagged edges . . . severed my cherished childhood memories of happy childhood communities of family, friends, and neighbors. My identity was in tatters" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). Five months after beginning her self-study, Nancy wrote of personal crisis, of becoming ill and requiring a doctor's care and medication for a respiratory infection and severe anxiety. Of the ensuing Christmas holiday she wrote:

Christmas with my family was a fragile, happy time. I was so weary. I was terrified of a dark thing sleeping within me. I was lonely in my crowded family. I felt unconnected, numb. I couldn't feel.



Figure 44. A fragile happy time.

I Fear
What?
I am sad.
I cry no tears.
I am not enough.
Is this real?
Is it raining in December?
Or, is it snowing?
Cold.
Icy coldness flows in my veins.
I can't get warm.
Things come undone.
I am wingless.

I became lost between the homes of family members. I lost my way coming home. I slept for hours, finding release from responsibility, or was it just the nothingness? (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Nancy began a deep, disturbing, and extended look into her self.

2. Emergence of a problem: Because self-examination is fundamental to self-study, there is much evidence that Nancy engaged in a formidable and penetrating process. Mezirow attributes feelings of shame, guilt, anger and fear to this phase of the process. Evidence of affect, not necessarily negative, emerges in the analysis of Nancy's revelatory examination of self, which she saw as a journey into her soul. However, her *Quest* is predominantly dark and dangerous. Early in the journey Nancy was dismayed by feelings of anger as she encountered contradictions between her lived and remembered experiences:

Silver mirages from my past materialized, shimmered brilliantly, but when I reached to capture their truth, they dissolved into tendrils of contradiction. Anger, unresolved conflicts, hurts, resentment, unfulfilled ambitions surfaced into my psyche. I howled inwardly, tears streaming from the rage I felt as I faced the truth. I tried to hide, to run from my cowardice and self-centeredness . . . I had neglected to consider contradictions. I had neglected to examine soul. To examine values requires a spiritual journey, a journey to the soul. This would be a tad messier and disjointed, leaving fragile tendrils of contradiction, puzzles, and humble self-centeredness. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Nancy's angst contrasts dispassionately with memories of childhood adventures, described in terms of "sweet freedom . . . shining innocence . . . (and) enchantment" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). Nestled among these memories is the story of the encounter with her father's well-intentioned friend on the front lawn in 1943. "Dad and his neighbor, Frank Turner, are passing the time of day quietly swapping the news, house projects and cars. I have just picked clover flowers for Dad and Mister Turner, and am now engaged in picking up my shadow" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). Nancy described her feelings in response to her neighbor's affectionate gesture as "Willful. Hateful. Afraid. Alone" (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). Recalling this event led Nancy to examine herself in relation to others whom she has come to understand as

“bullies” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), and she noted the inadequacy of her father’s response when she wrote, “he should have hugged me. He should have helped me against the bullies” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data).

Through “investigating the shadows” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), Nancy recognized that her encounters with bullies continued throughout her life: “bullies lurked inside my home and outside it as well” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). Her journey allowed Nancy to drop “the masks of respectability, compliance and conformity . . . (and) howl and rage against what has happened to me” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data).

A recurring theme in Nancy’s writing is the metaphor of the circle. She used the Chapin (1990) song lyric to exemplify her belief that “we are all bound to one another spiritually” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). Nancy experienced and acknowledged bullying as source of disequilibrium throughout her life, she came to question individuals with whom she felt she must deal, and principles that she has felt compelled to uphold. As well, Nancy questioned her deeply ingrained values: “to begin my inquiry, I looked into my own value system. To find my own system, I looked into my roots . . . the stories from my childhood which built my basic value system” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). In challenging the validity of lifelong patterns, Nancy was breaking out of the circle that had bound her. She recognized that all was not as it seemed within her family circle. She recalled:

Dad brought me up to be equal to my brothers. I mowed lawns, shoveled fertilizer on the garden, took off double windows and had the same allowance and chance for an education. I often protested that Douglas and Cary were not asked to help with the cooking, housework or weeding. The boys ran the roto-tiller. Nancy and Mum weeded. Although I protested, nothing was done about it. To some extent, there was a double standard in our house, a contradiction I challenged often, for it was so unfair. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Ultimately, Nancy came to recognize her voice, and through self-study began to use it to question the assumptions and individuals that had provided direction in her life.

3. Resolution: When Nancy became ill she described herself as “weary” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), “unconnected” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), “lonely” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), and, ultimately, “wingless” (Snow, 1999,

Unpublished raw data). Her experience of isolation left her virtually powerless to continue her *Quest*. However, she resisted the thrall of “nothingness” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), struggled to find her way back, and recognized that her journey had to be shared:

There was no English-speaking psychologist who could help me. I was too weary to speak in French. I remained in close contact with my physician. My friends hugged me tightly as I fought to stay at the surface. Phone calls at night, rides to do errands, phone calls during the day, e-mails—sometimes three times a day. I was softly encouraged to write, but no blinks when I couldn't. Just there. Just there. Just there for me. Maybe I am worthy. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Her return to good health brought Nancy some understanding of the importance of new relationships, her role within these and the possibilities for action. She wrote of this metaphorically saying:

The snow has melted in the front yard and almost in the back. A sharp March wind enables fall's dead, unraked leaves to teeter and topple drunkenly across brown grass. A soft purple mist clings to skeleton trees indicating the stirrings of new life. In the eternal cycle of the seasons, everything must change. Soon soft warm breezes will awaken the earth from its frozen trance. So too have I moved from the stark emptiness of winter's bleakness to new heartbeats of truth, and a mysterious new destiny. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Nancy came to realize that she had to learn to deal with her bullies, however she understood that earlier lessons, where she had learned to fight the bullies on their terms, were inadequate. In recalling an episode from her childhood, Nancy wrote:

A friend of the family, brought me home bloodied and crying. He told Dad that he had a valiant daughter. He had been driving up Wilson Street and there I was in the middle of the street, beating up a Fielding boy. The younger Fielding was on my back trying to help his brother . . . I was fighting because they had thrown a rock at Douglas, my shy, little, bespectacled brother . . . My mother was appalled and I was punished: strapped for fighting. (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

Nancy's early learning in dealing with bullies is exemplified by a problem encountered on her way to music lessons. Because she was being teased and physically

hurt, she was entrusted to the care of her older brother, Cary. His solution to the problem was to instruct her “to use my fists and (he) told me I shouldn’t be a baby. This was usually Cary’s advice” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). However, when Nancy used her strategies, the results were not always favorable, and the aftermath of aggression was more of the same.



Figure 45. Writing.

As a graduate student, and through self-study, Nancy is acquiring a new mode of defense. She is developing skill as a writer. It is in writing, and seeking “to find truth” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), that Nancy finds the means to deal with her oppressors. She has begun to use her voice. Nancy did not make explicit a plan of action in her personal learning. However, she indicated the direction it will take when she wrote that “investigating the shadows revealed that I have always fought like a tiger for others, but not for myself” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data). She clearly articulated her needs in saying:

I realize that the job in the classroom is not my main concern. I am. I need to find joy, peace and a niche for myself. I need to seek out things that make me feel joyful, truly joyful. It is time to let go of so many unnecessary and troubling thoughts that I have carried since childhood. It is time to put my act together.
(Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data)

4. Consequences: In studying and writing about herself, Nancy began to become aware of her self. There is evidence that she “learned how to deal with the bullies” (Snow, 1999,

Unpublished raw data) in her continuing narrative. In facing her “childhood’s unresolved confusion about authority and bullying, misunderstandings about a girl-child’s place in the scheme of things” (Snow, 1999, Unpublished raw data), Nancy was confronted with the dilemma of using force, and experiencing physical, verbal and political opposition in confrontational situations. Such situations infringed upon most aspects of her personal and professional life. Most of her battles were fought for others, and not on her own behalf. As she works to perfect the writer’s craft it may be said that the circle that had bound Nancy’s life was broken and a spiral may better depict her continuing quest.

Chapter 12

Passing Through the Eye of the Wind

A Conversation with Nancy

For the purpose of triangulation, Nancy was asked to provide a videotape of a day in her life as a teacher. We viewed the tape together, and discussed the contents, looking for evidence to substantiate claims to her learning through self-study. The conversation was taped, transcribed and analyzed both inductively and deductively using the coding scheme developed using Mezirow's phases of transformational learning (Figure 33, page 108).

Inductive analysis. A possible explanation for Nancy's professional learning emerged from an inductive analysis of the transcribed conversation (Appendix M) on the topic of the content and implications of her chosen videotape. A sample-coding sheet may be found in Appendix N. Emergent codes (Appendix O) fell into four categories: *Learning, Others, Barriers, and Values.*

1. Learning: Nancy described her learning as a "journey" (Snow, 2002), Unpublished raw data), symbolically represented in a photograph. The image, used by her students in the creation of the video, is of the road leading to her father's family home, one which she describes as "bumpy. There were weeds growing on it, and it's like the Robert Frost poem. I didn't take the highway. I took the difficult road" (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data).



Figure 46. Dad's old house.

Nancy's journey resulted in knowledge that permitted what she described as an "evolution" (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data) in her professional practice from a "highly traditional, authoritarian content-oriented classroom" (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data), in which she was "doing what the system told (her) to, to be the authority, to have control in the classroom" (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data). The evolution took place over a protracted period of time beginning in the 1970s with a sabbatical leave that allowed Nancy to study in Scotland, leading to implementation of innovative programs in her school upon her return. However, it was when Nancy began self-study, in the summer of 1999 that her most meaningful learning began. In her words:

Self-study made me realize that I wanted a democratic classroom and I wanted a classroom where all children became part of a community of scholars, in other words they could feel the power of learning. And that meant I had to walk away from content, walk away from normal ways of evaluating children, and walk away from an easier learning environment for kids, for most kids, because they just had to memorize, give it back, get good marks and go home. So, it was a learning process from many angles. And, in order to learn what was happening to me when the kids rebelled, or to me when administrators disapproved, because they did, I had to learn to be by myself . . . So, I found I had to have tremendous strength. (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data)

The perceptible outcome of Nancy's professional learning was the successful transformation of her traditional classroom with the implementation of a "constructivist" (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data), inquiry curriculum using the *ReACT* model (Halliday, n.d.), a change well documented in the video.

2. Others: Although she "had to learn to be by (her)self" (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data), Nancy articulated a clear understanding that she was not traveling alone on her journey. Her goal of democratic classroom and an inclusive community of scholars drove her learning, and Nancy's high regard for all students is evidenced in the following recollection:

I can remember my Dad saying when I'd bring a kid home that I'd met at school, "Oh, Nancy's got those stray puppies in again." I think I have always had a heart, a place in my heart for the disadvantaged and those who are a little different,

because I felt that way myself. And as I taught more and more, I realized I was always the champion of the turned off kid, I could see the potential there. And he might be in a remedial class or whatever, but would come into my class and shine. (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data)

Nancy saw herself as a co-learner with those whom she taught, and stated, “I feel so privileged . . . to be learning so much more, just by listening to the children, to what they’re learning” (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data). Finally, Nancy was able to say that through engaging in collaborative action research with a professor from Bishop’s University that she found what she wanted in the classroom. Nonetheless, some members of her school community constrained Nancy’s learning.

3. Barriers: Nancy encountered controversy and criticism as a consequence of her innovative practices. Administrators and some colleagues who supported traditional models of instruction attempted to constrain Nancy’s learning. She described the process of her learning as:

Difficult, because I’m in a very structured environment where memorization of facts is very important, and you have across-the-board exams to test, to see if the kids have learned those facts. So, success is based on how well the children can perform, at a certain point in time, on certain knowledge that they may or may not have been able to learn. And, I hated the constraints of this. (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data)

It was her students who, at times, impeded Nancy’s determination to instill a sense of scholarship:

Scholarship. The real sense of scholarship was involved. And I don’t think those kids have ever been up against it in their lives. I don’t think they’d ever gone into something where the mark at the top of the page wasn’t the most important thing. It was learning to learn that was the most important thing. They went into other classrooms and talked about me . . . They absolutely were floored by what they were doing. They went back to math class, you learn this for the mark. They went to English class, you memorize this, you do this, you get a mark. If you’re late, ah, your teacher will wait forty days for you to get your report in. But, when they came into my class, they were accountable to their group, and they had to have

the stuff ready, and we had a hard time teaching them that, Diane and I. The kids can play the politics of the school. By going to other teachers, they were playing the politics of the school. (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data)

Nancy described herself as being “besmirched by controversy” (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data), and experiencing “heartache” (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data) as a consequence. However, Nancy’s values prevailed in the end as she recognized that “there was a group of kids that had truly been in a learning situation” (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data).

4. Values: Because she values an inquiry curriculum, Nancy “learned to step back from content which is the mainstay of senior social sciences” (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data), and she recalled:

When I looked at the inquiry classroom, all of a sudden you have children who choose their own content, who are developing the content according to their own strengths, and I am teaching them the means of doing it, which any child can learn. (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data)

Ultimately, it is through a valuing of self and others that Nancy demonstrated her accomplishments as learner, who is also a teacher:

I believe in all my classes that . . . we value each other and we are valued by each other. I think in my classroom kids should . . . accept and respect differences. I think there’s too much emphasis on conformity, rather than celebration of differences. So, there we get into self-study. Students should be able to personalize a subject content matter to help shape their identity. So much of what they learn is depersonalized, so how can you grow as an individual, or how can you understand yourself and make goals for yourself if what we’re dealing with in school doesn’t have meaning for you? (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data)

Deductive analysis. A deductive analysis of the conversation transcript provides some evidence that would support a claim to evidence of learning. However, not all phases as defined by Mezirow (1991) are revealed in the conversation. The phase of self-examination with feelings of anger, fear, guilt or shame, for example, is not evident, nor is that of planning a course of action. Nevertheless, there is a path tracing elements of

Nancy's transformation from a teacher with a traditional perspective on teaching and learning to one who implements an inquiry curriculum.

1. Disorienting dilemma: Through self-study, Nancy recognized that following a traditional, content-oriented curriculum, she was working in contradiction to her valuing of a democratic, student-centered classroom. In explicating her dilemma, Nancy described her situation as "doing what the system told (her) to do" (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data), in:

A very structured environment where memorization of facts is very important, and you have across-the-board exams to test to see if the kids have learned those facts. So, success is based on how well the children can perform at a certain point in time on certain knowledge that they may or may not have been able to learn. And I hated the constraints of this. I knew I wasn't teaching children to think, that the goodness, or the background of each child wasn't tapped, that they weren't playing from their own strengths. And when I looked at the inquiry classroom, all of a sudden you have children who choose their own content, who are developing the content according to their own strengths. (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data)

Articulation of the contradiction between values held and teaching practice led Nancy to reflect critically on her teaching experiences, and trace the history of the dilemma.

2. Critical assessment of assumptions: Nancy revisited and explained earlier attempts to change her practice. She described herself as a teacher willing to accommodate the demands of the school system, however, she did so with a feeling of "alienation" (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data). Nancy recalled bringing new ideas to her work: "I had been instrumental in bringing in the Core Program, where the grade seven kids were contained within a classroom for fifty percent of their learning time instead of roaming around the school. And it meant cross-curricular teaching" (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data). This encouraged her to continue her studies in formal settings:

It started actually in the 70s. I had a sabbatical leave in Scotland . . . and I went to Scotland and studied in the university, and came in contact with people like James Britton, Pat D'Arcy, Piaget's theories, Bloom's Taxonomy, all these things which hadn't quite reached North America. And I became extremely enthusiastic, not

totally understanding the ramifications of everything. But, coming back just filled with the hope of an educative classroom. (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data)

Finally, Nancy asserted that “it’s important to take a stand when one realizes that something is against one’s values” (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data).

3. Recognition that the process of transformation is shared: Nancy consistently expressed concern for the needs of all students, and “not just for the kids who come from culturally rich homes, or who might be very, very bright and are able to fit in to the academic structure” (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data). She saw herself as one member of a “community of scholars” (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data), with her students, and maintained that “learning has to take place in a social context” (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data). The process of transformation was also shared with her co-researcher, who helped her transform her classroom with the *ReACT* model (Halliday n.d.).

4. Acquisition of knowledge and skills: Nancy knew that she wanted to work and learn in a constructivist classroom, what she described as “the way I want to teach” (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data). Working with her co-researcher provided her with the opportunity to develop a program and proficiency in her new role. She described the initial action research project that is the subject of the video as follows:

The video was about an inquiry project that Diane Earl and I did together in my class using constructivist ideas, using the idea that the children, within a context, which was the environment of the Eastern Townships, chose their own topics, and researched them. For each group, we were able to find an expert person to speak with . . . We had a period of how to conduct an interview, and all the things necessary to conducting good interviews . . . And they had to do photography shoots, and I was able to get each group a throw away camera from the library. Some of them used videotape . . . Kids phoned all over the world from the school to get information for their projects . . . They chose their own content . . . I was hoping to see some love of their own environment come into this . . . I think I did, when I looked at their research diaries, begin to see real feeling for what the environment is all about, and for the fragility of the environment in which they

live, and for preserving it for their own lifetimes. (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data)

5. Provisionally trying out new roles: Nancy recognized herself as a practitioner doing “all that conservative stuff” (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data), who committed to aligning her practice with her values. In order to change her practice, she had to change herself. Nancy described the process as one of walking away: “I had to walk away from content, walk away from normal ways of evaluating children, and walk away from an easier learning environment for kids, for most kids, because they just had to memorize, give it back, get good marks and go home” (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data). In her new role, Nancy became a “facilitator” (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data), in her work with her students.

6. Building competence and self-confidence: Nancy described the process of changing her practice as an “evolution from a highly traditional, authoritarian, content-oriented classroom” (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data). Teaching from her new perspective allowed Nancy to actively engage in her students learning:

I took them out to Bromptonville and we took pictures of the paper mills showing how they’ve cleaned up their act. We went into the paper mills, and we went into the municipal sewage plant, and all this sort of thing, and you can see (in the video) that some of their pictures were quite lovely of the water from the snow running into the drain pipes, and one girl saying how dangerous this lovely picture was because the water coming in could be filled with detergents and all this sort of stuff. (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data, parentheses added)

Nancy was teaching with enthusiasm and confidence as she and her students shared common concerns emerging through local environmental studies.

7. Reintegration: Through self-study Nancy was able to articulate her values and reflect on her teaching practice. Consequently, she “learned to step back from content which is the mainstay of senior social sciences” (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data). In her value claim Nancy stated: “I value learning, and I value people valuing each other in a learning situation” (Snow, 2002, Unpublished raw data). In shifting the focus of her practice from prescribed directives about content and methods to one centered on individual learners working in a community, Nancy managed to align actions and values.

Chapter 13

Running Before the Wind

An Interview with Nancy

In order to find further confirmation of evidence of her learning, I invited Nancy to be interviewed. A transcript of the interview may be found in Appendix P. The focus of the interview was Nancy's conceptualizations of *Teaching, Learning, and Research* and the relationships amongst concepts. This seemed justifiable, because, by the end of the narrative, *Nancy's Story*, Nancy was portraying herself as teacher, learner, and researcher. The interview was guided by the following questions, sent to her in advance in order that she might consider her responses:

- How did you get into teaching, what have you taught, and to whom?
- What made you decide to undertake graduate studies?
- As a graduate student, what has your experience as a researcher been?
- How was your teaching influenced by your learning as a graduate student?
- How was your teaching influenced by research you have read?
- How was your teaching influenced by your own research?
- Can you predict what your experience with research, or as a researcher, might be after graduate school?
- In light of the meaning you now hold for research, and the manner in which you see yourself as a researcher, how might your teaching be affected should you return to teaching?
- In light of the meaning you now hold for research, and the manner in which you see yourself as a researcher, how might your interpretation of students' learning be affected?

The purpose of the interview with Nancy was to track the path of her learning, and, in order to be able to discuss implications for teacher education, I have chosen to focus on learning as professional development in formal (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991) academic settings, and in non-formal (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991) professional development venues. Through inductive analysis of the interview protocol a portrait of Nancy as a lifelong learner emerged, with learning understood to mean "the process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of

one's experience in order to guide future action" (Mezirow, 1998, p. 6). See Appendix Q for codes and categories emerging from the inductive analysis. Deductive analysis tracks Nancy's evolution from teacher to teacher-researcher as she passes through various phases of perspective transformation.

Following the example of her grandmother, Nancy entered the teaching profession, and she did so with a conceptualization of herself as a teacher already forming. Her professional self-concept was flexible. She demonstrated her recognition of the need for continual professional growth following graduation from the teacher training program, in either formal or non-formal settings, as she enrolled in courses at the university, participated in professional development workshops, traveled to Scotland to study and observe, undertook to study for a Master's Degree, and finally embarked on self-study and action research projects. Nancy's learning is evidenced as she progressed from being stymied by research, to being a consumer of research produced by others, and ultimately to producing research of her own.

Inductive analysis. After member-checking the interview transcript, an inductive analysis was undertaken using an open coding strategy (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The unit of analysis (Yin, 1994) is the verbal act, analyzed at the level of the sentence or phrase. Extensive in vivo codes emerged and these were collapsed into five categories

- Actor
- Context
- Event
- Outcome
- Time

Actors include individuals and groups to whom Nancy referred in the interview and with whom she has engaged as she has learned. *Contexts* are environments, institutions, places in which the various actors are situated. The acts performed, or activities in which actors engage constitute *events*, while *outcomes* include the products or consequences of the event. *Time* provides a chronological framework, and includes Nancy's references to age, years of scholarship or teaching experience. Taken together, actors and events in various contexts, at various times throughout Nancy's life delineate a

chronological narrative of her experience as a learner becoming a teacher, and ultimately, a teacher-researcher.

Among the actors in the chronology of Nancy's learning about teaching and learning are her grandmother; faculty at Bishop's University—Drs. Johnson (pseudonym) and Williams (pseudonym), Professor Frances Halliday, and visiting Professor Jack Whitehead; workshop animator, Bruce Joyce; instructor and critical friend, Diane Earl; Drs. Mark Aulls and Gillian Bramwell, faculty at McGill University. The contexts within which Nancy discussed her learning are predominately formal settings—university classrooms and professional development venues. However, she did recount learning events in informal contexts as well. Learning events are recollections and descriptions of activities in which Nancy engaged, while the outcomes she reported constitute evidence of the learning that she has done over time. The categories have been arranged on timeline that begins with early childhood reminiscences and continues through graduate studies. Interestingly, however, there is no discussion of Nancy's experiences as a learner in formal settings prior to her entry to university. A sample-coding sheet may be found in Appendix R.

1. Early childhood: The chronology of Nancy's learning as seen in the interview data began in early childhood with a remembrance of the influence of her grandmother who:

Had been a teacher. She had been ahead of her (time) in working . . . So, I had a model. It was a thing that women did . . . I think the whole idea that women could do something with their lives outside the house was a given in my family . . . It was just considered something one did with one's life as a woman, and I liked it. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

Nancy cherishes memories of her first days as a teacher while playing school with childhood friends, and considered these to be legitimate lessons in becoming a teacher. She recalled:

I can never remember what it was not to teach. I used to line up the little kids in my neighborhood, outside in the summer, and we colored, and we sang. And sometimes I would bring them in around the piano, and I taught them songs. I was always teaching, I think. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

Nancy contrasts her experience with that of her playmate, Sarah, who also “played school, but she played with her dolls. I had to have real live kids” (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data).

2. Teacher Training: In 1963, Nancy graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree from Bishop’s University, and entered a one-year teacher-training program. Here she studied under Dr. Johnson, to whom she attributed a valuable lesson:

The one thing you can teach young teachers, and it was a gift from my instructor in teacher training, Dr. Johnson, was to reflect. We had to take our lesson plans from September to June up to Dr. Johnson and he’d say “Why are you teaching this? Why would a student be interested?” and we had to answer, and our answers got better . . . So, the thing that Dr. Johnson did was teach us to be reflective, to be analytical. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

Nancy expressed what she considers to be the relevance in this lesson for today’s young teachers when she stated:

If they’re taught to be reflective and analytical, there’s no way they’re going to stand for what was thrown at us, because they’ve got to change the system. You can have forty-five reforms, but change won’t happen unless someone does it, and I think it comes from reflection, and I think it comes from self-study. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

The influence of Dr. Johnson continued throughout Nancy’s career as she persisted in her formal learning. She remembered him as a “brilliant scholar” (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data), who had a lasting “impact” (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data):

He was just incredible. We all lasted, and came back in January, and he said “Those of you who are here, I’ll tell you my secret. I tear you down the first term and put you back together, into what I hope is a teacher, the second term.” He did. There wasn’t one of (us) that didn’t go through, I mean after every lesson, “Why do I teach?” (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

3. Early Career: Nancy’s early teaching career took her into a variety of school settings, elementary and secondary, English and French, finally arriving at Alexander Galt Regional High School in 1969 where, she remained until her retirement in 2002. Unlike that of many of her colleagues, Nancy’s formal learning did not end with

graduation and her teacher certification. Rather, Nancy immediately began to take courses at summer school, a practice that she has continued more-or-less regularly throughout her adult life. Along the way she received an Advanced Diploma in Educational Studies.

4. Sabbatical leave: During a reprieve from course work at Bishop's Nancy enjoyed a yearlong sabbatical at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, where she was:

Looking for ideas on how to teach. There was a wave--James Britton, Pat D'Arcy--involved in the new English Curriculum, the new Social Studies Curriculum . . . I didn't go for a degree . . . I was looking into elementary curricula. I went into all the beautiful public schools and the comprehensive schools. It was a wonderful investigation, and I was free from courses, although I did take several. I sat in, but I didn't have to pass or produce marks. I just had to come back and try to implement new ideas. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

It is at this juncture that Nancy began her work as a novice teacher-researcher.

5. Graduate studies: Back at Bishop's following her sabbatical, Nancy returned to formal studies in sociology and qualitative research under Dr. Williams, whom she remembered as "a caring and wonderful person" (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data).

Nancy recalled the learning as difficult saying:

I didn't know what hit me. I had absolutely no idea what hit me, and I didn't want it to hit me again . . . I had never read a research study, and I kept saying to Dr. Williams, "Don't they write English?" (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

Nancy's understanding of the methods and purpose of research were fostered in her course work with Dr. Williams:

He used to make us make these summaries of these damn (research) papers, had to get all the main ideas. I had to do over every one of my summaries. Then we had to write a proposal. To me a proposal was a marriage proposal. I did not make the connection between the summaries we were doing and the lit. review . . . and I remember somewhere out there, the word validity . . . I had no idea what validity was. I thought it was something for your parking ticket. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

Nancy recalled successfully completing the course:

I passed the course, and I had my proposal . . . it was good. It was a good question . . . I did understand data gathering, because I had a degree in History . . . My research question, it was a good question . . . It fit the public and private documentation that I could use. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

Equipped with some understanding of research methods, Nancy continued the learning that supported her transformation from teacher to teacher-researcher.

6. Professional development workshops: A second interruption to her graduate work came when Nancy was invited to participate in a professional development project initiated by the Eastern Townships Teachers' Association, her local union. Various experts, including David and Roger Johnson, and Bruce Joyce, were brought in to conduct regional workshops. Nancy recollected:

(The workshop) was called *Models of Teaching*, and, again, it turned my teaching around. We were taught how to construct a cooperative learning setting, how to use concept attainment, how to use concept formation, which were offshoots of Hilda Taba's work . . . (The workshops) were totally practical . . . I went, and I had no idea what I was getting myself into, but I was fascinated with the techniques . . . (Bruce Joyce) was talking about research-based findings... I just felt this was something to investigate . . . I had never seen anything so fascinating because his technique was model/do, model/do. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

Without complete understanding of the theory behind the technique, Nancy took her new ideas into her classroom and experimented with them:

So, I learned new tools, and now, here's Nancy, "Oh, yeah, I'll do this," hadn't a clue what inductive reasoning was, hadn't a clue what deductive reasoning was, hadn't a clue what a concept was, but I understood the technique and I understood how I could do History according to Bruce's rules. Didn't understand why. It blew me away how the kids reacted, absolutely blew me away. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

When asked whether she considered what she was doing in her classroom at this point to be a form of research, Nancy answered that at the time she did not, but does now. She continued, "I think I've always behaved like a researcher . . . thanks to Jack (Whitehead)

telling me. I mean I wouldn't have been going to reflect, analyzing, doing something new in my class. I wouldn't be going off to Scotland." (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

7. Graduate studies, continued: Another step in the formation of Nancy, the teacher-researcher, may be seen when she returned to her graduate studies at Bishop's in a curriculum studies course with Professor Frances Halliday. Nancy asserted:

The greatest thing that Fran gave me was the understanding of what a subject is, what a discipline is, of what can be content. And that came very late in my career . . . I think that I began to be able to envision what some of the broad philosophical principles of subjects are . . . I taught geography, history, economics, English, moral ed., math, science . . . and the broad philosophical principles of all subjects deal with the human condition. It's in the landscape, it's in geography, whether it be past societies, and how we can improve . . . It's the human, the individual condition . . . (Fran) forced me to look into history and beyond content. And, when I started to do that, I couldn't look at teaching history . . . the way I was forced to for a grade ten exam. Fran made me look at what I was teaching, the curriculum from the point-of-view of more than content. But when I began to do that, I began to see that how I was teaching geography, history, economics was not serving to teach children about life, and about their lives. And then I started to make changes in the ways I approached these subjects. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data, parentheses added)

8. Teacher-research conference: This shift in Nancy's perspective brought her directly into the teacher-research community. An interim administrator in her school encouraged her to attend the International Conference on Teacher-research (ICTR) in April 1999. Nancy related the conversation with the replacement vice-principal as follows:

She brought me into her office, and I thought "Oh, boy. What's she going to do?" because we haven't always seen eye-to-eye . . . And she said "There's a conference going on, and you should be involved in it because you've done this work all of your life, and I think you need to go to a place where you will feel satisfaction." . . . So, off I went to ICTR, and she was right. I found like-minded people. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

9. Graduate studies, continued: In July of the same year, Nancy enrolled in summer school at Bishop's University for a course in Educational Leadership with visiting Professor Jack Whitehead. At this juncture, Nancy began to understand her experience with research and herself as a researcher:

It began when I understood what I was doing with Jack, and then I began to do formal research in my classroom. I formalized what I was doing because I brought in ways of collecting data, ways of having friends involved so that you have some form of validity, critical friends . . . So I began to understand what I was doing, or what I had been doing most of my life—from my father saying I was just plain nosey, to actually looking at my classroom and myself. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

She explained the self-study work begun at summer school as “beyond being curious” (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data). Nancy continued:

I think I've always been trying to find out how to make things better, and if you do that, isn't that part of looking at your practice and trying to understand what's going on, understand yourself and the kids? I always did the two things, myself and the kids. Looked at where I am and the kids . . . and then trying to make some sort of change in the system. I was driven to improve my practice. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

She explained a change in the way she considered research after the summer school course as starting “to be really systematic about collecting evidence about what was going on in my classroom, (monitoring) how far I progressed on my research question, and the change I expected to have” (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data). Reflecting on the change, Nancy said:

I was in my thirty-fourth year of teaching. It was a long way from Williams, although I still think Williams, when I think about him, was as caring and wonderful a person as Jack . . . I now knew that validity was not for a parking ticket, and the lit. review was not a summary of a novel . . . I think with Jack there was a coming together. I was looking at the end of my career, but I was also trying to put it into perspective. Then, as I put it into perspective, I wanted to hurry . . . and get everything done that I hadn't done, and that was to look at my

practice dispassionately, improve it, teach. (I wanted) to improve it as well as I could so as many kids as possible in my classes could look into themselves, could see or find something that was meaningful to them, meaningful to their own life, academically, intellectually. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

10. Collaborative action research: The importance of the role of the critical friend in furthering her learning was brought home to Nancy in the year following the course with Jack Whitehead. Diane Earl, a lecturer in Curriculum Studies at Bishop's worked with Nancy in her Secondary III social studies class. Together they engaged in systematic action research for the purpose of introducing an inquiry curriculum engaging students in local studies. Of the experience Nancy reported:

The major thing I've learned is it's important to be in a community of learners, both the kids and teachers, because if we focused our knowledge, the knowledge we co-construct will be much better, meaning as a sharing of perspectives. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

Extending her thinking beyond her immediate experience of conducting research on practice, Nancy asserted that:

Teachers should be in charge of pedagogy as a collective, and there should be dissension, there should be fights . . . but it's the teachers who are in the classroom, and from there you are with a collection of friends, they keep you honest, critical friends. They keep you honest, you keep each other honest. And I think from there you get informed pedagogy. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

11. Graduate studies continued: In the final years of her Master's program, because courses she was required to take were not being offered at Bishop's, Nancy enrolled for two Educational Psychology courses at McGill University, studying qualitative research methods with Dr. Mark Aulls, and classroom processes from a sociological perspective with Dr. Gillian Bramwell. Of the research methods course experience Nancy said:

I know it's been a wonderful gift, Mark's course. I love the way he's designed it, so we have to suffer it every step, be confused . . . I needed someone to show me how to step back, and watch, and observe . . . The skills I have learned with Mark have been a wonderful asset. Just in my life, to look at things, just in a very quiet

passive way, not even an analytical way, just passively. Ah! Pretty flower, pretty bird. And, you accumulate this . . . data without any judgment, without any interpretation. This has been a wonderful life lesson to me . . . for me professionally, both for my studies and for me as a person. (Mark's) modeling, his kindness, his empathy—and he's a brilliant researcher—have been terrific models. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data, parentheses added)

Nancy recalled feeling more comfortable in the social psychology course:

Gill's course I adored, because sociology and culture are more in my line of theory. But, there were so many slants that were used in her course that gave me a different way of looking at things. And, she, herself, again is just a terrific example of a human being. I found reading research quite pleasant actually, but I must admit the style has improved since the seventies. I think there's been an opening up in qualitative research to allow people to use narrative style, or to use metaphor, and because they are beginning to realize that there's a very fine line between fact and fiction. In fact, what is a fact? (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data, parentheses added)

Deductive analysis. A deductive analysis of the interview transcript provides additional evidence of Nancy's professional learning. Working with the coding scheme developed from phases of learning following Mezirow's theory of perspective transformation (Figure 33, page 108), it may be claimed that Nancy's learning is evident in her responses to the interview questions, and that it is incremental in nature. As was the case with the conversation data, not all transformation phases of transformation were apparent.

1. Disorienting dilemma: Mezirow (1998) asserts that a "belief is a habit that guides action" (p. 7). In Nancy's case her belief that "there's always more to learn" (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data) guided her professional development, obvious when she said "I just took courses every summer, or most summers, in order to reflect on what I did, to plan for change for the next year" (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data). Her acknowledgement that she had "always been struggling to find how to teach . . . I knew you didn't only have to teach kids content. You had to teach them some of the skills they needed as they grew into adults and taking responsibility was one of them" (Snow, 2003,

Unpublished raw data), may be construed as a disorienting dilemma resulting in disequilibrium. This catalyst sent her back to school to learn more about teaching and learning, to find the knowledge she felt she needed to bring, not just into her practice, but into the broader context of her school. Nancy recognized the researcher in herself when she said, “I’ve always researched, I mean I wouldn’t have been going to reflect, analyzing and doing something new in my class” (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data). However, her reflections often brought her into conflict with policies and accepted practices in her school:

When I started to (look beyond the content) I couldn’t look at History, I couldn’t look at it, teaching it the way I was forced to for a grade ten exam . . . I was still looking for changes within the context, my context, my environment at school.
(Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data, parentheses added)

Nancy acknowledged the inadequacy of her early attempts at improving her practice when she recalled “the years, thirty years or so, that I was in it alone, and when I was (taking courses) with friends, it was competition . . . who could get the better mark (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data).

2. Self-examination: Nancy continued to pursue her studies and engaged in the often-fearful process of self-examination:

(As a graduate student), I began to understand more, and more, and more of the complexity of what I was doing. It scared me in a way . . . the huge responsibility to each child, and it became clearer and clearer how different each child was from the other. And, I became more and more alienated from the system in which I was teaching. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data, parentheses added)

The process led her to conclude that she “had become bored . . . I had become indifferent to what I was doing, not indifferent, but I was bored, I was unhappy, I was angry” (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data).

3. Critical assessment of assumptions: Self-examination brought Nancy to assess the reasons for and consequences of her deliberate learning activities. She realized that she was teaching in a school system that contradicted her fundamental belief in the importance of the individual student learning in a democratic context. Recognizing this allowed Nancy to look objectively at the system in which she worked, and then to pull

away. She made a direct link from this move to her learning: “I really started breaking away (from the system) . . . when I took the first course with Bruce Joyce, because then I began to understand something was wrong. I’m still blaming myself, it was me” (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data).

4. Recognition that the process of transformation is shared: Nancy long recognized the value of shared learning saying, “I am always cheered when I get into an educational system” (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data). This need for a learning community was demonstrated early in her career:

I just took courses every summer, or most summers, in order to reflect on what I did, to plan for change for the next year, and socially, a lot of teaching, talking to these people who were interested enough to take a summer course, and they were taking their Master’s degree. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

However, in recognizing and confronting her dilemma, and learning the tools of the teacher-researcher, the value of community took on new importance:

The major thing I’ve learned is it’s important to be in a community of learners, both kids and teachers, because if we focused our knowledge, the knowledge we co-construct will be much better, meaning as a sharing of perspectives. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data).

Learning about researching her practice left Nancy with strong convictions about the value of community and the importance of this idea for future generations of teachers:

To be in it as co-workers . . . none of this class system, none of this good, better, best. But, looking at our own strengths and weaknesses, and building with that in mind. And I don’t think that’s an ideal. I think that’s what we have to do, or else young teachers aren’t going to have a chance. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

5. Exploration of new options: Actively engaging in learning in formal settings brought Nancy to a point in her career where she had to walk away from practices that were accepted and expected in her school, but which no longer served her needs, or those of her students. During the summer school course with Jack Whitehead, she “made the decision to break away” (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data). She recalled:

I began to understand what I was doing with Jack, and then I began to do formal research in my classroom. I formalized what I was doing because I brought in ways of collecting data, ways of triangulating the data, ways of having friends involved so that you have some form of validity. So, I began to understand what I was doing, or what I had been doing most of my life . . . I started to be really systematic about collecting evidence about what was going on in my classroom, and how far I progressed in my research question, and the change I expected to have. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

6. Building confidence in a new role: It was within the context of the course that Nancy acquired the knowledge that would allow her to implement her plans for a democratic classroom and she understood that research “is beyond being curious” (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data). Nancy did not have an easy time changing her approach to her practice. She met tremendous resistance in her school, which she describes as “paternalistic” (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data). Building self-confidence in her new role was a slow, and often painful course of action. However, she found strength in the courses where she was learning the tools of the teacher-researcher:

As I gather more confidence in these skills of interviewing, data collection, when I really learn how to analyze data, interview, not chat, but really interview and listen attentively so that I know good probes . . . I can see myself working the rest of my life doing research in one form or another . . . Jack had me hooked once the course was over. I saw what he was saying as making the system bend, because if you investigate your own practice, you’re master of that practice. You can see the good and bad, and there’s no administrator who can tell you otherwise, because you see it. There’s no way they can tell you, and that’s the way it should be. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

7. Reintegration: Nancy’s new perspective on teaching is that of the teacher-researcher, which resulted from a career-long process of transformation:

I think with Jack there was a coming together. I was looking at the end of my career but I was also trying to put it into perspective, and then as I put it into perspective, I wanted to hurry in a year and get everything done that I hadn’t done, and that was to look at my practice dispassionately, improve it, teach.

Improve it as well as I could so as many kids as possible in my classes could look into themselves, could see or find something that was meaningful to them, meaningful to their own life, academically, intellectually. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

When asked how her learning has impacted her teaching, in particular her learning about research, Nancy replied:

I could never go back to teaching without some sort of systematic study of what I am doing, and I would, I think, try to devise some surveys, so that people could give objective answers . . . There would always be the sense of trying to see if I reached as many people as I could. (Snow, 2003, Unpublished raw data)

Chapter 14

Mapping the Journey

Analysis of Nancy's Concept Map

At the completion of the interview, I asked Nancy to do a card-sort, the results of which were used in the construction of a concept map of her understanding of various concepts discussed in the interview. These included

- Learn, learner, learning
- Research, researcher, research
- Teach, teacher, teaching.

Learning, researching, and teaching are understood as *events*; Learner, researcher, and teacher as *actors*; and learn, research and teach as *spheres* within which actors engage in events. I presented Nancy with nine, 2.5 X 3 inch cards with the name of one concept printed on each, and asked her to arrange them on a larger cardboard mat while engaging in think-aloud as she arranged them and articulated relational links across concepts. Nancy was told that she could use all, or as many of the cards as she felt she needed to represent her thinking (see Figures 47 and 48). The think-aloud protocol may be found in Appendix S. My purpose in asking Nancy to sort the cards and construct a concept map was to try to elicit a cognitive perspective of evidence of her understanding of her learning.

Analysis involved the interrogation of the map asking

- How does Nancy see herself undertaking activities within spheres?
- How do the spheres interact?

What emerged was a portrait (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997) of Nancy as a learner, researcher and teacher at the end of a thirty-seven year journey of becoming a teacher-researcher.

The first card placed on the mat was *Learner*. Nancy added the word *I* to the concept of *Learner*, and commented “I start as a learner before I become a teacher, and that’s as truthful as I can be about the way I do things” (Snow, 2003a, Unpublished raw data). From *Learner*, Nancy moved to *Learning*. She explained that learning is a “state or condition” (Snow, 2003a, Unpublished raw data), and the link connecting the concepts *Learner* and *Learning* is *Am always*.

Teach was linked to *Teaching* with *In the process*, and *Teaching* to *Researcher* with *I am a*, resulting in a clear articulation of Nancy's conceptualization of herself as a teacher-researcher. Reiterated in the think-aloud, she said:

From research, this research I might go back to the person as a teacher who creates activities and things for kids, and reconsider what I am doing. From research to teacher to teaching, I adjust my teaching . . . then adjusting my teaching, I go back to the research to find out what I should be teaching, then do further adjustment. (Snow, 2003a, Unpublished raw data)

Researcher is linked to *Researching* with *While*, and *Researching* leads back to *Learner*. *Researching* and *Learner* are linked with *I become* completing a circular map. Nancy describes the process that emerged from the card sort as a "dynamic, non-linear, thoughtful process" (Snow, 2003a, Unpublished raw data). She explained the non-linearity as follows:

These are going on simultaneously often, and often are interchangeable. I could go *Learner*, *Learning* over to *Teach* if I'm just learning content. I could go that way, and when I don't understand. Let's say content to teach, okay? In teaching, if I have a question about something I can become a researcher. (Snow, 2003a, Unpublished raw data)

Using the concepts and links of the card-sort, a portrait of Nancy the teacher-researcher might read:

I, Nancy am a *Learner*. I am always in a *Learning* state or condition. I am learning through action *Research*. I research to *Learn* to have the tools of the *Teacher* to *Teach*. In the process of *Teaching*, I am a *Researcher*. While *Researching* I become a learner.

Member checking produced a dynamic map, wherein Nancy emphasized the centrality of her *I*. She equated the *Learner*, *Researcher* and *Teacher* with the *I*, and placed them in a circular dynamic of *Evolving*, *Becoming* and *Problem solving*. *Learning*, *Research* and *Teaching* are concepts seen in a linear relationship, where *Learning* occurs through *Research*, and *Research* changes *Teaching*. All three, *Learning*, *Research* and *Teaching* are understood to effect change in the *I/Learner/Researcher/Teacher* as she

engages in *Problem solving*, and is *Becoming* or *Evolving*. *Learning* is understood to be a state, condition, context, or process; *Research* and *Teaching*, as processes.

Some concepts were eliminated in the map: *Learn*, *Teach* and *Researching* were seen as redundant. Again, Nancy described the relationship among concepts as a dynamic, non-linear, logical and thoughtful” (Snow, 2003a, Unpublished raw data). It is clear that Nancy sees herself as a teacher-researcher. She is actively involved in her learning about teaching and learning. As she encounters problems, Nancy conducts research on her practice. At the center of the process, which she describes as an evolution or act of becoming, she places herself, her *I*.

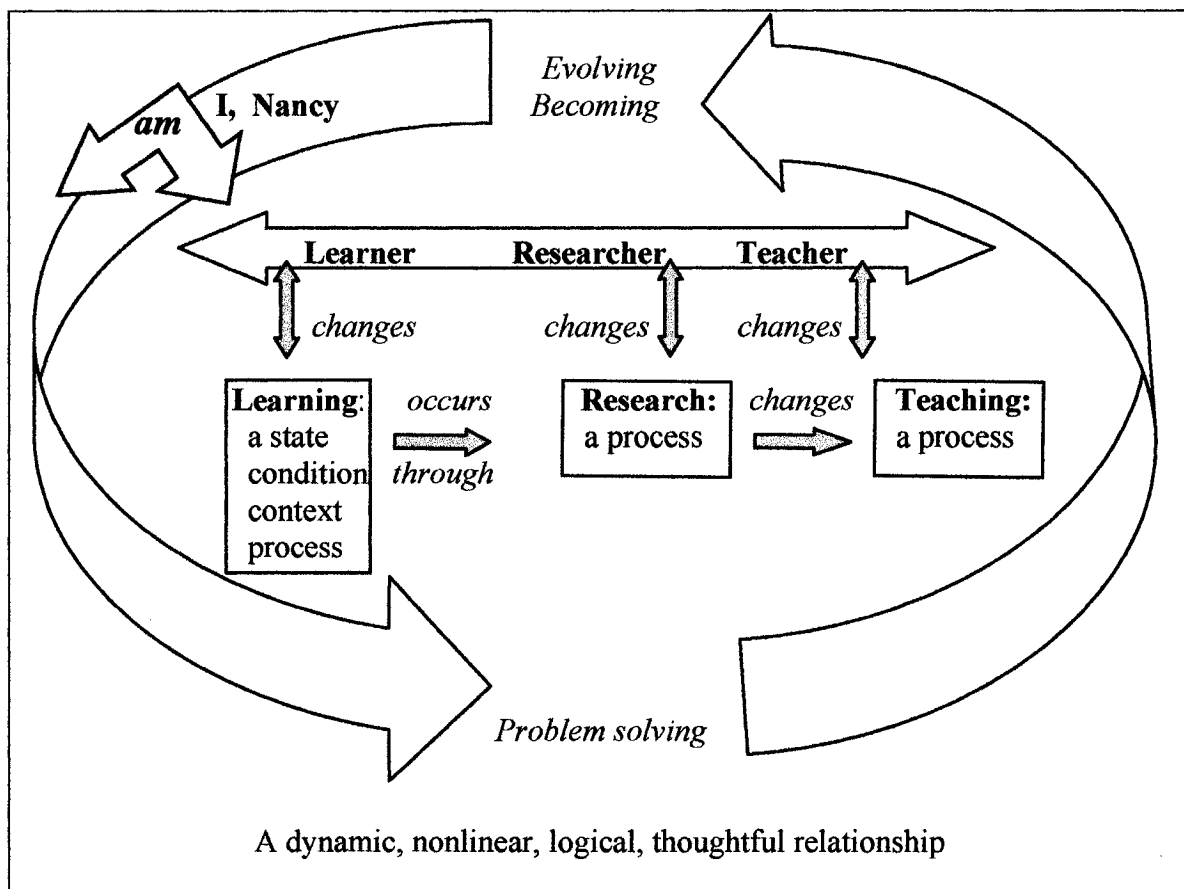


Figure 48. Concept map.

Chapter 15

Anchoring My Claim

Depth-sounding in the Shallows

Initially, I proposed investigating Nancy's learning as I queried her narrative guided by the question:

- How is learning evidenced in the report of the teacher-researcher engaged in self-study?

I shall address this here. As Nancy engaged in self-study (Cole & Knowles, 1995; Hamilton, 1998; Hollingsworth & Sockett, 1994; McNiff, 1993; Whitehead, 1993), she may be characterized within the conceptual framework of the adult learner (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991). *Nancy's Story* is a narrative account of self-study (Cole & Knowles, 1995; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Hamilton, 1998), which provides evidence that she, engaged in a "process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of . . . experience in order to guide future action" (Mezirow, 1998, p. 6). Future action is evidenced in improvement to her professional practices in the high school and the project undertaken in her graduate work (Eraut, 2000; Fenstermacher, 1994). Having determined a need for learning, Nancy enrolled in graduate school. She demonstrated recognition for what she needed to learn, and the appropriate venue for doing so when she elected to take the summer school course in action research. During the course, Nancy struggled but manages to engage in a self-reflective spiral (Elliot, 1994; McNiff, 1993; Merriam, 1998; Whitehead, 1993) where she moved from experiencing the problem of recognition that her valuing of a democratic classroom was being negated in her practice. She moved on to an imagined solution, which she presented at the end of the course. Returning to her high school classroom in the fall, she began to act to bring her practice in line with her values. Implicit in the notion of the democratic classroom is a valuing of other in a community of learners. Nancy acknowledges that she is not alone in her learning. She was scaffolded in her zone of proximal reflection (Reiman, 1999) by her professors and colleagues at summer school, and later, as she engaged in the transformation of her practice (Silcock, 1994) in her classroom, by her critical friend. Evidence of this progression is found in the narrative (Carter, 1993; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, 1999, 2000; Nespor & Barylske, 1991).

Learning as perspective transformation. The narrative provides confirmation of the transformative nature (Mezirow, 1991a, 1994, 1998) of Nancy's learning, which may be understood as meaningful personal and professional change. Although the personal and professional were handled separately in the analysis, I believe that Nancy's learning about self, contributed to her professional development and *vice versa*. While her values defined as meaning schemes (Mezirow, 1991a, 1994, 1998) remained unchanged, the knowledge constructed through self-study reflected new awareness of self and may be understood in terms of transformed meaning perspective. Nancy's self-awareness permitted her to question foundational assumptions of her life and practice, and to challenge expectations she held as well as those held by others. New knowledge resulted from the active construction of meaning through reflection on her experience within the culture of her family, elements of various learning settings, and her values. The learning may be understood as the result of reflection and action. In setting out to do self-study, Nancy experienced a disorienting dilemma as she confronted a contradiction of her values in practice. This initiated an examination of her assumptions, and the planning and enacting of change. In adjusting to her new perspective, Nancy continued the process of finding peace and self-acceptance (Mezirow, 1991a, 1994, 1998).

Learning as teacher-research. Nancy's learning is evidenced in her self-study and the stories (Allen & Shockley, 1996; Calfee & Berliner, 1996, Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Gudmundsdottir, 1995) that unfold which suggest that Nancy's learning may be discovered at the merging of theory and practice. For example the action research project she undertook in 2000 was done in order to bring the valued democratic classroom to life. The work was practitioner-driven, involved critical problem solving and was conducted in a systematic manner. Elements of the research process include:

- Reflection that there was a need for change to her practice
- Systematic framing of questions, collection and analysis of data
- Action, enactment of change
- Evaluation of change
- Sharing of the work in public (McNiff, Lomax, & Whitehead, 1996).

Nancy investigated herself, curriculum, context, learners, and learning. For the purpose of validation, her work was shared publicly at ICTR in Baton Rouge, Louisiana in April

2000, and was continued thereafter. Nancy was committed to undertaking authentic research, having realized that to teach is to do research and learn with the purpose of transformation of practice.

Learning as reconceptualization of self. Nancy's emerging knowledge of self as a teacher-researcher engaged in a problem solving process is evidenced in her self-study. Her activity as a learner, teacher and researcher may be understood to be goal-directed and knowledge-driven. Through experience in her classroom, and in formal learning settings, Nancy constructed and applied knowledge. Through accumulation, assimilation and organization of knowledge there was a shift in Nancy's conceptualization of her selves—learner, teacher, and researcher—to an integrated conceptualization of her self. She reinvents (Mitchell & Weber, (1999) herself as a learner/teacher/researcher. The elaborated schema governs the way Nancy processed information in her planning and problem solving activities, and guided her in the dynamic, nonlinear process she described as evolving and becoming. This understanding of Nancy represents a significant shift from that which she represents from early in her career. She was, from the outset, driven to find solutions to problems encountered in her practice. By the end of her career Nancy came to value and engage in research, to recognize, interpret and respond to elements of the instructional context. She recognized, interpreted and responded to problems in her instructional contexts, both in the high school where she taught and at the university where she engaged in formal learning activities.

Learning as alignment of values and practice. Nancy learns through the explication of her values. Her learning proceeds with a recognition that she had been working in contradiction to her values leading to actions that bring about alignment of values and actions. Nancy's learning may be seen as a story of learning in community with others, as she recognized that the women in the summer school class facilitated her learning the methodology of self-study, and she attributed her success with the project, at least in part, to continued contact with them. As well, learning in community with others may be evidenced in the curriculum work done with her students to whom Nancy refers as co-learners.

Much earlier, family members provided Nancy with models and direct lessons, which she carried with her into her adult life. Her grandmother modeled the teacher

Nancy would become, one who breaks the mold—the former having challenged the traditional roles of women. Nancy, ultimately, challenged a patriarchal school system. From her brothers and children in her neighborhood, Nancy learned how to deal with the bullies of her world, a lesson that carried over and was applied in the final years of her teaching career when Nancy created controversy by introducing innovations in the form of constructivist, student-centered social studies curricula. She refused to abandon her values as embodied in her inquiry curriculum when ordered to do so by the school administration. Nancy's understanding of her values and experience is made explicit through self-study, and as she recounted and made sense of them, she provides evidence of her learning.

Navigating a Shoal: Looking at the Issue of Validity

I believe that in order to promote teacher learning, a model of narrative inquiry engaging teachers in self-study is a strong option for teacher education. The narrative provides a vehicle for preserving and presenting the teacher's voice, visiting the research context, witnessing the activity therein, and understanding theory in practice. However, before pursuing that line of thought I must ascertain the validity of my claim to having disclosed a representation of Nancy's learning. A guiding question for a discussion of validity is posed by Merriam (1989):

- To what extent can the researcher trust the findings of a qualitative case study? (p. 166).

In order to address this question I have surveyed literature on validity in qualitative studies (Altheide & Johnson, 1998; Anfara, Brown & Mangione, 2002; Barbour, 2001; Chilton, 1999; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Eisenhart & Howe, 1992; Hammersley & Gomm, 1997; Johnson, 1997; Lincoln & Guba 2002; Maxwell, 2002; Merriam, 1989; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Norris, 1997; Peshkin, 1993; Reissman, 2002; Stake, 1998; Yin, 1994), seeking a variety of perspectives on the issue. An extensive list of concerns was developed and questions framed. These were reduced to a checklist that I then applied to my methods and findings in order to minimize the possibility of alternate explanations (Appendix T).

Internal validity. 1. Approaching the research question using multiple methods of data collection: *Nancy's Story* was constructed from her written artifacts begun during the

summer school course in July 1999, and from photographs that she used to substantiate claims made in her writing. Working together, we arranged these chronologically working within Nespor and Barylske's (1991) narrative structure. I typed them into a single document, which Nancy then edited, giving unity to her narrative.

The second phase of data collection involved the audio-taped conversation about Nancy's chosen video. Subsequently, in phase three, an audio-taped interview was conducted, Nancy having received the questions in advance of the meeting. Finally, a concept map was constructed following a card sorting activity.

2. The data collection, analysis, interpretation sequence: Data sources and methods of collection were triangulated as confirmatory evidence of Nancy's learning was sought. Data sources include:

- *Nancy's Story*, including self-study documents—written texts and images
- Audio-taped and transcribed unstructured conversation following the viewing of Nancy's videotape
- Audio-taped and transcribed semi-structured interview
- Concept map, including the card-sorting activity and audio-taped and transcribed think-aloud protocol

A variety of data collection methods was used. Procedures included:

- Co-construction of the narrative *Nancy's Story*
- Unstructured conversation
- Semi-structured interview
- Card-sorting and think-aloud

Each source and method evolved from the last. For example, reading, analyzing and member-checking *Nancy's Story* led to questions about her classroom practices. The method of self-selected video and conversation was chosen as a follow-up as it was more consistent with the assumption of the centrality of the *I* in self-study than, for example, classroom observation might be. During the conversation, and member checking of transcriptions and analyses, Nancy began to refer to herself as a teacher-researcher. This led to the interview and questions about her experiences with learning, teaching, and research. During the course of the interview, analysis and member checking the evolution of Nancy from an uncomprehending student exposed to research, through consumer, to

producer of research was uncovered. The final round of data collection, the concept map, allowed Nancy to make explicit her present conceptualization of herself as teacher/learner/researcher as embodied in her *I*.

3. Prolonged engagement with the participant in the research context: Data collection began in January of 2000 when Nancy provided me with a copy of the self-study report begun at summer school, various other writings she had chosen to be incorporated into *Nancy's Story*, and a selection of photographs. The conversation on the content of the video took place in March 2002. I interviewed Nancy in May 2003, and the initial card sort activity was done the same day. The final concept map was constructed in July 2003.

4. Member-checks: Prior to and during analysis frequent member-checks were done. Hard copies of *Nancy's Story*, the transcribed conversation, the interview transcript, the card-sort mat, concept map and think-aloud protocol were shared with Nancy for the purpose of member-checks in order to ensure the accuracy of the representation prior to analyses. After the first inductive, open coding round of analysis of each protocol lists of *in vivo* codes were discussed with Nancy. After the second inductive round emergent categories and the assignment of codes to categories were discussed with Nancy. As narratives-within were developed from the larger texts, *Nancy's Story* and the interview transcript, each was member-checked. Each round of analysis and interpretation of each narrative-within was followed by a member-check, as was the case with the conversation and the concept map. Once all analyses and interpretations and summary reports were completed, a final member-check was done.

Interpretive validity. 1. Preserving the voice of the participant: Through the use of verbatim evidence, Nancy's voice is present throughout the embedded case study. Large chunks of verbatim data are used to support interpretive claims. Interpretation is, for the most part, low inference. A possible exception may be found in the deductive analyses of the narrative, conversation and interview when a framework of learning as perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1991a) is applied. Nonetheless, Nancy's voice is heard through the use of verbatim evidence of her passage through the various phases of transformation.

2. Achieving agreement on the meaning of the experience: Through extensive member checking Nancy and I reached agreement. As each data set was constructed and

as each round of analysis was completed, Nancy and I met to review the documents. There was a high level of agreement throughout. On the few occasions where there was not, Nancy's insights served to inform me and her perspective prevailed.

3. Peer review: Peer review takes two forms. In the first case, initial findings from the study were presented for public validation and the issue of validity discussed at ICTR 2004 in La Jolla, California with a group of eleven teacher-researchers, some of whom teach in public schools, others at the university. Checklists for establishing paradigmatic validity (Appendix U) and narrative credibility (Appendix V) framed the discussion. As well, an initial draft of the *Checklist to Minimize Threats to Validity* (Appendix T) was discussed. Suggestions made were considered and incorporated. For example, one point on the checklist—Are methods and procedures recorded in detail?—was seen to be redundant as the matter was addressed in other items of the checklist. Other suggestions were considered and rejected. It was suggested that other teacher stories be collected and analyzed in order that cross-case analyses be conducted. It was also suggested that some kind of quantitative analysis would contribute to the rigor of the study. While reflecting legitimate concerns, these ideas are seen as being beyond the scope and paradigm of this study and, therefore, have not been incorporated.

In the second case, discussions with an expert in the field of qualitative research in education, Dr. Mark Aulls, professor of instructional psychology and research methods in the Department of Educational and Counseling Psychology of the Faculty of Education of McGill University were held throughout the conduct of the study.

4. Credibility and consistency with the experience of others: In order to address the issues of credibility and consistency of Nancy's experience with that of other practitioners I enlisted three colleagues as critical friends. Two, Art and Jack, are career professionals, holding graduate degrees in education. The third, Tammy, is a novice and has completed a Bachelor of Education degree. They were asked to read *Nancy's Story*, and consider it from two perspectives, paradigmatic validity and narrative credibility. I provided a copy of the narrative and two checklists (Appendices U and V). The first dealt with paradigmatic validity (Creswell, 1998; Eisner, 1991; Elliot, 1994; Hamilton, 1998; McNiff, 1993; Mezirow, 1991; Reason, 1998; Silcock, 1994; Whitehead, 1993), and

asked participants whether they recognized Nancy's work as research using the criteria in the checklists.

There was agreement that *Nancy's Story* constitutes research, however each felt that certain criteria were not adequately met. For example, one felt that it gave only the researcher's interpretation. Two felt that the view of all members of the various groups engaging with Nancy—her students and colleagues, for example—were inadequately represented. All recognized Nancy's need to reflect on professional practices in her stated purpose and the circumstances leading to reflection, action and change. *Nancy's Story* was seen as systematic inquiry into experience leading to understanding and alternate theory that followed a plan tailored to her particular experiential phenomenon. Each recognized a research question that guided Nancy as she explored her experience; evidence of data analysis organized around themes indicating pivotal events; detailed description, interpretation, and explanation; and a plan for action. The critical friends read, in *Nancy's Story*, a report of the enactment of change. However, only two of the three found evidence of learning in terms of the planning and evaluation of change.

The three critical friends agreed that *Nancy's Story* has a ring-of-truth. Jack wrote:

Is there a ring-of truth? My answer would be it was a symphony of bells . . . a soulful presentation of how one struggles to be fully human and alive in the face of sometimes unforgiving and suffocating world . . . home, school, community. (J. Adams, personal communication, April 2004)

There was agreement in terms of the coherence, consensus and instrumental utility of the narrative. Art asserted that "as teachers we must always reflect on what we do" (A. Farinha, personal communication, April 2004). Tammy concurred:

It is wonderfully woven. It is Nancy's bared soul, trials and effort that give the greatest credence to the story. It makes me realize that I have far to go, yet so closely resembles many of the experiences and questions I have about teaching. Weighing what I was asked to do in the classroom versus using methods based on my personal values has often left me at crossroads. (T. Romanuk, personal communication, April 2004)

Jack, a seasoned professional adds:

I have been in education, professionally 31 years and I felt I was hearing my shadow talk. Her vision of education and *spirit* of teaching are kindred to my own. (J. Adams, personal communication, April 2004)

Design integrity. There is a single logic that I have attempted to use to integrate the research question, data collection and analyses. At all times I have attempted to respect the fundamental assumption of the *I* in self-study. I recognize that I have violated that assumption with the deductive analyses by imposing a theoretical framework drawn from Mezirow's work on Nancy's living theory. I did this because I hope to expose the work of the teacher-researcher as *learning* to those working from alternate perspectives. I believe this to be justifiable.

Theoretical validity. In this study I have applied a particular theory of learning. Mezirow's theory of perspective transformation is used to trace the trajectory of Nancy's learning and explain it. Concepts and categories derived from the theory were applied consistently to various data sets, and relationships among these support the theory that learning took place and was transformative in nature. However, this did not apply to the concept map (Figures 47 and 48) because the nature of the data did not lend itself to a linear analysis looking at change over time.

Motivated bias. In order to define my goal as researcher in practical and political terms, I look at my position in the research process and biases brought to the endeavor. Hammersly and Gomm (1997) encourage the researcher to declare motivated biases in terms of practical or political goals. The goal of my study is to explore the potential of self-study as an instructional mode. It is my belief, based on personal experience, and on what I have come to understand of Nancy's experience, that as teachers engage in self-study, we learn, and that the learning may be evidenced as improved teaching practice. Experience also tells me that engaging in self-study is a powerful and empowering experience. Through self-study I have been able to recognize myself as a living contradiction (Whitehead, 1993), and to act deliberately to bring my practice in line with my values. Instruction situated in self-study carries the potential for transformation of more than just the individual teacher. Through self-study, we may truly become the architects of our schools.

I began my self-study at summer school in 1999, along with Nancy. I question how this circumstance has influenced the research process and its outcome. I believe that Nancy has withheld nothing of relevance to the study. Rather, we share a concern for what we see as a decline in our local school system, and a commitment to the idea that teachers engaged in self-study may bring about positive change. This possibility has caused each of us to feel frightened at times, in particular when we look at the potential ramifications of making our stories public. My familiarity with the public school system has contributed to a sense of complicity with Nancy. I have been able to understand, and at times empathize, with Nancy as she has written or spoken about her experience. She has been able to be open and specific in her accounts because of my membership in Québec's public school system. Although we have taught in different regions, we lived—and relived—many of the same events, and this has contributed to a depth of understanding that would not likely have been possible with an outsider.

However, I have remained an outsider to some degree. I met Nancy toward the end of her career, and know her as a child and young woman only through her reports. I do not know firsthand the culture of the school in which Nancy taught. I have been able to work outside the particular patriarchal system she described and longed to change, while at the same time accessing it through her experience. In making her story public through this thesis, Nancy is continuing to use her voice, while I provide a vehicle without becoming entangled in her workplace context.

CONSEQUENCES



Figure 49: The Scarborough River

The Other Shore

Reflecting, learning, moving forward.

Becoming. The River is in my blood.

My blood, in The River.

Ahead, in the distance

Two banks converge

The River. Me.

In my

I

Chapter 16

Reflections at Anchor

I have come from walking by the river

Marveling how it renews itself

—Elizabeth Brewster, *Renewable Glory*

I believe that there may be implications to be drawn for teacher education from my inquiry. In order to understand whether or not the findings represent knowledge that might be framed as a theory to guide future action in addressing local problems, I will return briefly to the responses from critical friends where I looked for support for a claim to pragmatic validity for the idea of narrative self-study as an instructional model.

After reading *Nancy's Story*, Tammy wrote:

I will akin my teaching style/methods more closely with my values. Teaching has to be a continual journey; quest for change; time to step back and reflect and evolve. I will be stagnant if I do not make these changes (T. Romanuk, personal communication, April 2004).

Jack understood Nancy's learning thus:

The human person has, deep within the soul, a quest to harbor meaning and purpose for their life. The real learner is a lifetime researcher of all that is mystery and sacred (J. Adams, personal communication, April 2004).

I infer that *Nancy's Story* has had an impact on the thinking of these teachers. However, I believe that first hand experience with inquiry, in particular narrative and self-study would outweigh the vicarious experience of reading the work of another.

Currents

Teaching is hard, messy work, if done well, and it isn't always well done. It has been described as a "complex, dynamic, ill-structured process" (Leinhardt, 1993, p. 1). There are a few ways to pursue—or survive—a career in teaching, one of which is to become a mechanically proficient technician. Another is to appear to be so. A third is to attempt to construct knowledge and develop expertise in any or all aspects of the complex and ill-defined task, to move beyond technical rationality (Habermas, 1972) to become a

“professional educator” (J. Whitehead, personal communication, July 16, 1999). Current curriculum reforms developed by the Québec Ministry of Education (2000) add the role of researcher to the job description of the local elementary, secondary and college teacher as innovations are implemented, and the added responsibility holds great potential for teacher learning. Still, when I consider that, until now, teacher professionalism has usually been equated with technical expertise, I am left wondering just how we will manage. If we are to take this opportunity to address a new curriculum, and a new attitude to the profession, which challenges present, deep-seated ambivalence, I believe that it is critical that practitioners engage in appropriate research practices and produce credible reports that reflect change.

Charting a New Course

Early in this inquiry I asked how a psychology of instruction that will support the learning of the teacher might be understood, and how the learning of the teacher might be explained. Resnick (1981) has called for a “cognitive psychology of instruction” (p. 660), framed as the study of “complex forms of cognitive behavior, the role of knowledge in human behavior” (p. 660), and the design of instruction that will “put learners in positions that allow them to construct well-structured knowledge” (p. 660). Glaser (1982) proposed five principles to guide work in the field of instructional psychology:

- Attention to performance and learning
- Domain-specific theories of knowledge
- A prescriptive theory of instructional design
- Theory oriented to the individual
- Instruction, which adapts to individual progress (p. 45).

Instruction is portrayed by Calfee (1992) as “instances of linguistic and metalinguistic communication patterns” (p. 170). “Instruction as communication supports the view of the student as an active participant in the learning process—and the *teacher* as an active learner in the instructional process” (p. 170, emphasis original). Finally, Berliner (1992), reminds us that “knowledge is contextualized, it is situated, it is enmeshed in webs of meaning” (p. 143), and he emphasizes the importance of story as the medium-of-choice for such knowledge. Taken together, these ideas would support a framework for a model of instruction (Figure 50) based on perspective transformation through teacher-inquiry,

including self-study. As teacher-researchers accept the challenge to find support for value claims, they may discover, and opt to engage with, contradictions to their values in practice. Resolution of the contradiction may subsequently lead to change in professional practices. Such contradictions may be seen as sources of disequilibrium which when recognized by the teacher-researcher may initiate critical self-reflection and action. Action may involve the determined consideration of multiple perspectives and the formulation of new perspectives. A new perspective, one that aligns values and actions, may then be brought to practice. A narrative report of the change process provides access for members of school and academic communities alike to knowledge constructed by the practitioner. As an ensemble, the theories of cognitive functioning, transformative learning, teacher-research and narrative inquiry provide a framework within which a teacher-researcher may be observed to be learning and providing evidence of that learning in credible reports of inquiry on practice.












Narrative	Teacher-research/ Self-study	Teacher learning/ Perspective transformation	Schema operations	Problem solving
				
Framing a situation	Formulate value claim	Existing meaning schemes/ perspectives	Existing schema	Awareness of potential problems
Emergence of a problem	Identify value/practice contradiction	Experience disorienting dilemma	Input new event	Specify task
Resolution	Reflect on practice	Self-examination	Find/create schema	Represent task
		Critical assessment of assumptions		
		Recognize that process of transformation is shared		
		Explore options for new roles, relationships, actions		Generate possible operators
	Act to align values and practice	Plan course of action		Select operator
		Acquire knowledge/skills for implementing plan		
		Provisionally try out new roles	Generate/store event/inference	Try operator
Consequences	Validate claim and evidence of change publicly	Build competence and confidence	Output information about events	
	Reflect on future action	Reintegration with new perspective		Solve

Figure 50: Framework for an Instructional Model Supporting Teacher Learning as Perspective Transformation Through Narrative Inquiry (Adapted from Deaux & Wrightsman, 1988; Hayes & Simon, 1974; Nespor & Barylske, 1991; Mezirow, 1991; Whitehead, 1993).

Roles. Fundamental to an inquiry curriculum for teacher education is the discourse of practice. “Instruction becomes a two-way endeavor in which students talk and teachers listen . . . a paradigm shift from impartation to engagement” (Calfee, 1992, p. 171). The teacher-educator, in this case, becomes a co-constructor of knowledge as the teacher-researcher is facilitated in the process of learning through research on practice. An awareness of the latter’s “level of proximal development” (Anderson-Patton & Bass, 2002, p. 113) becomes necessary in order that the teacher-researcher be effectively scaffolded in a “zone of proximal reflection” (Reiman, 1999, p. 601). The knowledge of both teacher-researcher and teacher-educator may be constructed using the narrative process and represented in narrative products. A possible representation of the dynamic, interactive instructional model may be found in Figure 51. Guidelines for the teacher-educator’s role in supporting the teacher-researcher are suggested by Reiman (1999). There ought to be:

- Acceptance of feelings
- Praise and encouragement
- Acknowledgement and clarification of ideas
- Prompts to inquiry
- Provision of information
- Provision of direction
- Problem identification

Teacher-Educator	Teacher-Researcher
I facilitate the teacher-researcher's attempt to frame a problem I ask what the teacher-researcher cares about in education I ask what constitutes evidence I contribute to a co-constructed narrative	I search for a problem in my practice I formulate a value claim I begin my narrative report of my self-study
I respond to the value claim I facilitate the structuring of the inquiry I contribute to a co-constructed narrative	I imagine a solution I determine criteria for evidence I continue my narrative
I support the teacher-researcher in a zone-of-proximal-reflection I contribute to a co-constructed narrative	I act in the direction of the imagined solution I gather evidence I continue my narrative
I support the teacher-researcher in a zone-of-proximal-reflection I contribute to a co-constructed narrative	I evaluate my actions I find confirming/disconfirming evidence that I live my values in my practice I continue my narrative
I ask what constitutes validity I contribute to a co-constructed narrative	I modify my actions I continue my narrative
I ask the teacher-researcher to submit the inquiry for public validation I contribute to a co-constructed narrative	I determine criteria for evaluation of the modifications I continue my narrative
I ask how the inquiry might be taken forward I continue to research my practice	I submit my inquiry for public validation I continue my narrative
	I formulate a new problem I continue my narrative

Figure 51: Interactive Instructional Model (Adapted from Whitehead, 1993; Reiman, 1999).

The teacher-educator desirous of fostering transformation and the teacher-researchers engaging in inquiry on practice will constitute a discourse community. This characteristically requires of all participants:

- Emotional maturity
- Awareness of self
- Empathy
- Control
- Self-motivation
- Self-regulation
- Political awareness
- Trustworthiness (Mezirow, 2000).

Not all teacher-researchers returning to the role of student in formal and non-formal professional development venues will be prepared to engage in such learning. Mezirow (2000) proposes “a set of conditions for optimizing adult learning” (p.13):

To more fully and freely participate in discourse, participants must have the following:

- More accurate and complete information
- Freedom from coercion and distorting self-deception
- Openness to alternative points-of-view: empathy and concern about how others think and feel
- The ability to weigh evidence and assess arguments objectively
- Greater awareness of the context of ideas and, more critically, reflectiveness of assumptions, including their own
- An equal opportunity to participate in the various roles of discourse
- Willingness to seek understanding and agreement and to accept a resulting best judgment as a test of validity until new perspectives, evidence, or arguments are encountered and validated through discourse as yielding a better judgment.

(Mezirow, 2000, pp.13-14)

That learning ought to continue throughout a teacher’s career must be accepted as a given. Teachers need knowledge—state-of-the-art knowledge, lots of it, in a variety of

genres—in order to teach effectively, an admirable end with unclear means. Marilyn Cochran-Smith writes that:

As we enter the 21st century . . . the future of teacher education is at best uncertain . . . There is no clear consensus about what teachers need to know, who should provide education for teachers, and what role university-based teacher preparation should play in school improvement. (Cochran-Smith, 2000, p. 163)

This thought is disturbing, and ought to provoke those concerned to search for solutions. Schools of education based on a model of technical rationality have served to foster a separation of research on teaching and learning and practices in classrooms (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Davis & Sumara, 1997; Schon, 1987), and many current practices are ineffective. The proposed alternative, my original contribution to knowledge, recognizes the teacher's need for a knowledge base connected to both theory and practice, the connection being made through reflection, engagement with problems, communication with others, and action. I have melded qualitative research traditions in order to make explicit how the learning of the teacher might be evidenced to those in the research community working from varying perspectives, and I have made the same accessible to practitioners and policy makers with an interest in the practitioner's story as well. Teacher learning is explained here in terms of standards of practice determined by the teacher working to align values, theory, and inquiry in practice, along with the representations of this work, and the process of making the learning public through self-study. Finally, I believe the four conceptualizations of teacher learning—perspective transformation, teacher-research, alignment of values and practice, and reconceptualization of self—taken together provide a unique understanding of structures supporting teachers' narrative reports of practice.

Chapter 17

Sailing Close-Hauled Once Again

I have a feeling that my boat
 Has struck, down there in the depths,
 against a great thing.
 And nothing
 happens! Nothing . . . Silence . . . Waves . . .
 –Nothing happens? Or has everything happened,
 and we are standing now, quietly, in the new life?
 –Juan Ramon Jiménez, *Oceans*

Framing the Situation

At summer school in 1999 I wrote my value claim:

In my work as a teacher I am accountable to my students, for it is the student that I value above all. I can be happy with the job I have done if my student is comfortable, safe and senses that I love and value each and every one. This doesn't happen often. Generally, there is a tension that exists in our classroom that is generated by the needs of the children, and my inability to read them. My inability is a function of many things. I may be preoccupied with issues of curriculum (formal), or bureaucracy, or the politics of the school. Sometimes I just get tired. But because I value the children, and their childhoods, there is a pull that brings me back to them. This, it seems to me, is the process of accountability in my work. It is collaborative, and it drives the real learning—theirs, mine and ours—that takes place (McBride, 1999, unpublished raw data).

Then, my concerns were for my students in Room Two. However, my journey on The River has taken me far beyond that place, all the while maintaining a hold on my values.

Emergence of a Problem

In writing *Working on the Underbelly of the Underdog*, I understood that it would be necessary to work outside Room Two in order to live my values in my practice. The disequilibrium that began at summer school persisted in me, as I persisted in writing my

self-study. I questioned fundamental assumptions about ideals, policies and practices supporting, and supported by, our school system—the very ideals, policies that had supported me in my practice.

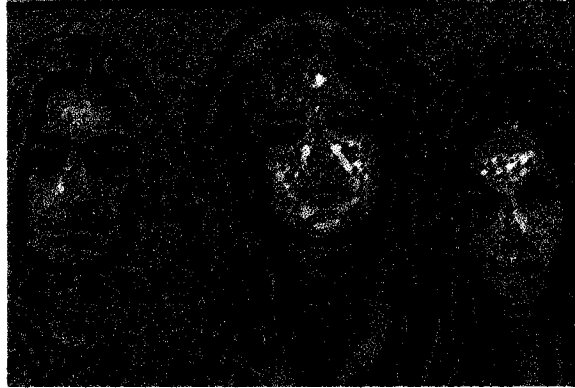


Figure 52: Leaving Room Two

Through questioning, I was able to frame my dilemma as a problem. I wanted to make a contribution to knowledge of teacher learning based on my own experience, believing that other practitioners could benefit and in so doing, pass on the benefits to their students. But, how?

Resolution

A shift in my focus from the learning of the learning disabled adolescent to my own learning led me to enroll in graduate courses with an emphasis on theories of adult learning and development, and on instructional practices in higher education. At the same time, I continued to participate in a graduate seminar on inquiry learning where I brought the notion of the teacher-as-inquirer and questions about teacher learning to the table. A faculty vacancy provided me with an opportunity to teach teachers. I was hired as a part-time lecturer to teach a graduate course in educational psychology in the summer of 2001. I have continued teaching the course, and have begun to work with practitioners in formal learning contexts, bringing the idea of inquiry-on-practice to as many of my colleagues as possible, while developing and testing my instructional model. I believe that if we can reflect critically on practice, some of the problems encountered by the special needs student in the mainstream might be appreciated.

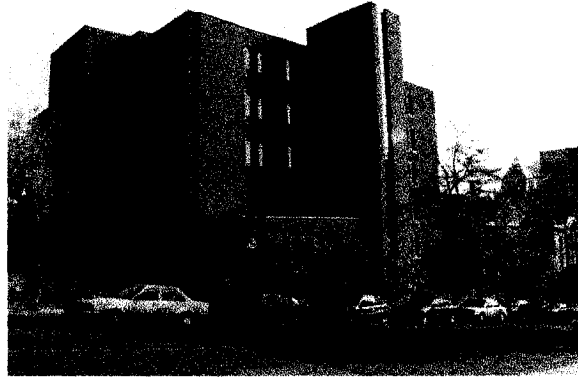


Figure 53: Into Another Hard Shell

As a teacher-educator my value claim has been extended:

In my work as a teacher-educator I am accountable to my students, and through them, to the learners in their care, for it is the student that I value above all. I can be happy with the job I have done if my student is comfortable, safe, and senses that I value each and every one as they engage in learning in an inquiry context. The process of accountability in our work is collaborative and reciprocal, as we work to improve practices, and, ultimately, the learning experiences of our students. (McBride, 2001, unpublished raw data)

At the end of the first course I delivered a paper to the class at our mini-conference. I wrote:

Working The River

Paper presented at the Talented and Gifted 314-526T Mini-conference

Montréal, QC, July 24, 2001

In the introduction to a thought paper on instructional psychology I wrote the following:

After conducting a workshop on action research for administrators and directors of my school board last August, I recorded a reflection in my research diary:

My principal walked me to my car, and the asphalt hurled heat skyward. I wavered, unsure. The butterflies hovered, circled and departed, and I understood something. The teacher doing research works The River . . .

The river valley is constituted of theory and research of a psychology of instruction, realized in the theory-based practices of the teacher-researcher. I thought it was important to travel back to this thought as I planned to teach this course for adult learners, to understand why I want to undertake this work, and to know how to be true to my values and purpose as I did so.

In stating my values as a professional educator when I audited a summer school course two years ago, I claimed to value my students above all. Two years ago, in seeking evidence to support this claim, I was confronted with the realization that I did not always put my students first, indeed, I had put them at risk by developing innovative learning opportunities for them in my self-contained special education classroom and then releasing them to traditional mainstream classrooms to face discomfort, humiliation, failure. I committed to the task of working outside my classroom in order that the integration of special needs students might become a safer, more humane and profitable journey. At the conclusion of the summer school course the professor challenged me to take my work forward at a time when I had serious doubts about continuing to teach at all. He wrote:

Judy raises the fundamental issue of whether we can sustain our relationships in a way which supports our engagements both with our students and with the wider social influences so that we can help transform the social order in a way which is more supportive of our educational values. (J. Whitehead, 1999, personal communication)

I was challenged to “help reconstruct the field of educational psychology as a cognitive science” (J. Whitehead, 1999, personal communication). This seemed a daunting—no—an impossible task. I was at the same time flattered and frightened. But, slowly, I came to understand what I might do in small ways to accomplish this reconstruction, all the while working through my values with the kids I love

so much, and with others outside my classroom—the teachers who might greet them when they leave my care. Jack was encouraging, gently emphatic, and wrote that a reconstruction of cognitive psychology could:

Focus on your abilities as an educator and an artist to see the qualities of humanity in those students whose behaviors appear to lack care and compassion for others . . . to help to reconstruct *educational* psychology, through your self-studies of your experiences as a professional educator. The reconstruction could focus on the ways you express your meanings through aesthetic forms and how you hold these in my mind in your educative relationships with your students. (J. Whitehead, personal communication, 1999)

His words reverberated insistently, much like the concentric ripples in suddenly disturbed still water, until the terror I experienced during summer school abated. It was my special needs students in the end who provided me with a reason to continue to teach, and implicitly, to learn. And, so, I have begun to work outside Room Two, to conduct workshops, address undergraduate classes, present at conferences, and finally, to teach this graduate course this summer.

Theories and theory.

The turbid river might be lizard-green, or gray,
Or yellowish

—May Swenson

Jack Mezirow (1991) conceptualized adult learning as the consequence of confrontation with a disorienting dilemma. The adult learner may recognize a mismatch between knowledge, beliefs and values, and alternate perspectives encountered in a particular culture or environment. The process of learning is understood to involve transformation of perspective, and this may be accomplished through reflection, planning and enacting change, followed by reintegration with a new perspective. Such learning may be incremental, a slow and reasoned process. Or, the learning may be epochal, often difficult and frightening. In either case, new beliefs, feelings and actions are integrated into previous knowledge frameworks.



Figure 54: Adult learners

Mezirow framed this theory more than twenty-five years ago. It has been, and is being, questioned, tested, challenged. Still it stands as a possible explanation for the learning done by adults in formal and non-formal settings. It provides me with a theoretical framework from within which to understand my learning as an adult, and now as a teacher of adult learners, the learning of my students. It is from within this framework that I have begun to design a course for educators working with talented and gifted learners. I have begun this design work for a course, which I hope to have the privilege of teaching again and again; one that I feel must reflect theories that support the learning of adults, and that incorporates fundamental theories of the teaching of talented and gifted learners as well. I have tried to provide an enriching (Davis & Rimm, 1998) environment within which to learn, and within which real problems might be posed and addressed. I have tried to raise the bar, to provide the opportunity for an intellectual stretch, a reflection of my interpretation of theories of acceleration (Davis & Rimm, 1998). In this course I have attempted to place the student—each of you—at the centre of my concern. I stated at the outset:

The course offers an overview of key concepts and a range of issues in the education of talented and gifted learners, including a review of theory and research tailored by the student to her or his professional and/or practical concerns (McBride, 2001).

Such learning puts the learner at the centre. Theories, models, ideas and practices, questions and knowledge, processes and constraints, successes and failures may be studied and shared. The exploration of the self, putting *I* at the center of learning and practice, and in this particular course, becoming aware of one's own talents and gifts and bringing them into one's practice have become my goal as your teacher. Your living educational theory may be the consequence of your unforeseen journey on this fast-moving and turbulent river.

This particular river journey. I am, in the end, accountable to you the learner whom I have been hired to teach. I am sure that, in terms of commonly understood definitions of *teaching*, I have not taught. I did read the texts and the journals. I did not reiterate what has been written by others in lectures. Two tiny lectures, if indeed I can refer to them as lectures, were delivered. One to emphasize the importance of concerns for ethical issues, and a teaser that I hope will encourage you to explore formal psychological theories of learning, in order that you understand what your students are doing, what you have done this summer, and what I hope you will continue to do in an authentic and exciting way. Other than that I guess I really didn't teach in the usual sense. A few students gave me their observations and comments at times during the course. From these, I know that I have much to learn:

We were introduced to a very different type of teaching and learning... We were given the steering wheel . . . We spent a great deal of time discussing the course outline after reading it silently, and some students were still unclear on several concepts . . . We missed having a standard text . . . Much data is outdated, and the information is not straightforward . . . I was sorely lacking in information . . . You spoke quickly and in low tones, it was often difficult to hear . . . We all felt it was a sink or swim situation. This struck fear in some and brought out the fight in others (McBride, unpublished raw data, 2001).

It was suggested that I had put the bar too high. I do think, nevertheless, that I have offered you an opportunity to learn. For each of you I have attempted to create a situation where you alone might face that disorienting dilemma of which

Mezirow (1991) writes. I wanted you to feel a tension in this learning setting, and I wanted you to feel uncomfortable with what you understood the teaching of talented and gifted learners to be. Disequilibrium is, I believe, a condition of learning.

We began the course with value claims, constructed knowledge of theory and its application in models and in your practices. It has been up to you to acknowledge alternative perspectives. If you have, these will be recognized in the evidence of your learning. And this will be evidenced in the work you do after you leave here today. You have been offered the opportunity for reflection, planning, and in some cases the enactment of change that is personal, belonging to your professional practices alone. The course is finished. Now it is up to you to take your learning forward, to move into the reintegration phase of your learning. For all of us—including myself because I too have been learning—I believe there is new knowledge. For some of us the learning has been incremental, a thoughtful, logical process. For others the learning has been epochal, a jarring, life-changing process that once begun, continues endlessly, much like the flow of *The River*.

A passenger on The River.

“Come to the edge,” he said.

They said, “We are afraid.”

“Come to the edge,” he said.

They came.

He pushed them. And they flew.

— Appollinaire, (in Eisner, 1997)

One student in this class who chose to engage on a risky river voyage in order to try to understand the particular gifts and talents she may one day bring to her professional practice is Joyce. Exploring her own gifts and shortcomings, she has undertaken a self-study of herself as a creative teacher. Early in this course she confided that she was incapable of leading a discussion and she wanted to meet to discuss alternative assignments. When we met it occurred to me that the course might provide an opportunity for her to explore her barrier as well as the

creativity that she brings to our profession. Let's listen to the story of her progress on *The River* (At this point in the Mini-conference Joyce presented her narrative self-study report for public validation).

Looking forward to other Rivers, other journeys.

I am still the river.
 You passersby
 Who share my journey,
 You move and change,
 I move and am the same;
 You move and are gone,
 I move and remain

—Anne Ridler

Many theories make perfect, logical sense to me as a teacher. Constructivism, and schema theory as ways of understanding how we learn and how our learning may be represented ring true to me as a teacher, learner and researcher. Dewey advocated discovery learning, and I hope you have found an opportunity to discover new ideas in this learning environment. Bandura's ideas about modeling make good practical sense to me, and I have attempted to model good learning and teaching strategies in our brief time together. Vygotsky's idea of a zone of proximal development is a sound one I believe, and one I have tried to employ, although time constraints have limited the possibilities for scaffolding. Time. Is there ever enough available to accomplish all that we set out to do as concerned professional educators? Regardless, I understand that real teaching and learning cannot be defined by bells or division of term. You have my email address. Stay in touch if you wish. Continue the conversation that I invited you into on day one of the course.

In the end, there is your own theory of learning as it will apply to the teaching of the talented and gifted learner. Or possibly to any learner in your care, if that is how you opt to use your knowledge. Your living educational theory. It is ephemeral. It will evolve. It will evade you altogether at times. Drying up, like *The River* of a long, hot summer when there is no rain. Don't doubt it. Take it

forward. And when there is water after a drought, build your craft, ask questions, do good work, make it public. Seek to answer questions like “Can we help transform the social order in a way which is more supportive of our educational values?” (J. Whitehead, personal communication, 1999), and if the answer is “Yes”, or even a tentative “Maybe . . .” I believe that *you* may believe that you *are* continuing your own good work.

My values remain unchanged. I value the learner above all else. My ideology is learner-centered with strong influences from the social and the academic. The vocational seems to take care of itself in this profession. If not, I imagine that you might have found somewhere else to be during this hot July. Parked on a beach by a river, perhaps. I thank you for your trust. It has been a pleasure to learn with you.

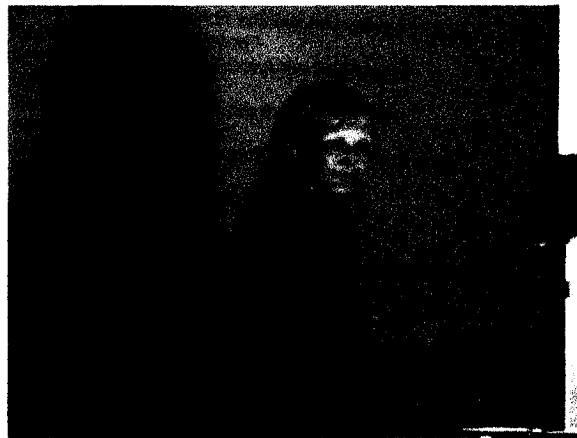


Figure 55: A Teacher-Educator

Consequences

“How do I, a teacher-researcher, contribute to knowledge of teacher education as I explore my values in my practice through self-study?” is the question with which I began this inquiry. I have offered perspectives—shared and separate—of personal and professional experience, and presented representations of professional selves to the educational research community for consideration and critique. I have done so because I

believe it is important to look across paradigms in order to enlarge our understandings of the experience of teachers working in classrooms. The metaphor of war has been used numbingly in debates on perspectives, value and validity of research in education. It appears that there is agreement on the purpose of the enterprise that is, understanding the nature of teaching and learning. The core of the controversy seems to be pride of paradigm (Cobb & Bowers, 1999; Anderson & Herr, 1999). Who is doing good research, where, and how? Following the direction of Anderson, Reder, and Simon (1995, 1996, 1998) practitioners may learn about the nature of knowledge in terms of processes and structures, memory and problem-solving, sub-skills and strategies individual learners come to use, and how these contribute to understanding and knowing. Others approach the same questions about teaching and learning in what may be seen as a complementary manner. Insights resulting from this research can inform the practice of the teacher on the importance of context, how our students and the curriculum form an interactive system (Greeno, 1997). Bowers and Cobb (1999) have helped clarify some practitioners thinking on how various perspectives jigsaw together. As well, they have given language to an intuition held by many of us when they say that theory and practice work in a reflexive relationship. Something else is held to be true by many professional educators. Good teaching practices are theory-based. Our theoretical frameworks, which are evolving in response to issues and problems encountered in our classrooms and schools do not give us all of the knowledge we need to work effectively. We need the complementary knowledge of formal theory tested by others as well. Furthermore, we understand that what we know is constituted in terms of our professional selves and the theories we hold as a result of teaching and researching our practices, our living educational theories. Ultimately, I believe that the products of such inquiry should serve to inform researchers working in other settings, within other paradigms. However, Herr and Anderson (1999) believe that “the insider status of the researcher, the centrality of action, the requirement of spiraling self-reflection on action, and the intimate dialectical relationship of research to practice, all make practitioner research alien (and often suspect) to researchers” (p.12, parentheses original), and they suggest that:

Academics tend to be comfortable with practitioner research as a form of local knowledge that leads to change within the practice setting itself, but are less

comfortable when it is presented as public knowledge with epistemic claims beyond the practice setting. (p.14)

Inquiry conducted on teaching practice by the teacher is seldom considered legitimate by standards of validity upheld within the academic community. In conducting this inquiry and exposing teacher selves to academic others, I hope to foster the idea of a community of practice (Pallas, 2001) that crosses institutions.

The metaphor of war has become ordinary. The power, lost. Yet the controversy continues (Pallas, 2001), and the marginalization of the practitioner at the hand of the researcher working in the academy persists. Pallas (2001) asserts that it is important to think about “the incorporation of the epistemologies and practices of traditionally subordinated groups . . . racial/ethnic minorities, women, and perhaps even education practitioners . . . into the educational research community” (p.7). It is quiet where I do my work. I understand The River as a gentle, more sympathetic locale for reflection, and possibly, reconciliation of epistemological differences than may be a war zone. This metaphor provides me with the opportunity for quiet contemplation. By defining my teaching career within a familiar landscape (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) I seek to make my self, formed and framed through decades of experience, explicit to myself and others. And so, I welcome those others and their war-weary selves into a pastoral setting to witness and share in my developing awareness of my professional self, understanding of my instructional practices, and the evolution of my living educational theory.

SEASONS ON THE RIVER IV

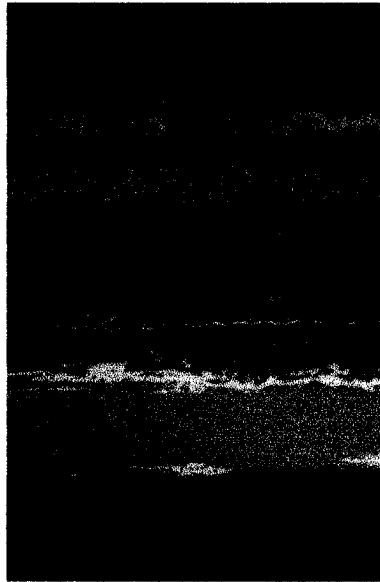


Figure 56: The Ottawa at Sundown

The River in Autumn

To navigate The River is to have ideas, vision, hope
Not realizing, forever nearing
Engaging in a rhythm with weather, seasons, serendipity
Tolerant of surprises—
Summers without rain
Winters of ice or sudden warmth
In-between seasons flashing, impatiently by.
To teach is to nurture and to be forgiven
To celebrate learning, venerate knowledge
To become, to understand the becoming
To answer the beckoning finger of the long, bony delta hand
Luring me forever onward on The River
Forever onward
To the sea

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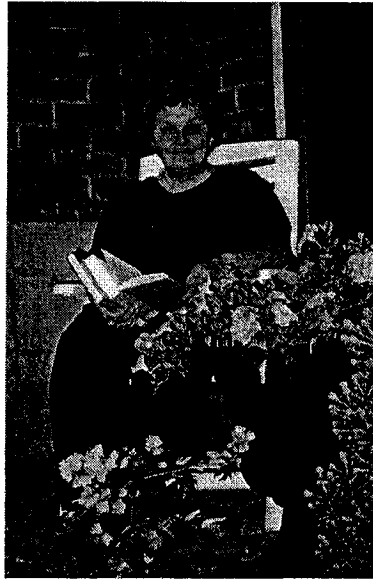
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Appendices

Appendix A

Nancy's Story

Blooming

Framing the Situation

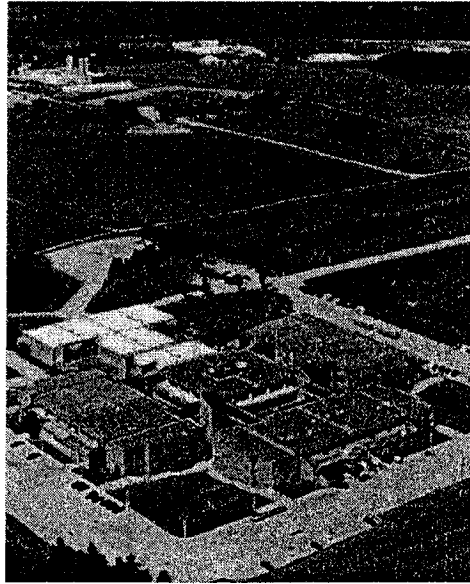
Introduction

Block I History: Late January 1999, 9:15 a.m.

Thirty-two history students tramped into class to join their teammates in their various groups. Some took their homework out, ready to start. Others chatted while I took attendance. Questions were answered as students made their way to their seats. Comments, gossip, smiles were exchanged. Groups settled down to their inquiry of documents pertaining to the 1837 Rebellion in Lower Canada. Nathan and Billy sat together in stony silence, eyes glazed. Nathan wore his blonde/black/copper locks gelled upward and outward, some tied with colored ribbon, others held in place with bobby pins. He was dirty, disheveled, limply sprawled across his desk. Billy's head was down. He studied the carpet while rocking his chair backward and forward like a metronome - steady, rhythmic, purposeless movement. I wondered what they had taken.

Richard, late, entered noisily, attempting to disrupt the class, which had become involved in their study. He whispered the latest news of the suicide attempts of two friends while looking me in the eye, defiant, angry, continuing to talk. Richard's power play. It was only his first day back after spending two weeks in hospital where the police had been called to handcuff and subdue him. Nathan and Billy did not have any homework done. For several weeks there had been little evidence of effort, participation or work from the two boys. I had cajoled, threatened, worked with them, but to no avail. I will recommend that they go to PASS (Possible Alternative to Student Suspension). It will be a retreat for these two boys. Neither will have to be bothered with me or with the other students. Because the person in charge of PASS does not teach, the work I design

for them will be mechanical, oriented toward the June provincial examinations. Recess would be the time to deal with these two. Sterile oblivion.



Sterile Oblivion

Richard is now out of control. Because the classroom telephone is out of order, I must accompany him down the hall to the principal's office. He manages to disrupt other classes along the way. Upon returning to our classroom, I find others tiredly lost, but we do regain some measure of good-natured interchange. The bell rings too soon. I have not made contact with Maureen, so clever, so unhappy, so quiet and gentle. Her parents had suddenly divorced...the mother moving to Ontario with her son, Maureen remaining with her father to finish her school year. I know she misses her mother. She needs care and conversation right now. She, too, is lost and lonely, but she has the courage to continue to do all the 'right things' and work through her problems. When we talk, it is about history and historical fiction. It is through stories that we can reach out and touch. She left a note on her desk saying 'I love history', and I wept inwardly. She understood the dilemma posed by the other students, and comforted me through her pain. Suddenly I felt achingly miserable and inept. I had allowed the boys to dominate again. The girls need a mirror to see their uniqueness, their importance to world order, their promise, the beauty that women can offer society, their wonderful strength. Too often my efforts are sabotaged by the restless aggressiveness of the boys. I wonder if they should be taught separately during adolescent years. In my case, the girls would receive more attention; I would modify the curriculum to meet their interests and needs.

At recess I found Billy and Nathan lying on the carpet in front of an empty office with about eight others. Impassively they listen to me. Their numbness and desolation hurts and angers me. I want to slap some sense into them until their demons dissolve. They are just babies really. Instead, I turn and walk away. They slip into oblivion. I had only taught one period and already three students would be out of my class for a few days. I felt strangely defeated, weary. Not only would they miss instruction, but they

would not have the benefit of the powerful give and take between students as they write their think logs and discuss their learning.



Defeated and Weary

Chapter One

Bishop's University: Summer School 1999

When I entered the Action Research class on July fifth, it had been three years since I had taken a course at the Graduate School of Education of Bishop's University. I had unconsciously abandoned my dream of completing my M. Ed. However, in late April, my life was redirected to Bishop's when I attended the International Teacher Researcher Conference (ICTR) in Magog. At summer school, I thought that I would continue to sift through my thirty-four years of teaching and shape some form of identity of myself as a teacher, and trace my professional development as well. Jack Whitehead, our teacher, suggested, quite casually, that I should view my career in terms of my own values and look for inherent contradictions.

Circles. This song is a simple expression of my belief that we are all bound to one another spiritually. It is in our spirit that we touch humanity.

*All my life's a circle
Sunrise and sun down,
The moon rolls through the nighttime
'Til daybreak rolls around.
All my life's a circle,
I can't tell you why,
Seasons spinning round again
The years keep rolling by.
It seems like I've been here before
But I can't remember when,
I've got this funny feeling
We'll all be together again.
No straight lines make up my life
All my roads have bends,
There is no clear-cut beginning*

*And, thank God, no dead ends.
 I've found you a thousand times
 I guess you've done the same.
 Then we'd lose each other
 It's like a children's game.
 And as I find you here again
 The thought runs through my mind
 Our love is like a circle
 Let's go round one more time (Chapin, 1990).*



A Newcomer to Action Research

It was early evening. Tropical heat wrapped the town in a breathless humidity. I sat at my computer struggling with the homework from the first session of the action research course. In the final hour of the session, Jack had requested that we write our values and find evidence of how we lived up to them in our practice. Because I was a newcomer to action research, Jack suggested that I create a portfolio of my thirty-four years of teaching.

Critical incidents from my practice would be the outline from which I would view these changes through the lens of my moral values. This had seemed straightforward enough. I would simply list my values from my moral base - integrity, honesty, justice, love, intellectual curiosity and freedom. These values would lead to stories from my childhood, how values developed and played out in the context of my career. My documents would support my claims. Or, so I thought. I would present documents, stories and photographs in a colorful scrapbook. The idea of a scrapbook is rather old-fashioned. The idea would symbolize the passage of time.

My value claim. With disturbing clarity, I commenced the slow process of excavating my practice in terms of my values and some of the troubling events of the last school year. An awakening of conscience and soul occurred.

Am I an educator or Am I a technician?

I began to write stories to illustrate the contradictions between my practice and my values. When I review the values I wrote that hot, humid July day, I see that I had written them almost like a student's Bill of Rights. That surprised me, for I had been mulling over how I could democratize my classroom the next year. The following is a conversation between my ideals and my practice.

STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS

1. EACH STUDENT SHOULD GROW IN AWARENESS OF HIS OR HER INNATE TALENTS AND STRENGTHS: Nathan, Danny and Richard were not given that

opportunity. I spent most of my time disciplining them and others like them. I did not reach out to them. I was the authority and I gave up too soon out of expediency.

2. EACH STUDENT HAS THE RIGHT TO BE RESPECTED AND VALUED:

Loving my students, accepting my students is not enough. Other students lose patience with the oddballs, the rebels. In a group situation often they let others down. They take no responsibility for their actions. Talk, discussion, forgiveness seem often to have the opposite effect. They push, testing until I take action. They know me. I know they find my optimism and tenacity terribly irritating. Sometimes a teacher simply has to be the adult, against whom they can rebel, testing authority.

3. STUDENTS SHOULD LEARN TO ACCEPT HOW THEY DIFFER FROM OTHERS AND ACCEPT AND RESPECT THE DIFFERENCES IN OTHERS:

This is an important factor in a democracy where a society is built on collaboration with others. Ridicule and taunting have gone on in my classroom. I have heard it. The desired behavior is not practiced outside the classroom.

4. STUDENTS SHOULD RECOGNISE AND USE THEIR GOODNESS AND SPIRIT:

Kindness, generosity, caring, listening to others, patience are fostered in the classroom. Reflective and responsive writing can, in part, help to nurture these values. I have met very few students who do not display these values. These virtues are community building and democratizing. They are found in my classroom most of the time, but not all of the time - inconsistency and contradiction.

5. STUDENTS SHOULD LEARN THAT THERE ARE CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN THEY SHOULD STAND APART FROM THE CROWD AND SHOULD BE

RESPECTED WHEN THEY DO: My students know that I do this myself. We spoke last year about the fact that I was one of the few teachers out on the picket line. I explained my reasons as well as my understanding of the views of other teachers. The strike had been illegal. I assume my students know that I will support their efforts to help others on the grounds of moral principles. I have assumed too much recently.

6. STUDENTS SHOULD LEARN THAT IT IS EACH PERSON'S RESPONSIBILITY TO SHARE HIS OR HER TALENTS AND IDEAS WITH OTHERS, TO HELP EACH

OTHER: In geography class, Donald, a bright boy who had never worked, taught his group about Power Point and led them to create a cleverly researched and organized presentation. Truman led the level five Economics class to create a successful fudge business which paid for a three day trip to Toronto.

7. WE MUST LEARN TO LAUGH AND SHARE OUR GOOD HUMOUR AND THE ABUNDANCE THAT IS IN OUR LIVES: Mel had just returned to economics class

after the death of his mother. I wanted to give him a comforting hug, but instead I wondered if he would be embarrassed. I waited a minute too long. We all should have hugged Mel. In fact, I know if I had started the hug, it would have become a group thing.

The others needed me to start. We probably would have wept, but so what? It was in this class where Mel found solace during his mother's final months. I knew Mel trusted me. He continued to come and chat, but a barrier had been put up. This is the most powerful and wrenching of my failures because of my shyness. Shyness and reserve. Can I change? Will I be able to be more overtly tender and loving?

A response from the professor. Nancy...*I did feel inspired on reading your notes. I focused on the importance of taking a stand when you wrote: "Each student should grow in awareness of his/her innate talents and strengths. Accept and be accepted/valued. Students should learn and accept how they differ from others and accept and respect differences in others. Students should be able to personalize the subject matter to help shape identity. Students should recognize and use their goodness and spirit. There are times when it is time to stand apart from the crowd - they should be respected when they do. Students should learn that it is each person's responsibility to share talents, ideas with others, to help each other. It is important to take a stand when one realizes that something is working against one's values. Learning involves action research for students, for understanding the self. Learning to enjoy the gift of each day. To laugh, to share. Cherish the rainbow of humanity".*

I'm wondering Nancy, how to help to transform these statements of value into helpful enquiries for the next couple of weeks. I think you could do this by asking, researching and answering questions of the kind: Can I explain to the group how I have helped students to personalize the subject content matter to help the shape their identities? Can I show that I have helped a student recognize their 'goodness' and 'spirit'? Can I explain how and why I made a stand when I realized that something was against my values? You could, if you would find it helpful, transform each statement of value into this kind of question, and you could chose which ones could be worked on in a manageable way over the next couple of weeks. Jack

Chapter Two

My Quest

It was 1:00 a.m. on that hot July evening and a new journey had begun. Silver mirages from my past materialized, shimmered brilliantly, but when I reached to capture their truth, they dissolved into tendrils of contradiction. Anger, unresolved conflicts, hurts, resentment, unfulfilled ambitions surfaced into my psyche. I howled inwardly, tears streaming from the rage I felt as I faced the truth. I tried to hide, to run from my cowardice and self-centeredness. But I dug deeper. I wrote and wrote and wrote. The project so linear and tidy in my mind had become messy and disjointed. What was the truth? I was considered to be one of the best teachers at my school, but as I considered my values, I could see only an excellent technician, promoting the paternalistic system, which I found so suffocating and menacing. The examination of values in my practice began a spiritual journey to clarity and vision.

Happy phantoms bubbled merrily to the surface of my memory. Biking with my friends to Scout Rock to eat a picnic lunch; flying down Wilson Street on a bobsled with twelve others, frosty air stinging our faces and the wind leaving us breathless; skating on the outdoor rink behind the curling club, forming a line, skating faster, faster, faster, until someone fell, and we tumbled down on top of each other laughing, and shrieking. Skating was particularly fun for the girls who could hold the hand of their favorite boy. Many of us kissed for the first time under the January moon to the tune of the *Skaters' Waltz*, with streaming noses and cracked lips.



Happy Phantoms

But, oh! It was so romantic! Hay rides, sleigh rides, organizing and directing the church pageant for the little kids; weekends at Farnham's cottage on Lake Massawipi; neighborhood corn roasts, barbecues; homemade strawberry ice cream for my July first birthday, made from freshly picked berries and cream; decorating our bikes for parades; and last but not least, swimming in the icy cold waters of the lake in May, gave us sweet freedom! What a shining innocence! What enchantment!

However, by three a.m., shadows began to tinge my happy childhood memories. I had neglected to consider contradictions. I had neglected to examine soul. To examine values requires a spiritual journey, a journey to the soul. This would be a tad messier and disjointed, leaving fragile tendrils of contradiction, puzzles, and humble self-centeredness.

Jack responds. Monday 19th July - Good Morning Nancy...I did enjoy your presentation on Friday and was most impressed with the way you had constructed your portfolio. I know how much time and effort it took. I had several responses to your presentation. The first was that you achieved what you wanted with the sense of identity with Canada. I also felt you brought into play the spiritual qualities of a professional educator. When you said 'I am not an academic', my response was 'Yes, you are!' - I thought that you were finding ways of communicating some of the most difficult educational values - Eisner has been recommending that we seek to extend the forms of representation we use as teacher-researchers. I enjoyed the way you worked at this. You also said 'I am not an action researcher'. My response was 'Yes, you are!'. Your portfolio demonstrates the sustained commitment over years to improve the opportunities for the students in your care. You have worked at curriculum issues, you have engaged with the ideas of others like Pat D'Arcy, you have continuously worked at making sure your voice was heard in support of your students' needs. I admire the way you continue to take on new challenges, especially over the recognition of 'bullying' and wondering what to do about it. A pleasure to share the program with you. What to do about the fear? Hug and smile. Jack



Yes! You Are

Summer school ends. Bishop's University, July 18, 1999 - Dear Jack...I have picked myself up and dusted myself off and started all over again. One of my stories begins last Friday night. Another mock turtle found me and pushed me into story with her stories. She eased my fears with her fears. She made me realize that the first wooden mask I must drop is the one of sweetness. She illuminated the path I wish to follow with tales of her experience. She walked with me to the road and left me to wander back with part of my splintered self on paper as a story. I would like to do my presentation for the summer school course over again! I would dim the lights; push the tables to one side so all of the mock turtles and cowardly lions might sit in a circle. On the overhead would be a recent picture of myself in the classroom.



In My Classroom

I had not attended Bishop's Graduate Summer School for at least three years. I had not planned to again, but in April the ICTR (International Conference on Teacher Research) in Magog was magical. I was captured by the idea of empowering teachers through their own research at a grassroots level: teachers studying their own practice. The

idea of it all was overwhelming. I embraced the unspoken honesty, integrity, and passion with which most spoke at the conference, presenters and audience alike.

The last school year was brutal at times. I struggled with the question of retiring early, off and on, for most of the year. The school culture was changing rapidly leaving me to question my own values in light of my students' values, those of my colleagues and my administrators. I wondered if I had the energy and the vitality to conduct six classes with the possibility of thirty five to forty students in each class for the next year. Would I be able to offer anything of value to the teaching and school communities?

I thought maybe in this course I could find some evidence of a meaningful practice in terms of my own values. I needed to investigate whether my practice supported my values. I also hoped that I might find an issue or a part of my practice to focus on, so that I would not retire in September, rather wait for June. To begin my inquiry, I looked into my own value system. To find my own system, I looked into my roots. The focus of this presentation is to tell the stories from my childhood, which built my basic value system. I will *"contrast then and now, before and after, describe what life used to be like, what it has become"* (Geertz, 1995). My first picture would be one of Mum and Dad posing for their wedding. The picture depicts the historical content of values, technology, style so effortlessly. I would place the picture on the overhead as I began the story of my circles.



Mum and Dad

Chapter Three

Beginnings in My Family Circle

My family members are storytellers, keeping alive the memory of our family, its traditions and its values. My mother and father embraced my brothers and me with stories of our childhood while we looked through photograph albums. Dad's stories were full of paradox, irony, humor, and warnings. Mum's stories were quieter, gentler, and sadder, speaking of sacrifice, service, duty and loss.

Next, the refrain from Harry Chapin's *Circles* would play.

All my life's a circle

*Sunrise and sun down,
The moon rolls through the nighttime
'Til daybreak rolls around.
All my life's a circle,
I can't tell you why,
Seasons spinning round again
The years keep rolling by.*

As the music plays, a picture of me would be placed on the overhead. My wish is for there to be some sense of what I looked like at that age while I tell my story. Style, the value of extended family, and the body language of the little girl would be there to observe.



Nancy

The time of the story is 1943. The story takes place in our front lawn on Lorne Avenue in Lennoxville. Dad and his neighbor, Frank Turner, are passing the time of day quietly swapping the news, house projects and cars. I have just picked clover flowers for Dad and Mister Turner, and am now engaged in picking up my shadow. Frank spots me and lifts me into the air. I scream and struggle. He hugs me tighter, trying to calm me. I hit him with little clenched fists, the flowers tumbling away. He sets me down. I return to my shadow. Willful. Hateful. Afraid. Alone. Frank tries to explain. *Lorraine is so scrawny. Nancy is dimpled, cuddly and huggable. I did not mean to frighten her.* Dad replies: *Nancy is independent and usually very busy and does not like to be interrupted. She only lets certain people hold her and only at certain times. She's wary and keeps her distance.* I was shy and I was wary. Dad allowed me to become. He did not think I had to take time from my web of exploration and daydreams to deal with adults. However, he should have hugged me. He should have helped me against the bullies.

Early lessons of family and friendship. According to my mother, I exhibited a healthy curiosity coupled with a desire to be helpful at an early age. By the time I was two and a half I had a very good friend called Sarah. We were inseparable. Sarah and I

exhibited our natural gardening ability and curiosity one spring day in 1944. Mother was planting gladiola bulbs for fall around our Lorne Street house. Sarah and I followed, bent down, and picked up each bulb, examined it and replanted it upside down.



Nancy and Sarah

With great tenacity we did this for a good part of the afternoon. Some bulbs were spared. Soon after this event I was taught the difference between a weed and a plant. Cheerfully, I worked side by side my mother doing a little weeding.

I bombarded my parents with endless questions. They always answered as best they could. I never was afraid to ask a question or give my ideas. I was asked to modify, to rethink, reconsider and often heard "No". But I was given a voice, as was everyone in my house. Conversation, argument, news abounded, especially at mealtime. We discussed what we had read from the newspaper, we shared our stories of the day. Sharing was important in our family whether it was ideas, happiness, or our hearts.



Learning About Living and Dying, Respect and Caring

Everyone was welcome at my house. By the time my brothers and I were teenagers, our home had become a drop-in centre for young people as well as having the usual collection of adults. Grandma Annie Elizabeth lived in our house until she died. She had a stroke while she was with us and remained in an upstairs room with a caretaker. My brother, Cary, would read the Bible to Grandma every night even when she was sick and didn't know him. I sometimes sang to her. Her first caretaker was a big, jolly lady named Mrs. Lemay. Her kids would come to visit her. Of course, Mum fed

everybody and learned their stories. I played with the grand kids. Mrs. Lemay's daughter had married a 'black man'. This was my first experience in knowing someone of a different race. My questions were answered about the situation in private. The man was kind and fun and was wonderful to Mrs. Lemay, who had had a terrible life. She had rescued her children from an alcoholic father and worked to bring them up. That was all that counted. Mum found Mrs. Lemay dead in Grandma's room one day. My brothers and I began to learn about living, dying and old age, respect and caring.

It was my mother who taught me decorum, socially acceptable behavior and how to be a lady. At least she tried. She fostered my talents. On my first birthday, the story goes, Mum was in the kitchen preparing for my Birthday celebration. I was in my playpen observing the festivities. The radio was on as Mum listened to descriptions of the first of July parades and the address of the Queen to the nation. Apparently, I began to sing along to *Oh, Canada* and *God Save the Queen*. I took piano and organ lessons from the age of six until I graduated from high school at the age of 15. Mum had studied piano for five years and voice for two years. Her love was classical music and opera. From the tender age of five years, I was taken to community concerts held at the Granada Theatre. Many leading figures in music would use the nearby city of Sherbrooke as their dress rehearsal for their concerts in Montreal and Toronto. I vividly recall Rise Stevens, a well-known contralto. I was completely transported to another world on the waves of her voice. I wore white gloves, a hat and my best clothes to the concerts. Out of slacks and away from adventures in the woods and bicycles, Mum and I shared a world of love apart from that of my brothers and my father.

My mother was quietly and gently firm. She was loved by everyone who met her and became everyone's confidant. Her advice was sought. She was organized, competent and strong. She provided a model for other mothers in the neighborhood. She seldom had an unkind word about anyone, preferring to keep her own counsel. She made homemaking and parenting an art form. Every chore was an act of love. Around us were quilts, doilies, embroidered sheets and pillowcases, all testaments to the woman's love of family. Mum did not follow her career, but said later in life she wished she had. She knew she daily held the kingdom in her hands. She loved her life of simple abundance. Abundance.

Bully lessons. Dad brought me up to be equal to my brothers. I mowed lawns, shoveled fertilizer on the garden, took off double windows and had the same allowance and chance for an education. I often protested that Douglas and Cary were not asked to help with the cooking, housework or weeding. The boys ran the roto-tiller. Nancy and Mum weeded. Although I protested, nothing was done about it. To some extent, there was a double standard in our house, a contradiction I challenged often, for it was so unfair. Douglas and Cary smirked.

The darkest story of My Quest occurred when I was seven. I had been studying music for a year. My music teacher, Mrs. Harvey, lived on the next street, a good block away. On my way to music lessons, if I took the short route, I would pass the homes of the Fieldings, the Wingets and the Hammers. Each family had three bullyboys. I was taunted and called names as I passed their houses. I walked by, head held high. However, when I turned seven, my adored Uncle Haig gave me a handsome tan leather briefcase to carry my music books in. The next day, I walked proudly to my music lesson only to be teased unmercifully. The Wingets grabbed the briefcase and kicked it around. They

pushed me down as I reached for the case, and hit me as well. The driver of a passing car frightened the boys off and rescued me.

I arrived at my lesson frightened, bloodied and scraped. The second time this happened, my music teacher phoned my parents and suggested that someone walk with me to my lesson. Cary was elected, but he only took me once. At home he taught me to use my fists and told me I shouldn't be a baby. This was usually Cary's advice. I walked another, longer, route to my lessons until the bullies lost interest.

Shortly thereafter, Mister Tupper, a friend of the family, brought me home bloodied and crying. He told Dad that he had a valiant daughter. He had been driving up Wilson Street and there I was in the middle of the street, beating up a Fielding boy. The younger Fielding was on my back trying to help his brother. My brother, Douglas, the cause of the fight, had walked away into the house. I was fighting because they had thrown a rock at Douglas, my shy, little, bespectacled brother. He thought it was stupid that I bothered. My mother was appalled and I was punished: strapped for fighting.



Brought Up Equal

Investigating the shadows revealed that I have always fought like a tiger for others, but not for myself. Years later I would read Grandma Annie Elizabeth's diary. The day after she visited the house for Christmas she wrote *I really do wish Stewart and Gertie would do something about the teasing little Nancy endures from young Cary and Douglas*. My bullies lurked inside my home and outside it as well. I need ideas about how to deal with the bullies. The teasing of my brothers ceased as we became older and gave up childish things. I continue to search for ideas. My brothers' teasing ended when we grew into our late teens to become friends, close friends. The scars are still on my heart. I have never satisfactorily learned how to deal with the bullies. I will this year, for they lurk in the hallways, classrooms, and in the staff room. I have given in to them too long. They need to be shown up for what they are. They are destroying order at Alexander Galt Regional High School. I am struggling against control and power. It seems to me that this circle has gone around and around all my life.



Paternalism

For the first time in my life, my story is not a cover story, loyally putting a good face on things. It is not what I expect is expected of me, dutifully handed back with all the neat buttons and bows. The masks of respectability, compliance and conformity dissolve. I can howl and rage against what has happened to me, and, as a result to the students that I teach.

Chapter Four

After Summer School

It is the end of July and a lot has been accomplished. I took a course in action research, and I've found my soul and a whole new wonderful group of friends. Jack Whitehead helped me to unlock a part of me that I did not know existed, the loving part of my nature, I have been aware of, but did not know how to express. So much of my own soul has been lost in trying to cope with the paternalistic outward reality of this world. I feel the hand of God guiding me now. Where I'll end up. I don't know, but I think it will be wonderful! It is important for me to love, to help, to be appreciated - more important than the success trappings that society has offered. A whole part of me has been starving too long. I find I am listening with my heart now, taking time for others. I wish to find out about them, how they're doing.

I am back playing the piano with stiff fingers and lack of speed. I played publicly and listened to the beautiful voices of the women of the action research group. We should form a chorus and sing. Music and humor are things that I value. I was fortunate to have the money and the time to read *Okham's Razor* and *Seat of the Soul* before finishing a paper about values for Jack. This will be my fifth attempt to find my direction into the classroom and research for next year. I'm still not sure what I have to do about my M.Ed. I do believe that I have choices, and the best path will be shown to me.



Music and Humor

Will I be going to the ICTR Conference in Louisiana? I can work toward presenting something if my work in the classroom is significant...My blessings are many but the greatest is peacefulness. I am sure next year's students will be shocked with the slightest change they see in me. I will most certainly be happier. I will use examples from Jack's work with us this summer. I shall facilitate the way for the students to form a democratic and intelligently caring community of scholars who provide support and encouragement for each other and spur each other to excellence. I will become the facilitator, not the disciplinarian. And I will enjoy that.

Emergence of a Problem

Chapter Five

August 1999: Facing contradictions

I am a model teacher for the system I have perpetuated for thirty-four years. I have run an orderly, disciplined classroom. The passing rate for the provincial examinations is usually over 88%, a good record. I learned new techniques, contributed to school life, and usually gave in when I created controversy. *Why do I allow myself to be bullied into compliance?* I have had my moments when I was instrumental in making change, but I haven't shouted loud enough, long enough, or persistently enough. I haven't raged at the injustices, oppression and the lack of humanity of the system and in myself. *Why?* I know what it is like to be bullied, beaten up, hurt, left out, mocked and tormented. *Why do I not do something about it?* I can. I know that students do not begin on equal footing. I have attempted to individualize my courses but failed miserably. The system, timetabling, assessment criteria, outside examinations, prestige of the subject matter are my masters. *Why didn't I just quit? When in my career did this extreme conformity begin?*

Funnily enough, I feel I am just beginning to get things right and it's the end of my career. I have found some glimpses of my goodness as a teacher. I have longed for a just and democratic classroom with negotiated compromises as groups of students prepare for their place in society. It has taken me too long to relinquish control. Letting go and allowing students to give and take, to lead and be led, has taken time. Dialogue is essential in building a society that is fair to all. Dissension is a building block of a democracy. Intentions should be transparent and easily understood. There should be no one on the 'in' and no one on the 'out'. I will have to let go of control. The vulnerability that is attached to this idea terrifies me. A second goal for the year is to create a loving

atmosphere in my classroom where students can feel free to be themselves and be safe, protected, needed. As I like to remain emotionally detached and in control, this will be a huge challenge.



A Model Teacher

Teaching after summer school. School screeched to a start with symbols of labor negotiations crashing into the background buzz and hum of the new school year. The beat of work-to-rule provided the rhythm for the fall. For a while, I forgot its strident clang. I was taken aback by school's opening. 'It is too soon,' I cried inwardly, 'I haven't reached any understanding of my past. I haven't found a comfort level with my findings.' Jagged edges still severed my cherished memories of happy childhood communities of family, friends and neighbors. My identity was in tatters. Neither had I fully rested from the disturbing and often brutal 1998-99 school year. Yet I began the year with renewed optimism, but also with a sense of urgency that I had never felt before. So much work had to be accomplished in one short year. I would retire at the end of it. Upon reflection, I realized that it was guilt, anger and sense of worthlessness that I encountered in confronting my contradictions.

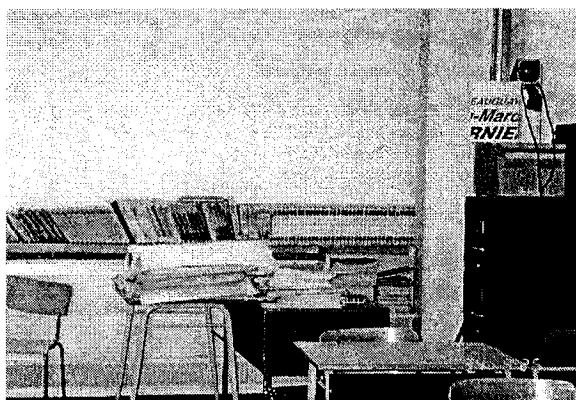


Childhood Community

All of these years I had been serving a master I intellectually loathed - the paternalistic system - not fighting it, as I assumed I had for thirty-five years. My childhood's unresolved confusion about authority and bullying, misunderstandings about a girl-child's place in the scheme of things, drove me to make up for a lifetime.

I believe that a teacher should level the playing fields for all students in her care. A classroom should be a fair and happy place for students to inquire, exchange ideas, and pursue their interests, which would guide them to become. Their contributions should be welcomed as instrumental in the daily workings of our world. My classroom could be a family community circle like that, which had nourished me into adulthood. I had failed more often than I had captured that shimmering silver dream.

The fall would become a flurry of activity. I had decided to conduct an action research project in one history class. I ended up trying my ideas in all six classes. This was too much too soon for this perfectionist action researcher. My research question became *Will democratizing my classroom create student interest in history, and thus improve learning and marks on the MEQ examination? I hoped to build a caring community of inquirers actively searching for their own truth. Would working together with me for evaluation give the knowledge that there are many measurements of success?*



Bare Walls Waiting

On the first day of school as I awaited my first class, the class I had chosen arbitrarily to be the action research site, I wrote in my action research diary: *The first day seems surreal. It is uncomfortably hot and humid, each movement sticky with perspiration. The sun pours in the open window, eerily highlighting the back corner. Wasps fly into the classroom, circle dangerously before buzzing out again to hover menacingly against the hot glass. Bare walls and bulletin boards await the offerings of this year's students. This year also marks the beginning of the end of my teaching career of thirty-five years. Oddly, the enthusiasm and idealism with which I began teaching remains, albeit tempered by some wisdom. I have learned to listen to the intuition of my experience. My teaching career began in the blaze of the political unrest of the 1960s. It was a time of economic prosperity. As did others of my generation, I burned with a sense of purpose and hope. As I look back, I realize we did help make a difference. Jobs were plentiful; job security was an accepted right. I believe, as I did thirty-five years ago, that each individual is responsible for helping and effecting changes for the disadvantaged and disenfranchised. This means my voice must be heard calmly and insistently. Overcoming shyness and a lifetime of giving in to the demands of the paternalistic system will be difficult. But it is for those kids in my care.*



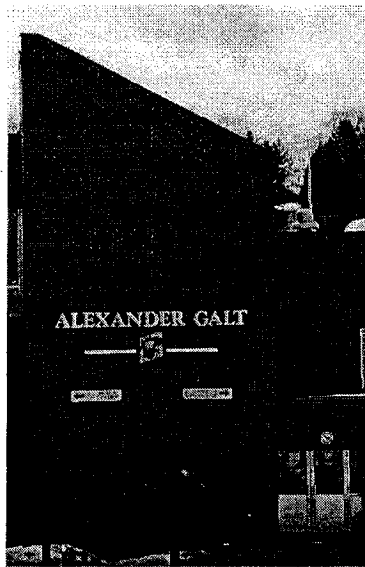
A Sense of Purpose and Hope

My students arrive tanned, happy and healthy. Old acquaintances are sought out and found. Scrubbed, smiling faces look at me. It's time to begin. I put aside the lesson plan I have used for years. This time we write about our values and our stories. The students' ideas are poetic. They become my mandate for the year. I write their words into a poem.

Values

*I believe school should be a happy place
Where I can just be me, unique, healthy beautiful;
Or, I can discuss life with my friends.
I will find opportunities and choices in this place
Or find a helping hand and caring people who will help and comfort me.
School is a place where we learn to trust each other respect one another.
I can find out how the library, how computers will be useful in my studies.
I will find out how to get somewhere in my life.
I want to work with my friends in groups so
I can exchange ideas, talk things out, make new friends.
School will teach me how to keep an open mind and a willing heart.
I will be free.
I will learn to take care of things I value,
Feel safe.*

My goal is to empower my students with knowledge and understanding of what they can do and that they should try to make a difference in the world. The students will live in a democratic classroom in which ideas will be freely exchanged and differences of opinion respected. Students will become more confident as they are listened to, and what they have to say is carefully considered. Two or three issues prevalent in Canadian society will be pursued in light of their historical context. Students will debate these issues; decide upon a course of action and act upon their ideas to solve some of the human issues that exist today.



A Happy Place

Being a member of the action research group at Bishop's summer school has had a profound effect on me. It's made me acutely aware of the importance of a community of inquirers as a lifeline for one in one's endeavors. The importance of being respected as a person with ideas and potential is an essential characteristic of being a member of a democratic society. I hope I can guide the development of this class into becoming a community of learners.

Chapter Six

Scalding disappointment

The fall brought its goodness and rewards. A local Professional Improvement (PIC) grant was given to two of my colleagues and me to increase awareness of action research in three high schools in the board area. This was in keeping with the new reform. Close on its heels came the news that an elementary teacher-friend and I had been granted a Ministry of Education (MEQ) grant to conduct research into the teaching of history. The newly formed action research group of the province became another action research inquiry for me. By October, I was working towards presenting a paper at the International Conference on Teacher Research (ICTR) with Kathy and Judy. In addition, I was taking a course for my Master's Degree, and I was very disappointed that I could not continue the study I had begun in the summer school course. Instead, I was reading research results on the teaching of history. I kept in touch with my newly found friends, and soon we were working on interwoven self-studies. Unfortunately, a union work-to-rule campaign began to have a profound effect on my goals and usual teaching routine. Field trips had to be abandoned. My successful economics entrepreneurial section became a sad dream. Planned work with my colleagues remained untouched.

It began with a respiratory virus, which lasted for months. By November I was under a doctor's care and taking Paxil for anxiety attacks. I still managed to finish the fall term remaining quite happy about my work and my classes. Christmas with my family

was a fragile, happy time. I was so weary. I was terrified of a dark thing sleeping within me. I was lonely in my crowded family.



A Fragile, Happy Time

I felt unconnected, numb. I couldn't feel.

I Fear

What?

I am sad.

I cry no tears.

I am not enough.

Is this real?

Is it raining in December?

Or, is it snowing?

Cold.

Icy coldness flows in my veins.

I can't get warm.

Things come undone.

I am wingless.

I became lost between the homes of family members. I lost my way coming home. I slept for hours, finding release from responsibility, or was it just the nothingness?

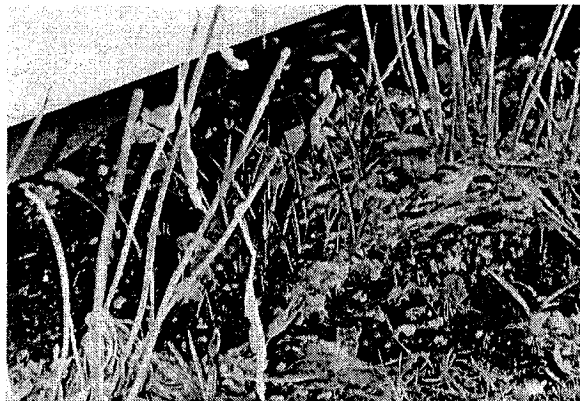
I did not resume work in January. There was no English-speaking psychologist who could help me. I was too weary to speak in French. I remained in close contact with my physician. My friends hugged me tightly as I fought to stay at the surface. Phone calls at night, rides to do errands, phone calls during the day, e-mails - sometimes three times a day. I was softly encouraged to write, but no blinks when I couldn't. Just there. Just there. Just there for me. Maybe I am worthy.

At the end of January I drove to Montreal to work with Judy and Kathy. I was touchy. I was hugged and forgiven. I took my papers and began to write. I was given strength. I was given hope. What wonderful teachers they are! I returned home renewed.

On February 10th I told Doctor Brunet that I was going back to work. Though he thought it too soon, he supported my decision. He wanted me to promise I would only teach - nothing more. I couldn't. My history students needed me to guide them toward the MEQ examination. Labor negotiations had ended. I could start my projects. It was a long journey back. My colleagues at school were supportive. I told my students what my illness was. It turned into a lesson. No repercussions from anyone only continued support.

The snow has melted in the front yard and almost in the back. A sharp March wind enables fall's dead, unraked leaves to teeter and topple drunkenly across brown grass. A soft purple mist clings to skeleton trees indicating the stirrings of new life. In the eternal cycle of the seasons, everything must change. Soon soft warm breezes will awaken the earth from its frozen trance. So too have I moved from the stark emptiness of winter's bleakness to new heartbeats of truth, and a mysterious new destiny. The dreams of my life's young mornings murmur enticingly to a return to those fresh ideas of long ago. I have come full circle.

During those oppressively tropical days of early July at the summer school course, haunting memories and unfulfilled youthful dreams and soulful whispers of ignored truths tumbled turbulently into my consciousness. The summer months slipped silently by unnoticed, as I uncovered secrets of my troubled psyche. Circles of new friends entered my world and gladdened my life with love and wisdom, remaining to support me. I wrote and wrote, never before realizing I had any talent. The soft circle encouraged my efforts to find truth in my journey.



Awakening From a Frozen Trance

How do I deal with the bullies? With love. Do I speak up? Yes, however, not always calmly. I was happy to be back at work. I was learning so much from listening to my students. We were negotiating, and for the most part, we were learning together. I cherished my strength. I looked into the smiling faces of my friends and foes, and I saw God, but I still had work to do.

Resolution

Chapter Seven

August 2000: Systematic Action Research

I was working with the tools of research: defining the problem, examining student work, observations of students, videotapes of lessons, audiotapes of conversations with

students, keeping a research diary, taking photographs, doing case studies within the classroom. An MEQ grant with Diane Earl gave me the opportunity to change my practice, to align my work with my values. Throughout the summer of 2000 Jo and I worked to transform a highly knowledge-based Canadian geography course into a richness of concepts and 'big' questions.

My big question was *How have man's activities impacted on the environment?* Because I was a member of the Senior Social Studies Department with two others, I knew my students would be examined using a school board-wide examination, as well as the assignments I would correct. The term was divided into three parts: the basic concepts of the course; the teaching of research competencies - building the scaffolding; and student-conducted inquiry. My classroom became a constructivist one.



Co-researchers

November. I did not expect this resistance. Casey says she learned all this in grade three. I did not think quickly enough and explain 'accessing prior knowledge'. She carries her unhappiness about me and the class into the other classes. Teachers are listening to a lot of anger about inquiry and about me. The kids are unhappy that things did not work out with the project with the university students. They blame me. I am losing patience. I feel threatened and offended by her attitude. I feel I am letting everyone down. I am losing my reputation. What reputation? The reputation that I could control the class, teach the information, and have students do exceptionally well on the examinations? Now, I realize that I was admired for things that I abhorred in myself. I perpetuated a harsh and cold system with its emphasis on competition, high marks and doing what is expected. I was terrified now, for I was stepping completely out of the bounds of the system. I had to confront old demons. How much authority could I exert? In examining my own authority, I began at last to examine my own reaction to authority and my own fears. I understood why I wore masks of compliance, of politeness. I was brought up to please. I received information and gave it back diligently. I got good marks to please my parents. I went to university because my father had a heart attack when my brother failed his first year at Bishop's. I knew the dance. I did not construct knowledge. There was no real transformation. I did what the administration wanted. I tried to please so I could glow in their praise. But there never was praise. Just growing demands. I did challenge the system, but from within it. Any time I strayed I was brought back into

place. I was bullied by their attack on my weakness. My confusion has led me to read about women's ways of coming to know, and the results of women's learning and working in paternalistic, male-controlled, aggressive and competitive institutions. The works of Carol Gilligan, Nel Noddings, Mary Belenky, and Rachel Kessler resonate in me. I understand how I have allowed myself to be bullied into compliance. I observe my fear clinically. Understanding and being aware does not mean there is resolution. It will take time. But I do see a different me in the classroom right now.

To me action research is more than reflection and the story of that reflection. It is a systematic inquiry into my practice. In studying my work as a teacher, I develop a question and try to find answers or to change my practice based on what I learn. I become more aware of my world, my actions in it and myself. I pose questions and seek answers based on the here and now, and I question my awareness. My personal values are my road signs. I write a reflective journal, make observations, look for surprises and tensions in my daily practice. I watch videotapes and listen to tapes of student interviews. I look for patterns, for false assumptions. After all is said and done, I then write of my experiences as a story to explain, illuminate my life and my emotions. I reorganize, reassess, realign my life experiences in that story so that it is continually integrated into my life. It guides me to make changes so I can live my life more fully according to my values. I work with critical friends who help keep me on track. My purpose in conducting this soul-searching is to find better ways to teach my students, to help them become the centre of their own learning, to understand how I learn, and how the system and culture in which I live has shaped me. As an action researcher, I unearth my living theories.

Consequences

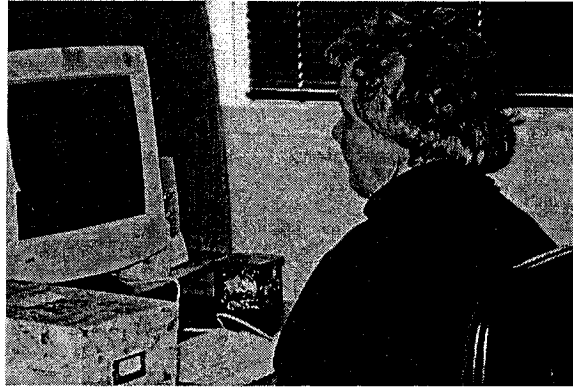
Chapter Eight

Reflection: April 2002

I do love to write. I love to communicate. This is probably why Dad once said that I talked too much. However I have reached a time in my life right now when it is time to listen. Much of my chatter has become nervous talk, talk which springs from inner anxiety and tension. When I feel that insecure and unhappy, that is time I should remain quiet.

Last week was traumatic. I had an interview with the administration, and they really socked it to me. I felt as if I was fighting the whole good-old-boy network. I remained upright, solid. But inside was such a mixture of rage and sadness. They robbed me of the one thing I thought I had going for me. Expert teaching. Everything was reduced to multiple-choice questions and doing as others do. What I am doing is making the kids too frightened and unhappy, according to the principals. The aspect of teaching, which I loved, was the ability to be an individual, not a clone. In such a highly conservative and lock step place there is now room for innovation.

I realize that the job in the classroom is not my main concern. I am. I need to find joy, peace and a niche for myself. I need to seek out things that make me feel joyful, truly joyful. It is time to let go of so many unnecessary and troubling thoughts that I have carried since childhood. It is time to put my act together.



Writing

September 2002: A letter to Jack. *Dear Jack...This is to inform you that my story has been completed and I'll send you copy as soon as the photographs have been added. If you have the time, I would be grateful for your comments when you receive it. I retired from the schoolyard in June. Strangely, I have always believed in happy endings. I believed that if I worked hard enough to produce top-quality work, I would be appreciated. It was not to be. My career ended in controversy. I emerged from the playground wearing my white gloves - that was my victory! However, all that is the stuff for another story.*

I will finish my Master's degree at Bishop's. My exit project at Bishop's will entail working with the older people of the Eastern Townships in a course I will offer entitled "Writing My Life's Story". Those who volunteer will write their autobiographies based on their values, and they will use historical documents as evidence for their story. The documents will also add individuality, color and originality to each work. Upon the completion of their family history, I hope each autobiography will be bound - each one in keeping with the integrity of the story - and a validation ceremony will be held to honor the work of these elderly students. Perhaps other members of the family might become involved in the writing, adding anecdotes to those of their parents/grandparents. A record of the stories of those who have emigrated and their thoughts about their old home would have historical significance.

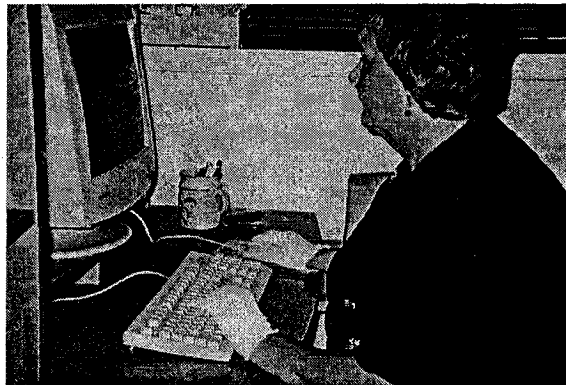
I hope to put this all together in a common history of the ET. In addition, I shall collect data on how older people learn and how they view their own learning now and in the past. Is there a difference between how one learns in youth and in later life? I wonder if they will find a difference between the course I will conduct and a classroom of their youth. Contact with the Centre on Aging at the University of Sherbrooke, as well as with the Eastern Townships Centre is underway. The Eastern Townships Centre produces a first class journal on the culture of the Eastern Townships. Perhaps the work of my elderly scholars could be showcased there. Their efforts might also enrich work carried on by the cultural scholars of this region.

I belong to the Lennoxville Historical Society so I hope to receive help from it as well as do some interviewing of the elderly in the area for them. Official recognition, I hope, for the full and generous lives these folks have lived, will honor them and bring grant money to pay for photographic experts, computer trainers, supplies, rooms we shall need. I shall be conducting interviews of some of our aged for the Lennoxville Historical Society, which might be used in initial instruction in my class. My dreams are big but I have to stop

somewhere. There are many roads to take but I know my basic goals will be realized: I will work with the elderly of my area on family history and their work will be recognized publicly.

The Education Department of Bishop's is having trouble filling their evening Post Graduate courses so things are bit up in the air about my accreditation. However, creative answers will be found. Nothing is ever linear or precise in my world, Jack! I wonder if the time is drawing near for you to retire. Take care of yourself and my best wishes to you in whatever you do. Your web site is a source of comfort and hope. You are indeed a wonderful teacher and person, and you have so greatly enriched my life. With kindest regards, Nancy S.

P.S. I owe it to my friendship with Judy that I am continuing. Without her faith in my efforts, her inspiration, honesty and courage, I would not be finishing my degree. I would have been content to work at the Lennoxville library at minimum wage and wile away my remaining days.



Wearing My White Gloves

Jack replies. Hi Nancy... Very good to hear from you and I'm looking forward to reading your story. I'm only just back from three weeks in Japan so my body is in Bath but my mind is floating with marvelous images from the mountains near Kumamoto - Joan and I stayed with a Ph.D. student of mine, who is working in Japan and has a wonderful house in the mountains.

Good to hear Judy's influence has been so positive. Do give her a hug for me when you see her.

"I wonder if the time is drawing near for you to retire." My plan is to continue here until my contract ends in 2009. You can never tell what is going to happen, but I'm really excited about this multi-media work I'm doing and I've a group of some 14 Ph.D. students that keep me on my toes and who are doing inspirational work. So, as long as I can see that the work I'm doing is helpful I intend to continue.

Just as you are planning to do through the Centre for Aging -- I did enjoy hearing about your plans for the future and do think that project on the 'Writing My Life's Story' is most important -- that's what I'm spending my time here supporting with my research students.

Many thanks for those kind and supportive words of yours -- you can feel the pleasure they have given. Love, Jack

Appendix B

In Vivo Codes: Nancy's Story

Abundance	Cary	Desolation
Ability	Cause	Dialogue
Acquaintances	Challenge	Diane
Action research	Change(s)	Diary
Action researcher	Childhood	Difference(s)
Act	Chore	Dilemma
Administrators	Circle(s)	Disadvantaged
Adults	Clang	Disciplinarian
Adventures	Clarity	Disappointment
Advice	Class	Disenfranchised
Aggression	Classroom, just,	Dissension
Albums	democratic	Distance
Alex G R H S	Collaboration	Documents
Allowance	Colleagues	Doilies
Ambitions	Community(s)	Donald
Anger	Compliance	Douglas
Argument	Compromises	Driver
Atmosphere	Concerts	Duty
Attention	Conflicts	Edges
Authority	Conformity	Education
Baby(s)	Confusion	Educator
Barrier	Conscience	Effect
Beat	Context	Enchantment
Beauty	Contradiction(s)	Encouragement
Belief	Contributions	Endeavors
Behavior	Controversy	Energy
Billy	Conversation	Enthusiasm
Bishop's University	Cooking	Evaluation
Black man	Corner	Events
Blessings	Counsel	Evidence
Boards	Courage	Examinations
Books	Course	Excellence
Bows	Cowardice	Expediency
Boys	Criteria	Experience
Briefcase	Culture	Exploration
Brother(s)	Curiosity, intellectual	Face(s)
Bully(s)	Curriculum	Facilitator
Buttons	Dad	Failures
Buzz	Daughter	Fall
Campaign	Daydreams	Family
Canada	Decorum	Fear(s)
Care	Demands	Fertilizer
Career	Democracy	Fight
Caretaker	Demons	Fighting
Caring	Desire	Findings

Appendix B

In Vivo Codes: Nancy's Story

Fists	Ideas	Maureen
Flowers	Identity	Measurements
Footing	ICTR	Mel
Forgiveness	Importance	Memory(s)
Freedom	Individual	Mirror
Friends	Injustices	Model, teacher
Friendship	Innocence	Moments
Garden	Inquiry	Moral base
Generation	Inquirers	Mother
Generosity	Instruction	Movement
Gertie	Integrity	Music, lesson
Girl(s), child	Intentions	Myself
Give and take	Interests	Names
Glass	Intuition	Nancy
Glimpses	Irony	Nathan
Goal(s)	Issues	Nature
God	Jobs	Need(s)
Goodness	Journey	Negotiations
Grandkids	Judy	Neighborhood
Grandma Annie	Justice	News
Elizabeth	Kathy	Numbness
Grant	Kids	Oblivion
Grassroots	Kindness	Oddballs
Group(s)	Kingdom	Old age
Guilt	Knowledge	Opening
Hallways	Lack	Opinion
Hammers	Lady	Oppression
Happiness	Language	Optimism
Mrs. Harvey	Lawns	Order
Heart(s)	Learning	Other(s)
Hands	Mrs. Lemay	Outside
High school	Lens	Pain
History	Lesson(s)	Path
Home	Life	Paper
Homemaking	Lifeline	Paradox
Honesty	Lifetime	Parenting
Hope	Listening	Parents
Housework	Loss	Part
Hug	Love	Passion
Hurt	Mandate	Past
Humanity	Mansfields	Path
Humor	Marks	Patience
I	Mask	Peacefulness
Idealism	Master	People
Ideals	Master's	Person

Appendix B

In Vivo Codes: Nancy's Story

Phantoms	Rights	Teaching
Photograph(s)	Road	Teasing
Physician	Route	Technician
Piano	Routine	Technique(s)
Picture	Roots	Technology
Pillowcases	Sacrifice	Tellers, story
Place	Scars	Tenacity
Plan	School, yard	Tendrils
Playground	Section	Tiger
Poem	Self	Time
Potential	Self-centeredness	Time tabling
Power	Self study(s)	Tradition(s)
Practice	Service	Trappings
Prestige	Shadows	Trip(s)
Principles	Sheets	Truman
Professional development	Sherbrooke	Truth
Project	Shyness	Mr. Tupper
Promise	Silence	Uncle Haig
Prosperity	Site	Understanding
Psyche	Society	Uniqueness
Psychologist	Song	Unrest
Purposelessness	Soul	Urgency
Puzzles	Spirit	Values
Quest	Spirituality	Victory
Question(s)	Staff room	Virus
Quilts	Stand	Vision
Race	Standard, double	Vitality
Rage	Stewart	Voice
Rate	Story(s)	Vulnerability
Reality	Storytelling	Walls
Rebels	Strength(s)	Warnings
Record	Student(s)	Wasps
Reform	Study	Way
Research	Style	Web
Resentment	Subject matter	Weeding
Reserve	Success	White gloves
Respect	Sun	Window(s)
Respectability	Support	Winglets
Responsibility	Surface	Wisdom
Results	Sweetness	Wish
Rhythm	Symbols	Work
Richard	System	World
Ridicule	Tale(s)	Worthlessness
Right things	Talent(s)	Writing
	Teacher(s)	

Appendix C

Sample Coding Sheet: Inductive Analysis

<p><u>Block I History, Late January 1999, 9:15 a.m.</u></p> <p>Thirty-two history students tramped into class to join their teammates in their various groups. Some took their homework out, ready to start. Others chatted while I took attendance. Questions were answered as students made their way to their seats. Comments, gossip, smiles were exchanged. Groups settled down to their inquiry of documents pertaining to the 1837 Rebellion in Lower Canada.</p> <p>Nathan and Billy sat together in stony silence, eyes glazed. Nathan wore his blonde/black/copper locks gelled upward and outward, some tied with colored ribbon, others held in place with bobby pins. He was dirty, disheveled, limply sprawled across his desk. Billy's head was down. He studied the carpet while rocking his chair backward and forward like a metronome - steady, rhythmic, purposeless movement. I wondered what they had taken.</p> <p>Sterile Oblivion - image Richard, late, entered noisily, attempting to disrupt the class which had become involved in their study. He whispered the latest news of the suicide attempts of two friends while looking me in the eye, defiant, angry, continuing to talk. Richard's power play.</p>	<p>Students</p> <p>Groups</p> <p>Others</p> <p>Students</p> <p>Groups Inquiry</p> <p>Canada</p> <p>Billy, Nathan</p> <p>Silence</p> <p>Purposelessness</p> <p>Oblivion</p> <p>Richard</p> <p>Power</p>
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Appendix D

Inductive Categories and Codes

<u>Self/values:</u>	<u>Community/other:</u>	<u>Symbolic/metaphoric:</u>
Abundance	Action research	Belief
Academic	Administration	Blaze of unrest
Action researcher	Administrators	Circle, family, friends, full,
Awakening	Authority	soft, story of
Childhood	Bill of Rights	Cycle
Choices	Billy	Destiny, mysterious, new
Compliance	Boys	Dreams
Conformity	Bull(y)s	Emptiness
Confusion	Bullying	Highway
Contradiction(s)	Care	Idea(s)
Curiosity	Cary	Journey, spiritual
Daughter	Casey	Leaves, dead, unraked
Defeat	Change	Mask
Demands	Clarity	Mirages
Democracy	Class	Mist
Demons	Classroom, democratic	Mock Turtle
Dialogue	Community, of inquirers,	Morning(s)
Dream	learners	Path
Educator	Constraints	Porch
Equality	Contradiction	Psyche
Facilitator	Control	Quest
Fear	Conversation	Road
Freedom	Core Program	Road signs
Friendship	Dad	Secrets
Goal	Democracy	Shadows
Graduate study	Dialogue	Snow
Honesty	Diane	Tendrils
Humor	Dissension	Thing(s), dark
I, me	Donald	Tiger
Ideas(s)	Environment	Trees, skeleton
Idealism	Evolution	Walls, bare
Identity	Examinations	Wasps
Inquiry	Facts	Wind
Integrity	Friends	Window
Justice	Girl(s)	Winter
Knowledge	Grandma Annie Elizabeth	World
Learning	Group(s)	
Living theories	Home	
Love	Inquiry	
Master's degree	Judy	
Memory	Kathy	

Appendix D

Inductive Categories and Codes

Music	Kids	
Nancy	Lifeline	
Newcomer	Jim McCain	
Peacefulness	Maureen	
Practice	Mel	
Professional development	Mother	
Psyche	Nathan	
Punished	Oblivion	
Questions	Parents	
Rainbow of humanity	Paternalistic system	
ReAct model	Principal	
Research	Process, learning	
Resistance	Professor	
Responsibility	Richard	
Scholarship	Sarah	
Self-study	Story	
Soul	Student	
Strength	System, paternalistic	
Struggle	Teacher	
System	Truman	
Teaching	Uncle Haig	
University	Jack Whitehead	
Values		
Victory		
Voice		
Vulnerability		
Technician		
Truth		

Appendix E

Narrative of Self and Values

Block I History, late January 1999, 9:15 a.m.

I had only taught one period and already three students would be out of my class for a few days. I felt strangely defeated, weary.

Bishop's University: Summer School 1999

When I entered the Action Research class on July fifth, it had been three years since I had taken a course at the Graduate School of Education of Bishop's University. I had unconsciously abandoned my dream of completing my M. Ed. However, in late April, my life was redirected to Bishop's when I attended the International Teacher Researcher Conference (ICTR) in Magog. At summer school, I thought that I would continue to sift through my thirty-four years of teaching and shape some form of identity of myself as a teacher, and trace my professional development as well. Jack Whitehead, our teacher, suggested, quite casually, that I should view my career in terms of my own values and look for inherent contradictions.

It was early evening. Tropical heat wrapped the town in a breathless humidity. I sat at my computer struggling with the homework from the first session of the action research course. In the final hour of the session, Jack had requested that we write our values and find evidence of how we lived up to them in our practice. Because I was a newcomer to action research, Jack suggested that I create a portfolio of my thirty-four years of teaching.

Critical incidents from my practice would be the outline from which I would view these changes through the lens of my moral values. This had seemed straightforward enough. I would simply list my values from my moral base - integrity, honesty, justice, love, intellectual curiosity and freedom. These values would lead to stories from my childhood, how values developed and played out in the context of my career.

My value claim.

With disturbing clarity, I commenced the slow process of excavating my practice in terms of my values and some of the troubling events of the last school year. An awakening of conscience and soul occurred.

Am I an educator

or

Am I a technician?

I began to write stories to illustrate the contradictions between my practice and my values. When I review the values I wrote that hot, humid July day, I see that I had written them almost like a student's Bill of Rights. That surprised me, for I had been mulling over how I could democratize my classroom the next year. The following is a conversation between my ideals and my practice.

Student Bill of Rights

1. Each student should grow in awareness of his or her innate talents or strengths
2. Each student has the right to be respected and valued
3. Students should learn to accept how they differ from others and accept and respect differences in others
4. Students should recognize and use their goodness and spirit

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Narrative of Self and Values

5. Students should learn that there are circumstances when they should stand apart from the crowd and should be respected when they do. My students know that I do this myself. We spoke last year about the fact that I was one of the few teachers out on the picket line. I explained my reasons as well as my understanding of the views of other teachers. The strike had been illegal. I assume my students know that I will support their efforts to help others on the grounds of moral principles. I have assumed too much recently.

6. Students should learn that it is each person's responsibility to share his or her talents and ideas with others, to help each other

7. We must learn to laugh and share our good humor and the abundance that is in our lives. (My student, Mel) is the most powerful and wrenching of my failures because of my shyness. Shyness and reserve. Can I change? Will I be able to be more overtly tender and loving?

My Quest

It was 1:00 a.m. on that hot July evening and a new journey had begun. Silver mirages from my past materialized, shimmered brilliantly, but when I reached to capture their truth, they dissolved into tendrils of contradiction. Anger, unresolved conflicts, hurts, resentment, unfulfilled ambitions surfaced into my psyche. I howled inwardly, tears streaming from the rage I felt as I faced the truth. I tried to hide, to run from my cowardice and self-centeredness. But I dug deeper. I wrote and wrote and wrote. The project so linear and tidy in my mind had become messy and disjointed. What was the truth? I was considered to be one of the best teachers at my school, but as I considered my values, I could see only an excellent technician, promoting the paternalistic system, which I found so suffocating and menacing. The examination of values in my practice began a spiritual journey to clarity and vision.

Happy phantoms bubbled merrily to the surface of my memory. Biking with my friends to Scout Rock to eat a picnic lunch; flying down Wilson Street on a bobsled with twelve others, frosty air stinging our faces and the wind leaving us breathless; skating on the outdoor rink behind the curling club, forming a line, skating faster, faster, faster, until someone fell, and we tumbled down on top of each other laughing, and shrieking. Skating was particularly fun for the girls who could hold the hand of their favorite boy. Many of us kissed for the first time under the January moon to the tune of the *Skaters' Waltz*, with streaming noses and cracked lips. But, oh! It was so romantic! Hay rides, sleigh rides, organizing and directing the church pageant for the little kids; weekends at Farnham's cottage on Lake Massawipi; neighborhood corn roasts, barbecues; homemade strawberry ice cream for my July first birthday, made from freshly picked berries and cream; decorating our bikes for parades; and last but not least, swimming in the icy cold waters of the lake in May, gave us sweet freedom! What a shining innocence! What enchantment!

However, by three a.m., shadows began to tinge my happy childhood memories. I had neglected to consider contradictions. I had neglected to examine soul. To examine values requires a spiritual journey, a journey to the soul. This would be a tad messier and disjointed, leaving fragile tendrils of contradiction, puzzles, and humble self-centeredness...

Appendix E

Narrative of Self and Values

I would like to do my presentation for the summer school course over again! I would dim the lights, push the tables to one side so all of the mock turtles and cowardly lions might sit in a circle. On the overhead would be a recent picture of myself in the classroom.

I had not attended Bishop's Graduate Summer School for at least three years. I had not planned to again, but in April the ICTR (International Conference on Teacher Research) in Magog was magical. I was captured by the idea of empowering teachers through their own research at a grassroots level: teachers studying their own practice. The idea of it all was overwhelming. I embraced the unspoken honesty, integrity, and passion with which most spoke at the conference, presenters and audience alike.

The last school year was brutal at times. I struggled with the question of retiring early, off and on, for most of the year. The school culture was changing rapidly leaving me to question my own values in light of my students' values, those of my colleagues and my administrators. I wondered if I had the energy and the vitality to conduct six classes with the possibility of thirty five to forty students in each class for the next year. Would I be able to offer anything of value to the teaching and school communities?

I thought maybe in this course I could find some evidence of a meaningful practice in terms of my own values. I needed to investigate whether my practice supported my values. I also hoped that I might find an issue or a part of my practice to focus on, so that I would not retire in September, rather wait for June.

To begin my inquiry, I looked into my own value system. To find my own system, I looked into my roots.

As the music plays, a picture of me would be placed on the overhead. My wish is for there to be some sense of what I looked like at that age while I tell my story. Style, the value of extended family, and the body language of the little girl would be there to observe.

The time of the story is 1943. The story takes place in our front lawn on Lorne Avenue in Lennoxville. Dad and his neighbor, Frank Turner, are passing the time of day quietly swapping the news, house projects and cars. I have just picked clover flowers for Dad and Mister Turner, and am now engaged in picking up my shadow. Frank spots me and lifts me into the air. I scream and struggle. He hugs me tighter, trying to calm me. I hit him with little clenched fists, the flowers tumbling away. He sets me down. I return to my shadow. Willful. Hateful. Afraid. Alone. I was shy and I was wary. Dad allowed me to become. He did not think I had to take time from my web of exploration and daydreams to deal with adults.

Early lessons of family and friendship.

According to my mother, I exhibited a healthy curiosity coupled with a desire to be helpful at an early age. By the time I was two and a half I had a very good friend called Sarah. We were inseparable.

I bombarded my parents with endless questions. They always answered as best they could. I never was afraid to ask a question or give my ideas. I was asked to modify, to rethink, reconsider and often heard "No". But I was given a voice as was everyone in my house.

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Narrative of Self and Values

Everyone was welcome at my house. By the time my brothers and I were teenagers, our home had become a drop-in centre for young people as well as having the usual collection of adults. Grandma Annie Elizabeth lived in our house until she died. I sometimes sang to her.

Dad brought me up to be equal to my brothers. I mowed lawns, shoveled fertilizer on the garden, took off double windows and had the same allowance and chance for an education. I often protested that Douglas and Cary were not asked to help with the cooking, housework or weeding. The boys ran the roto-tiller. Nancy and Mum weeded. Although I protested, nothing was done about it. To some extent, there was a double standard in our house, a contradiction I challenged often, for it was so unfair.

Mister Tupper, a friend of the family, brought me home bloodied and crying. He told Dad that he had a valiant daughter. He had been driving up Wilson Street and there I was in the middle of the street, beating up a Fielding boy. The younger Fielding was on my back trying to help his brother. My brother, Douglas, the cause of the fight, had walked away into the house. I was fighting because they had thrown a rock at Douglas, my shy, little, bespectacled brother. He thought it was stupid that I bothered. My mother was appalled and I was punished: strapped for fighting.

Investigating the shadows revealed that I have always fought like a tiger for others, but not for myself.

For the first time in my life, my story is not a cover story, loyally putting a good face on things. It is not what I expect is expected of me, dutifully handed back with all the neat buttons and bows. The masks of respectability, compliance and conformity dissolve. I can howl and rage against what has happened to me, and, as a result to the students that I teach.

After Summer School

It is the end of July and a lot has been accomplished. I took a course in action research, and I've found my soul and a whole new wonderful group of friends. Jack Whitehead helped me to unlock a part of me that I did not know existed, the loving part of my nature, I have been aware of, but did not know how to express. So much of my own soul has been lost in trying to cope with the paternalistic outward reality of this world. I feel the hand of God guiding me now. Where I'll end up. I don't know, but I think it will be wonderful! It is important for me to love, to help, to be appreciated - more important than the success trappings that society has offered. A whole part of me has been starving too long. I find I am listening with my heart now, taking time for others. I wish to find out about them, how they're doing.

I am back playing the piano with stiff fingers and lack of speed. I played publicly and listened to the beautiful voices of the women of the action research group. We should form a chorus and sing. Music and humor are things that I value.

I was fortunate to have the money and the time to read *Okham's Razor* and *Seat of the Soul* before finishing a paper about values for Jack. This will be my fifth attempt to find my direction into the classroom and research for next year. I'm still not sure what I have to do about my M.Ed. I do believe that I have choices, and the best path will be shown to me. Will I be going to the ICTR Conference in Louisiana? I can work toward presenting something if my work in the classroom is significant...My blessings are many

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Narrative of Self and Values

but the greatest is peacefulness. I am sure next year's students will be shocked with the slightest change they see in me. I will most certainly be happier. I will use examples from Jack's work with us this summer. I shall facilitate the way for the students to form a democratic and intelligently caring community of scholars who provide support and encouragement for each other and spur each other to excellence. I will become the facilitator, not the disciplinarian. And I will enjoy that.

August 1999: Facing contradictions

I am a model teacher for the system I have perpetuated for thirty-four years. I have run an orderly, disciplined classroom. The passing rate for the provincial examinations is usually over 88%, a good record. I learned new techniques, contributed to school life, and usually gave in when I created controversy.

Why do I allow myself to be bullied into compliance?

I have had my moments when I was instrumental in making change, but I haven't shouted loud enough, long enough, or persistently enough. I haven't raged at the injustices, oppression and the lack of humanity of the system and in myself.

Why?

I know what it is like to be bullied, beaten up, hurt, left out, mocked and tormented.

Why do I not do something about it?

I can. I know that students do not begin on equal footing. I have attempted to individualize my courses but failed miserably. The system, timetabling, assessment criteria, outside examinations, prestige of the subject matter are my masters.

*Why didn't I just quit?**When in my career did this extreme conformity begin?*

Funnily enough, I feel I am just beginning to get things right and it's the end of my career. I have found some glimpses of my goodness as a teacher. I have longed for a just and democratic classroom with negotiated compromises as groups of students prepare for their place in society. It has taken me too long to relinquish control. Letting go and allowing students to give and take, to lead and be led, has taken time. Dialogue is essential in building a society that is fair to all. Dissension is a building block of a democracy. Intentions should be transparent and easily understood. There should be no one on the 'in' and no one on the 'out'. I will have to let go of control. The vulnerability that is attached to this idea terrifies me. A second goal for the year is to create a loving atmosphere in my classroom where students can feel free to be themselves and be safe, protected, needed. As I like to remain emotionally detached and in control, this will be a huge challenge.

Teaching after summer school.

School screeched to a start with symbols of labor negotiations crashing into the background buzz and hum of the new school year. The beat of work-to-rule provided the rhythm for the fall. For a while, I forgot its strident clang. I was taken aback by school's opening. 'It is too soon,' I cried inwardly, 'I haven't reached any understanding of my past. I haven't found a comfort level with my findings.' Jagged edges still severed my cherished memories of happy childhood communities of family, friends and neighbors.

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Narrative of Self and Values

My identity was in tatters. Neither had I fully rested from the disturbing and often brutal 1998-99 school year.

Yet I began the year with renewed optimism, but also with a sense of urgency that I had never felt before. So much work had to be accomplished in one short year. I would retire at the end of it. Upon reflection, I realized that it was guilt, anger and sense of worthlessness that I encountered in confronting my contradictions. All of these years I had been serving a master I intellectually loathed – the paternalistic system – not fighting it, as I assumed I had for thirty-five years. My childhood's unresolved confusion about authority and bullying, misunderstandings about a girl-child's place in the scheme of things, drove me to make up for a lifetime.

This year also marks the beginning of the end of my teaching career of thirty-five years. Oddly, the enthusiasm and idealism with which I began teaching remains, albeit tempered by some wisdom. I have learned to listen to the intuition of my experience.

My teaching career began in the blaze of the political unrest of the 1960s. It was a time of economic prosperity. As did others of my generation, I burned with a sense of purpose and hope. As I look back, I realize we did help make a difference. Jobs were plentiful, job security was an accepted right. I believe, as I did thirty-five years ago, that each individual is responsible for helping and effecting changes for the disadvantaged and disenfranchised. This means my voice must be heard calmly and insistently. Overcoming shyness and a lifetime of giving in to the demands of the paternalistic system will be difficult. My goal is to empower my students with knowledge and understanding of what they can do and that they should try to make a difference in the world.

Being a member of the action research group at Bishop's summer school has had a profound effect on me. It's made me acutely aware of the importance of a community of inquirers as a lifeline for one in one's endeavors. The importance of being respected as a person with ideas and potential is an essential characteristic of being a member of a democratic society. I hope I can guide the development of this class into becoming a community of learners.

Scalding disappointment

It began with a respiratory virus, which lasted for months. By November I was under a doctor's care and taking Paxil for anxiety attacks. I still managed to finish the fall term remaining quite happy about my work and my classes. Christmas with my family was a fragile, happy time. I was so weary. I was terrified of a dark thing sleeping within me. I was lonely in my crowded family. I felt unconnected, numb. I couldn't feel.

I Fear

What?

I am sad.

I cry no tears.

I am not enough.

Is this real?

Is it raining in December?

Or, is it snowing?

Cold.

Appendix E

*Narrative of Self and Values**Icy coldness flows in my veins.**I can't get warm.**Things come undone.**I am wingless.*

I became lost between the homes of family members. I lost my way coming home. I slept for hours, finding release from responsibility, or was it just the nothingness?

I did not resume work in January. There was no English-speaking psychologist who could help me. I was too weary to speak in French. I remained in close contact with my physician. My friends hugged me tightly as I fought to stay at the surface. Phone calls at night, rides to do errands, phone calls during the day, e-mails - sometimes three times a day. I was softly encouraged to write, but no blinks when I couldn't. Just there. Just there. Just there for me. Maybe I am worthy.

During those oppressively tropical days of early July at the summer school course, haunting memories and unfulfilled youthful dreams and soulful whispers of ignored truths tumbled turbulently into my consciousness. The summer months slipped silently by unnoticed, as I uncovered secrets of my troubled psyche.

How do I deal with the bullies? With love. Do I speak up? Yes, however, not always calmly. I was happy to be back at work. I was learning so much from listening to my students. We were negotiating, and for the most part, we were learning together. I cherished my strength. I looked into the smiling faces of my friends and foes, and I saw God, but I still had work to do.

August 2000: Systematic Action Research

I was working with the tools of research: defining the problem, examining student work, observations of students, videotapes of lessons, audiotapes of conversations with students, keeping a research diary, taking photographs, doing case studies within the classroom.

November.

I did not expect this resistance. Teachers are listening to a lot of anger about inquiry and about me. (The kids) blame me. I am losing patience. I feel threatened and offended by (Casey's) attitude. I feel I am letting everyone down. I am losing my reputation. What reputation? The reputation that I could control the class, teach the information, and have students do exceptionally well on the examinations? Now, I realize that I was admired for things that I abhorred in myself. I perpetuated a harsh and cold system with its emphasis on competition, high marks and doing what is expected. I was terrified now, for I was stepping completely out of the bounds of the system. I had to confront old demons. How much authority could I exert? In examining my own authority, I began at last to examine my own reaction to authority and my own fears. I understood why I wore masks of compliance, of politeness. I was brought up to please. I received information and gave it back diligently. I got good marks to please my parents. I went to university because my father had a heart attack when my brother failed his first year at Bishop's. I knew the dance. I did not construct knowledge. There was no real transformation. I did what the administration wanted. I tried to please so I could glow in their praise. But there never was praise. Just growing demands. I did challenge the system, but from within it. Any time I strayed I was brought back into place. I was

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Narrative of Self and Values

bullied by their attack on my weakness. My confusion has led me to read about women's ways of coming to know, and the results of women's learning and working in paternalistic, male-controlled, aggressive and competitive institutions. The works of Carol Gilligan, Nel Noddings, Mary Belenky, and Rachel Kessler resonate in me. I understand how I have allowed myself to be bullied into compliance. I observe my fear clinically. Understanding and being aware does not mean there is resolution. It will take time. But I do see a different me in the classroom right now.

To me action research is more than reflection and the story of that reflection. It is a systematic inquiry into my practice. In studying my work as a teacher, I develop a question and try to find answers or to change my practice based on what I learn. I become more aware of my world, my actions in it and myself. I pose questions and seek answers based on the here and now, and I question my awareness. My personal values are my road signs. I write a reflective journal, make observations, look for surprises and tensions in my daily practice. I watch videotapes and listen to tapes of student interviews. I look for patterns, for false assumptions. After all is said and done, I then write of my experiences as a story to explain, illuminate my life and my emotions. I reorganize, reassess, realign my life experiences in that story so that it is continually integrated into my life. It guides me to make changes so I can live my life more fully according to my values. I work with critical friends who help keep me on track. My purpose in conducting this soul-searching is to find better ways to teach my students, to help them become the centre of their own learning, to understand how I learn, and how the system and culture in which I live has shaped me. As an action researcher, I unearth my living theories.

Reflection: April 2002

I do love to write. I love to communicate. This is probably why Dad once said that I talked too much. However I have reached a time in my life right now when it is time to listen. Much of my chatter has become nervous talk, talk which springs from inner anxiety and tension. When I feel that insecure and unhappy, that is time I should remain quiet. I realize that the job in the classroom is not my main concern. I am. I need to find joy, peace and a niche for myself. I need to seek out things that make me feel joyful, truly joyful. It is time to let go of so many unnecessary and troubling thoughts that I have carried since childhood. It is time to put my act together.

September 2002: A letter to Jack

Dear Jack,

I retired from the schoolyard in June. Strangely, I have always believed in happy endings. I believed that if I worked hard enough to produce top-quality work, I would be appreciated. It was not to be. My career ended in controversy. I emerged from the playground wearing my white gloves - that was my victory! However, all that is the stuff for another story.

I will finish my Master's degree at Bishop's. My exit project at Bishop's will entail working with the older people of the Eastern Townships in a course I will offer entitled "Writing My Life's Story". My dreams are big but I have to stop somewhere. There are many roads to take but I know my basic goals will be realized: I will work with the elderly of my area on family history and their work will be recognized publicly.

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Narrative of Self and Values

The Education Department of Bishop's is having trouble filling their evening Post Graduate courses so things are bit up in the air about my accreditation. However, creative answers will be found. Nothing is ever linear or precise in my world, Jack!

With kindest regards,

Nancy S

P.S. I owe it to my friendship with Judy that I am continuing. Without her faith in my efforts, her inspiration, honesty and courage, I would not be finishing my degree. I would have been content to work at the Lennoxville library at minimum wage and wile away my remaining days.

Appendix F

Narrative of Community and Other

Thirty-two history students tramped into class to join their teammates in their various groups. Some took their homework out, ready to start. Others chatted while I took attendance. Questions were answered as students made their way to their seats. Comments, gossip, smiles were exchanged. Groups settled down to their inquiry of documents pertaining to the 1837 Rebellion in Lower Canada.

Nathan and Billy sat together in stony silence, eyes glazed. Nathan wore his blonde/black/copper locks gelled upward and outward, some tied with colored ribbon, others held in place with bobby pins. He was dirty, disheveled, limply sprawled across his desk. Billy's head was down. He studied the carpet while rocking his chair backward and forward like a metronome - steady, rhythmic, purposeless movement. I wondered what they had taken.

Richard, late, entered noisily, attempting to disrupt the class, which had become involved in their study. He whispered the latest news of the suicide attempts of two friends while looking me in the eye, defiant, angry, continuing to talk. Richard's power play. It was only his first day back after spending two weeks in hospital where the police had been called to handcuff and subdue him.

Nathan and Billy did not have any homework done. For several weeks there had been little evidence of effort, participation or work from the two boys. I had cajoled, threatened, worked with them, but to no avail. I will recommend that they go to PASS (Possible Alternative to Student Suspension). It will be a retreat for these two boys. Neither will have to be bothered with me or with the other students. Because the person in charge of PASS does not teach, the work I design for them will be mechanical, oriented toward the June provincial examinations. Recess would be the time to deal with these two. Sterile oblivion.

Richard is now out of control. Because the classroom telephone is out of order, I must accompany him down the hall to the principal's office. He manages to disrupt other classes along the way. Upon returning to our classroom, I find others tiredly lost, but we do regain some measure of good-natured interchange.

The bell rings too soon. I have not made contact with Maureen, so clever, so unhappy, so quiet and gentle. Her parents had suddenly divorced...the mother moving to Ontario with her son, Maureen remaining with her father to finish her school year. I know she misses her mother. She needs care and conversation right now. She, too, is lost and lonely, but she has the courage to continue to do all the 'right things' and work through her problems. When we talk, it is about history and historical fiction. It is through stories that we can reach out and touch. She left a note on her desk saying 'I love history', and I wept inwardly. She understood the dilemma posed by the other students, and comforted me through her pain. Suddenly I felt achingly miserable and inept. I had allowed the boys to dominate again. The girls need a mirror to see their uniqueness, their importance to world order, their promise, the beauty that women can offer society, their wonderful strength. Too often my efforts are sabotaged by the restless aggressiveness of the boys. I wonder if they should be taught separately during adolescent years. In my case, the girls would receive more attention, I would modify the curriculum to meet their interests and needs.

Appendix F

Narrative of Community and Other

At recess I found Billy and Nathan lying on the carpet in front of an empty office with about eight others. Impassively they listen to me. Their numbness and desolation hurts and angers me. I want to slap some sense into them until their demons dissolve. They are just babies really. Instead, I turn and walk away. They slip into oblivion.

I had only taught one period and already three students would be out of my class for a few days. I felt strangely defeated, weary. Not only would they miss instruction, but they would not have the benefit of the powerful give and take between students as they write their think logs and discuss their learning.

I had unconsciously abandoned my dream of completing my M. Ed. However, in late April, my life was redirected to Bishop's when I attended the International Teacher Researcher Conference (ICTR) in Magog. I sat at my computer struggling with the homework from the first session of the action research course. In the final hour of the session, Jack had requested that we write our values and find evidence of how we lived up to them in our practice. Because I was a newcomer to action research, Jack suggested that I create a portfolio of my thirty-four years of teaching. Critical incidents from my practice would be the outline from which I would view these changes through the lens of my moral values.

I began to write stories to illustrate the contradictions between my practice and my values. When I review the values I wrote that hot, humid July day, I see that I had written them almost like a student's Bill of Rights. That surprised me, for I had been mulling over how I could democratize my classroom the next year.

Student Bill of Rights

1. Each student should grow in awareness of his or her innate talents or strengths
2. Each student has the right to be respected and valued
3. Students should learn to accept how they differ from others and accept and respect the differences in others
4. Students should recognize and use their goodness and spirit
5. Students should learn that there are circumstances when they should stand apart from the crowd and should be respected when they do
6. Students should learn that it is each person's responsibility to share his or her talents and ideas with others, to help each other
7. We must learn to laugh and share our good humor and the abundance that is our lives

As I considered my values, I could see only an excellent technician, promoting the paternalistic system, which I found so suffocating and menacing. The examination of values in my practice began a spiritual journey to clarity and vision. It is the end of July and a lot has been accomplished. I took a course in action research, and I've found my soul and a whole new wonderful group of friends. Jack Whitehead helped me to unlock a part of me that I did not know existed, the loving part of my nature, I have been aware of, but did not know how to express. So much of my own soul has been lost in trying to cope with the paternalistic outward reality of this world.

I began the year with renewed optimism, but also with a sense of urgency that I had never felt before. So much work had to be accomplished in one short year. I would retire at the end of it. Upon reflection, I realized that it was guilt, anger and sense of worthlessness that I encountered in confronting my contradictions. All of these years I

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Narrative of Community and Other

had been serving a master I intellectually loathed – the paternalistic system – not fighting it, as I assumed I had for thirty-five years.

I believe that a teacher should level the playing fields for all students in her care. A classroom should be a fair and happy place for students to inquire, exchange ideas, and pursue their interests, which would guide them to become. Their contributions should be welcomed as instrumental in the daily workings of our world. My classroom could be a family community circle like that which had nourished me into adulthood.

The fall would become a flurry of activity. I had decided to conduct an action research project in one history class. I ended up trying my ideas in all six classes.

My research question became

Will democratizing my classroom create student interest in history, and thus improve learning and marks on the MEQ examination? I hoped to build a caring community of inquirers actively searching for their own truth.

This means my voice must be heard calmly and insistently. Overcoming shyness and a lifetime of giving in to the demands of the paternalistic system will be difficult. But it is for those kids in my care.

It's time to begin. I put aside the lesson plan I have used for years. This time we write about our values and our stories. The students' ideas are poetic. They become my mandate for the year. I write their words into a poem.

Values

*I believe school should be a happy place
Where I can just be me, unique, healthy beautiful;
Or, I can discuss life with my friends.
I will find opportunities and choices in this place
Or find a helping hand and caring people who will help and comfort me.
School is a place where we learn to trust each other respect one another.
I can find out how the library, how computers will be useful in my studies.
I will find out how to get somewhere in my life.
I want to work with my friends in groups so
I can exchange ideas, talk things out, make new friends.
School will teach me how to keep an open mind and a willing heart.
I will be free.
I will learn to take care of things I value,
Feel safe.*

Being a member of the action research group at Bishop's summer school has had a profound effect on me. It's made me acutely aware of the importance of a community of inquirers as a lifeline for one in one's endeavors. The importance of being respected as a person with ideas and potential is an essential characteristic of being a member of a democratic society. I hope I can guide the development of this class into becoming a community of learners. I was learning so much from listening to my students. We were negotiating, and for the most part, we were learning together.

I was working with the tools of research: defining the problem, examining student work, observations of students, videotapes of lessons, audiotapes of conversations with students, keeping a research diary, taking photographs, doing case studies within the classroom. An MEQ grant with a professor from the university gave me the opportunity

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Narrative of Community and Other

to change my practice, to align my work with my values. Throughout the summer of 2000 Jo and I worked to transform a highly knowledge-based Canadian geography course into a richness of concepts and 'big' questions.

My big question was

How have man's activities impacted on the environment?

The term was divided into three parts: the basic concepts of the course; the teaching of research competencies - building the scaffolding; and student-conducted inquiry. My classroom became a constructivist one.

I did not expect this resistance. Casey says she learned all this in grade three.

I did not think quickly enough and explain 'accessing prior knowledge'. She carries her unhappiness about me and the class into the other classes. Teachers are listening to a lot of anger about inquiry and about me. The kids are unhappy that things did not work out with the project with the university students. They blame me. I am losing patience. I feel threatened and offended by her attitude. I feel I am letting everyone down. I am losing my reputation. What reputation? The reputation that I could control the class, teach the information, and have students do exceptionally well on the examinations? Now, I realize that I was admired for things that I abhorred in myself. I perpetuated a harsh and cold system with its emphasis on competition, high marks and doing what is expected.

My purpose in conducting this soul-searching is to find better ways to teach my students, to help them become the centre of their own learning, to understand how I learn, and how the system and culture in which I live has shaped me. As an action researcher, I unearth my living theories.

Appendix G

Symbolic/Metaphoric Narrative

Blooming - cover page image (See Appendix A for images referred to here)

Sterile Oblivion - image

Defeated and Weary - image

Circles.

This song is a simple expression of my belief that we are all bound to one another spiritually. It is in our spirit that we touch humanity.

*All my life's a circle
Sunrise and sun down,
The moon rolls through the night time
'til daybreak rolls around.
All my life's a circle,
I can't tell you why,
Seasons spinning round again
The years keep rolling by.*

*It seems like I've been here before
But I can't remember when,
I've got this funny feeling
We'll all be together again.
No straight lines make up my life
All my roads have bends,
There is no clear-cut beginning
And, thank God, no dead ends.*

*I've found you a thousand times
I guess you've done the same.
Then we'd lose each other
It's like a children's game.
And as I find you here again
The thought runs through my mind
Our love is like a circle
Let's go round one more time (Chapin, 1990) .*

A Newcomer to Action Research - image

My Quest

It was 1:00 a.m. on that hot July evening and a new journey had begun. Silver mirages from my past materialized, shimmered brilliantly, but when I reached to capture their truth, they dissolved into tendrils of contradiction. Anger, unresolved conflicts, hurts, resentment, unfulfilled ambitions surfaced into my psyche. I howled inwardly, tears streaming from the rage I felt as I faced the truth. I tried to hide, to run from my cowardice and self-centeredness. But I dug deeper. I wrote and wrote and wrote. The project so linear and tidy in my mind, had become messy and disjointed. What was the truth? I was considered to be one of the best teachers at my school, but as I considered my values, I could see only an excellent technician, promoting the paternalistic system,

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Symbolic/Metaphoric Narrative

which I found so suffocating and menacing. The examination of values in my practice began a spiritual journey to clarity and vision.

Happy phantoms bubbled merrily to the surface of my memory. Biking with my friends to Scout Rock to eat a picnic lunch; flying down Wilson Street on a bobsled with twelve others, frosty air stinging our faces and the wind leaving us breathless; skating on the outdoor rink behind the curling club, forming a line, skating faster, faster, faster, until someone fell, and we tumbled down on top of each other laughing, and shrieking. Skating was particularly fun for the girls who could hold the hand of their favorite boy. Many of us kissed for the first time under the January moon to the tune of the *Skaters' Waltz*, with streaming noses and cracked lips. But, oh! It was so romantic! Hay rides, sleigh rides, organizing and directing the church pageant for the little kids; weekends at Farnham's cottage on Lake Massawipi; neighborhood corn roasts, barbecues; homemade strawberry ice cream for my July first birthday, made from freshly picked berries and cream; decorating our bikes for parades; and last but not least, swimming in the icy cold waters of the lake in May, gave us sweet freedom! What a shining innocence! What enchantment!

Happy Phantoms - image

However, by three a.m., shadows began to tinge my happy childhood memories. I had neglected to consider contradictions. I had neglected to examine soul. To examine values requires a spiritual journey, a journey to the soul. This would be a tad messier and disjointed, leaving fragile tendrils of contradiction, puzzles, and humble self-centeredness.

Yes! You Are - image

Dear Jack,

I have picked myself up and dusted myself off and started all over again. One of my stories begins last Friday night. Another mock turtle found me and pushed me into story with her stories. She eased my fears with her fears. She made me realize that the first wooden mask I must drop is the one of sweetness. She illuminated the path I wish to follow with tales of her experience. She walked with me to the road and left me to wander back with part of my splintered self on paper as a story.

I would like to do my presentation for the summer school course over again! I would dim the lights, push the tables to one side so all of the mock turtles and cowardly lions might sit in a circle. On the overhead would be a recent picture of myself in the classroom.

In My Classroom - image

...I looked into my roots. The focus of this presentation is to tell the stories from my childhood that built my basic value system. I will *Contrast then and now, before and after, describe what life used to be like, what it has become* (Geertz, 1995).

My first picture would be one of Mum and Dad posing for their wedding. The picture depicts the historical content of values, technology, style so effortlessly. I would place the picture on the overhead as I began the story of my circles.

Mum and Dad - image

Beginnings in My Family Circle

My family members are storytellers, keeping alive the memory of our family, its traditions and its values. My mother and father embraced my brothers and me with stories of our childhood while we looked through photograph albums. Dad's stories were full of

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paradox, irony, humor, and warnings. Mum's stories were quieter, gentler, and sadder, speaking of sacrifice, service, duty and loss.

Next, the refrain from Harry Chapin's *Circles* would play.

All my life's a circle

Sunrise and sun down,

The moon rolls through the night time

'til daybreak rolls around.

All my life's a circle,

I can't tell you why,

Seasons spinning round again

The years keep rolling by.

Nancy - image

I was shy and I was wary. Dad allowed me to become. He did not think I had to take time from my web of exploration and daydreams to deal with adults.

Nancy and Sarah - image

Learning About Living and Dying, Respect and Caring - image

The darkest story of My Quest occurred when I was seven. I had been studying music for a year. My music teacher, Mrs. Harvey, lived on the next street, a good block away. On my way to music lessons, if I took the short route, I would pass the homes of the Fieldings, the Wingets and the Hammers. Each family had three bullyboys. I was taunted and called names as I passed their houses. I walked by, head held high. However, when I turned seven, my adored Uncle Haig gave me a handsome tan leather briefcase to carry my music books in. The next day, I walked proudly to my music lesson only to be teased unmercifully. The Wingets grabbed the briefcase and kicked it around. They pushed me down as I reached for the case, and hit me as well. The driver of a passing car frightened the boys off and rescued me. I arrived at my lesson frightened, bloodied and scraped. The second time this happened, my music teacher phoned my parents and suggested that someone walk with me to my lesson. Cary was elected, but he only took me once. At home he taught me to use my fists and told me I shouldn't be a baby. This was usually Cary's advice. I walked another, longer, route to my lessons until the bullies lost interest.

Brought Up Equal - image

Investigating the shadows revealed that I have always fought like a tiger for others, but not for myself.

Paternalism - image

My bullies lurked inside my home and outside it as well. I need ideas about how to deal with the bullies. The teasing of my brothers ceased as we became older and gave up childish things. I continue to search for ideas. My brothers' teasing ended when we grew into our late teens to become friends, close friends. The scars are still on my heart. I have never satisfactorily learned how to deal with the bullies. I will this year, for they lurk in the hallways, classrooms, and in the staff room. I have given in to them too long. They need to be shown up for what they are. They are destroying order at Alexander Galt Regional High School. I am struggling against control and power. It seems to me that this circle has gone around and around all my life.

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Symbolic/Metaphoric Narrative

For the first time in my life, my story is not a cover story, loyally putting a good face on things. It is not what I expect is expected of me, dutifully handed back with all the neat buttons and bows. The masks of respectability, compliance and conformity dissolve. I can howl and rage against what has happened to me, and, as a result to the students that I teach.

Music and Humor - image

This will be my fifth attempt to find my direction into the classroom and research for next year. I'm still not sure what I have to do about my M.Ed. I do believe that I have choices, and the best path will be shown to me.

A Model Teacher - image

School screeched to a start with symbols of labor negotiations crashing into the background buzz and hum of the new school year. The beat of work-to-rule provided the rhythm for the fall. For a while, I forgot its strident clang. I was taken aback by school's opening. 'It is too soon,' I cried inwardly, 'I haven't reached any understanding of my past. I haven't found a comfort level with my findings.' Jagged edges still severed my cherished memories of happy childhood communities of family, friends and neighbors. My identity was in tatters.

Happy Childhood Community - image

All of these years I had been serving a master I intellectually loathed - the paternalistic system - not fighting it, as I assumed I had for thirty-five years.

Bare Walls Waiting - image

The first day seems surreal. It is uncomfortably hot and humid, each movement sticky with perspiration. The sun pours in the open window, eerily highlighting the back corner. Wasps fly into the classroom, circle dangerously before buzzing out again to hover menacingly against the hot glass. Bare walls and bulletin boards await the offerings of this year's students.

This year also marks the beginning of the end of my teaching career of thirty-five years. Oddly, the enthusiasm and idealism with which I began teaching remains, albeit tempered by some wisdom. I have learned to listen to the intuition of my experience.

A Sense of Purpose and Hope - image

My teaching career began in the blaze of the political unrest of the 1960s. It was a time of economic prosperity. As did others of my generation, I burned with a sense of purpose and hope. As I look back, I realize we did help make a difference.

A Happy Place - image

Christmas with my family was a fragile, happy time. I was so weary. I was terrified of a dark thing sleeping within me. I was lonely in my crowded family. I felt unconnected, numb. I couldn't feel.

*I Fear
What?
I am sad.
I cry no tears.
I am not enough.
Is this real?
Is it raining in December?
Or, is it snowing?*

Appendix G

*Symbolic/Metaphoric Narrative**Cold.**Icy coldness flows in my veins.**I can't get warm.**Things come undone.**I am wingless.*

A Fragile, Happy Time - image

The snow has melted in the front yard and almost in the back. A sharp March wind enables fall's dead, unraked leaves to teeter and topple drunkenly across brown grass. A soft purple mist clings to skeleton trees indicating the stirrings of new life. In the eternal cycle of the seasons, everything must change. Soon soft warm breezes will awaken the earth from its frozen trance. So too have I moved from the stark emptiness of winter's bleakness to new heartbeats of truth, and a mysterious new destiny. The dreams of my life's young mornings murmur enticingly to a return to those fresh ideas of long ago. I have come full circle.

Awakening From a Frozen Trance - image

During those oppressively tropical days of early July at the summer school course, haunting memories and unfulfilled youthful dreams and soulful whispers of ignored truths tumbled turbulently into my consciousness. The summer months slipped silently by unnoticed, as I uncovered secrets of my troubled psyche. Circles of new friends entered my world and gladdened my life with love and wisdom, remaining to support me. I wrote and wrote, never before realizing I had any talent. The soft circle encouraged my efforts to find truth in my journey.

Co-researchers - image

I had to confront old demons. How much authority could I exert? In examining my own authority, I began at last to examine my own reaction to authority and my own fears. I understood why I wore masks of compliance, of politeness. I was brought up to please. I received information and gave it back diligently. I got good marks to please my parents. I went to university because my father had a heart attack when my brother failed his first year at Bishop's. I knew the dance. I did not construct knowledge. There was no real transformation. I did what the administration wanted. I tried to please so I could glow in their praise. But there never was praise. Just growing demands. I did challenge the system, but from within it. Any time I strayed I was brought back into place.

To me action research is more than reflection and the story of that reflection. It is a systematic inquiry into my practice. In studying my work as a teacher, I develop a question and try to find answers or to change my practice based on what I learn. I become more aware of my world, my actions in it and myself. I pose questions and seek answers based on the here and now, and I question my awareness. My personal values are my road signs. I write a reflective journal, make observations, look for surprises and tensions in my daily practice. I watch videotapes and listen to tapes of student interviews. I look for patterns, for false assumptions. After all is said and done, I then write of my experiences as a story to explain, illuminate my life and my emotions. I reorganize, reassess, realign my life experiences in that story so that it is continually integrated into my life. It guides me to make changes so I can live my life more fully according to my values. I work with critical friends who help keep me on track. My purpose in conducting this soul-searching is to find better ways to teach my students, to help them become the

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centre of their own learning, to understand how I learn, and how the system and culture in which I live has shaped me. As an action researcher, I unearth my living theories.

Then and Now - image

Writing - image

Dear Jack,

I retired from the schoolyard in June. Strangely, I have always believed in happy endings. I believed that if I worked hard enough to produce top-quality work, I would be appreciated. It was not to be. My career ended in controversy. I emerged from the playground wearing my white gloves - that was my victory! However, all that is the stuff for another story.

Wearing My White Gloves - image

Appendix H

Dimensionalization of Codes and Categories: Narrative of Self and Values

<u>Current</u>	<u>Contradiction</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>Consequence</u>
Accountability Champion Compliance Contradictions Control Curiosity Dream Feeling Goal Home I Loving nature Masks Master's degree Memory Resistance Story Struggle Values Voice	Educator Master Model teacher Technician	Action research Inquiry classroom Learning Self-study Strength Tools, of research	Action research Choices Defeat Group I Identity Psyche Work Worthlessness
<u>Current/ Contradiction</u>	<u>Current/ Contradiction/ Change</u>	<u>Current/ Contradiction/ Consequence</u>	<u>Current/ Change</u>
Double standard Values	Spiritual journey	Daughter Fear	Authority Roots Work
<u>Current/ Consequence</u>	<u>Contradiction/ Change</u>	<u>Contradiction/ Consequence</u>	
Controversy Research	Awakening Evolution	Truth	

Appendix I

Sample Coding Sheet: Narrative of Self and Values

<p><u>Block I History, late January 1999, 9:15 a.m.</u></p> <p>I had only taught one period and already three students would be out of my class for a few days. I felt strangely defeated, weary.</p> <p><u>Bishop's University: Summer School 1999</u></p> <p>When I entered the Action Research class on July fifth, it had been three years since I had taken a course at the Graduate School of Education of Bishop's University. I had unconsciously abandoned my dream of completing my M. Ed. However, in late April, my life was redirected to Bishop's when I attended the International Teacher Researcher Conference (ICTR) in Magog. At summer school, I thought that I would continue to sift through my thirty-four years of teaching and shape some form of identity of myself as a teacher, and trace my professional development as well. Jack Whitehead, our teacher, suggested, quite casually, that I should view my career in terms of my own values and look for inherent contradictions.</p> <p>It was early evening. Tropical heat wrapped the town in a breathless humidity. I sat at my computer struggling with the homework from the first session of the action research course. In the final hour of the session, Jack had requested that we write our values and find evidence of how we lived up to them in our practice. Because I was a newcomer to action research, Jack suggested that I create a portfolio of my thirty-four years of teaching.</p> <p>Critical incidents from my practice would be the outline from which I would view these changes through the lens of my moral values. This had seemed</p>	<p>I</p> <p>Defeat</p> <p>Dream</p> <p>Identity</p> <p>Struggle</p> <p>Newcomer</p> <p>Values</p>
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Appendix I

Sample Coding Sheet: Narrative of Self and Values

<p>straightforward enough. I would simply list my values from my moral base - integrity, honesty, justice, love, intellectual curiosity and freedom. These values would lead to stories from my childhood, how values developed and played out in the context of my career.</p> <p><u>My value claim.</u></p> <p>With disturbing clarity, I commenced the slow process of excavating my practice in terms of my values and some of the troubling events of the last school year. An awakening of conscience and soul occurred.</p> <p><i>Am I an educator</i> or <i>Am I a technician?</i></p> <p>I began to write stories to illustrate the contradictions between my practice and my values. When I review the values I wrote that hot, humid July day, I see that I had written them almost like a student's Bill of Rights. That surprised me, for I had been mulling over how I could democratize my classroom the next year.</p>	<p>Integrity Honesty, Justice, Love, Curiosity Freedom</p> <p>Values</p> <p>Awakening</p> <p>Educator</p> <p>Technician</p> <p>Contradictions</p>
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Appendix J

Sample Coding Sheet: Deductive Analysis

<p>Nathan and Billy sat together in stony silence, eyes glazed. Nathan wore his blonde/black/copper locks gelled upward and outward, some tied with colored ribbon, others held in place with bobby pins. He was dirty, disheveled, limply sprawled across his desk. Billy's head was down. He studied the carpet while rocking his chair backward and forward like a metronome - steady, rhythmic, purposeless movement. I wondered what they had taken.</p>	<p>Disorienting dilemma: external event provoking internal disillusionment</p>
<p>Sterile Oblivion - image</p>	<p>Disorienting dilemma: external event provoking internal disillusionment</p>
<p>The bell rings too soon. I have not made contact with Maureen, so clever, so unhappy, so quiet and gentle. Her parents had suddenly divorced...the mother moving to Ontario with her son, Maureen remaining with her father to finish her school year. I know she misses her mother. She needs care and conversation right now. She, too, is lost and lonely, but she has the courage to continue to do all the 'right things' and work through her problems. When we talk, it is about history and historical fiction. It is through stories that we can reach out and touch. She left a note on her desk saying 'I love history', and I wept inwardly. She understood the dilemma posed by the other students, and comforted me through her pain. Suddenly I felt achingly miserable and inept. I had allowed the boys to dominate again.</p>	<p>Disorienting dilemma: external event provoking internal dilemma</p>
<p>Defeated and Weary - image</p>	<p>Disorienting dilemma: external event provoking internal disillusionment</p>
<p>The girls need a mirror to see their uniqueness, their importance to world</p>	<p>Critical assessment of assumptions</p>

Appendix J

Sample Coding Sheet: Deductive Analysis

<p>order, their promise, the beauty that women can offer society, their wonderful strength. Too often my efforts are sabotaged by the restless aggressiveness of the boys. I wonder if they should be taught separately during adolescent years.</p>	
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Appendix K

Narrative of Professional Learning

Nathan and Billy sat together in stony silence, eyes glazed. Nathan wore his blonde/black/copper locks gelled upward and outward, some tied with colored ribbon, others held in place with bobby pins. He was dirty, disheveled, limply sprawled across his desk. Billy's head was down. He studied the carpet while rocking his chair backward and forward like a metronome – steady, rhythmic, purposeless movement. I wondered what they had taken.

Image Sterile Oblivion - image

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Image Defeated and Weary - image

The girls need a mirror to see their uniqueness, their importance to world order, their promise, the beauty that women can offer society, their wonderful strength. Too often my efforts are sabotaged by the restless aggressiveness of the boys. I wonder if they should be taught separately during adolescent years. In my case, the girls would receive more attention, I would modify the curriculum to meet their interests and needs.

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At summer school, I thought that I would continue to sift through my thirty-four years of teaching and shape some form of identity of myself as a teacher, and trace my professional development as well. Jack Whitehead, our teacher, suggested, quite casually, that I should view my career in terms of my own values and look for inherent contradictions.

Image A Newcomer to Action Research - image

Critical incidents from my practice would be the outline from which I would view these changes through the lens of my moral values. This had seemed straightforward

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enough. I would simply list my values from my moral base – integrity, honesty, justice, love, intellectual curiosity and freedom. These values would lead to stories from my childhood, how values developed and played out in the context of my career. My documents would support my claims. Or, so I thought. I would present documents, stories and photographs in a colorful scrapbook. The idea of a scrapbook is rather old-fashioned. The idea would symbolize the passage of time.

With disturbing clarity, I commenced the slow process of excavating my practice in terms of my values and some of the troubling events of the last school year. An awakening of conscience and soul occurred.

Am I an educator

or

Am I a technician?

I began to write stories to illustrate the contradictions between my practice and my values. When I review the values I wrote that hot, humid July day, I see that I had written them almost like a student's Bill of Rights. That surprised me, for I had been mulling over how I could democratize my classroom the next year.

EACH STUDENT SHOULD GROW IN AWARENESS OF HIS OR HER INNATE TALENTS AND STRENGTHS

Nathan, Danny and Richard were not given that opportunity. I spent most of my time disciplining them and others like them. I did not reach out to them. I was the authority and I gave up too soon out of expediency.

EACH STUDENT HAS THE RIGHT TO BE RESPECTED AND VALUED

Loving my students, accepting my students is not enough. Other students lose patience with the oddballs, the rebels. In a group situation often they let others down. They take no responsibility for their actions. Talk, discussion, forgiveness seem often to have the opposite effect. They push, testing until I take action. They know me. I know they find my optimism and tenacity terribly irritating. Sometimes a teacher simply has to be the adult against whom they can rebel, testing authority.

STUDENTS SHOULD LEARN TO ACCEPT HOW THEY DIFFER FROM OTHERS AND ACCEPT AND RESPECT THE DIFFERENCES IN OTHERS

This is an important factor in a democracy where a society is built on collaboration with others. Ridicule and taunting have gone on in my classroom. I have heard it. The desired behavior is not practiced outside the classroom.

STUDENTS SHOULD RECOGNISE AND USE THEIR GOODNESS AND SPIRIT

Kindness, generosity, caring, listening to others, patience are fostered in the classroom. Reflective and responsive writing can, in part, help to nurture these values. I have met very few students who do not display these values. These virtues are community building and democratizing. They are found in my classroom most of the time, but not all of the time - inconsistency and contradiction.

STUDENTS SHOULD LEARN THAT THERE ARE CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN THEY SHOULD STAND APART FROM THE CROWD AND SHOULD BE RESPECTED WHEN THEY DO

My students know that I do this myself. We spoke last year about the fact that I was one of the few teachers out on the picket line. I explained my reasons as well as my understanding of the views of other teachers. The strike had been illegal. I assume my

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students know that I will support their efforts to help others on the grounds of moral principles. I have assumed too much recently.

WE MUST LEARN TO LAUGH AND SHARE OUR GOOD HUMOUR AND THE ABUNDANCE THAT IS IN OUR LIVES

Mel had just returned to economics class after the death of his mother. I wanted to give him a comforting hug, but instead I wondered if he would be embarrassed. I waited a minute too long. We all should have hugged Mel. In fact, I know if I had started the hug, it would have become a group thing. The others needed me to start. We probably would have wept, but so what? It was in this class where Mel found solace during his mother's final months. I knew Mel trusted me. He continued to come and chat, but a barrier had been put up. This is the most powerful and wrenching of my failures because of my shyness. Shyness and reserve. Can I change? Will I be able to be more overtly tender and loving?

My Quest

It was 1:00 a.m. on that hot July evening and a new journey had begun. Silver mirages from my past materialized, shimmered brilliantly, but when I reached to capture their truth, they dissolved into tendrils of contradiction. Anger, unresolved conflicts, hurts, resentment, unfulfilled ambitions surfaced into my psyche. I howled inwardly, tears streaming from the rage I felt as I faced the truth. I tried to hide, to run from my cowardice and self-centeredness. But I dug deeper. I wrote and wrote and wrote. The project so linear and tidy in my mind, had become messy and disjointed.

What was the truth? I was considered to be one of the best teachers at my school, but as I considered my values, I could see only an excellent technician, promoting the paternalistic system, which I found so suffocating and menacing. The examination of values in my practice began a spiritual journey to clarity and vision. However, by three a.m., shadows began to tinge my happy childhood memories. I had neglected to consider contradictions. I had neglected to examine soul. To examine values requires a spiritual journey, a journey to the soul. This would be a tad messier and disjointed, leaving fragile tendrils of contradiction, puzzles, and humble self-centeredness.

Image Yes! You Are - image

The last school year was brutal at times. I struggled with the question of retiring early, off and on, for most of the year. The school culture was changing rapidly leaving me to question my own values in light of my students' values, those of my colleagues and my administrators. I wondered if I had the energy and the vitality to conduct six classes with the possibility of thirty five to forty students in each class for the next year. Would I be able to offer anything of value to the teaching and school communities?

Image In My Classroom - image

To begin my inquiry, I looked into my own value system. To find my own system, I looked into my roots. The focus of this presentation is to tell the stories from my childhood, which built my basic value system. I will contrast then and now, before and after, describe what life used to be like, what it has become (Geertz, 1995).

I have never satisfactorily learned how to deal with the bullies. I will this year, for they lurk in the hallways, classrooms, and in the staff room. I have given in to them too long. They need to be shown up for what they are. They are destroying order at

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Alexander Galt Regional High School. I am struggling against control and power. It seems to me that this circle has gone around and around all my life.

For the first time in my life, my story is not a cover story, loyally putting a good face on things. It is not what I expect is expected of me, dutifully handed back with all the neat buttons and bows. The masks of respectability, compliance and conformity dissolve. I can howl and rage against what has happened to me, and, as a result to the students that I teach.

It is the end of July and a lot has been accomplished. I took a course in action research, and I've found my soul and a whole new wonderful group of friends. Jack Whitehead helped me to unlock a part of me that I did not know existed, the loving part of my nature, I have been aware of, but did not know how to express. So much of my own soul has been lost in trying to cope with the paternalistic outward reality of this world. I feel the hand of God guiding me now. Where I'll end up. I don't know, but I think it will be wonderful! It is important for me to love, to help, to be appreciated – more important than the success trappings that society has offered. A whole part of me has been starving too long. I find I am listening with my heart now, taking time for others. I wish to find out about them, how they're doing.

Image Music and Humor - image

I am back playing the piano with stiff fingers and lack of speed. I played publicly and listened to the beautiful voices of the women of the action research group. We should form a chorus and sing. Music and humor are things that I value.

This will be my fifth attempt to find my direction into the classroom and research for next year. I'm still not sure what I have to do about my M.Ed. I do believe that I have choices, and the best path will be shown to me. Will I be going to the ICTR Conference in Louisiana? I can work toward presenting something if my work in the classroom is significant...

I will use examples from Jack's work with us this summer. I shall facilitate the way for the students to form a democratic and intelligently caring community of scholars who provide support and encouragement for each other and spur each other to excellence. I will become the facilitator, not the disciplinarian. And I will enjoy that.

I am a model teacher for the system I have perpetuated for thirty-four years. I have run an orderly, disciplined classroom. The passing rate for the provincial examinations is usually over 88%, a good record. I learned new techniques, contributed to school life, and usually gave in when I created controversy.

Image A Model Teacher - image

Why do I allow myself to be bullied into compliance? I have had my moments when I was instrumental in making change, but I haven't shouted loud enough, long enough, or persistently enough. I haven't raged at the injustices, oppression and the lack of humanity of the system and in myself. Why? I know what it is like to be bullied, beaten up, hurt, left out, mocked and tormented. Why do I not do something about it? I can. I know that students do not begin on equal footing. I have attempted to individualize my courses but failed miserably. The system, timetabling, assessment criteria, outside examinations, prestige of the subject matter are my masters. Why didn't I just quit? When in my career did this extreme conformity begin?

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Funnily enough, I feel I am just beginning to get things right and it's the end of my career. I have found some glimpses of my goodness as a teacher. I have longed for a just and democratic classroom with negotiated compromises as groups of students prepare for their place in society. It has taken me too long to relinquish control. Letting go and allowing students to give and take, to lead and be led, has taken time. Dialogue is essential in building a society that is fair to all. Dissension is a building block of a democracy. Intentions should be transparent and easily understood. There should be no one on the 'in' and no one on the 'out'.

I will have to let go of control. The vulnerability that is attached to this idea terrifies me. A second goal for the year is to create a loving atmosphere in my classroom where students can feel free to be themselves and be safe, protected, needed. As I like to remain emotionally detached and in control, this will be a huge challenge.

School screeched to a start with symbols of labor negotiations crashing into the background buzz and hum of the new school year. The beat of work-to-rule provided the rhythm for the fall. For a while, I forgot its strident clang. I was taken aback by school's opening. 'It is too soon,' I cried inwardly, 'I haven't reached any understanding of my past. I haven't found a comfort level with my findings.' Jagged edges still severed my cherished memories of happy childhood communities of family, friends and neighbors. My identity was in tatters. Neither had I fully rested from the disturbing and often brutal 1998-99 school year. Upon reflection, I realized that it was guilt, anger and sense of worthlessness that I encountered in confronting my contradictions. All of these years I had been serving a master I intellectually loathed – the paternalistic system – not fighting it, as I assumed I had for thirty-five years. My childhood's unresolved confusion about authority and bullying, misunderstandings about a girl-child's place in the scheme of things, drove me to make up for a lifetime.

The fall would become a flurry of activity. I had decided to conduct an action research project in one history class. I ended up trying my ideas in all six classes. This was too much too soon for this perfectionist action researcher. My research question became Will democratizing my classroom create student interest in history, and thus improve learning and marks on the MEQ examination? I hoped to build a caring community of inquirers actively searching for their own truth. Would working together with me for evaluation give the knowledge that there are many measurements of success?

Image Bare Walls Waiting - image

Image A Sense of Purpose and Hope - image

This year also marks the beginning of the end of my teaching career of thirty-five years. Oddly, the enthusiasm and idealism with which I began teaching remains, albeit tempered by some wisdom. I have learned to listen to the intuition of my experience. My teaching career began in the blaze of the political unrest of the 1960s. It was a time of economic prosperity. As did others of my generation, I burned with a sense of purpose and hope. As I look back, I realize we did help make a difference. Jobs were plentiful; job security was an accepted right. I believe, as I did thirty-five years ago, that each individual is responsible for helping and effecting changes for the disadvantaged and disenfranchised. This means my voice must be heard calmly and insistently. Overcoming shyness and a lifetime of giving in to the demands of the paternalistic system will be difficult. But it is for those kids in my care.

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My goal is to empower my students with knowledge and understanding of what they can do and that they should try to make a difference in the world. The students will live in a democratic classroom in which ideas will be freely exchanged and differences of opinion respected. Students will become more confident as they are listened to, and what they have to say is carefully considered. Two or three issues prevalent in Canadian society will be pursued in light of their historical context. Students will debate these issues, decide upon a course of action and act upon their ideas to solve some of the human issues that exist today.

Image A Happy Place - image

Being a member of the action research group at Bishop's summer school has had a profound effect on me. It's made me acutely aware of the importance of a community of inquirers as a lifeline for one in one's endeavors. The importance of being respected as a person with ideas and potential is an essential characteristic of being a member of a democratic society. I hope I can guide the development of this class into becoming a community of learners.

The fall brought its goodness and rewards. A local Professional Improvement (PIC) grant was given to two of my colleagues and me to increase awareness of action research in three high schools in the board area. This was in keeping with the new reform. Close on its heels came the news that an elementary teacher-friend and I had been granted a Ministry of Education (MEQ) grant to conduct research into the teaching of history. The newly formed action research group of the province became another action research inquiry for me. By October, I was working towards presenting a paper at the International Conference on Teacher Research (ICTR) with Kathy and Judy. In addition, I was taking a course for my Master's Degree, and I was very disappointed that I could not continue the study I had begun in the summer school course. Instead, I was reading research results on the teaching of history. I kept in touch with my newly found friends, and soon we were working on interwoven self-studies.

I was learning so much from listening to my students. We were negotiating, and for the most part, we were learning together. I cherished my strength.

I was working with the tools of research: defining the problem, examining student work, observations of students, videotapes of lessons, audiotapes of conversations with students, keeping a research diary, taking photographs, doing case studies within the classroom.

An MEQ grant with Diane Earl gave me the opportunity to change my practice, to align my work with my values. Throughout the summer of 2000 Di and I worked to transform a highly knowledge-based Canadian geography course into a richness of concepts and 'big' questions.

Image Co-researchers - image

Because I was a member of the Senior Social Studies Department with two others, I knew my students would be examined using a school board-wide examination, as well as the assignments I would correct. The term was divided into three parts: the basic concepts of the course; the teaching of research competencies – building the scaffolding; and student-conducted inquiry. My classroom became a constructivist one.

I did not expect this resistance. Casey says she learned all this in grade three. I did not think quickly enough and explain 'accessing prior knowledge'. She carries her

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unhappiness about me and the class into the other classes. Teachers are listening to a lot of anger about inquiry and about me. The kids are unhappy that things did not work out with the project with the university students. They blame me. I am losing patience. I feel threatened and offended by her attitude. I feel I am letting everyone down. I am losing my reputation. What reputation? The reputation that I could control the class, teach the information, and have students do exceptionally well on the examinations?

Now, I realize that I was admired for things that I abhorred in myself. I perpetuated a harsh and cold system with its emphasis on competition, high marks and doing what is expected. I was terrified now, for I was stepping completely out of the bounds of the system. I had to confront old demons. How much authority could I exert? In examining my own authority, I began at last to examine my own reaction to authority and my own fears.

I understood why I wore masks of compliance, of politeness. I was brought up to please. I received information and gave it back diligently. I got good marks to please my parents. I went to university because my father had a heart attack when my brother failed his first year at Bishop's. I knew the dance. I did not construct knowledge. There was no real transformation. I did what the administration wanted. I tried to please so I could glow in their praise. But there never was praise. Just growing demands. I did challenge the system, but from within it. Any time I strayed I was brought back into place. I was bullied by their attack on my weakness.

My confusion has led me to read about women's ways of coming to know, and the results of women's learning and working in paternalistic, male-controlled, aggressive and competitive institutions. The works of Carol Gilligan, Nel Noddings, Mary Belenky, and Rachel Kessler resonate in me.

I understand how I have allowed myself to be bullied into compliance. I observe my fear clinically. Understanding and being aware does not mean there is resolution. It will take time. But I do see a different me in the classroom right now.

To me action research is more than reflection and the story of that reflection. It is a systematic inquiry into my practice. In studying my work as a teacher, I develop a question and try to find answers or to change my practice based on what I learn. I become more aware of my world, my actions in it and myself. I pose questions and seek answers based on the here and now, and I question my awareness. My personal values are my road signs. I write a reflective journal, make observations, look for surprises and tensions in my daily practice. I watch videotapes and listen to tapes of student interviews. I look for patterns, for false assumptions. After all is said and done, I then write of my experiences as a story to explain, illuminate my life and my emotions. I reorganize, reassess, realign my life experiences in that story so that it is continually integrated into my life. It guides me to make changes so I can live my life more fully according to my values. I work with critical friends who help keep me on track. My purpose in conducting this soul-searching is to find better ways to teach my students, to help them become the centre of their own learning, to understand how I learn, and how the system and culture in which I live has shaped me. As an action researcher, I unearth my living theories.

Dear Jack,

This is to inform you that my story has been completed and I'll send you copy as soon as the photographs have been added. If you have the time, I would

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be grateful for your comments when you receive it.

I retired from the schoolyard in June. Strangely, I have always believed in happy endings. I believed that if I worked hard enough to produce top-quality work, I would be appreciated. It was not to be. My career ended in controversy. I emerged from the playground wearing my white gloves – that was my victory! However, all that is the stuff for another story.

I will finish my Master's degree at Bishop's. My exit project at Bishop's will entail working with the older people of the Eastern Townships in a course I will offer entitled "Writing My Life's Story". Those who volunteer will write their autobiographies based on their values, and they will use historical documents as evidence for their story. The documents will also add individuality, color and originality to each work. Upon the completion of their family history, I hope each autobiography will be bound – each one in keeping with the integrity of the story – and a validation ceremony will be held to honor the work of these elderly students.

Your web site is a source of comfort and hope. You are indeed a wonderful teacher and person, and you have so greatly enriched my life.

I owe it to my friendship with Judy that I am continuing. Without her faith in my efforts, her inspiration, honesty and courage, I would not be finishing my degree. I would have been content to work at the Lennoxville library at minimum wage and wile away my remaining days.

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Blooming - image

Circles.

This song is a simple expression of my belief that we are all bound to one another spiritually. It is in our spirit that we touch humanity.

*All my life's a circle
Sunrise and sun down,
The moon rolls through the night time
'til daybreak rolls around.
All my life's a circle,
I can't tell you why,
Seasons spinning round again
The years keep rolling by.*

*It seems like I've been here before
But I can't remember when,
I've got this funny feeling
We'll all be together again.
No straight lines make up my life
All my roads have bends,
There is no clear-cut beginning
And, thank God, no dead ends.*

*I've found you a thousand times
I guess you've done the same.
Then we'd lose each other
It's like a children's game.
And as I find you here again
The thought runs through my mind
Our love is like a circle
Let's go round one more time (Chapin, 1990).*

My Quest

It was 1:00 a.m. on that hot July evening and a new journey had begun. Silver mirages from my past organizingd, shimmered brilliantly, but when I reached to capture their truth, they dissolved into tendrils of contradiction. Anger, unresolved conflicts, hurts, resentment, unfulfilled ambitions surfaced into my psyche. I howled inwardly, tears streaming from the rage I felt as I faced the truth. I tried to hide, to run from my cowardice and self-centeredness.

Happy phantoms bubbled merrily to the surface of my memory. Biking with my friends to Scout Rock to eat a picnic lunch; flying down Wilson Street on a bobsled with twelve others, frosty air stinging our faces and the wind leaving us breathless; skating on the outdoor rink behind the curling club, forming a line, skating faster, faster, faster, until someone fell, and we tumbled down on top of each other laughing, and shrieking. Skating was particularly fun for the girls who could hold the hand of their favorite boy. Many of us kissed for the first time under the January moon to the tune of the *Skaters' Waltz*, with

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streaming noses and cracked lips. But, oh! It was so romantic! Hay rides, sleigh rides, organizing and directing the church pageant for the little kids; weekends at Farnham's cottage on Lake Massawipi; neighborhood corn roasts, barbecues; homemade strawberry ice cream for my July first birthday, made from freshly picked berries and cream; decorating our bikes for parades; and last but not least, swimming in the icy cold waters of the lake in May, gave us sweet freedom! What a shining innocence! What enchantment!

Happy Phantoms - image

However, by three a.m., shadows began to tinge my happy childhood memories. I had neglected to consider contradictions. I had neglected to examine soul. To examine values requires a spiritual journey, a journey to the soul. This would be a tad messier and disjointed, leaving fragile tendrils of contradiction, puzzles, and humble self-centeredness.

To begin my inquiry, I looked into my own value system. To find my own system, I looked into my roots. The focus of this presentation is to tell the stories from my childhood which built my basic value system.

I will

Contrast then and now, before and after, describe what life used to be like, what it has become (Geertz, 1995).

My first picture would be one of Mum and Dad posing for their wedding. The picture depicts the historical content of values, technology, style so effortlessly. I would place the picture on the overhead as I began the story of my circles.

Mum and Dad - image

The time of the story is 1943. The story takes place in our front lawn on Lorne Avenue in Lennoxville. Dad and his neighbor, Frank Turner, are passing the time of day quietly swapping the news, house projects and cars. I have just picked clover flowers for Dad and Mister Turner, and am now engaged in picking up my shadow. Frank spots me and lifts me into the air. I scream and struggle. He hugs me tighter, trying to calm me. I hit him with little clenched fists, the flowers tumbling away. He sets me down. I return to my shadow. Willful. Hateful. Afraid. Alone.

Nancy is independent and usually very busy and does not like to be interrupted. She only lets certain people hold her and only at certain times. She's wary and keeps her distance.

Nancy - image

I was shy and I was wary. Dad allowed me to become. He did not think I had to take time from my web of exploration and daydreams to deal with adults. However, he should have hugged me. He should have helped me against the bullies.

According to my mother, I exhibited a healthy curiosity coupled with a desire to be helpful at an early age. By the time I was two and a half I had a very good friend called Sarah. We were inseparable. Sarah and I exhibited our natural gardening ability and curiosity one spring day in 1944. Mother was planting gladiola bulbs for fall around our Lorne Street house. Sarah and I followed, bent down, and picked up each bulb, examined it and replanted it upside down. With great tenacity we did this for a good part of the afternoon. Some bulbs were spared. Soon after this event I was taught the difference between a weed and a plant. Cheerfully, I worked side by side my mother doing a little weeding.

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Nancy and Sarah - image

I bombarded my parents with endless questions. They always answered as best they could. I never was afraid to ask a question or give my ideas. I was asked to modify, to rethink, reconsider and often heard "No". But I was given a voice as was everyone in my house. Conversation, argument, news abounded, especially at mealtime. We discussed what we had read from the newspaper, we shared our stories of the day. Sharing was important in our family whether it was ideas, happiness, or our hearts. Learning About Living and Dying, Respect and Caring - image

It was my mother who taught me decorum, socially acceptable behavior and how to be a lady. At least she tried. She fostered my talents. On my first birthday, the story goes, Mum was in the kitchen preparing for my Birthday celebration. I was in my playpen observing the festivities. The radio was on as Mum listened to descriptions of the first of July parades and the address of the Queen to the nation. Apparently, I began to sing along to *Oh, Canada* and *God Save the Queen*. I took piano and organ lessons from the age of six until I graduated from high school at the age of 15. Mum had studied piano for five years and voice for two years. Her love was classical music and opera. From the tender age of five years, I was taken to community concerts held at the Granada Theatre. Many leading figures in music would use the nearby city of Sherbrooke as their dress rehearsal for their concerts in Montreal and Toronto. I vividly recall Rise Stevens, a well-known contralto. I was completely transported to another world on the waves of her voice. I wore white gloves, a hat and my best clothes to the concerts. Out of slacks and away from adventures in the woods and bicycles, Mum and I shared a world of love apart from that of my brothers and my father.

Dad brought me up to be equal to my brothers. I mowed lawns, spread fertilizer on the garden, took off double windows and had the same allowance and chance for an education. I often protested that Douglas and Cary were not asked to help with the cooking, housework or weeding. The boys ran the roto-tiller. Nancy and Mum weeded. Although I protested, nothing was done about it. To some extent, there was a double standard in our house, a contradiction I challenged often, for it was so unfair. Douglas and Cary smirked.

The darkest story of My Quest occurred when I was seven. I had been studying music for a year. My music teacher, Mrs. Harvey, lived on the next street, a good block away. On my way to music lessons, if I took the short route, I would pass the homes of the Fieldings, the Wingets and the Hammers. Each family had three bullyboys. I was taunted and called names as I passed their houses. I walked by, head held high. However, when I turned seven, my adored Uncle Haig gave me a handsome tan leather briefcase to carry my music books in. The next day, I walked proudly to my music lesson only to be teased unmercifully. The Wingets grabbed the briefcase and kicked it around. They pushed me down as I reached for the case, and hit me as well. The driver of a passing car frightened the boys off and rescued me. I arrived at my lesson frightened, bloodied and scraped. The second time this happened, my music teacher phoned my parents and suggested that someone walk with me to my lesson. Cary was elected, but he only took me once. At home he taught me to use my fists and told me I shouldn't be a baby. This was usually Cary's advice. I walked another, longer, route to my lessons until the bullies lost interest.

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Brought Up Equal - image

Shortly thereafter, Mister Tupper, a friend of the family, brought me home bloodied and crying. He told Dad that he had a valiant daughter. He had been driving up Wilson Street and there I was in the middle of the street, beating up a Fielding boy. The younger Fielding was on my back trying to help his brother. My brother, Douglas, the cause of the fight, had walked away into the house. I was fighting because they had thrown a rock at Douglas, my shy, little, bespectacled brother. He thought it was stupid that I bothered. My mother was appalled and I was punished: strapped for fighting.

Investigating the shadows revealed that I have always fought like a tiger for others, but not for myself. Years later I would read Grandma Annie Elizabeth's diary. The day after she visited the house for Christmas she wrote
I really do wish Stewart and Gertie would do something about the teasing little Nancy endures from young Cary and Douglas.

My bullies lurked inside my home and outside it as well. I need ideas about how to deal with the bullies. The teasing of my brothers ceased as we became older and gave up childish things. I continue to search for ideas. My brothers' teasing ended when we grew into our late teens to become friends, close friends. The scars are still on my heart. I have never satisfactorily learned how to deal with the bullies.

Paternalism - image

For the first time in my life, my story is not a cover story, loyally putting a good face on things. It is not what I expect is expected of me, dutifully handed back with all the neat buttons and bows. The masks of respectability, compliance and conformity dissolve. I can howl and rage against what has happened to me, and, as a result to the students that I teach.

Jagged edges still severed my cherished memories of happy childhood communities of family, friends and neighbors. My identity was in tatters.

Childhood Community - image

My childhood's unresolved confusion about authority and bullying, misunderstandings about a girl-child's place in the scheme of things, drove me to make up for a lifetime.

It began with a respiratory virus that lasted for months. By November I was under a doctor's care and taking Paxil for anxiety attacks. I still managed to finish the fall term remaining quite happy about my work and my classes. Christmas with my family was a fragile, happy time. I was so weary. I was terrified of a dark thing sleeping within me. I was lonely in my crowded family. I felt unconnected, numb. I couldn't feel.

I Fear

What?

I am sad.

I cry no tears.

I am not enough.

Is this real?

Is it raining in December?

Or, is it snowing?

Cold.

Icy coldness flows in my veins.

I can't get warm.

Appendix L

*Narrative of Personal Learning**Things come undone.**I am wingless.*

A Fragile, Happy Time - image

I became lost between the homes of family members. I lost my way coming home. I slept for hours, finding release from responsibility, or was it just the nothingness?

I did not resume work in January. There was no English-speaking psychologist who could help me. I was too weary to speak in French. I remained in close contact with my physician. My friends hugged me tightly as I fought to stay at the surface. Phone calls at night, rides to do errands, phone calls during the day, e-mails - sometimes three times a day. I was softly encouraged to write, but no blinks when I couldn't. Just there. Just there. Just there for me. Maybe I am worthy.

The snow has melted in the front yard and almost in the back. A sharp March wind enables fall's dead, unraked leaves to teeter and topple drunkenly across brown grass. A soft purple mist clings to skeleton trees indicating the stirrings of new life. In the eternal cycle of the seasons, everything must change. Soon soft warm breezes will awaken the earth from its frozen trance. So too have I moved from the stark emptiness of winter's bleakness to new heartbeats of truth, and a mysterious new destiny. The dreams of my life's young mornings murmur enticingly to a return to those fresh ideas of long ago. I have come full circle.

Awakening From a Frozen Trance - image

During those oppressively tropical days of early July at the summer school course, haunting memories and unfulfilled youthful dreams and soulful whispers of ignored truths tumbled turbulently into my consciousness. The summer months slipped silently by unnoticed, as I uncovered secrets of my troubled psyche. Circles of new friends entered my world and gladdened my life with love and wisdom, remaining to support me. I wrote and wrote, never before realizing I had any talent. The soft circle encouraged my efforts to find truth in my journey.

I do love to write. I love to communicate. This is probably why Dad once said that I talked too much. However I have reached a time in my life right now when it is time to listen. Much of my chatter has become nervous talk, talk which springs from inner anxiety and tension. When I feel that insecure and unhappy, that is time I should remain quiet.

Writing - image

I realize that the job in the classroom is not my main concern. I am. I need to find joy, peace and a niche for myself. I need to seek out things that make me feel joyful, truly joyful. It is time to let go of so many unnecessary and troubling thoughts that I have carried since childhood. It is time to put my act together.

Wearing My White Gloves - image

Appendix M

*Unstructured Conversation Transcript*March 2002: A conversation after watching a videotape

The video I selected for sharing was produced by secondary V students in 2001, and portrays younger students engaging in inquiry into local environmental issues, the purpose of which was to study and attend to the world around them in the Eastern Townships. The video is a compilation of vignettes of students at work on such issues as clear cutting, sludge, the effects of manure use as fertilizer, sick buildings, and marshlands. My role was facilitator.

Judy: You wanted to tell me why you chose that particular video for us to watch together.

Nancy: Because the secondary V kids made it. They took a compilation of six or eight hours of tape that I had made with this group and chose certain scenes. I also gave them about five or six pages of my writing and that of Michael Jones, they knew which was Michael Jones' and which was mine. I gave them a picture of a house, Dad's old house, and the road leading up to it. Incredible the symbolism, now to me. I didn't think of it then, as tying into the journey. I chose it because the road was bumpy. There were weeds growing on it, and it's like the Robert Frost poem. I didn't take the highway. I took the difficult road. And I think, I realize when I watched the video today that was probably deep in my sub-conscious. I didn't think it then. I was just in a hurry to find a picture. And then the porch was kind of an afterthought. The kids found a picture of a porch on the Internet, and they put up the welcome sign. And as I looked at the kids working, I realized that they picked pictures of the younger kids really engaged in their work. So I had the feeling as I watched it, the kids feel they walk into my class and they have to work. That learning is going to take place.

Judy: Maybe you could describe what the video was all about.

Nancy: The video was about an inquiry project that Diane Earl and I did together in my class using constructivist ideas, using the idea that the children, within a context which was the environment of the Eastern Townships, chose their own topics, and researched them. For each group, we were able to find an expert person to speak with. In fact, most of them had two or three. They were allowed to go out of the classroom during the class period for their interviews. Their parents picked them up. A lot of the people whom they were allowed to interview were from Bishop's. We had a period of how to conduct an interview, and all the things necessary to conducting good interviews, and we asked what questions will be asked, sending out the questions in advance. And they had to do photography shoots, and I was able to get each group a throw-away camera from the library. Some of them used videotape, like the three boys who made a documentary. Casey's group, the most vocal against working this way, had an excellent, excellent project. Casey was able to get information from the experimental farm on the difficulties of manure use as fertilizer. They phoned Scotland, kids phoned all over the world from the school to get information for their projects. It was wonderful. It is the way I want to teach. They chose their own content.

Judy: How does a video showing the kids at work in an inquiry curriculum and presenting their research for public validation, constitute evidence of your learning as a teacher, as a professional?

Nancy: Well, I learned to step back from content, which is the mainstay of senior social sciences in a regular program.

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Unstructured Conversation Transcript

Judy: Can you describe what that process meant to you?

Nancy: It was difficult. It was difficult because I'm in a very structured environment where memorization of facts is very important, and you have across-the-board exams to test to see if the kids have learned those facts. So, success is based on how well the children can perform at a certain point in time on certain knowledge that they may or may not have been able to learn. And I hated the constraints of this. I knew I wasn't teaching children to think, that the goodness, or the background of each child wasn't tapped, that they weren't playing from their own strengths. And when I looked at the inquiry classroom, all of a sudden you have children who choose their own content, who are developing the content according to their own strengths, and I am teaching them the means of doing it, which any child can learn.

Judy: And this style of teaching reflects learning that you have done, your professional development.

Nancy: What I've always hoped to do is open my classroom, turn it into a democratic one, have a community of scholars available, teach the student to be a scholar, teach them to want to look for answers. First of all, to be able to see a problem, and problems such as not always being able to find the correct people to work with, how do you learn not to become frustrated, but learn to settle down and find a solution to a problem so, they become problem-solvers. I was hoping to see some love of their own environment come into this. Love of the land, which I hold. I think I did when I looked at their research diaries, begin to see real feeling for what the environment is all about, and for the fragility of the environment in which they live, and for preserving it for their own lifetimes. But they were pretty young as you could see in the tape, and that's a pretty deep thing to want from them. But I think some of them were beginning to see the beauty. The girls who did a very positive project on the environment, the work on the Saint Francis River which has been completed, is an example. I took them out to Bromptonville and we took pictures of the paper mills showing how they've cleaned up their act. We went into the paper mills, and we went into the municipal sewage plant, and all this sort of thing, and you can see that some of their pictures were quite lovely of the water from the snow running into the drain pipes, and one girl saying how dangerous this lovely picture was because the water coming in could be filled with detergents and all this sort of stuff. So, it's just wonderful. I feel so privileged, I don't know if that's an overworked word, to be learning so much more, just by listening to the children, to what they're learning.

Judy: You're saying that this teaching reflects your learning as a professional, your professional evolution. Can you describe your teaching before this learning began?

Nancy: It's been an evolution from a highly traditional, authoritarian content-oriented classroom, and it's gradually evolved, because I have a great sense, or always had a great sense of purpose, that education should be equalized, that every child who walks in your classroom should walk out with the power of understanding the power of learning. And I didn't think I was doing that. Although I was doing what the system told me to, to be the authority, to have control in the classroom, I didn't like the alienation. And so in the 90s I undertook to change. Well, it started actually in the 70s. I had a sabbatical leave in Scotland, and I had been instrumental in bringing in the Core Program where the grade seven kids were contained within a classroom for fifty percent of their learning time

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Unstructured Conversation Transcript

instead of roaming around the school. And it meant cross-curricular teaching. And I went to Scotland and studied in the universities, and came in contact with people like James Britton, Pat D'Arcy, Piaget's theories, Bloom's taxonomy, all these things that hadn't quite reached North America. And I became extremely enthusiastic, not totally understanding the ramifications of everything. But coming back just filled with the hope of an educative classroom. Not just for the kids who come from culturally rich homes, or who might be very, very bright and are able to fit in to the academic structure, but for all kids.

Judy: Can you make a link from the inquiry classroom and your learning about becoming a teacher in an inquiry classroom, to self-study?

Nancy: Self-study made me realize that I wanted a democratic classroom and I wanted a classroom where all children became a part of a community of scholars, in other words they could feel the power of learning. And that meant I had to walk away from content, walk away from normal ways of evaluating children, and walk away from an easier learning environment for kids, for most kids, because they just had to memorize, give it back, get good marks and go home. So, it was a learning process from many angles, and in order to learn what was happening to me when kids rebelled, or to me when administrators disapproved, because they did, I had to learn how to be by myself.

Judy: What was your value claim that began your self-study?

Nancy: I believe in all my classes that we all accept each other and we are all accepted by each other, we value each other and we are valued by each other. I think in my classroom kids should learn how they are different from others and the same, and accept and respect the differences. I think there's too much emphasis on conformity, rather than celebration of differences. So, there we get into self-study. Students should be able to personalize a subject content matter to help shape their identity. So much of what they learn is depersonalized, so how can you grow as an individual, or how can you understand yourself and make goals for yourself if what we're dealing with in school doesn't have meaning for you? Children should recognize their own goodness and spirits and use them. As you know there's no place for nastiness in my classroom. There are times when you have to stand apart from the crowd, and they should be respected when they do so. And that's so difficult to expect from a kid, it's so difficult. Students should learn that it's each person's responsibility to share their talents and their ideas with others, and to help each other. It's a responsibility and has to be learned. You have to give them lots of room for practice. It is important to take a stand when one realizes that something is against one's values. That again is very difficult with the children when their values are just being formed. I think that's very difficult. But you try. I think that learning involves action research for students for understanding themselves, and that is something that, if I had another thirty years to teach, I would get into. And I wouldn't teach history and social studies with a structured content anymore. I'd go into moral ed., or else I'd devise some sort of philosophy course or something on my own. I think we should learn to enjoy the gifts of each day, and I think adults and kids alike should learn to be grateful. And we should learn to laugh, and above all cherish the rainbow of humanity.

Judy: In the video do you see evidence of your having worked through your values in this project?

Nancy: Oh, yes.

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Unstructured Conversation Transcript

Judy: Were there occasions where you found yourself facing contradictions?

Nancy: Terrible contradictions. I had to face the fact that of some of my own control issues, my insecurities with that girl who just hated doing the research. It upset her goals. She's an athlete. She's a farmer's daughter, and she's in a whole lot of activities. And all of a sudden she was involved in a class, which was asking far more of her and her time, of her academically. And she resented it, and she resented it because I was in the process of learning how to evaluate the work. I went into it sort of la-di-da, thinking 'This is great'. Diane says it's great. Fran says it's great. It's taken me a year of reflection to realize how different it was, how startling the whole process was.

Judy: A year of reflection since the video was made?

Nancy: Yes.

Judy: Can you elaborate a little bit on that?

Nancy: I didn't realize how different, how extremely different it was. The kids have been in groups. For example, the kids have done *Julius Caesar* and had to learn a part, but this was actually making them be a scholar. Scholarship. The real sense of scholarship was involved. And I don't think those kids have ever been up against it in their lives. I don't think they'd ever gone into something where the mark at the top of the page wasn't the most important thing. It was learning to learn that was the most important thing. They went into other classrooms and talked about me. I wrote about that, crying about it. I now realize why. They absolutely were floored by what they were doing. They went back to math class, you learn this for the mark. They went to English class, you memorize this, you do this, you get a mark. If you're late, ah, your teacher will wait forty days for you to get your report in. But when they came into my class, they were accountable to their group and they had to have the stuff ready, and we had a hard time teaching them that, Diane and I. The kids can play the politics of the school. By going to other teachers, they were playing the politics of the school, and I think in Casey's case, trying to get me to stop. So, I found I had to have tremendous strength. I had to learn – and I didn't do it successfully – to be forgiving. And I am just learning to understand Casey, because I am just learning to understand myself, and Casey is me. She will stand up for what she thinks no matter if she's wrong, but I wouldn't do it the way she did it. I wouldn't be gang leader. But I've had a hard time understanding, as a person who wants to please, that she felt so terrible about it.

Judy: I would like to pick up on something that you said about the kids in your class and accountability. They were working within a different curriculum model, and within this paradigm the issue of accountability is really important. Prior to the beginning of this learning or the beginning of this period of evolution, you described your teaching as more like that of your colleagues, where you were concerned about content, marks. And at that point you were accountable to curriculum content. As a consequence of this learning that you have undertaken, has that shifted?

Nancy: I am accountable to the children's learning, that they have a learning environment, where they can learn from where they are. And I've become very aware of this, especially doing genealogy with the children who don't have quite the materials, trying to shift it so I can go in where they are, and bring them into the process. But previously we haven't been accountable to the children's learning. We feel we are because they get good marks, but that's not accountability to learning. Learning has to

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take place in a context, a social context, and so for learning to take place well, kids have to piggyback on each other's ideas. And you can't do that if you are not prepared, if you haven't prepared yourself. And so if you come in and you're not ready, you don't look very good in the eyes of your teammates or the other people.

Judy: Was this a gradual shift? Can you trace the path of your learning?

Nancy: Yes. I can remember my Dad saying when I'd bring a kid home that I'd met at school, 'Oh, Nancy's got those stray puppies in again'. I think I have always had a heart, a place in my heart for the disadvantaged and those who are a little different, because I felt that way myself. And as I taught more and more, I realized I was always the champion of the turned off kid, I could see the potential there. And he might be in a remedial class or whatever but would come into my class and shine. Because I realized, and I now can articulate it, that intelligence is not that recognizable in our school system, real intelligence, and I think in my classes, because somehow, in spite of the fact that I was doing that conservative stuff, there was always room for that intelligence to come out. So I think that despite what I had to do, I was challenging kids to think. I was challenging them to make sense of whatever they were learning. I think that's true. I think I can go back and say that's pretty true, for sure. Because when we put in the Core Program for cycle one in the 70s, we had the Eastern Townships' history as part of it. This was Jim McCain and me. We took them up on the top of Mont Orford, we went to graveyards, and we went to an old courthouse in Stanstead. So I think I always had that in me. But what Jack did at summer school in 1999 is say 'Okay, what do you value? You can do the fancy stuff, but what do you really value?' And I value learning, and I value people valuing each other in a learning situation.

Judy: So that was a pivotal point, making your values explicit and going on from there. So was the evolution accelerated?

Nancy: Oh, God yes. And then with Diane and the ReAct model I found what I wanted in a classroom. And then I was just besmirched by controversy.

Judy: Do you think that impacted on your learning?

Nancy: Oh, God yes. But I'm just sorting it out now. I've gone through summer school. I've gone through the heartache of being back in that place again, because I started doing something different again and not doing multiple-choice tests. I'm just beginning to see I'm not to blame, that my only problem is being in the wrong place at the wrong time. I'm where the school will be in about ten or fifteen years. I know despite everything we went through as a group, if I am just coming into the staff room and a kid is with another teacher, and I walk by and I say 'Hi Patty,' and she says 'Hi. I miss being in your class,' those kids went out of my classroom with something that was genuinely real. And that is something that they're going to carry with them. So, the principal can prevent me from teaching them in grade ten but he will never put out the fire, I don't think. And I hear the grade ten teachers just raving about how these kids can do research, how talented they are, and I know it started to develop in that class with Diane and me. I don't say that we're heroes or anything, but because I was looking into my own values, I knew what I wanted to pass on, and somehow the timing was right.

Judy: I believe that for learning to take place there has to be some kind of tension, dissonance, and that clearly was the case with you. You expressed discontent with

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Unstructured Conversation Transcript

teaching content instead of kids, but I also think that that tension can be, at times, painful. You want to explore that a little bit?

Nancy: I don't like being singled out, and I admitted when I was taken on the carpet by administrators that I was reaching. They were being besieged by parents who wanted good marks and all this sort of thing. Diane and I did do a rubric. When the principal took me down again he asked how I was evaluating, I said 'I am doing what I should do, multiple choice and a rubric. He said 'Well, do you know what a rubric is?' Sorry. I don't like stupid people, and that shows you how hated I am by him, that he couldn't even remember when I gave him evidence last year from the grade eleven and the grade nine of all the things I'd done. Plus he went to the kids' presentations, and he asks me if I know what a rubric is? You see, I want recognition, which is, I suppose, normal. But as I watch the film it became less important, knowing that there was a group of kids that had truly been in a learning situation.

Judy: What did you learn yourself from that piece of action research that you did with Diane last year?

Nancy: I learned that that's what we've got to do with kids. We've got so many kids hurting, so many intelligent kids being lost in the shuffle, ending up selling drugs, we've got to do this sort of thing so they can explore their own potential.

Judy: That's what you've learned about kids. What did you learn about your colleagues?

Nancy: They should be looking at the professional dimension of their work which involves graduate study.

Judy: What did you learn about your school, the directors, the administrators?

Nancy: They're more worried about their own promotion, and image.

Judy: And what did you learn about yourself?

Nancy: I'm tough.

Appendix N

Sample Coding Sheet: Conversation

<p><u>March 2002: A conversation after watching a videotape</u></p> <p>The video I selected for sharing was produced by secondary V students in 2001, and portrays younger students engaging in inquiry into local environmental issues, the purpose of which was to study and attend to the world around them in the Eastern Townships. The video is a compilation of vignettes of students at work on such issues as clear cutting, sludge, the effects of manure use as fertilizer, sick buildings, and marshlands. My role was facilitator.</p> <p>Judy: <i>You wanted to tell me why you chose that particular video for us to watch together.</i></p> <p>Nancy: Because the secondary V kids made it. They took a compilation of six or eight hours of tape that I had made with this group and chose certain scenes. I also gave them about five or six pages of my writing and that of Michael Jones, they knew which was Michael Jones' and which was mine. I gave them a picture of a house, Dad's old house, and the road leading up to it. Incredible the symbolism, now to me. I didn't think of it then, as tying into the journey. I chose it because the road was bumpy. There were weeds growing on it, and it's like the Robert Frost poem. I didn't take the highway. I took the difficult road. And I think, I realize when I watched the video today, that was probably deep in my sub-conscious. I didn't think it then. I was just in a hurry to find a picture. And then the porch was kind of an afterthought. The kids found a picture of a porch on the Internet, and they put up the welcome sign. And as I looked at the kids working, I realized that they picked pictures of the younger kids really engaged in their work. So I had the feeling as I watched it, the kids</p>	<p>Video</p> <p>Students</p> <p>Inquiry, environment</p> <p>Students</p> <p>Role, facilitator</p> <p>Kids</p> <p>Journey</p> <p>I</p> <p>Video</p>
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Appendix N

Sample Coding Sheet: Conversation

<p>feel they walk into my class and they have to work. That learning is going to take place.</p> <p><i>Judy: Maybe you could describe what the video was all about.</i></p> <p>Nancy: They video was about an inquiry project that Diane Earl and I did together in my class using constructivist ideas, using the idea that the children, within a context which was the environment of the Eastern Townships, chose their own topics, and researched them.</p>	<p>Learning</p> <p>Inquiry</p> <p>Environment</p>
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Appendix O

In Vivo Codes and Categories: Conversation

<u>Barrier</u>	<u>Learning</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Value</u>
Constraints	Change	Administrators	Acceptance
Content	Evolution	Children	Accountability
Controversy	Journey	Community	Environment
Politics	Inquiry	Kids	I, facilitator
Problem	Learning	Role	Inquiry
Recognition	Self	Students	Responsibility
	Understanding		Values
	Video		

Appendix P

Semi-structured Interview Transcript

Judy: How did you get into teaching, what have you taught, and to whom?

Nancy: I saw a lot of my grandparents. They were very integrated into my family. My grandmother Snow had been a teacher. She'd been ahead of herself in working. She worked until she was forty and then she married and then she had my dad when she was forty-one. So, I had a model. It was a thing that women did. My mother was a nurse, so I think the whole idea that women could do something with their lives outside the house was a given in my family. I can never not remember loving to teach. I used to line the kids up, the little kids in my neighborhood, outside in the summer, and we colored and we sang. Sometimes I'd bring them in around the piano, and I taught them songs. I was always teaching and I think the one thing that even when I was a kid, I remember, it was my friend Sue playing school, but she played with her dolls. I had to have real live kids. That I remember. It was just considered something one did with one's life as a woman, and I liked it.

My first two years of teaching were in Three Rivers and I taught two classes of grade eight, English literature, English composition and history, and the English course included Bible study, which we did in those days. I had a class of sixteen kids. When I graduated another fellow and I went to Three Rivers to teach and he started two hundred dollars higher than I did because he was a man. Then I went to the French system where I taught English as a second language in Courtland, grades nine, ten, eleven and twelve, which was a really interesting experience. The reason I ended up there was that my second year teaching I was diagnosed with rheumatic fever, and I had to come home. I was teaching in Three Rivers, and I was teaching grade four at Courtland Elementary School, because I thought I'd love the little kids – which I didn't. I found them too much trouble. I was twenty-two and the French school called, and they needed a supply teacher for Madam Daoust, who taught in both Monseigneur Parent and École Alfred Hébert. So, the people at Courtland Elementary School thought I'd be a good candidate. École Albert Hébert was an all boys' school, and Monseigneur Parent was an all girls' school. They taught me you have to be tough, those kids. I was twenty-three and I learned that there was something sinister in a kid's make up. They will push you until they make you tough. It's sort of a test and once the test is over, you're okay. That was an interesting experience.

So, then I went to Galt, and when I first taught at Galt I taught French. I was there for thirty-two years, and I taught French, grade ten history, English literature, to regular classes and I taught what we called X classes, which I loved. These kids were basically intelligent but totally turned off, and no one knew what to do. That's what they designated them. X classes. And, I loved them, I loved the kids, I got along with them. At that time Galt had a strong technical part of the school and many of them were in tech-voc, agriculture and these were good, basic, solid kids. And Lauren Couture asked them about me, as teachers are inclined to do, but she repeated what they said. And, she said they liked Miss Snow because she's dead honest, which was gratifying to me. I taught those kids anything they would learn. We negotiated what had to be learned, and of course, I was in heaven. I was free. I taught them English, but I taught them English, which they could understand and was needed. They had to need. They had to understand they needed what I had to offer. So, it was bargaining, and it was selling. These were kids

Appendix P

Semi-structured Interview Transcript

that were in grade eight and nine, and I had 3X classes. I don't know if they were extra bad. I just know I enjoyed them completely. Instead of calling them remedial or turned off, they called them X. Basically boys, with a twinkle and defiance. I loved their attitude, and I got somewhere with most of them.

Next I went to teaching grade seven. There was a group of us, eight or nine teachers, who became very concerned about these youngsters in grade seven. The school was at thirty-two hundred students at this point. We were teaching kids who came from villages of five hundred, and we noticed the high absenteeism in the classes. And we decided to do something. There were eight of us, six vice-principals. Bob Hedge was one, and he went upstream, against the current of administration. And we devised what was called the Core Curriculum. We brought another four teachers on board, and we went around selling this program to the parents. The kids were contained 60% of their time in one class, and it was at this time I started teaching math, French, science, language, and loved it. It really worked. There was an increase in performance on the part of the kids. We were teaching in teams. I was in the Red House team. Grace and I devised an Eastern Townships curriculum. We took the kids up Mount Orford and to graveyards where they did rubbings, and all this sort of thing. It was a wonderful course. We were called the Mothers of the Earth. There were five men. They really were the outsiders. It's not only women who suffer in a paternalistic system. One of the men, Will Thompson, became so turned off he quit teaching, because he wanted to teach that way and he wasn't accepted by the other men.

They decided to take the Core Program into level two, and the whole paternalistic idea began to fall into place. Because, in so doing, they told me that they would like me to be a department head when it went into the two levels. I thought that was great, but what they did was divide it into subjects. They had the science/math people, and the history/English people, and then moral and social development. And, I didn't realize that I was going to be department head of a subject area. I thought I was going to be department head of cycle one, in other words, the whole idea of general subjects. At this time there was a huge struggle between specialist and generalist teachers. By this time, I kind of liked math and to give it up was hurtful. Anyway, it was at this point I went to Scotland, looking for ideas on how to teach. There was the wave of James Britton and Pat D'Arcy, and I've forgotten the other one involved in the new social studies curriculum. When I went on sabbatical I didn't go for a degree. I was attached to Moray House, which was the teaching college at the University of Edinburgh. They treated me as an equal. It was wonderful. The first half of the year I was in Scotland, I was looking into elementary curricula. And I was taken to all of the special schools like the Centre for Very Advanced Children. I went into all these beautiful public schools, and the comprehensive schools. It was a wonderful investigation, and I was free form courses, although I did take several, I sat in but I didn't have to pass, I just had to come back and try to implement new ideas. I was on a paid sabbatical, 80% of my salary. When I was at Moray House, my salary at 80% was higher than that of the president. The teachers were badly underpaid.

I also had a wonderful, wonderful life changing experience. I was very lonesome and I had been taken out to a pub by a lot of the teachers at Moray House. I said "Ah, I just love the accent", and I remember Mister White returned with "Darling, you're the one

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with the accent!” But anyway, I went to the church, it was the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. I hadn’t a clue what it was all about. I met a delightful secretary Betty, and we struck up a really good friendship. She had sung in the chorus of an opera, and she took me to an opera. She had the score, and I could follow the score. This was at Usher Hall. She was about seventy-five. She took me to social service of the Free Presbyterian Church called Corner Stone. I had two parallel, fascinating, life-changing experiences. One through working with these people in Moray House at the University of Edinburgh, and the second with Betty in Corner Stone. Corner Stone was a group of professionals who ran a drop-in centre, which had food, in the catacombs of the church, and I was on a team with Bob Ellis, and Ron MacGregor, who was our leader. Ron was a civil servant for the government of Scotland, and one of his duties was when the Royal Family came to be sure that all their places were in order. He was also involved in negotiations in the social sector. Another fellow was Bruce, a psychiatric nurse. Now, I’m going to tell you why we needed all these people. People who made a lasting impression on me were the young soldiers who were in Dublin who used to drop in, and they needed people who were qualified to talk to them because some of them had seen friends blown up, through mines, and all this sort of thing. The other group that used to come in was the old bums who lived in the hills around Edinburgh. There was one fascinating fellow called James Conrad. I don’t know what had happened to him. I don’t know if it was alcohol. He had been, not a Don, but a lecturer at Oxford. He used to come in with these huge plastic bags filled with things that he had picked up. They always sent me down. I would say “Yes, Mister Conrad, would you like your usual?” which was tomato soup. These men used to come in and when they needed to be cleaned up, or dried out, Bruce and Ron, and the others on our team used to take them to the hospital to be looked at. I was on every week, either Friday, Saturday or Sunday night. And they used to take them to the Royal Infirmary. I was taught the signs to look for. Sometimes they took them in just because they were filthy. Mister Conrad stands out in my mind. We had conversations. He was more lucid than the others. Not often, but there were a couple of emergencies with the soldiers. I used to wonder why I couldn’t go into the kitchen and just prepare the food. I’m shy and I didn’t like being on the tables, but they made me be a waitress. I could understand not allowing me on the cash. I just adored these people. So at the end of my stint, at the end of my stay in Edinburgh they put me on the cash. I said, “May I ask why I was never allowed to work in the kitchen or be on the cash before?” Their answer was because I am comforting and good, and the people loved me as a waitress out there, and they loved my accent. So I’d come full circle from talking about the Scottish accent at the beginning when I came to the people liking the Canadian accent. The very flat broad accent, they used to say. The other thing that was interesting with Corner Stone is we used to have meetings once every two weeks. We used to have psychiatrists from the Royal Infirmary talk to us about the pathology of some of the people we had. Obviously, they thought I was understanding this, because they kept putting me on the tables. I realized I was put up for Mister Campbell. I didn’t at the beginning. They wanted me to go to Mister Campbell. And we had troops. I remember there was a film director who came and talked about acting and theatre that they were implementing for the soldiers, to act out the trauma that they were experienced in Ireland. That was extremely interesting. They had two components. The actual role-playing, but they found that puppets were

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really working. They talked about traumatized children. We didn't get that many youth. There was one incident. When I was on sabbatical I went into the schools and I talked to teachers, and I looked at curricula, and I saw what they were doing in reading and English, and spoke to them. I went into a poverty-stricken school in the heart of Glasgow, tremendous poverty. I remember a group of elementary children. There was one kid, a little girl of about six or seven. She was sitting on the top of the desk, and there was a looking glass. She had been so abused that she had no identity. What the teachers were doing was making her look in that looking glass and talk about herself. And she wasn't speaking. It was incredible. This was after my eighth year of teaching and I was really tired of it. I was about thirty. When I went to Galt it was in 69. This was the early seventies. I've often thought about the French side of it. They're trying to get away from the Church, the strong authoritarian, patriarchy, and they can't do it. They just set up the Ministry of Education that was the same as the Church. And I talked about this to my mentor, and I also learned a very good lesson in the school. There was a fellow called Charles LeRoy. He was a huge barrel of a man, very energetic, and he had those kids in science eating out of his hand. He was doing great things. And I remember this little kid François, he had an English last name, which lots of those kids do, they're half English, half French, half the kids in the Townships, even in the French system. And I had felt sorry for him because he lived in a home with a dirt floor. There were eighteen children. This was something else that amazed me, because those kids came from huge families. And Charles LeRoy said, because he had taken a round out this poor little kid, and Madame Daoust was sort of giving it to Charles. This little staff room was a work room, and Charles said you know as well as I do the only way these kids can get out of the filth is by being a hell of a lot tougher than what they're in. And I've never forgotten that. Because, it's true. You don't do a service to kids by pandering to them. I never forgot that lesson. We were way behind the schools in Glasgow. Specially, in teaching. I think that the richness of this experience, I was about twenty-three and I taught grades nine, ten and eleven, boys' classes. And they streamed the kids this way. There was science-lettres, which was the high stream. No, science-maths. And, then science-lettres, and then regulier. And I taught all of them. But one that was fun was the grade twelve courses. I was teaching what was equivalent to a survey of English literature that I did at Bishop's in my first year. They were fast and I've never in my life read as good writing since that episode as I was getting from those children. Beautiful writing, beautiful writing, filled with metaphor, images. And this is what I love the French for. They talk in metaphor. And I didn't have to teach them Shakespeare, although they wanted me to, so I ended up choosing the act in which Hamlet give his soliloquy 'to be or not to be', and they enjoyed that. Science-maths was a different story, because these kids were scientists. They were being trained in mathematics, in the old Descartes principle, eh, in a French school. And I remember three friends, René, Claude and Jacques. They spoke English. You know how they learned to speak it? Watching the Beverly Hillbillies. So there were times I was trying to correct these French Canadian kids' granny English. It was really, really wild. And when I had them for English on a Friday, I had them for two hours, and I thoroughly enjoyed them. I was twenty-three. And they persuaded me, especially when I was wearing my yellow dress, to let them have a break for a smoke. So, I'd be waiting twenty minutes. And I'd get up a puff of steam. Get in here. Okay, okay. They were about four

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feet taller than I was and in they'd march behind me. It was funny. I mean they treated me more as an equal. They wouldn't let me pull my teacher stuff. They just wouldn't, these boys. The yellow dress. Remember the shirtwaist? I always seemed to be in a good mood when I wore that dress, and they could get away with anything. We once went down and had a Coke at the local restaurant. I think they taught me to relax a little. They just didn't let me get away with it. There was a fellow named Christian Lefebvre. Never have I met as wonderful a writer, or a fellow who understood literature to the depth that this kid did. I don't know what happened to him but I really like that kid and I used to pick him and Dianne up in Compton on my way and drive them to school. I usually had as many kids as I could squeeze into my car. I didn't realize that I shouldn't be doing this. I have yet to meet one of them in a store and they say you look just the same as you did when you were teaching. And they will stop. Now they 're showing me their grandchildren. It was a wonderful experience, and I don't think about it often enough. I didn't really thoroughly relax, because I didn't completely learn to speak French. But they always would translate. Sometimes I wondered just what they were saying because there would be a lot of laughter, and then I thought well, let it go. Especially, Gaston in one of my grade tens. There was once, I said to Madame Daoust, I'm sure he's not translating what I'm saying. Madame Daoust said probably not, knowing Gaston. I think every teacher should have this kind of experience, but you have to be ready to take the risk. Which I seem to do, but I loved that experience. I had André who was a real Pequiste and didn't like my face, and he was horrified when the kids petitioned for me to stay another year. They wanted me to stay even another year but I didn't. I went to Galt.

At Galt I taught math, science, French, history, English, moral and social development, economics, geography, all levels. They'd streamed at Galt. There was an advanced group. And they did it as usual underhandedly. They'd offer a course in French and the kids had to have an 80% average to take immersion courses, and I very seldom had the immersion group. The special ed has never been integrated into the mainstream at Galt. I had what they called the ALPS (Alternate Paths to Learning) kids who were integrated into the group. They were supposed to be four levels of reading retarded. What the administration did in their ultimate wisdom, and they won't look beyond this, is this; they felt that kids would have a better chance of passing if more time were spent on the subject. But again, I came into conflict, because I said you've got to change your approach with these kids. I never thought to argue from having had those X groups. The administration knew I was highly successful with those kids. They kept giving me more. I said d you've got to change you approach to how you teach these children. Just giving more of the same thing is just going to make it worse. The people who taught ALPS I and II, because they did take a different approach, got these kids turned on. I'm assuming this is true, the teachers Karen and Elaine said that when their students had me, they stayed turned on, when they came to me in grade nine, out of Alps. The reason was because my classes were structured, and expectations for behavior were high. I expected those kids to pass. And once they left the womb of Core with these ladies, it was basically "well, they're ALPS kids. What do you expect?" But, I wouldn't do that. These kids were streetwise. I didn't know anything about learning disabilities, and I did try to inform myself. There weren't any courses at Bishop's. The one thing I did know was that their brains worked to learn, and there was a way to, I always thought it was through activity I created in the

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classroom. They were hands on. Group. With the ALPS kids, I fought them. I wouldn't let them get away with anything. They resented me. They went to the administration, told them they were afraid of me. I said, "It's very funny. They are very able to talk to me about my faults", and I got them through. We got through. I went home exhausted some day, trying to drag these kids in, trying to keep them on track, trying to get them to do their homework. Not trying. I insisted. I never would consider that they do otherwise. That's how arrogant I am, because I was determined. I told them "You're going to leave this school knowing something, and being able to do something in studies. You're not just going to polish the wood work with your bum!" But anyway, I did have my failures. This was in the nineties, when I don't think the kids had as many problems. Lauren said it's just that we had a different clientele, so man of the families left the townships. So her idea is that we were left with an inferior product. I don't believe that. I think that environment has a big influence on the kids who we're working with right now. I think they're as smart as kids were before, but I think that the environment has let them down, home environment and the school environment. I think so many kids need structure and weren't given the structure at school, or at home. It's messed up. Boyfriends coming and going. Girlfriends coming and going. People married who are second cousins. Pretty sad. Poverty is a factor. Education is a factor. Of the parents. I don't think the problem is with the kids who are on the farms. The problem is with the kids who are in the towns and the cities. The kids who grow up on farms are disciplined. You get up every morning and do chores at five o'clock, do your schoolwork. I never had trouble with farm kids having their homework done. They had learning difficulties, they had trouble with the school work. Usually, they had a respect for authority, not always, but usually. I think it's the town kids. I think it's the family the family with the mother in charge or the father in charge. I think it's that mess that's creating a lot of problems. The only farm kid that I remember having trouble with was last year, you know, the kid who was selling his father's marijuana. That was problematic. Meeting some of the kids, I go to agriculture fairs, I go to the opera, I go wherever there's activity. I met one kid and I had a bottle of beer in my hand and he thought he was going to die of shock. Here's Miss Snow with a bottle of beer. He was twenty-five. He didn't quite know what to do.

Judy: What made you decide to undertake graduate studies?

Nancy: There was no big decision. I just took courses every summer, most summers in order to reflect on what I did, to plan for change for the next year, and socially, I love talking to these people who are interested enough to take a summer course. And they were taking their Master's degree and eventually I accumulated enough points, enough credits to be given an advanced course in educational studies that Bishop's had. And I had Michael Jackson who was head of the educational department at that time, who took an interest in me. And he said do you realize that you have almost enough credits for a Master's degree? So, then I enrolled, this was in the eighties, I enrolled in the program. I started summer school studies right t after teacher training, '65. I didn't go to summer school during my sojourn in the French school, the in the 70s, implementing the Core Program, going to Scotland was the 70s, and at the end of the 70s, I went back to Bishop's with the full intention of entering the Master's course. And I took sociology of education. That was a wonderful course with a professor Bancroft who was a black man. Wonderful fellow, sort of a Jack-quality teacher. Total interest in the human being behind

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the mind. Interested in the mind. Loved the subject, totally versed in the subject, doing research. Powerful teacher. The next year I think Lauren came with me and we took qualitative research, and I think it was a sociology course. We took a qualitative research course with a Doctor Williams from Winnipeg. I didn't know what hit me. I had absolutely no idea what hit me and I didn't want it to hit me again. Oh, God. I had never read a research study, and I kept saying to Doctor Williams, "Don't they write English?" Well, he said, "Maybe their style is a little bit..." And he used to make us make these summaries of these damn papers, and it had to be succinct and it had to get all the man facts and it had to be, I think, a third, thirty percent. He measured it. I had to do over every one of my summaries. And then we had to write a proposal. Well, to me a proposal was a marriage proposal. It was that funny. I did not make the connection between these summaries and what we were doing in the lit review. Never crossed my mind. I got a 63, and I think that was a gift from dear old Doctor Williams. Lauren was as bad too. She won't admit it but she was. So, anyway I went to write my proposal. Now, I did understand data gathering because I had a degree in history, so I knew how to gather data. The lit review, I don't know...but my research question. It was a good research question. At that time I could come up with a question, and of course it fit the public and private documentation that I, I mean I went to great lengths about what documentation I would use. And, for analysis, I think it's okay with analytical part. I remember it somewhere out there, the word validity. It's true, and I had no idea what validity was. I thought it was something for your parking ticket. I don't think you should play this for Mark.

Judy: No, I won't play this for Mark. He'll see the transcript.

Nancy: Oh God, it was funny. Lauren said, "You did...lit review". I said, "I don't remember what the lit review was". Probably, Clinton did it for me, I don't know. What was the analysis? Now, that was interesting, Judy. How I was going to do the analysis? I can't remember. Anyway, passed the course, and I had my proposal, and I thought it was, it was a comparison of the, I can't remember the exact wording of it, but it was good. It was a good question, good, good question because the comprehensive schools had just come into being, and people were lamenting the passing of the old high school, which was a wonderfully entrenched education system here. There's no two ways about it.

So anyway, in Scotland I visited the high school that our area had modeled the high school...so anyway, I passed the course and I thought, never again, never again will I take another research course. And of course, as I told you, I thought research courses were for Doctors and not for teachers, and I do not remember any, I don't remember understanding the reading I was doing. I hadn't a clue, but I got through the course and the sociology course, of course. I got my usual 85%, you know, because I understood it. Then during the eighties, I avoided the Master's because I was going to have to take a statistical course and another research course, because the time for me completing my proposal had sort of disappeared. So, I thought, "Oh, the advanced course of studies is good, that's ok. You know, I'll do that one and I can fill it with all the courses I like, avoiding psychology, statistics and research, and very happy to be creating my nice little activities for". And then I became, I stopped going to Bishop's, and I became very involved and this is a very, very interesting story, in Bruce Joyce, the Johnsons, the Bennetts. I was standing in the pharmacy one summer, I think it was in July, and Pat

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Warren came over to me and said, "Are you taking the course?" So, I said, "What course?" She said, "The course the union is putting on". I said "The union..."

End of tape

Nancy: This was the late nineties, late eighties, because in that period I looked after my parents and, between 1984 and 1987, trying to care for, and balance with teaching, and so, I just buried my Dad, I think, that spring, and I thought maybe I always am cheered when I get into an educational system. It's just a setting, I think I'll do it. It was at Bishop's, and they really needed bodies, so I went.

Judy: What was the program?

Nancy: It was called *Models Of Teaching*, with Bruce Joyce, and it again turned my teaching around. We were taught how to construct a cooperative learning setting, how to use concept attainment, and how to use concept formation, which were offshoots of Hilda Taba's work, but they were totally practical.

Judy: Was this graduate level?

Nancy: It was the union, the union under Don. Don has a Master's degree in Science. He's a brilliant man. He's Sue Cote's brother, and he'd done this massive collection of data and analyzed it, and he found that teachers in our area were burning out, and what they needed was a boost to their professional career. Or, at least that's how he interpreted it. So he brought in this Bruce Joyce who was well known, his book is well known, and I went and I had no idea was I was getting into, but I was just fascinated with the techniques, absolutely. And, with him to a certain extent, and he was talking about research based findings, and concepts and lots of stuff I didn't know about, but I just felt this is something to investigate. I like this, and, Judy, I'm going to forget the other thing which is, it was the technique I found incredibly...in teaching this way. All I can think of is synchronicity but that's not what it was. It's the technique, and I've lost my *Models of Teaching* book, maybe it will come to me.

I had never seen anything as fascinating, doing this in his course because it was mark, model, do, model, do, you know. And he was with Bev Showers at this time. So I learned two new tools, three new tools to teach, cooperative learning, inductive, concept attainment, concept formation, and now, here's Nancy, "Oh yeah, I'll do this", hadn't a clue what inductive reasoning was, hadn't a clue what deductive reasoning was, hadn't a clue what a concept was, but I understood the technique and I understood how I could do it in history according to Bruce's rules. Didn't understand why. It blew me away how the kids reacted, absolutely blew me away, and I'm really never that good at doing this, and I had, Ben Hodge has since told me, I had kids in groups he just didn't think should be in groups, and he came down to my classroom, and was blown away at the response of these kids.

Judy: Would you consider what you were doing at this point in your career a form of research?

Nancy: It is now.

Judy: You didn't think of that such then?

Nancy: No.

Judy: But, looking back, would you say you were behaving like a researcher in your classroom?

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Nancy: I think I've always behaved like a researcher. I really, and, thanks to Mark telling, no, thanks to Jack telling me, I've always researched, I mean I wouldn't have been going to reflect, analyzing and doing something new in my class. I wouldn't be going off to Scotland. I remember my Mother sitting, looking at me, "I don't understand you, going over there, you don't know anyone", and my Father said, "You don't understand the money". Didn't care. I mean, I just thought it would be okay, and it was. It was a wonderful experience, and in many other ways too, which we won't put on tape.

Judy: You can say anything on tape you like. The transcript comes to you before it goes to...so just keep the ideas coming ok?

Nancy: But this business with the inductive and concept attainment, I realize, I realized as I went, started this with the kids I had become bored again. I had become indifferent to what I was doing, not indifferent, but I was bored, I was unhappy, I was angry and this, just watching these kids and then to hear people like...And this is where I met Brian, and I won't tell you anymore, was it this...And I just thought he was such a neat teacher, and he really showed me how to make data sets, and how to, I found concept attainment more difficult, to make the data set than concept formation. I found that very, very easy in the History class, and it was such a neat way to teach the basic facts to kids, and you could sneak in maps and you could sneak pictures into your data set, and have them categorize, and at the same time they had to talk about these pictures. So, they were going over the information and then we could, with Bruce, what we had to do, the kids had to put, number the data set, and then the kids had to be able, when they made up a category, to explain why they put the attributes of the concepts within the category, why they put them together, and this was wonderful work, this wonderful method to work for kids, and you see I didn't realize I was doing...and stuff, Judy.

Judy: I have a question for you and it's going to take us off a little, but I would really be interested in knowing this. I don't understand what you're talking about with concept formation and concept attainment, but I hear you talking about constructing a data set and I'm wondering if there is a link to that? ...you had to deal with it last year, the concept map.

Nancy: I should have been able to do a concept map. What you did for concept attainment was that you gave the kids, you started out, I can't remember exactly the procedure, but you had positive attributes and negative attributes, it was like twenty questions. It was wonderful, so if I had the concept of Industrial Revolution, phases, the first phase of Industrial Revolution, you would give the kids clues as to what the, what industry, the century, and all this sort of thing, and negative attributes might be something to do with the...of society, religious society, or something so the kids had to, by process of elimination, using the positive attributes and the negative attributes, come up with the concept, and it was wonderful. I would use them after he taught something, then I began to use it, this kind of a data set to introduce it, and it blew me away. They could figure it out without...They had...some...

Now concept formation was easier for me because I think this is the way I learn. It is that you gave the kids all sorts of statements, or pictures, or maps and they had to put them into categories and identify the category and I can't do concept maps.

Judy: But you had them doing it following the process?

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Nancy: Exactly, without any trouble and they loved it...Just a last point about the graduate studies. When I decided to really get serious again was when Bishop's changed the program to a Master's of Education with an exit project, and I thought I could avoid statistics psychology and research. Fat chance, eh?

Judy: Yeah. So you haven't avoided them, obviously.

Nancy: No.

Judy: Are you still feeling the same?

Nancy: I had a terrible struggle as you know, you saw me through it last summer with a psychology course, and I think it's because the information was so new, and it was so different, a way of looking at things, what I was used to, and I was stubbornly resisting it as you know. The qualitative research that I'm taking, I know it's been a wonderful gift, Mark's course. I love the way he's designed it so we have to suffer it every step. Be confused, but I think it was, I believe in synchronicity and as you know I believe in God. When you need them, and I needed someone, to show me how to step back and watch and observe. I still get very chatty, but the skills I'm learning with Mark, or have learned with Mark, have been a wonderful asset, just in my life, to look at things, just in a very quiet, passive way, not even an analytical way, just passively. Ah, pretty flower, pretty bird, and you accumulate this, and then I hadn't.

Judy: Accumulate what?

Nancy: The data without any judgment, without any interpretation, has been a wonderful life lesson to me.

Judy: Ok, so you're taking skills and knowledge out of Mark's research methods course?

Nancy: Both. For me professionally, both for my studies and me as a person, and his own modeling, his kindness, his empathy, and he's a brilliant researcher, have been terrific models. And, Gill's course I adored, because sociology and culture are more in my line of theory, but there are so many slants that were used in her course that gave me a different way of looking at things. And she herself again is just a terrific example of a human being.

Judy: In these courses were you in fact having to... research?

Nancy: Yep.

Judy: And did you have to...?

Nancy: No. I found it quite pleasant actually, but I must admit the style has improved since the seventies.

Judy: What style?

Nancy: Style of research of findings. More readable.

Judy: How to report...?

Nancy: Yes.

Judy: So, what's the difference?

Nancy: Well, I think that there's been an opening up in qualitative research to allow people to use a narrative style, or to use metaphor, and because they are beginning to realize that there's a very, very fine line between fact and fiction. In fact, what is fact? If you believe that person constructs their own knowledge so, when you put a research finding out there, you're putting out your interpretation.

Judy: Well, there are different paradigms.

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Nancy: Yes, and it was with qualitative studies because with, I mean I have done History, which is a form of qualitative research, now. I've done quantitative with chemistry, I took chemistry and biology and physics in university, I loved it and I was doing the number fad, and I really liked it but, when I thought of research I thought of what I did in chemistry, and then when I was, I thought I ruined it. I think that is why I backed off in the seventies it was because I had no place in it.

Judy: So, you couldn't take the models that you learned about when you were studying science and apply them to an area involving human beings?

Nancy: I didn't know how.

Judy: And now you've found paradigms that you're comfortable with?

Nancy: For sure, and I also can see where you could use a member check or quantitative study also to check your qualitative work. I mean Mark has pointed that out, and it was, I mean, he made it so, I mean it almost seems that you should to try to specify some, a place where people could agree with your study. It would be a good way to do it if you could. So, whether that's going back and giving your interview, your interviewees a questionnaire based on what you learned from your studies, and it is a very objective quick thing to see if they agree or disagree, and that sort of thing, that I think could add strength to your study. I've learned a little...Mark, not much. So that's basically it. I still think, hoping that I can graduate without statistics. I think it's deeper than just the stats course, I think it's math. I was not a good math student. Math is simple, it's adding and subtracting, multiplying and dividing, fractions and decimals. It's simple math, but missing pre...teaching is the link to the whole research process. Oh, it makes sense to me what you're saying, the math out of the context of the study and teaching in a situation and for me that was just one bad practice cause you don't teach things out of context and these are people who are in education who understand that, but they don't use it, they don't apply it. And part of this, I was a good science student, that I know, not only marks, I know I was a good science student. I enjoyed it, I enjoyed experiments out of the hood in chemistry, I enjoyed tracing atoms, I didn't like biology, I didn't like that at all, but I did love chemistry and I couldn't go on because I didn't have math and I just scraped through by the skin of my teeth in math. I was very good in algebra, but geometry, oh, you can understand why geometry. I mean I couldn't get passed "Who cares if it's an isosceles triangle?" I don't. It was at that level. I couldn't unblock my mind um, and yet, if you played Bach, I mean that is a tremendously mathematical form of music he has produced. I couldn't do fractions when I was in high school but I sure as hell knew what a sixteenth note was and a eighth note and a quarter note, and how they made a beat in music so, I don't know there's sure a stubborn to math, there's a stubbornness in me when I don't like what I have to learn and you're talking about it in context. If someone had taken the math and had put it in context of where I was, now I'm sounding like we because I could see this with we. If this learning had been in the context, if he could have made connections.

Judy: I think that they're talking about absence of one's...I mean if somebody had made explicit the link between math and music to you, you probably would have flown through.

Nancy: I don't know if I would have flown through geometry. Well ok, but the algebra link to music is pretty close. Well, algebra I was good at because there was patterns I could see.

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Judy: If somebody could have made a link between geometry and something else that was familiar to you probably would have...in the world you would have mastered...

Nancy: Well, my dad did. I learned what a rectangle was because he talked about his garden and we...off, like buildings and furniture and all kinds of things when at home using geometry. It's a prior knowledge issue thing. It really is. That link has to be there, but anyway they're changing the course. I told you this. I think I'll be able to graduate from a master's and my claim to fame is going to be that I didn't have to take a stats course. Did have to take the psychology and research course again, though.

Judy: Have you taken all of the credits that you need?

Nancy: Yep, once I get though these two courses, I'll have my credits.

Judy: Ok, shall we move on?

Nancy: Yes.

Judy: As a graduate student, what has your experience as a researcher been?

Nancy: It began when I understood what I was doing with Jack and then I began to do formal research in my classroom. I formalized what I was doing because I brought in ways of collecting data, ways of triangulating the data, ways of having friends involved so that you have some form of validity, critical friends, plus getting ideas from the kids so that you had some form of validity. So I began to understand what I was doing or what I had been doing most of my life from my father saying I was just plain nosey to actually be looking at my classroom and myself.

Judy: All right, you make a distinction from Jack and formal research in the classroom. Could you elaborate?

Nancy: I never used, I went by gut feeling when I would plan what I was going to do, you know, in the summer, like I took the course in Canadian, in teaching history from Dr. Jones. Ok, just imagine my question, you started this your answer to this question by saying it all began your experiences with, as a researcher began. Formal researcher. Formal research.

Judy: Ok, so you do consider what you did with Jack as formal research?

Nancy: Oh, sure.

Judy: Ok.

Nancy: Oh, sure. It's beyond being curious and is that what, what was the question?

Judy: As a graduate student, what has your experience as a researcher been?

Nancy: Well, as I told you I think I've always been trying to find out how to make things better and if you do that, isn't that part of looking at your practice and trying to understand what's going on, understand yourself and the kids. I always did the two things, myself and the kids. Looked at where I am and the kids, more successful about the kids than myself, I must admit, and then trying to make some sort of change in the system, the system. I was driven to improve my practice. And then for changes, it was intuitive, partly, it was partly response of the kids and I think also when I was making the changes, I was adapting to social patterns, shifting patterns in society also, because every year there was a little difference in what kids expected and how they came into you, so I think that you had to be aware of those.

Judy: Ok, so at the point where you take the course with Jack could you imagine this?

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Nancy: I started to really be systematic about collecting evidence about what was going on in my classroom and how far I progressed to my research question and the change I expected to have.

Judy: And this was when?

Nancy: 1999.

Judy: Where?

Nancy: Oh, Bishop's university, I was in my 34th year of teaching, it was a long way from Williams, although I still think Williams, when I think about him, was a caring and wonderful person as Jack.

Judy: Did you try a...problem with him?

Nancy: Yep, I now knew that validity was not...for traffic ticket...and the lit review was not a...of mine...

Judy: Do you want me to tell you about my first experience with...in the psychology course last summer?

Nancy: There's one story I'd better finish that I started. In the 90's taking this course with Bruce Joyce. The second...Don really got the union against him. The teachers didn't feel that we should be spending money on something as airy fairy as someone who going to teach us how to be better teachers because after all we've been teaching for 105 years, didn't we already know everything there was to know about teaching kids? There was this group, this strong male group with the hangers on them, okay, but Don made a profit of \$15,000 bringing in this guy, because Don knows how to market and he marketed to the board. The next year, do you know who was in the, he had administrators there with Bruce Joyce one was Gilles. Gilles alluded to the time that we took cooperative learning and Bruce Joyce together, and I never was brave enough to say, "Why in hell aren't you doing anything about it?" But you see, Gilles thought it was just for the classroom, wasn't for administrators and he was there to make sure that teachers in his classroom did... The second year, and I think it was because I was using these methods in my classroom, there were 10 Galt teachers who became involved, and I think it was directly as a result of me doing it in Galt, and they stayed... Then the following year the board got into the act and decided cooperative learning was the way to go and they asked Bruce Joyce, and he suggested the Bennetts? So, the board chose, I think it was eight teachers, there were three administrators, there was a consultant, two or three administrators and eight teachers who went to Toronto for a 3 or 2 week training session with Carol and whatever his name is, Bennett and in cooperative learning and models of teaching, and I was very lucky to be chosen to go and it was a wonderful, wonderful session and then Carol and I can't remember his name came to Galt in the Eastern townships to follow us up for 3 years and I got high ratings from Carol. So, they were doing research on you? Yep. Was it actually a research-based course? No, it was learning methodology, Judy, it was curriculum methodology and that's what was to bad but I think that Carol had her PhD and it was wonderful and her PhD was on...she let me read it. Then Laurie Stephan more and more fell onto Laurie Stephan who was sort of their prodigy, her shoulders and the Johnson's. By that time I was starting to take the Johnson's, I took the 3 books, 6 weeks of training 8 weeks and I found my niche because David Johnson is a social, cultural psychologist and um they, you see it fit my, I'd always been struggling to find how to teach the, I knew you didn't only have to teach kids content, you had to teach

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them some of the skills they needed as they grew into adults and taking responsibility was one of them and the context of the group was very important and the dynamics of the group and they taught us how to look at a group, look at the dynamics, interpret the dynamics, teach the kids how not to be hitchhikers and all this sort of stuff. It was wonderful.

So, I grew a little bit disinterested with the Bennetts, because with the Bennetts they were there and by this time I was sorry. And in addition, Bruce Joyce had taken over a school system in Georgia, not Augusta, no it was Augusta because the Masters Golf Coarse tournament was on and he invited our board to go down and have a look and I was asked and I went with 3 other teachers who had been in on cooperative learning. I was the only high school person and the reason then I went, this is before the board took on the Bennetts, it's because I was the only high school teacher who been doing it at that point and that was a wonderful, wonderful experience. And if I could think of the name of that technique or model or method we were taught because I just saw a wonderful woman, a woman doing wonderful work with it. And what was, the paradox of these Canadians coming in from winter, we're all stark white into, of course, Negro schools and that was very interesting. There were white faces, but not many, they were predominantly Negro in this schools we attended and of course, they paraded out their best and we went to the best schools in the system but we saw the teacher, how the teachers learn the models and how they were brought in to help every facet. Bruce Joyce, the one thing I liked about him was he believed so deeply in teachers and the integrity of teachers and, teachers the ability to change lives of children. He supported anyone who tried and he was just delighted that someone like Don, who is a union president, would come to him before a board. He loved Don for that.

Judy: Ok, were the teachers engaged in any kind of systematic research on their practice or was it all top-down?

Nancy: No, it was all top-down.

Judy: Ok, can I sum up? As a graduate student your experience as a researcher basically began with Jack's course?

Nancy: Yes, with Jack's course, formal research, yes. Systematically researching in your practice with, yes, with critical friends.

Judy: Before that your experience was not as a researcher, but being taught methods?

Nancy: Yes.

Judy: Ok, how was your teaching influenced by your role as a graduate student?

Nancy: Oh, I don't know Judy, it's just that I began to understand more and more and more of the complexity of what I was doing. It scared me in a way and the huge responsibility to each child and it became clearer and clearer how different each child was from the other and I became more and more annihilated from the system that I was teaching.

Judy: The system in the abstract or does that include...?

Nancy: I think both abstract and...I think it was both but I think the abstract came first but I think when I really started breaking away, was when I took the first course with Bruce Joyce because then I began to understand something was wrong. I'm still blaming myself, it was me but I think I began to see it in terms, ah in abstract terms and I was beginning to be brought in. Now, Bruce Joyce took great pains to tell us, the researchers

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that, research based studies that had gone behind providing these models. I didn't quite follow this, because I still thought that research belonged with medicine, you know? I think with Jack there was a coming together. I was looking at the end of my career but I was also trying to put it in perspective and then as I put it in perspective, I wanted to hurry in a year and get everything done that I hadn't done, and that was to look at my practice dispassionately, improve it, teach ah, improve it as well as I could so as many kids as possible in my classes could look into themselves, could see or find something that was meaningful to them, meaningful to their own life, academically, intellectually. I think I could put it in words then and I think I been looking for the Holy Grail anyway, all my teaching career and it's taken time to realize that there isn't one definitive answer to anything and I think that the major thing I've learned is it's important to be in a community of learners, both kids and teachers, because if we focused our knowledge, the knowledge we co-construct will be much better, meaning as a daring perspectives and, if this can come to be for young teachers, I think of the years, 30 years or so that I was basically in it alone. And, had I had, when I was with friends it was competition, like with Lauren it was who could get the better mark, let's face it. But to be in as co-workers know none of this class system, none of this better, good, better, best, but looking at our own strengths and weaknesses and building with that in mind and I don't think that's an ideal, I think that's what we have to do, or else young teachers aren't going to have a chance. They'll be off to something else in 5 or 6 years.

Judy: *Did you experience teacher educators who approached that idea?*

Nancy: Yep, Joan Bull.

Judy: *People when you were in grad school doing graduate studies?*

Nancy: Fran, Jack, Mark Jill.

Judy: *Last names?*

Nancy: Jack Whitehead, Mark Aulls, Gill Bramwell, Diane Earl, Fran Halliday.

Judy: *How was your teaching influenced by research?*

Nancy: Can I go back to research? I don't know where I'm going to put this in Judy, but I want to say a word, I want to put this in about Fran before I forget. I didn't know Fran that well as a teacher. I started to take a course of hers, but I had a bout of depression and I had to leave it, but the greatest thing that Fran gave to me was the understanding of what a subject is, what a discipline is, of what can be on content and that came very late in my career and with the reform teachers are going to have to look for it. I think that I begun to be able to envision what some of the broad philosophical principles are of subjects. I mean I taught geography, history, economics, English, moral ed, math, science to a very limited degree and the broad philosophical principles of all subjects deal with the human condition. It's in the landscape, it's in geography, whether it be past societies and how we can improve, whether it be, psychology it's the human the individual condition and how to. It all seems to be with coping with life. There seems to be that broad spectrum from which we can navigate and with Fran, she made me, she forced me to look into history beyond the content, and when I started to do that I couldn't look at teaching history, I couldn't look at it, teaching it the way I was forced to for a grade 10 exam. But, when I was dealing with her, I was still looking for changes, within the context, my context, my environment at school. When I got to Jack, I made the decision to break away. So, Fran initiated the process of putting self at the center? No, I think Fran

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made me look at what I was teaching, the curriculum. Ok. From the point of view of more than content but, when I began to do that I began to see that um, how I was teaching history, geography and economics was not serving to teach children about life and about their lives and when I started to make changes in the way I approached these subjects, which I did and at that time, I'd taken a course and it was 'history reading workshop', and I had done a study about turning my history classroom into a workshop type of area which I did to only a limited point because I still had this grad 10 class. Then with Don Jonderville, Didi and myself we did a PD grant writing across the curriculum. It just re-enforced what Fran was saying and it help Don, well Don already knew, but it help him to see that English, science and geography they're all trying to do the same thing and we got some really, really interesting things that we worked on and Don found wonderful science things and Didi was able to find parallels in English and I was able to look at the geography environment and how things were polluted and that sort of thing. So, we were able to bring the subjects together. It was wonderful. Then, after that I had Pauline, she...I think this is a sequence and she brought me in her office, and oh boy what is she going to do because Pauline and I haven't always seen eye-to-eye, in fact she broke my back so she could become department head but that's ok.

Judy: She was a vice-principal at this time?

Nancy: She'd taken over for Charlie and she said there is a conference going on and you should be involved in it because you've done this work all your life, all your teaching life and I think you need to go to a place where you will feel satisfaction. I thought, Pauline being Miss sensitive? And, she found ways by this time, I didn't have any health days left, I know, judgmental I know but, she did break my back so she could become department head. So, off I went to ICTR and she was right, I found like-minded people. There was no two ways about it and I told you, I don't know why I went to Jack's course, what drew me there, what compelled me there, drove me there and when I got there, it felt totally out of place and I told Jack this. I said, 'look Jack, I walked in there they we all almost finished their Master's degree, I only had a BA in educational studies, no stats, no research and I said, I looked at the pecking order and there was Fran's group and then around you there was sort of a group and I said, Cathy was friendly and drew me in and I sat down by mistake in Fran's group and it was very clear the next day cause there were no seat they were all taken by Fran's group and Jack said, 'How'd you cope? I said, 'by humor' and he said, 'you succeeded'. But, why I stuck it out, I didn't know why I was sticking it out. I don't know I think maybe there is something ornery in me. I just wanted to in spite of them. I don't know, but I think I was so compelled now, I mean he had me hooked once the course was over. I saw what he was saying as making the system bend because if you investigate your own practice, you're master at that practice cause you see the good and bad and there's no department, administrator who can tell you otherwise because you see it. You got it on tape, you recorded it, you've asked the kid. There's no way they can tell you and that's the way it should be and it will make administration, you see I think teachers should be in charge of pedagogy as a collective and there should be dissension, there should be fights, there should be the whole thing, but it's the teachers who are the classroom and from there if you are with a collection of friends, they keep you honest, critical friends. They keep you honest you keep each other honest, Judy and I think from there you get informed pedagogy.

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Judy: How do you see this shift happening practically?

Nancy: I don't know. I think the reform is trying to, but just gossip. Teachers are just saying well, I'll adjust this and it will look like I'm trying to go to reform. I don't know how you break it down. I don't know how did business break down? How did business finally allow women as presidents and CEOs of a company and listen to women who are in top job professions? Judy, I just want to say one more things about teachers. I try not to get too negative about education because I was in a particular circumstance and I realize that I just went so far beyond everybody that it was very difficult, when Galt was my school, I realized that, you know I had to be, there was no place I could go there. It was unfortunate what happened but basically I should have been smart enough to know it ended. But I think that the one thing you can teach young teachers and it was a gift from my instructor in teacher training was Dr. Johnson, was to reflect. We had to take ah, our lesson plans from September to June up to Dr. John and he'd say, 'why are you teaching this, why would student be interested'? Ok, and we had to answer and our answers got better. And, afterwards we always had debriefing. What did you do? If he'd seen us or angry...they would say we saw this and this, what's your response to this criticism etc. So, the thing that John did was teach us to be reflective, to be analytical, to be reflective. I don't care what kind of setting, whether it's a constructivist or positivist setting. If they're taught to be reflective and analytical, there's no way they're going to be able, I think that if they had some sort of teaching, training and self study and active research somewhere in their careers, in their training, thoughts, emphasis on reflective thinking throughout the whole course, there's no way, knowing kids today and how they operate, they're going to stand for what was thrown at us because they've got to change the system. You can have 45 reforms but it won't happen unless someone does it and I think it comes from reflection and I think it comes from self-study.

Judy: And this begins with the teacher education system?

Nancy: Oh yeah, I would prefer it would be done the way Jack does it where right away, what do you value, what are your contradictions. It's taken me a lifetime to figure it out. They can be helped to figure it out and they can be helped within critical friends where they're supported, there's a net for them, ok?

Judy: Ok. Can we continue now? Can you predict what your experience after graduate school of research what a researcher might be?

Nancy: Oh yeah. As I gather more confidence in these skills of interviewing and data collection, well, data collection I feel ok with, I have from the beginning cause I'm history. I keep repeating that but when I really learn how to analyze data, how to interview, not chat, but really interview and listen attentively so that I know good probes, understand how to use good probes. I can see myself working the rest of my life doing research in one form or another...Qualitative, and I hope I'll learn how to marry the two, quantitative and qualitative and I should know how to make the survey, I mean that's the heart of economics, their survey, so I should be able to learn how to do it. Now, I lived in the Eastern Townships, I've lived all my life...Doctor John was a poor boy in London, on the streets of London and a teacher took an interest in him. He ended up going, I think it's Christ's Church School, boys school which I think is amalgamated with Cambridge. He's a brilliant scholar and his book on psychology was considered one of the best and the graduates he produced were known through Canada for our organizational ability, our

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analytical ability and our ability to care for human being, and that's my tribute. I can't begin to say the impact he had on all of us, he was terribly chauvinistic. He told me I was overprotective, which was true but I remember going to him because I wasn't doing very well, and I said, 'Dr. John, shouldn't I quit?' I mean, what could he say oh in time you'll make an excellent teacher? But he said, 'you've got to loose weight' and I was just cut. I cried and cried and cried and I realize now why he said that. It was limiting my thinking, I see now, but I didn't then but we adored him and I thought he thought we were all a bunch of fools. He talked about our pinky, our pinky stamp degrees. Remember Steinberg's at that time? We all had and he'd come in, he came in one day and stood at the door, he was a strange looking man. He had a mustache, very tall and he had an impediment to his speech, which he emphasized. Oh, he was wonderful, Judy and he just stood there and he'd talk and we had to work and he'd say, 'does anyone understand what I said?' And they'd say no, and he said, 'I'm showing you what an educated man can do, you just heard 5 minutes of Greek and 5 minutes of Latin'. He was just incredible, he was just incredible and he said, we all lasted and we came back January, and he said those of you who are here, I'll tell you my secret. I tear you down the first term and put you back together into what I hope is a teacher, the second term. He did. There isn't one of my friends that doesn't go through, I mean after every lesson I was, why did I teach. I'm sorry if I cry because I had to say something about him and Fran.

I wrote the philosophy course and I as usual, had gotten off track with people. I was going to the dance with George Caldwell, he'd asked me. I was pretty popular in teacher training. A girl called Marianne Harmer was furious, she wanted me not to go, but she had a boyfriend, she was engaged and George said no way, we're going, so I went. This was all going on, this turmoil and you had the...people who said poor Marianne and my friends would say, the hell with her. So George and I did go and we had a wonderful time. Reg wanted to take me and Reg had halitosis, couldn't stand him, so ah, I got this phone call and my mother said Dr. Johnson, even the people in town were in awe of this guy and somebody had a conversation with John, one of the, I think really people in the Church who thought they were really great and she said, I just had this wonderful, most wonderful conversation with Dr. John, just thank you he said, 'well, I can get up or down to any level'. You had to know him, Judy. Oh, God. So, anyway I went to the phone quaking and I thought he's changed his mind, he thinks I should quit. By this time I knew I had a 57 in practice teaching which wasn't very good and he said, 'Miss Snow, I know you'd be worried sick that you didn't finish the exam'. I didn't know there were 3 other questions on the other side of the exam. I was so worried about George. He said I know you must be terribly worried that you left out, he really was sincere but you left out, I don't know how many marks I left out, but he said it was one of the best pieces you did for me, it was perfect what you wrote and I was just dumbfounded. First of all, I thought I'd finished the exam, you see I was...I did that with Derek Booth and he phoned me and he said I know you were...I hadn't a clue. But, Derek gave me a pass cause I left out 60 marks. He gave me a pass based on what I did. That's why I love him and the reason I took the Geography course was because I had to teach it and I wanted to have some knowledge of the material, the content. So, that I knew Dr. Johnson liked me when he called, but I got 62 on Philosophy and I must have written out of 62 marks because he said, for him to say it was excellent, Judy, I told you how critical he was and to, and

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Philosophy, I mean it's something that I didn't know was Philosophy but I took to it. So, that was Dr. Johnson.

Judy: Go on.

Nancy: On, no.

Judy: Ok, in light of the meaning that you now hold for research, in the manner you see yourself as a researcher, how might your teaching be effective should you return in teaching?

Nancy: I could never go back to teaching without some sort of systematic study of what I'm doing and I would, I think I would try to devise surveys so that people could give objective answers to certain things that could require, for instance, was I on time all the time, did they think I was prepared and all that sort of stuff. Very objective things. Two broad questions about the course itself and about my approach to them. There would always be that sense of trying to see if I reached as many people as I could and that it was something that they thought was not only interesting in the abstract, but might be practical to them, to their learning, to their development to the place where they were.

Judy: So, you're asking them to assess you at the same time you would be assessing...?

Nancy: Help them with their answers to their course would be a help, ah. That would give me perceptive and analysis.

Judy: How might your interpretation of students learning...?

Nancy: I would try to have a far more knowledgeable understanding of them as a learner rather than just learning content. I think I've always tried for that, but I think with the research I'll be able to find evidence. I think I would use the research from beginning to end partly research would help me find out what they know.

Judy: Evidence of what?

Nancy: Evidence of their development and learning. It would be purposely...

Judy: Anything you want to add?

Nancy: Do you want me to tell you about what I'm going to do? No, I think that's it because I'm not sure what I'm going to do. There's always more to learn about the subject, there's also more to learn about the parameters of what's going on in the environment, what's expected of you, and then I teach.

Appendix Q

In Vivo Codes: Interview

<u>Actor: person, group, administration</u>	<u>Event: act, activity</u>	<u>Context: place, environment, institution</u>
Administrator	Activity, hands-on, group	Accent
Adult(s)	Analysis	ALP's
Andre	Bargaining	Bishop's
Mark Aulls	Boost	Board, school
Madame Bedard	Break, coke	Church
Bennetts	Career(s), end	Circle
Betty	Competition	Class, regular, History
Beverly Hillbillies	Concept, attainment, formation, map	Classroom
Derek Booth	Conflict	Coaticook
Boy(s)	Conversation(s)	Compton
Eileen Bradley	Coping	Conference
Gill Bramwell	Cycle	Content
Brian	Dance	Context
Joan Bull	Data gathering	CORE curriculum, project, program
Carol	Debriefing	Corner Stone
Cathy Brick	Democratization	Course(s), immersion, Bishop's, summer, advanced, research, statistical, psychology, Jack's, philosophy
James Britton	Diane Earl	Eastern Townships
Bums	Emergencies	English
George Caldwell	Experience(s), life-changing	Environment, home, school
John Campbell	Fights	Galt
Charlie	ICTR	Heaven
Child	Investigation	Kitchen
Children, special ed.	Learning, cooperative	Knowledge, prior
Chauvinist	Member check	Landscape
Clientele	Project, exit	Meetings
Community, of learners	Reading	Models of Teaching
Consultant	Reflection	Moray House
Co-workers	Response	Narrative
Dad	Role-playing	Need
Pat D'Arcy	Sabbatical	Net
Department head	Self-study	Niche
Diane	Selling	Oxford
Didi	Session	Patterns, social, shifting
Director, film	Sharing	Perspective
Doctor Johnson	Struggle	
Dolls	Study(s), advanced course of, graduate, research-based, systematic	
Gaston Dube		
Madame Dupuis		
Bob Ellis		
Family(s)		

Appendix Q

In Vivo Codes: Interview

Fellow Francois French Canadian Friend(s), critical, collection of Jack Garneau Generalist Gilles Girl Graduate(s) Grandchildren Grandmother Group, male Gwen Fran Halliday Hitchhiker(s) Ben Hodge I, Nancy, Ms Snow researcher Instructor Interviewees Michael Jackson Johnsons Don Jondreville Doctor Jones Bruce Joyce Kathy Kids, farm, town Diane Earl Carol Lapointe Leader Lecturer Lorraine Ron MacKenzie Man, men Mentor Ministry Model Mother Mothers-of-the-Earth Outsiders Parent(s) Paulette People, like-minded	Teaching Test Training, teacher Work	Place Poverty Quebec Royal Infirmary School(s), French, poverty- stricken, Quebec, summer, Comprehensive, old high, high, Negro Scotland Setting Situation Society, paternalistic Stream Summer System, French, education Three Rivers Toronto University University of Edinburgh Yellow Dress
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Appendix Q

In Vivo Codes: Interview

Pequiste Person, high school PQ Priests Product, inferior Psychiatrists Psychologist, social, cultural Puppets Researcher, formal Scholar Bev Showers Soldiers Specialist Laurie Stephan Student, science Sue Hilda Taba Teacher(s), good, Jack- quality Team(s) Wayne Ticehurst Troops Union Us, staff, students Vice-principal Waitress Pat Warren Mr. White Jack Whitehead Professor Williams Woman, women Writer X classes, groups		
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Appendix Q

In Vivo Codes: Interview

<u>Time: age, year</u>	<u>Outcome: product, consequence</u>	<u>Standard: value, principle, quality</u>
Age, 22, 23, 30, 31, 2 or 3 years older	Answer(s), definitive	Ability
Year, 1969, 70s, 90s, 80s, 1965, 1999	Approach	Asset
Year, of teaching, 8 th , 32 nd , 34 th	Attributes, positive, negative	Attitude
Years, 105	BA	Authority
	Balance	Awe
	Circumstance	Condition, human
	Complexity	Culture
	Confidence	Curriculum
	Connection(s)	Empathy
	Contradiction(s)	English
	Credits	Equal
	Criticism	Expectations
	Curriculum, Eastern	Freedom
	Townships	Humor
	Data set	Idea(s), paternalistic
	Decision	Ideal
	Degree, Master's, Pinky stamp	Integrity
	Depression	Judgment
	Development	Kindness
	Dissension	Lives, children's
	Documentation	Love
	Evidence	Mind
	Failure(s)	Patriarchy
	Friendship	Practice
	Grant, PD	Principles, philosophical
	Identity	Responsibility
	Impact	Risk
	Impressions	Rules
	Information	Society, paternalistic
	Influence	Stubbornness
	Interest	Teaching
	Interpretation	Theory
	Knowledge, discipline	
	Lesson, life	
	Link	
	Lit review	
	Meaning	
	Method	

Appendix Q

In Vivo Codes: Interview

	Mood, good Pedagogy, informed Problems Procedure Proposal, marriage, research Question(s) Questionnaire Rating(s) Reform Research, qualitative, study, question, findings, formal, action Schoolwork Secret Skill(s) Slants Story Stuff Survey(s) Technique(s) Thinking Thought(s) Tools Tribute Trouble Understanding Validity Wave Wisdom	
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Appendix R

Sample Coding Sheet: Interview

<p>Interview May 19, 2003</p> <p><i>Judy: I would like to begin by asking you how you got into teaching, what you taught, and whom you taught?</i></p> <p>Nancy: When I was thinking about this question, this is rather a long and convoluted answer but it ties in with me. First of all, I saw a lot of my grandparents. They were very integrated into my family. My grandmother Snow had been a teacher. She had been ahead of herself in working and she worked until she was 40, when she married, and then she had my dad when she was 41. So, I had a model. It was a thing that women did. My mother was a nurse, so, I think the whole idea that women could do something with their lives outside the house was a given in my family. I can never remember what it is not to teach. I used to line the kids up, the little kids in my neighborhood, outside in the summer, and we colored and we sang. Sometimes I would bring them in around the piano, and I taught them songs. I was always teaching and I think...the one thing that even when I was a kid...I remember my friend Sarah played school, but she played with her dolls. I had to have real, live kids. That I remember, okay? So, that is basically it. It was just considered something one did with one's life as a woman, and that I liked it.</p> <p><i>Judy: What have you taught?</i></p> <p>Nancy: My first two years of teaching were in Three Rivers and I taught two classes of grade eight - English literature, English composition, and History. I guess that was it. The English course included Bible study, which we did in those days. I had classes of sixteen kids. When I graduated another fellow and I, I've got to say this, went to Three Rivers to teach and he</p>	<p>Grandmother, teacher</p> <p>Model Mother Women</p> <p>Family</p> <p>Kids</p> <p>I</p> <p>Teaching</p> <p>Sarah</p> <p>Dolls, kids</p> <p>Three Rivers</p> <p>Kids Fellow</p>
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Appendix R

Sample Coding Sheet: Interview

<p>started \$200 higher than I did, because he was a man. Then I went to the French system, where I taught English as a second language and in Courtland to grades nine, ten, eleven and twelve, which was a really interesting experience.</p> <p>The reason I ended up there was that, in my second year of teaching, I was diagnosed with rheumatic fever, and I had to come home. I was teaching in Three Rivers and I was teaching grade four at Courtland Elementary School because I thought I loved the little kids, which I didn't, by the way - too much trouble. I was twenty-two, though, and the French school called, and they needed a supply teacher. Mme Dupuis, who taught in both in Monsignor ...needed a replacement so, people at Courtland Elementary School thought I'd be a good candidate. And, I went there. ...was an all boys' school and Monsignor... was an all girls' school and they taught me to be tough, those kids when I was twenty-three. I learned that there's something sinister in a kid's makeup. They'll push until they make you talk, and if you don't...it's sort of a test, and once the test is over, you're okay. That was an interesting experience. So, then I went to Galt, and when I first taught at Galt, I taught French.</p>	<p>Man French system Courtland</p> <p>Teaching I, Nancy</p> <p>Kids 22 years old School</p> <p>Mme Dupuis</p> <p>Kids 23 years old</p> <p>Test</p> <p>Galt</p>
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Appendix S

Think Aloud Protocol

Judy: Ok, what's the relationship between learner and learning? You put that down second.

Nancy: I'm going to start with learning because that's simple for me. It doesn't matter what I'm doing, I'm learning. Now, I don't know which to put first learner or learning. I see myself as a learner who is always learning. That's central to anything and I do it through researching. I don't know if I would put it as...no, I do it through research. Not formal. I'm talking about formal and informal learning, research here, ok? I've learned how to, I'm learning, I'm in the process of learning how to be a better researcher. This is odd, right? Research doesn't matter, ok, and this whole process is to learn, so, all this goes along when researching. And then when I felt the learning phase is over, I decide to teach. I become a teacher and I teach.

Judy: So, the process is to learn?

Nancy: Uh huh. Then I become, enough to become

Judy: Is that what it is?

Nancy: That's right, or I have the skills, the tools to take into the classroom as a teacher to teach. Whether it's learning more history or finding out, thinking through research, different aspects of. Do you understand what I mean? It's ongoing, it's ongoing. I learn, always learning through research. The process to learn, through the process of learning which helps me in the role of teacher when I teach. In the process of teaching, I am a researcher because I'm analyzing through my own eyes, maybe through tape what's going on, and through this process of researcher, I become a learner.

Judy: The researcher engages in the process of researching?

Nancy: Yes, to bring me back to learning, to becoming a learner, learning and finding different ways to becoming better. I think that's it.

Judy: Though researching I become a learner?

Nancy: Uh huh, again. While researching I would say, while researching I'm a learner. I'm in the process of learning from my research.

Judy: Ok, is there anything you want to change before we take a break?

Nancy: I think that's the circle I've covered. I think that's the...I go through.

Judy: Ok, do you want to interpret it for me? Do you know what this is? You're going to laugh.

Nancy: A flow chart.

Judy: It's a concept map. You use concepts and this is the relationships...the concepts.

Nancy: But, you see, I start as a learner before I become a teacher and that's as truthful as I can be about the way I do things. Because as you know, these are just going on simultaneously often and often interchangeable.

Judy: Ok, so you could go, 1, 2, 3?

Nancy: I could go 1, 2 over to teach.

Judy: You could go 1, 2, 6?

Nancy: If I'm just learning content, I could go that way and when I don't understand.

Judy: Just a minute.

Nancy: Let's say content to teach, ok? In teaching, if I have a question about something, I can become a researcher. I can become a researcher. No, but if I'm teaching and I have

Appendix S

Think Aloud Protocol

a question and I can go back to research and that research may simply be interviewing a kid. And, from that research

Judy: Just a second, I'm sorting this out.

Nancy: When you're teaching and a question pops in my mind, and it might be about a student and I might go back to research to interview that student about what I saw or what I thought. From this research I might go back to the person as a teacher who creates activities and things for kids and reconsider what I'm doing. It's just, it's not even a circle.

Judy: But, research provides answers to the teacher?

Nancy: Yep, and then I adjust my teaching. From research to teacher to teaching, I adjust my teaching. We do this all the time, Judy. A kid says something and then adjusting my teaching, I go back to the research to find out what I should be teaching and then do further adjustment and just goes.

Judy: Ok, here we have loop.

Nancy: Did you expect this?

Judy: I was afraid to say concept map, so I didn't...called it a card-sort, something Mark and I...

Nancy: You and Mark decided to call it a card-sort?

Judy: If I had called it a concept...I'd have you taking your panic pills. Ok, it's dynamic, and it's...

Nancy: But, it's logical.

Judy: Oh, yes...

Nancy: Kids...

Judy: You started in...

Nancy: But that could be the kids too.

Judy: Ok.

Nancy: But don't I exist through the kids? I like to see what other people think.

Judy: Well you can, you can...

Nancy: Not researcher, Judy?

Judy: I see teaching, learning and researching as one, so that's how I would stack them probably.

Nancy: Well that's basically what I'm trying to say, these are the steps I take when I go...
End of tape

Appendix T

*Checklist to Minimize Threats to Validity***Internal Validity**

- ☐ Is the research question approached using multiple methods of data collection?
- ☐ Are the methods and procedures recorded in detail?
- ☐ Is the data collection, analysis, interpretation sequence made explicit?
- ☐ Is there prolonged engagement with the participant in the research context?
- ☐ Are there member-checks?

Interpretive Validity

- ☐ Is the voice of the participant preserved through the use of verbatim evidence or low-inference interpretation?
- ☐ Do the researcher and the participant achieve agreement on the meaning of the experience?
- ☐ Is there evidence of peer review?
- ☐ Is the research credible and consistent with the experience of others?

Design Integrity

- ☐ Is there a logic that integrates the research question, and data collection and analysis methods?

Theoretical Validity

- ☐ Is theory applied?

Role of the Researcher and Motivated Bias

- ☐ Is the goal of the researcher defined in practical terms?
- ☐ Is the goal of the researcher defined in political terms?

Pragmatic Validity

- ☐ Do the findings represent knowledge that might be framed as a theory to guide future action in addressing local problems?

(Adapted from Barbour, 2001; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Eisenhart and Borko, 1993; Eisner, 1991; Hammersly & Gomm, 1997; Maxwell, 2002; Merriam, 1999; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Norris, 1997).

Appendix U

*Evaluation Criteria for Paradigmatic Validity***Is there**

- ☐ **A recognition of a need to reflect on professional practices, in other words is there**
 - A stated circumstance and purpose for reflection and change
- ☐ **A recognition of an need to act on reflection, in other words is there**
 - Evidence of systematic inquiry into experience, understanding, alternate theory
 - Evidence of study of meaning of behavior, language and interactions of members of a particular cultural group
 - Evidence of reflection on the experience of all members of the group
 - A plan tailored to the particular experiential phenomenon
 - Evidence of a process of framing of questions, collection and analysis of data
 - A research question that explores experience
 - Detailed description of a purposive sample
 - Evidence of observation, archival documents and records, interviews
 - Data gathered over a significant period of time
 - Evidence of data analysis organized around themes that may indicate pivotal events
 - Detailed description, interpretation, explanation and possible multiple meanings through analysis
 - A plan for action
- ☐ **An evaluation of subsequent changes to practices, in other words is there**
 - A report of the enactment of change
 - Evidence of the view of all members of the group and the researcher's interpretation
 - Evidence of learning in terms of planning, enacting and evaluating change
 - Evidence of general or universal meanings
 - Evidence of emergent living theory
- ☐ **A recognition of a need to share the work of reflecting and acting in a public arena, in other words is there**
 - A report which includes contextual, cultural, personal, and institutional themes
 - A comprehensive, possibly chronological, description of the experience in the voices of all involved
 - Evidence of coherence of argument
 - Reason for claims of consensus among researchers and audience
 - Reason for claims of instrumental utility in guiding participants and others?

(Adapted from Creswell 1998, Eisner 1991, Elliot 1994, Hamilton 1998, McNiff 1993, Mezirow 1991, Reason 1998, Silcock 1994, and Whitehead 1993).

Appendix V

*Criteria for Establishing Narrative Credibility***Validity**

- Does Nancy's Story have a ring-of-truth?

Coherence

- Does the narrative make sense?
- Is there evidence that various data sources have been used to give credence to the story?
- How well does the story relate to what you know of teaching and learning?

Consensus

- Are Nancy's interpretations of her experience consistent with your own experience or with that of others that you know? How?

Instrumental Utility

- Does the story allow you to feel you understand the motives and interests of the students and the teacher?
- What predictions are you able to make about future events?

Other comments you would like to make:

(Adapted from Eisner, 1991).

Appendix W

Ethics Approval Form and Consent Letters

MCGILL UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF EDUCATION
STATEMENT OF ETHICS OF PROPOSED RESEARCH
Full Review

1. Informed Consent of subjects

Two teacher researchers, who have reached the age of majority, will receive, and be asked to sign, two consent forms (Appendix A and B) prior to their participation in the study. A cover letter (Appendix C) and abstract (Appendix D) will explain the nature and purpose of the study. Included will be information about the voluntary nature of participation and notice that any participant may decide against participation at any time.

2. Subject Recruitment

2.1 Participants (2) have volunteered to participate in this study.

2.2 A possible contribution to an understanding of the nature of adult learning as it may be evidenced through teacher inquiry as experienced by participants and by the researcher is the only inducement to participate.

2.3 Participants will be informed, in writing, at the time that their consent to participate is sought, that they may withdraw at any time, for any reason, and that all data collected will be returned to them directly at the time of withdrawal (Appendix A).

3. Subject Risk and Wellbeing

3.1 The study should pose no risk to the physical or psychological wellbeing of the participants other than that inherent in presenting reflections on their individual professional practices to public scrutiny.

3.2 Possible risks resulting from submitting individual professional practices to public scrutiny will be discussed with participants prior to requesting their written consent to participate in the study.

3.3 Data sets will be constructed from texts, artifacts and taped conversations, and to preserve subject wellbeing, these will be reviewed by participants prior to and during analysis.

3.4 To further preserve subject wellbeing, member checks of the results of analyses of cases will be conducted after each of three rounds of analysis (inductive, deductive and cross-case) , and once these are embedded in the body of the dissertation.

4. Deception of Subjects

The study involves no deception of the participants.

5. Privacy of Subjects

The privacy of participants will be respected in that no confidential information will be sought. Data will constitute only information that is volunteered by the participants.

6. Confidentiality/Anonymity

6.1 The study will **not** guarantee anonymity to the participants. Participants, by their own request and consent, will be identified by given name and surname. Other biographical information and still photographic images of the participants may be considered for use in the study should such be offered by the participant and be deemed germane to the study by the researcher.

6.2 Data may include photographic images of the participants as provided by the participants, at their discretion. Copies of such images will be made and retained by the researcher for a period of five years. Originals will be returned to the participants once data sets are constructed.

6.3 Data may include audio taped conversations between the researcher and the participant discussing video clips of the participant in her professional context. The video tape will not constitute data, rather a prompt for discussion and will not leave the possession of the participant; that is, the researcher will neither borrow nor retain original or duplicates of the video tape, but will view the video tape only in the presence of and with the consent of the participant. No discussion of any individual appearing in the video tape other than the participant will be included as data. The researcher and participant will each retain a copy of the transcript of the audio taped conversation.

6.4 Data may include narrative texts, original art works, and other artifacts of the participant's choosing. Such material will be copied by the researcher and retained for a period of five years. Originals will be returned to the participant once data sets are constructed.

6.5 The participant will be asked to sign a second consent form indicating her willingness to release data sets, once constructed, to the researcher. This form will indicate the names and positions of others who may see the data, that is members of the researcher's dissertation committee, and the manner in which it would be disseminated to these individuals (Appendix B).

6.6 Raw data will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the Faculty of Education of McGill University.

6.7 Raw data will not be used for any purpose other than this dissertation, and will be returned to participants five years following completion of the final version of the dissertation.

6.8 Aggregated data will be retained by the researcher, but would not be used

Appendix A

Appendix B

Consent Form.2

Data and Data Use

This is to state that I have studied the data sets and that I understand, and agree to, the manner in which they will be used in a research project conducted by Judith McBride, M Ed of the Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology at McGill University entitled *Portraits of Practice*.

I agree to the use data sets, as constructed by the researcher.

I understand that the data may be viewed by the following individuals for the purpose of supporting the researcher in her work on the study:

Dr. Mark Aulls, Faculty of Education, McGill University; academic advisor to the researcher

Dr. Gillian Rejskind, Faculty of Education, McGill University; member of the dissertation committee of the researcher

Dr. Jack Whitehead, Faculty of Education, Bath University(UK); member of the dissertation committee of the researcher

I understand that data may be distributed to the above-mentioned individuals in either hardcopy or electronic formats.

I understand that data may include photographic images of me as provided by me, at my discretion. Copies of such images will be made and retained by the researcher for a period of five years. Originals will be returned to me once data sets are constructed.

I understand that data may include audio taped conversations between the researcher and myself as we discuss video clips of me in my professional context. The video tape will not constitute data, rather a prompt for discussion and will not leave my possession; that is, the researcher will neither borrow nor retain original or duplicates of the video tape, but will view the video tape only in my presence and with my consent. No discussion of any individual appearing in the video tape other than myself will be included as data. The researcher and I will each retain a copy of the transcript of the audio taped conversation.

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Appendix C

potential to constitute educational theory, and that, together, we may make a contribution to an understanding of the nature of adult learning as it may be evidenced through teacher inquiry as we have experienced it.

Sincerely,

Judith McBride, M Ed

c.c. Dr. Mark Aulls, Faculty of Education, McGill University
Dr. Gillian Rejskind, Faculty of Education, McGill University
Dr. Jack Whitehead, Faculty of Education, Bath University(UK)

Appendix D

Abstract of the Proposed Research

The proposed study will present my views and values as a teacher, researcher and learner on matters of paradigm and standards of validity as evidenced in reports of teachers engaged in inquiry on practice. For most of my career I have been a teacher of English in secondary school special education settings in the Province of Québec. In presenting my narrative account of becoming the teacher I hope to become, and in examining the self study reports wherein practitioners - my colleagues - tell of their experiences as teacher researchers, I hope to be able to make the claim that in engaging in inquiry on practice by addressing questions about what we care about in education, we are, in fact, learning; that the learning may be transformational in nature; and that learning may occur as we address problems, dilemmas, and contradictions to our values encountered in our work. It is my expectation that the stories told of and by teacher researchers, framed as self study (Hamilton, 1998) , have the potential to inform members of both the academic and school communities who have concerns about teaching practices, learning outcomes, and their relationship. In other words, that the stories of teacher researchers conducting inquiry on practice may hold the potential to constitute educational theory (Austin, 2001; Whitehead, 1993) . It is proposed that my own self study, with embedded case studies (Yin, 1994) will constitute this dissertation. I hope to encourage a merging of the two, too often, distinct communities of school and university through the shared understanding of the teacher researcher's experience.

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- Hamilton, M. (1998) . Reconceptualizing teaching practice: self study in teacher education. London: Falmer.
- Whitehead, J. (1993) . The growth of educational knowledge: Creating your own living educational theories. Bournemouth, ENG: Hyde.
- Yin, R. (1998) . Case study research: design and methods (2nd ed.) . Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Consent Form.2

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