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**THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS: ONE PRESERVICE TEACHER'S
EXPERIENCE OF BECOMING A CRITICAL TEACHER**

By

Marjorie Cooper

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Curriculum, Teaching & Educational Policy

2009

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ABSTRACT

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS: ONE PRESERVICE TEACHER'S EXPERIENCE OF BECOMING A CRITICAL TEACHER

By

Marjorie Cooper

The concept of journey is (explicitly or tacitly) pervasive as a metaphor for the process of becoming a critical teacher, yet the received notion of “journey” rests on a structural definition—an act of travel from one location to another— and implications of a structural metaphor of journey in preparing critical teachers are seldom interrogated in the scholarly literature. Accordingly, this dissertation study offers a case study of one preservice teacher’s experience of a praxis-based structural journey that was to begin with naming a social problem and end with an integrative curriculum of social action. The focal participant was a senior student in a prestigious teacher preparation program; she was concurrently completing practica in social studies, science and an independent study on teaching for social justice. Data sources included the preservice teacher’s written journals and email communication, a self-constructed video case, and transcripts of related reflective conversations facilitated by the independent study teacher (now the researcher). Following Dyson and Genishi (2005) and Bogdan and Biklen (1992), data were analyzed using a system of iterative coding to identify recurrent themes. Data were interpreted through Field and Latta’s (2001) poststructural conceptualization of what it means “to experience” becoming a teacher, including their application of Neitche’s (1983) concept of “active forgetting” and their reliance on Arendt’s (1958) notion of praxis as pluralistic and creative action (as opposed to reflection). Interpretation was also

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facilitated by reliance on Fendler's (2003) critique of teacher reflection as a widely used pedagogical intervention and through literary allusions to Lewis Carroll's (1832-1898) *Alice's adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the looking glass*. The study found that the preservice teacher experienced what was supposed to be a "liberatory" and "moral" social justice approach to teaching as a paradoxically constraining rabbit hole of frustrated intentions that prompted self-doubt. Attempts to step out of the rabbit hole through a personal journey of written self-examination drove the preservice teacher deeper into the rabbit hole as she named a problem (her white identity) she could not change; oral reflection enabled by the written reflection intensified the squeeze. Caught between the structural commitments of her praxis goal of naming/addressing a social problem and the poststructural commitments of her critical literacy goal of embracing multiple perspectives of students and of social issues, this aspiring critical pedagogue became paralyzed with failure. Construction of a video case helped to alleviate paralysis enabling the preservice teacher to "actively forget" her history of defeat and discover a way to achieve her praxis goal; more importantly, conversation about her case enabled a personal insight that the praxis goal was incommensurable with the critical literacy goal. While not rejecting the viability of praxis-based integrative projects the study suggests that when critical pedagogies reflect structural notions of journey, failure to reach desired goals occasions *non-journeys* that may discourage critical aspirations and complicate teacher assessment. The study troubles unexamined reliance on a journey metaphor and suggests attention to incommensurable "demands" of structural or poststructural notions of journey that underlie multifarious critical pedagogies. Findings also suggest caution in the use of written and/or oral reflection as a pedagogical intervention.

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To Sarah—
who made this dissertation possible.

To Jan—
whose teaching inspired my doctoral studies.

To my Father, John Gibson—
who imparted the love of learning.

To my children—
who turned the tables and let Mom leave the Nest to go to college.

To my husband, Bill—
whose constant support has been invaluable.

To God be the Glory

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I would first like to thank Lisa, the modern-day Alice whose willingness to go on “real adventures” prompted this dissertation study. I am beholden to Lisa for sharing her time and her thoughts, and humbled by her courage in relentlessly opening herself to the vulnerability occasioned by perpetual encounters with the unexpected. In Field and Latta’s (2001) terms, Lisa’s adventures marked her as a critical pedagogue not in any emergent sense related to the enactment of a certain kind of critical project, but by the very pursuit of criticality.

I would also like to thank my committee members, Janine Certo, Laura Apol, Lynn Fendler and my director, Cheryl Rosaen. Each has played an important role in guiding my research process. Cheryl has influenced both my literacy teaching and my literacy research and has been an incredibly patient committee and dissertation director. I will be ever grateful that she stepped up to the plate and took me on as a dissertator despite all my uncertainties regarding the nature and scope of my project. Her clear, prompt and wise feedback was invaluable and deeply appreciated. Lynn Fendler’s influence is all over this dissertation study. Her course on “Learning to Teach” opened me to new and dangerous ways of thinking about “the critical project” that underlie this dissertation’s attempt to take a step, albeit a cautious one, out of a life-long structural history. I’m grateful to Laura Apol who stepped out of a structural approach to teaching by offering a course on diversity in children’s literature designed by we, the students!

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Both the methods of the course and the range of topics discussed have been formative in my critical literacy stance. Finally, I'm grateful to Janine Certo for so graciously agreeing to be on my committee at late notice. From my first meeting of Janine to the present I have valued her as a person, I have been inspired by her enthusiasm for literacy teaching, and I have appreciated her kind-hearted support on numerous occasions.

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I wish to thank my children, Mary, Sam, Nancy and David for freeing me to leave family and country to pursue a dream to teach teachers. This was not without sacrifice on their parts and I appreciate this more than I can say. Each of them is tremendously precious to me and their belief in me and prayers for me have been a constant encouragement. Finally, I could not have completed this work without the unflagging support of my husband, Bill, who has facilitated every step of this journey, from agreeing to live apart for a year as I completed my Master's degree at Calvin College, to picking up lock, stock and barrel on very short notice and moving to Michigan. Bill has constantly supported my dream and sustained me with acts of caring. He has been available day and night for prayer support that has illuminated many dark hours and banished doubts and fears. I appreciate him more than words can say, and I am truly looking forward to the next chapter of our lives together.

LIST OF F

CHAPTER

PROBLEM

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	xiv
 CHAPTER ONE	
PROBLEMATIZING THE JOURNEY METAPHOR	1
Literature Review	2
Different Perspectives on Criticality.....	2
What does it mean to be critical?	3
What counts as critical in education?	4
Critical thinking.	5
Critical modernism: An antagonistic response to power.	6
Postmodern influences on critical modernism.....	7
Postmodernism/Poststructuralism: An Agonistic response to power.	8
Critical Pedagogical Discourses	10
Critical pedagogy.....	10
Critical literacy.	11
Democratic education.	12
Curriculum integration and integrative curriculum.	15
Culturally responsive teaching and multicultural education.....	19
Experiencing Learning to Teach Critically as a Journey	20
A critical literacy “praxis” journey.....	21
An integrative curriculum praxis journey.....	22
A Critical Pedagogy personal and praxis journey.	24
A multicultural education personal journey.....	26
A spiritual multicultural education personal journey.	28
An anti-racism education personal journey.	30
Interrogating “Journey” as Structuralist and Post-Structuralist Concepts.....	32
Theoretical Framework.....	35
Journey as Experience	35
A poststructural journey is dependent on encounters with the unexpected.....	35
A poststructural journey will occasion vulnerability.....	36
A poststructural journey is characterized by action rather than by reflection.	37
The plurality and natality of experience.	37
Reflection.....	40
Cartesian rationality:.....	41
Deweyan reflectivity.....	41
Schön’s “Reflective Practice”.....	42

Cal
Resear
Overview
Cha
Ove
Ove
Ove
Ove
Ove
Ove

CHAPTER
METHODS
Context o
Framing
Snap
Snap
Snap
Moving
Snap
Data Sourc
Data Anal
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Alice
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Lisa w
Video
Further C

CHAPTER TH
"FAILING" D
ADVENTURE
Critical Bun
Experienc
Experienc
Experienc
Experienc

Cultural feminism’s reflectivity.....	42
Research Question	45
Overview of Study.....	46
Chapter two: Methods.....	46
Overview: Chapter three.....	47
Overview: Chapter four.....	47
Overview: Chapter five.....	48
Overview: Chapter six.....	49
Overview: Chapter seven.....	49
 CHAPTER TWO	
METHODS	51
Context of Study	53
Framing the Independent Study.....	56
Snapshot of the classroom.....	58
Snapshot of Lisa.....	61
Snapshot of Sharon, the mentor teacher.....	64
Moving into the Independent Study	65
Snapshot of Marjorie and Lisa.....	67
Data Sources	70
Data Analysis.....	71
Alice.....	74
The Structure of the Study	74
Social justice as a structural journey.....	75
Poststructuralist lens.....	75
Alice.....	75
Lisa with students.....	75
Lisa with Marjorie.....	75
Video case.....	75
Further Orientation to Chapters 3 - 6.....	77
 CHAPTER THREE	
“FAILING” DOWN A RABBIT HOLE: LISA’S EXPERIENCE OF REAL	
ADVENTURES.....	78
Critical Bunny Trails Towards a “Peculiar” Praxis: Lisa’s Independent Study Texts ..	82
Experiencing Vulnerability: Theoretical Perspective	87
Experience as an indeterminate (post-structural) journey.....	87
Experience as vulnerability.....	88
Experience as pluralistic and nascent action.....	88

Fran
"Fai
Hele
Down
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CHAPTER F
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CHAPTER FIV
THROUGH THI
Explanation o

Framing Lisa's Praxis Adventures.....	89
"Failing" Down a Structural Rabbit-Hole	91
Holes in "Whole" (Integrative) Praxis.....	93
Down the Rabbit Hole of the Acculturation Discussion.....	93
Down the Rabbit Hole of the Nazi Rally Discussion	99
Critical literacy as a rabbit hole.	103
Down the Rabbit Hole of the César Chávez Lesson.....	104
Preparing for prison.	104
Praxis as prison.	105
Fixing it fast.	106
Down the Rabbit Hole of the Rigoberta Menchú Lesson.....	108
Get out of "My Space."	109
Justice social.	111
Down the Rabbit Hole of the Everyday People Lesson.....	112
Writing and talking justice.....	112
Discussion.....	117
When Journey is Not a Journey	117
A poststructural lens: Where there's a sojourner there's a journey.....	118
 CHAPTER FOUR	
THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS AND WHAT LISA FOUND THERE	120
Explanation of Figure 3. Visual Map of Chapter 4.	121
Bridge Building and Mirror Gazing: Lisa's Independent Study Texts.....	123
Writing Vulnerability as Openness to Wounding: Theoretical Perspective.....	125
Writing Vulnerability: Written Reflection.....	125
Through the Looking Glass and what Lisa found there: "I'm racist."	127
An Oral underscore.	129
Through the Looking Glass and what Lisa found there:	131
"I'm fundamentally flawed."	131
Through the Looking Glass and What Lisa Found There: I'm an Outsider!.....	133
Discussion.....	138
The Bridge to Nowhere.....	138
Complicating the urgency to unpack White privilege.	140
Complicating the use of reflective journals.	142
Complicating the notion of transformation as a personal journey.....	143
 CHAPTER FIVE	
THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS: A REFLEXIVE (P)TOOL OF TEARS	147
Explanation of Figure 4: Concept Map of Chapter 5	149

Learnin
Speak
Bro
The
The B
Ref
Thro
Namin
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Discou
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CHAPTER S
STEPPING C
Explanation
Lisa w
The vi
Lisa w
Alice p
Towards an
Forgetting V
Remembe
Context o
Backgroun
Forgetting
It was n
It WAS
It WOU
It was ah

Learning to be White: Lisa's Independent Study Texts	151
Speaking Vulnerability: Theoretical Perspective	152
Bridging the experience of written and oral reflection.	153
The Game of "Bridge" as positioning and counterpositioning.	154
The Bridge Connection: Inside(h)r Knowledge.....	155
Reflection on demand.	156
Through the looking glass and what Lisa found there: "Marjorie!"	157
Naming the problem.	159
Inside(h)r knowledge and selectivity.	159
(S)Electing to Talk about Race.....	160
The mad tea party.	160
Discourse Segment 1	161
Non-present voices.	162
Discourse Segment 2	164
Discourse Segment 3	165
A pool of tears.....	168
Playing bridge.	170
Sidestepping the challenge.....	171
Stepping into the challenge.....	176
Mirror, mirror.....	177
Discussion.....	182
 CHAPTER SIX	
STEPPING OUT: ACTIVE FORGETTING AND RE-MEMBERING FORWARD ...	185
Explanation of Figure 5. Concept Map of Chapter 6.....	187
Lisa with Students.....	187
The video case rectangle.	187
Lisa with Marjorie.	187
Alice picture.....	187
Towards an Improved Memory: Lisa's Independent Study Texts	189
Forgetting Vulnerability: Theoretical Perspective.....	191
Remembering Forward	193
Context of Lisa's "Case of Ways to Leap into Critical Literacy"	194
Background of Lisa's Case	195
Forgetting Co-teaching	197
It was not about HER.....	197
It WAS about her!.....	198
It WOULD be about her.	200
It was about being a co-teacher.....	201

Forg
Forgett
Forg
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CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION

Contrib
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Conclus

REFERENCE

Forgetting co-teaching as re-membering co-teaching.	203
Forgetting Incompetence	206
Forgetting incompetence as re-membering incompetence.	214
Forgetting Chaos.....	214
Forgetting chaos as re-membering chaos.....	218
Forgetting Failure	219
Forgetting failure as re-membering failure.	225
Forgetting Journey	226
Forgetting journey as re-membering journey.	227
Discussion.....	228
 CHAPTER SEVEN	
DISCUSSION.....	232
Contributions of the Study.....	232
Complicates “journey”.....	232
An argument for a poststructural notion of journey.	234
Suggests further conversations about diversity.	235
Problematizes “liberatory” praxis.	235
Challenges assumptions about the preservice practicum.....	236
Critiques “critical”.	237
Limitations of the Study	239
Implications of the Study for Teacher Educators	241
Greater attention to epistemological underpinnings of critical pedagogies.....	241
Designing and assessing praxis assignments.	242
Designing integrative courses.	243
Co-teaching.....	244
Reflective Pedagogical Interventions.	245
Implications of the Study for Future Research	245
Integrative Teaching.	245
Co-teaching research.....	245
Negotiation of power.	246
Video.....	246
Conclusion	247
 REFERENCES	 250

Figure 1. C

Figure 2. C

Figure 3. C
Ho

Figure 4. C
Ho

Figure 5. C
Pers

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Concept Map for Study: Lisa's Experience of a Structural Critical Journey...	76
Figure 2. Concept Map of Chapter 3: Lisa's Experience of a Praxis Rabbit Hole.....	81
Figure 3. Concept Map of Chapter 4: Lisa's Experience of a Personal Journey Rabbit Hole Enabled Through Written Reflection.....	122
Figure 4. Concept Map of Chapter 5: Lisa's Experience of a Personal Journey Rabbit Hole Enabled through Oral Reflection	150
Figure 5. Concept Map of Chapter 6: Lisa's Experience of Stepping out of a Praxis and Personal Rabbit Hole.....	188

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CHAPTER ONE:

PROBLEMATIZING THE JOURNEY METAPHOR

“Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?”
“That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,” said the Cat.
“I don’t much care where—” said, Alice.
“Then it doesn’t matter which way you go,” said the Cat.
“—so long as I get somewhere,” Alice added as an explanation.
“Oh, you’re sure to do that,” said the Cat, “if you only walk long enough”.
(Carroll, 1832—1898, in Gardner 2000, p. 65)

This study speaks to teacher educators who espouse the “critical project in education” (Popkewitz and Fendler, 1999) and who work to prepare future teachers who will come to understand and address the vital relationship between pedagogical practices and social practices. (Popkewitz and Fendler, 1999), p. xiii). While different perspectives on what counts as critical, where power lies and what constitutes praxis (Fendler, 2004) have important implications for teacher education, many teacher educators exhibit reliance on a range of critical pedagogies (Weideman, 2001) that feature a discourse of democracy. These include, for example, Critical Pedagogy, Critical Literacy, Democratic Education, Culturally Responsive Teaching and Multiculturalism. Much of the literature within these multifarious discourse communities relies on a journey metaphor that assumes that teacher education students will experience becoming critical teachers as a journey of transformation that is either personal or praxis-based or both. This pervasive—if not always explicit metaphor of journey—has not been problematized. To problematize “journey” does not imply that commonly-held (structural) notions of journey are necessarily “bad”, nor that the journey metaphor needs to be rejected; rather, as a

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pervasive metaphor in teacher education, the journey metaphor and its implications in learning to teach critically needs to be examined, re-thought, and subjected to poststructuralist inquiry. However, little research has offered empirical evidence of *how* (or *whether*) preservice teachers experience a journey of becoming critical teachers. This study attends to that oversight by presenting a case of one preservice teacher as she attempted to enact an integrative project in an urban classroom for social justice purposes.

In this chapter I will first review the literature on different perspectives on criticality, touching on what it means to be critical and what counts as critical in education; then, providing brief sketches of three approaches to criticality in education—critical thinking, critical modernism, and postmodernism. Second, I review the literature on several critical pedagogical discourses, including Critical Pedagogy, Critical Literacy, Democratic Education, Integrative Curriculum, Culturally Responsive Teaching and Multiculturalism. Third, I draw attention to a metaphor of journey that is either explicit, implicit (or both) in studies within these various critical Discourse Communities. Fourth, I present my theoretical framework (which draws on Field and Latta, 2001; and Fendler, 2003). Finally, I will articulate the overarching research question of this study and outline the remaining chapters of the dissertation.

Literature Review

Different Perspectives on Criticality

The commitment to transformation in education is rooted in critical theory, a branch of social theory bent on “going against the grain of thinking about the social and intellectual organization of life” (Popkewitz, 1999, p. 2). Such going against the grain

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reflects both modernist and postmodernist concerns about power, though this concern plays out in different ways, which I discuss below. Moreover, beyond the different conceptions of power and its workings, modernist and postmodernist critical theorists advance different views about the human subject—especially whether or not human beings have agency, an idea that is important to this study, and will be discussed later in this chapter.

The intersection of critical theory and education, then, has had its reconstructive (modernist) and deconstructive (postmodernist) moments (Morrow and Torres, 1999, p. ix). These moments have played out in a multiplicity of pedagogy/theory mixes, or critical pedagogies, spanning a range of discourse communities including, but not limited to Democratic Education, Culturally Responsive Teaching, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, Spiritual Education, Critical Pedagogy, Critical Whole Language and Critical Literacy. These instantiations of the critical project in education have not occurred in historical progression, rather, different approaches to criticality intersect, resulting in theory/methods mixes that tend to lean more or less to modernist or postmodernist persuasions, but drawing at times upon both. My study was designed to provide insights into the implications for teacher education of the elusiveness and complexity of this thing called the “critical project” in education. To begin, I discuss several competing views of what it means to be “critical”, what constitutes the “critical project” in education (Popkewitz & Fendler, 1999), and what the competing views suggest about the experience of becoming a critical teacher.

What does it mean to be critical? Dictionary definitions of “critical” include a variety of perspectives that range along a continuum from an inclination to find fault, to

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an urgency to arrive at the “crux” of an argument or issue by identifying that which is essential and indispensable, urgently needed or absolutely necessary. The inclination to get to the “crux” of a problem has something of a positivist/modernist cast because it seems to suggest finalizability and a “one right answer”, or the “Truth”. Further dictionary investigation of the word “crux” (plural, cruces like cru-sees) supports this modernist inclination, but also indexes a more complex view of criticality. The dictionary gives as the first definition for crux, “the basic, central, or critical point or feature: the crux of the matter”. However, a second meaning – “a puzzling or apparently insoluble problem” indexes a less finalizable, and therefore more “postmodern” sense of criticality. In fact, the word is derived from the Medieval Latin and includes the notion of torment. The complete definition of crux, then, incorporates a nuanced view of criticality that includes notions of torment and critique, a view of criticality that opens, rather than finalizes options. I argue that modernist and postmodernist constructions of what counts as critical with respect to education share an inclination to identify power relations as the “crux” of the problem of injustice in educational practices. Differences exist however, in terms of where power lies and how it should be addressed.

What counts as critical in education? In a move that means to bridge both modernist and postmodernist persuasions in critical theory as it relates to education, Popkewitz and Fendler (1999) state, “[t]he critical project in education proceeds from the assumption that pedagogical practices are related to social practices, and that it is the task of the critical intellectual to identify and address injustices in these practices” (p. xiii). In other words, all teachers who embrace critical theory want to change schools. The phrase “identify and address” indexes the notion of “transformation”, or change that is the

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desired outcome of the intersection of critical theory and education. Further, the word transformation carries the notion of “praxis”, or practical reason – the marriage of knowledge and action to promote a better life. However, among all those who embrace the critical project’s goal of working toward a better world, there are differences in what counts as critical. These differences are partly accounted for by distinct styles of reasoning that characterize and operationalize critical approaches to education pedagogy and research. Popkewitz and Fendler (1999) make the case that different perspectives on criticality reflect varying beliefs about the workings of power and whether, or the degree to which, individuals act as free moral agents. It is these differences regarding how power operates that impact the ways in which injustices in the practices of schooling are identified and addressed (or the ways in which praxis plays out). Different perspectives on power, then, result in the employment or deployment of different styles of reasoning, which play out in different approaches to transformation in the education project.

According to Popkewitz (1999, pp. 2-3), the three styles of reasoning are pragmatic/analytical, which characterizes the Critical Thinking approach, dialectic/legislative, which characterizes the Critical Modernist approach (Critical Pedagogy) and agonistic, or genealogical reasoning, which characterizes postmodern/poststructural approaches.

Critical thinking. The Critical Thinking tradition proceeds from a pragmatic commitment to logic and order as the basis for social progress and individual liberation. While the notion of transformation is relatively undeveloped here, it is still discernable. Here the “critical project in education” is to teach students how to use the tools of analytic reasoning to “supplant sloppy and distorted thinking” (Burbules and Berk, 1999,

p. 46), which

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p. 46), which will effect transformation by giving students control over their futures: liberation comes through self-sufficiency. Reminiscent of Socrates' statement that the "unexamined life is not worth living", the critical thinking tradition relies on individualistic, rather than communal wisdom to advance its moral project. Here, consistent with Cartesian rationality, the conception of moral formation lies in the mind of the human subject who is seen as autonomously capable of forging an individual identity.

Critical modernism: An antagonistic response to power. By contrast, the goal of transformation as embraced by modernist critical theorists is markedly communal in vision and practical in its approach to change. As Marx had it, the point was not to interpret the world, merely, but to change it. Critical modernism, whether rooted in Marxian critiques of economic determinism or neo-Marxist critiques of cultural determinism, embodies a criticality that is characterized by a shared conviction about the urgent need to effect change in the power relations of social life and the power structures of social systems. This union of critical theory and action constitutes the modernist notion of "praxis," or practical reason. (Kamberellis and Dimitriadis, 2005, p. 114). This strand of critical theory is committed to a Hegelian/modernist vision of history as continuous and predictable, characterized by and constituted by "social antagonisms of power, domination, and emancipatory potential" (p. 3). The way this antagonistic history played out in education, (via Paulo Freire) was the construction of a critical pedagogy that understood the purpose of education dialectically, as a perpetual dialogue between possibility and reality. Critical pedagogy, for Freire, meant helping students name history as a conflict between oppressors and oppressed, then resisting that reality through

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dialogue. Rather than remaining the objects of oppressors' histories, by working in solidarity with others, individuals can become subjects of their own lives, their own narratives (Kamberellis and Dimitriadis, 2005, p. 116). This sense of agentive subjectivity as praxis comes to ideational fullness in the thinking of Frankfurt School theorist Jürgen Habermas (see Fendler, 1999, p. 184), who developed a kind of group approach to emancipation, wherein people could use the dialogic potential of speech to talk their way into consensus through “unfettered” dialogue. Dialogue could then promote “emancipatory” rationality, or the discernment of and resistance to the lures of hegemony and oppression (of the cultural/ideological, rather than economically determined sort) (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis, 2005, pp. 38-40). Important to my study is the Habermasian rejection of the complete autonomy of subjects and his argument for a communal/dialogic construction of identity through the potential of language for consensual dialogue. This notion also reflects Vygotskian (1978) views of intersubjectivity, where knowledge is socially constructed with interactional partners.

Postmodern influences on critical modernism. While American (as opposed to European) critical theory was deeply influenced by Freire, Marx, and the Frankfurt School's critical modernist theorists, American critical theorists (such as, for example, Apple, Giroux, Arronowitz, Britzman, McLaren, and others) moved in different directions in response to issues of race, class, and gender in American education. According to deMarrais and LeCompte (1999), of particular importance with this group of theorists is that they moved back and forth between reproduction theory which held that the power of dominant groups is reproduced by the structure of schools, and theories of agency and resistance (and we see here the Habermasian influence) characterized by

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discourses of hope, in Giroux's and Arronowitz' (1985) terms. Edelsky (1991) for example, located her critical whole language theory within Arronowitz's and Giroux's beliefs that critical work should incorporate languages of possibility, that teachers should be intellectuals who bring practice and theory together in the effort to change oppressive forces (p. 160). Of particular interest, is that out of concern for uncovering "the ways in which dominant ideology is translated into practice in schools and the ways in which human agency mutes the impact of that ideology" (deMarrais and LeCompte (1999, p. 32), the reproductive and agentive theories came together to call for distinctly critical pedagogies, although Fendler (2003) "troubles" this understanding, and this will be discussed below.

Postmodernism/Poststructuralism: An Agonistic response to power. Agonistic reasoning reflects the Greek athletic contest that valued struggle as healthy, perpetual and generative. Therefore, although agonists do not deny that oppression and domination do exist in certain circumstances, they do not see the external workings of power as the 'real' opponent. Instead, they are more concerned to grapple with what Foucault called "the effects of power" or "truth regimes", that is, how power operates through everyday practices and thus becomes "a prosaic regularity, recognizable and predictable by all" (Morson & Emerson, 1990, p. 87). These mundane regularities operate as discourses that amount to durable commonsensibilities about what is seen as normal and abnormal; agonists believe these truth regimes must be tackled through contest, not by dialogue that ends up solidifying positions and 'othering'. Truth regimes operate as "structuring structures," whereby subjects are disciplined and governed through their own complicity in the accepted practices. For example, when a child sits proudly in an Author's Chair,

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one of the accepted pedagogical practices of Writer's Workshop, she/he unwittingly reinforces the othering structure of expert/novice. Foucault calls these structuring structures "discourses," which are made by people through repeated talk and action, and they do not exist outside of people. Agonistic reasoning is used to expose how power operates within people, that is, how it is "effected" by making possible the conditions for individuals' self-discipline and self-regulation, rather than via naked oppression. This calls into question critical modernist conceptualizations of human agency.

According to Fendler (2003), the earlier critical modernists (for example, Adorno) believed that humans were free agents, while Habermas saw subjects as having not full, but partial agency, and, especially in concert with others, they would be free to push against authority structures – a view that reflects Frierian notions of Critical Pedagogy. However, as Fendler (2003) has it, this is a "dehistoricized" position, that is, it fails to "acknowledge the current historical context that entails the self-discipline of the individual" because it fails to "account for the ways subjective perception, tastes, desires, and hopes are effects of historical contexts" (p. 178). As Popkewitz (1999) explains, "For a long time political engagement ...was understood to mean the end of resistance to oppression. However, when the nature of power is problematized, as it is in discourse studies, the identification of oppression is also problematic" (p. 4).

Popkewitz' problematizing of the identification of oppression directly confronts the commitment of modernist critical approaches (what Fendler 2004 calls pedagogies based on discourses of democracy) that identify students as an oppressed group in a Cartesian hierarchical system. Fendler (2004) exposes the limitations of modernist notions of emancipation based upon the assumption that some groups have power, others

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do not – and when it all comes out in the wash nothing changes because “the same people who did not have power still do not have power” (Fendler, 2004, p. 454). For example, if students are normatively described as oppressed, then it follows that there is no possibility of being a free agent while still being a student. Fendler charges that modernist emancipatory conceptualizations effectually limit the possible by proposing utopian outcomes that do little or nothing to perform change. In this way, modernist world views, which claim to be transformational, dictate, or “legislate” what ‘ought’ to be, but do not enact or perform agency and emancipation (Fendler, 2004). Fendler’s comments provide an important critical backdrop for the following section, in which I provide brief descriptions of critical pedagogies that pertain to this study, all of which are based (at least loosely) on a discourse of democracy.

Critical Pedagogical Discourses

Critical pedagogy. In terms of teacher preparation of critical pedagogues, once prospective teachers have adopted the neo-Marxian philosophical position that schools are sorting mechanisms, it becomes “imperative” to teach for social change through “liberatory praxis” (Freire, 1970, Burbules and Berk, 1999). The notion of liberatory praxis means that it is not enough to raise consciousness about oppressive social circumstances through a “language of critique” (Giroux 1983, 1988); rather, liberation, or emancipation can only occur through changed social situations (Freire, 1970).

Accordingly, following Freire and Giroux (1988) critical pedagogues should espouse a “language of possibility” (rather than mere critique) that involves changing the way school is done. Hence, “Critical Pedagogues” must try to decenter the role of the

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teacher, inviting students to help decide what knowledge is worth knowing, how it can be known, and how it may be assessed. Working together, teachers and students should pose problems, inquire into issues and activate social response. As Freire (1970) expressed it, teachers and students enter into reflective dialogue wherein “the teacher of the students and the students-of-the teacher cease to exist, and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teacher” (cited in Reed and Johnson 2000, p. 194). According to Giroux, the critical pedagogue should “raise ambitions, desires, and real hope for those who wish to take seriously the issue of educational struggle and social justice” (Giroux, 1988, p. 177). The critical pedagogue will be characterized by a Freirian (1970) focus on critical literacy, that is, the moral imperative to move beyond teaching language skills, to building students’ confidence and efficacy by using language to understand and change themselves and their social worlds. Thus, the critical pedagogue will mobilize critical literacy to help students “critically engage – read and write – the world” (Segall, 2000, p. 10).

Critical literacy. Comber & Simpson (2001) note that critical literacy has a long history, dating back to Paulo Friere (1970), but point out that postmodern theories have given rise to the view that “what counts as powerful or critical literacies is a matter for debate and local negotiation” (Lankshear & McLaren, 1993; Luke & Freebody, 1997, deMarrais & LeCompte (1999). What makes critical literacy critical, then, is that it resists insistence on finding the crux of a matter; rather, it values cruces. Critical literacy holds in tension a multiplicity of perspectives and resists privileging one perspective as the “right” one, or the Truth.

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Nonetheless, although the idea of “ generic universal critical or empowering literacies or pedagogies” is contested (Comber & Simpson, 2001, Kamler & Comber, 1996; Luke, 1996), critical literacy’s Freirian focus on encoding and decoding the social, political, and ideological situatedness of literacy contributes to the ways schools can become sites for social justice (Wooldridge, 2002) and in that sense, critical literacy is a form of critical pedagogy. This intersection between critical pedagogy and critical literacy may be seen in Segall’s (2002) conflation of critical pedagogy with his work as a social studies educator charged with critically engaging students in reading and writing the world (p. 10.) This is an exemplar of Morrow and Torres’s (1999) point (above) that the critical project in education has had its modernist and postmodernist moments (and see also McLaren, 1997) and that these foci intermingle in a less than predictable pattern.

In a sense, Friere’s focus on reading and writing the world invited postmodern troubling of his ideas about what constitutes power, where it is located, and what to do about it. In contrast to Critical Modernism’s (and Friere’s) dialectic reasoning that forecasts and legislates a harmonious society, critical theorists of postmodern/poststructuralist persuasions adopt an agonistic style of reasoning that embraces conflict and messiness and sees hope therein.

Democratic education. Since the time of John Dewey the egalitarian notion of participatory democracy (Westbrook, 1991, p. 203) has permeated the conversation about teaching for social justice with remarkable durability. After rejecting Calvinist religious absolutism, Dewey at first connected his thinking about democracy to Hegelian idealism, embracing the Social Gospel movement, then turned (by 1894, during his tenure as chair of the Department of Philosophy, Psychology, and Pedagogy at the University of

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Chicago) from metaphysical religious idealism to (secular religious) pragmatic naturalism (or what Counts, 1952, called “America’s social faith” (In Beane, 2005, p. 12). Dewey’s pragmatic philosophy of education was characterized by the mutually informing ideas of interaction and continuity. Dewey believed an educative experience was one in which “an active mind interacts with a wide-open world to solve genuine problems that are continuous with, yet different from, previous experiences” (Reed & Johnson, 2000, p. 91). The sense here is that there is a forward-moving – that is, progressive momentum toward a better future, though utopian tendencies of this vision are chastened by the notion of continuity where the present dwells in both the past and the future.

My Pedagogic Creed (1897) advances Dewey’s belief that the school should be an instrument of progress, the teacher the “harbinger” of a new (democratic) social order with its concomitant valuing of human (including children’s) dignity and the responsibility to work out what it means to care about the worth and dignity of others. While scholars (e.g., Westbrook, 1991, Reed & Johnson, 2000) argue that only superficial readings of Dewey suggest that he advocated adjusting the child to society on the one hand, while promoting the overthrow of the social order on the other, a similar conflict appears like a warp thread through the whoop of the continuous history of social justice teaching. Conflicted notions of what counts as democracy are visible, for example, in the largely unexamined potential for the daily practice of democratic principles in schools to stabilize rather than bring about social change. Moreover, the conflicted notion of change is reflected in different visions for what democratic teaching might look like. On the one hand, following Dewey, many democratic educators (for example, James

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Beane, George Wood, Deborah Meier, Joseph Featherstone, Alfie Kohn, Linda Darling-Hammond, Ted Sizer) see school as the potential training ground for democracy. As Alfie Kohn notes, “Students who are able to participate in making decisions at school are more committed to decision making and democracy in other contexts (1996. In Beane, 2005, p. 28). What goes unexamined is whether or not this is actually true, given the principle of governmentality by which a democratized citizenry trained to regulate itself (and thus not be suspicious of stabilizing tendencies) may be enabled through schooling. Hints of this danger are discernable in Hargreave’s and Fullan’s (1998) statement that democratic communities “should start in the classrooms in which students share responsibility for their own learning and for regulating each others’ behavior” (as cited in Beane, 2005, p. 66).

The epistemological conflict between socializing the child into democratic society on the one hand and moving to change the balance of power among teachers and students (that is, overturning the social order) within this discourse community may account, in part, for the dearth of studies of democratic teacher education. According to Beane (2005), while professors often employ a rhetoric of teaching for democratic participation, “its reality in teacher education programs is rare” (p. 99). Beane cites only one study, Varvus’ (2002) description of the program at Evergreen State College, in Olympia, Washington. Beane does not, however, move to examine the conceptual conflict that lies at the heart of democratic education—that is, the stabilizing dangers of democracy. Failure to discern this danger may make it difficult to study teacher education programs designed to create educational practices “aimed at social justice rather than stability” (Beyer, 1996, p. 10. As cited in Beane, 2005, p. 99).

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Curriculum integration and integrative curriculum. One pedagogical discourse that specifically locates within Democratic Education is that of curriculum integration, a three-pronged curriculum reform that includes “integrated”, “multidisciplinary” and “integrative” approaches that have in common a commitment to depart from a subject-centered approach to schooling. As the heading of this section indicates, I mean to focus on one type of curriculum integration, a curriculum design known as “integrative” curriculum since it is directly applicable to this dissertation study. In order to highlight the distinctiveness of “integrative” curriculum from its integrated and multidisciplinary relatives it will be helpful to understand some of the historical threads that have influenced this discourse in its current articulation. In this review of curriculum integration I draw heavily on the work of curriculum theorist and educator James Beane. Beane (1997), a key proponent of curriculum integration and, especially, of “integrative” curriculum design (1997) asserts that “the lack of historical references in popular discourse around curriculum integration suggests...that people don’t know there is a history behind this work and that it was meant to involve the social purposes of democracy” (p. 35). Accordingly, while a comprehensive review of the literature on curriculum integration is beyond the scope of this dissertation study I offer the following brief glimpse.

The influence of a discourse of democracy on curriculum integration design may be traced partly to Dewey, where the notion of integration, without the explicit use of that term, is discernable in his work in the Lab school where curriculum was organized around areas of human occupations. Dewey also anticipated what Beane (1997) calls “misinterpretations” of curriculum integration: “The teacher will not have to resort to all

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A well-known extension of Dewey’s thought regarding the child and experience and the child and society was William Kilpatrick’s “Project Method” (Kilpatrick, 1918). While not using the term integration Kilpatrick “alluded to what would become the basic grounds for Curriculum Integration as a design theory: personal and social/democratic learning brought together with the problem-centered project as a context for organizing and integrating knowledge” (Beane, 2007, p. 24).

In the 1940s, L. Thomas Hopkins became a major theorist and proponent of curriculum integration, emphasizing (in his 1941 work, *Interaction: The Democratic Process*,) the social context of integration and calling for a problem-and experience-centered curriculum collaboratively planned between teachers and students. Significantly for this dissertation review of curriculum integration, Hopkins criticized the use of the term integration for multidisciplinary projects rooted in subject-mastery rather than in personal and social integration.

While there remains a great deal more to be said concerning the historical background of current instantiations of curriculum integration, the influences mentioned above are key to an understanding of “integrative” (see, for example, Apple & Beane, 1995; Beane, 1993, 1995, 1997, 2004; Schultz, 2004, 2005) as compared to “multi-disciplinary” and “integrated” approaches to curriculum reform and democratic education (Beane, 1993, 1995, 1997).

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In addition to sharing a commitment to move away from a fragmented separate-subject emphasis, “multi-disciplinary”, “integrated” and “integrative” approaches to curriculum design have in common a commitment to the idea of democratic participation: In a democracy, the principle of human dignity insists that people have a say in decisions that affect them and that their say counts for something. For this reason, probably no idea is more widely associated with democratic classrooms than the involvement of young people in making decisions about what and how things are done. (Boomer et al. 1992)

In spite of these common assumptions, however, important differences among the three approaches exist, and these differences highlight the distinctiveness of the notion of “integrative” curriculum. Beane (e.g., 1993; 1995; 1997; 2004) distinguishes carefully among *multi-disciplinary* units of study where subject area distinctions are retained, but correlated around themes; integrated units where themes are chosen that reflect real-life problems and puzzles that draw on content and skills across a broad range of subject areas only as needed; and, *integrative* curriculum, which is similar to an integrated theme-based approach with one important difference; namely: “For those who want to teach the democratic way, the most important source of themes is significant social interests and topics” (Beane, 1997, p. 37).

While such emphases may be the focus of multi-disciplinary and integrated units, Beane (1995) and Apple (1990) suggest that the epistemological assumptions of (especially) multi-disciplinary approaches are suspect because the retention of subject boundaries privileges White (and male) convictions that the intellectual grasp of high-status knowledge translates into life success (Beane, 1995; Apple, 1990). Instead, with Apple (1990), Beane asks, “*Whose* knowledge is of most worth?” He recommends

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framing curriculum around the use of “real-life” themes that demand a wider range of content and the placement of that content in thematic contexts so as to make it more accessible for all students, irrespective of social privilege. This is important, says Beane (1993, 1995, 1997), especially because a major finding of the Eight Year Study (in the 1940s) was that graduates who had received integrative curriculum outperformed those who received a separate-subject approach, a finding that gave rise to the notion of “core” curriculum. While these findings gave rise to “core” curriculum that was, in that era, focused on the integration of students’ personal concerns and broader social concerns, eventually the notion of core curriculum, and integrated curriculum was appropriated by more conservative voices in education who were interested in students’ achievement, in ways that may further enact social sorting.

While Beane (1993, 1995, 1997) asserts that it is the school “subjects”, not disciplinary knowledge per se that is suspect, he is quick to note this does not suggest the essentializing of disciplinary knowledge. As Beane tells us, during the 1960s, partly due to Bruner’s (1960) emphasis on the structure and teachability of the disciplines (following Sputnik in 1957), curriculum integration grew out of favour. Interestingly, Bruner later reneged on this stance, calling for a “de-emphasis on matters that have to do with the structure [of disciplines] and deal with curriculum rather in the context of the problems that face us...putting knowledge, wherever we find it and in whatever form we find it, to work in these massive tasks” (p.p. 29-30). I found, in fact, that in *The Culture of Imagination* (1996), Bruner referred to his work on the structure of the disciplines as “early Bruner,” (p. 88) and both advocated and offered exemplars of something akin to a project-centered approach to elementary school teaching (p.p. 76-77). I have reserved a

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Culturally responsive teaching and multicultural education. Culturally responsive (Gay, 1995, 2000) and multicultural teaching (Banks, 1992; Nieto, 1992) intersects conceptually in advocating the practice of using students' cultural orientations to teach ethnically diverse students. This is based on the premise that since "how one thinks, writes and speaks reflects culture and affects performance, aligning instruction to the cultural communication styles of different ethnic groups can improve school achievement" (Gay, 2000, p. xvii). An obvious limitation exists in the context of teacher education, namely "the problem of cultural insularity on the part of the educational professoriate in the context of preparing beginning teachers to work with an increasingly diverse population of pupils" (Grant & Secada, 1990, p. 170). Beyond cultural insularity, Ladson-Billings (2005) interrogates the factor of an *aging* professoriate who may not have the "incentive" (p. 12) to graduate teachers prepared for diversity. Moreover, as Weideman (2000) notes, multicultural education has "failed to critique power relations, especially in terms of racism and inequality" (p. 201) and promoted a color –blind approach (McIntyre, 1997; Thompson, 1998) through the workings of dysconscious racism (King, 1997). While Weideman (2000) explains that multicultural education began as a struggle for equality during the civil rights movement, featuring cultural transformation of schools and the inclusion of multicultural content in the curriculum, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) use the lens of critical race theory to charge that multicultural education was "designed to help African Americans and other 'unmeltable' ethnics to become a part of America's melting pot" (p. 61).

In response to the charges of parochialism and dysconscious racism a “social justice” version of multicultural education developed. It was rooted in social reconstructionism and characterized by a focus on critique of inequality and oppression within education and in the sociopolitical context as well (Sleeter and Grant, 1992). This is a “social justice” approach to multicultural education, focusing on inequality and oppression within social structures. The goal, as with other democratic discourses described here, is one of bringing about equality within education in order to impact the sociopolitical context as well. In order to attend more specifically to dimensions of race and power, critical multiculturalism was developed, and here the central focus is on racism, oppression, and democratic principles (see McLaren, 1995). In the next section I draw attention to a metaphor of journey that is either explicit, implicit (or both) in studies within these various critical Discourse Communities I have discussed in this section.

Experiencing Learning to Teach Critically as a Journey

Not only do the discourse communities discussed above share a perspective on criticality that is influenced to a greater or lesser degree by the dialectic tension between those who have power and those who do not in today’s schools, but the scholarly conversations of these discourse communities have in common an assumption—sometimes implied, and sometimes explicit—that teachers will experience becoming critical teachers as a journey of transformation that is either personal or praxical or both. By “journey” I mean to say that the literature displays a reliance on a journey metaphor conveyed by notions of process and passage of time across the career, even if the word “journey” is not explicitly used. In the available literature the metaphor of “journey” is

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largely uncontested and implications of reliance on a journey metaphor are not usually addressed in the literature.

A hologramatic metaphor may aptly convey what I mean by the scholarly foci on personal and/or praxis journeys: just as a pictorial image on a credit card is made up of several pictures, one of which is foregrounded by the turn of the card in one's hand, in a similar way, foci on either a personal journey or a praxis journey may be foregrounded in certain literature, but the personal and praxis foci are mutually informed. By "*personal journey*" I mean, first, a call (implicit or explicit in the literature) for transformation of a teacher's identity. However, such transformative journeys are sometimes seen to be effected through personal self-examination that conveys an inner journey, and sometimes through thoughtful attention to teaching activity, or praxis attempts. By "*praxis journey*" I mean a focus in the scholarly literature on the enactment of, or attempts to enact pedagogical praxis based on a discourses of "democracy," as described above.

A critical literacy "praxis" journey. Vivian Vasquez's (2004) action research study describes five instances where her four-year old students identified, or "named" (Freire, 1970; Wink, 2000) life-problems that mattered to them. The study presents evidence of how Vasquez negotiated among her own voice, and curricular, administrative, parental and children's voices to bring the children along unfamiliar paths and uncharted territory. For example, she helped them move from single letters to petitions in getting their voice heard. The problems ranged from outrage at being the only children in the school not invited to an otherwise "school-wide" special event, to their empathetically-motivated and voiced concern at the lack of vegetarian offerings at another school-wide event, a concern that arose from the fact that one of their classmates

was vegetarian. Vasquez highlights how disciplinary knowledge was recruited to address the concerns the children and Vasquez together agreed to work on, and how both the content and standards of the mandated curriculum were met in the process.

While Vasquez's work with her four-year old students in a "Junior Kindergarten" program in Ontario, Canada exemplified integrative curriculum, Vasquez does not explicitly locate within the discourse of integrative curriculum. An account that does locate in the discourse of democratic teaching and integrative curriculum is discussed below.

An integrative curriculum praxis journey. Brian Schultz's (2004) research is directly related to Beane's and Apple's (2005) emphasis on integrative curriculum – that is, Schultz's research exemplifies an instance of an enactment of integrative curriculum. Evidence of Schultz's negotiation of an integrative curriculum was presented in a chapter in Beane's (2004) book *A Reason to Teach: Creating Classrooms of Dignity and Hope*. The chapter, "Spectacular Things Happen Along the Way" denoted a similar problem-naming approach to the one negotiated by Vasquez and her students as discussed in the above review. Schultz offered evidence of the process by which his disenfranchised, fifth-grade students from a high-poverty area of a large mid-Western city "named" a problem – the need to replace their decrepit school. They then went on to mobilize disciplinary knowledge to address the problem, a process that took an entire school year and constituted an integrative curriculum. (In Beane, 2004, 1997.)

Where Vasquez highlights how her student-centered approach maps onto and extends her district's mandated curriculum guidelines, Schultz focuses on assessment and shows how (at least in this instance) the students achieved well-beyond grade-level

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expectations in reading and writing as they worked for something that mattered personally to them: getting a new school. While Schultz locates in the Deweyan discourse community of “Education for Democracy” (or, as Biesta, 2007 would have it, “education *through* democracy”) and Vasquez locates within the Critical Literacy/Critical Pedagogy conversation, their accounts encapsulate a number of commonalities that span these theoretical perspectives including curriculum beginning with “an examination of the problems, issues and concerns of life as it is being lived in a real world” (Beane, p. 230), the use of disciplinary knowledge to serve such an examination, and a sense that “young people tend to do at least as well and often better, on traditional measures of school achievement when the curriculum moves further in the direction of integration” (Beane, p. 230).

Vasquez’s and Schultz’s accounts are also alike in that they both offer empirical evidence of negotiation among teachers and students. This is in contrast to most accounts of enacted social justice teaching that provide inspirational description and/or build theory but with few exceptions do not provide empirical focus on the messy and uncertain attempts to initiate such teaching. Both the Schultz (2004) study and the Vasquez (2004) study are partial exceptions. Schultz describes the variety of the students’ ideas and their process of coming to consensus, and Vasquez recruits the research-friendly term “audit trail” to describe how she and the children developed a year-long, panoramic bulletin-board that represented not only the onset but the progression of the children’s inquiries. However, both the Schultz and Vasquez studies share a similar limitation, in that they both moved past the moment of problem-naming and focused on enactment, and therefore, even though time and space is provided by both Schultz and

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Vasquez to difficulties and messiness, the overall timbre of both works may be described as triumphant. The trouble with triumphal accounts, as Comber & Simpson (1997) have posited, is that their triumphant character may prevent teachers from trying to enact social justice teaching and/or discourage those who do try from continuing. Hence, a problem inherent in both Schultz' and Vasquez's research accounts is that they both privilege a notion of "journey" that is not a journey at all; rather, it is a description of an arrival at a destination – the enacted integrative social action. In the available literature I did not find any study that offered empirical evidence of a non-triumphal attempt to move from a problem-naming moment to an integrative project. I turn now to a discussion of a study that conflates the notions of praxis and personal journey.

A Critical Pedagogy personal and praxis journey. One study that exhibited a focus on the inter-relation of praxical and personal journeys was Cochran-Smith's account, "Learning and Unlearning: the education of teacher educators" (2002). While Cochran-Smith does not explicitly employ the word "journey" to connote teachers' experiences of unlearning while learning, the notion of journey is performed throughout the piece through use of phrases such as "over time" and "process" (p. 9). Cochran-Smith means to promote an inquiry stance towards the "overall enterprise of teacher education" (p. 7) as a means of facilitating teacher growth "at different entry points over the course of the professional career" (p. 7) and "across the life span" (p. 8). The author bases her account on analyses of her own participation as a teacher educator in a variety of learning communities in two different institutions over 20 years and highlights exemplars from four specific learning communities comprised variously of faculty, non-faculty teacher supervisors and doctoral student teaching assistants. The first of these exemplars features

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the author's own personal journey of struggling to "unlearn" racism as she and prospective teacher education students learned to read teacher education as a racial text in which she (and others) came to believe they were "complicit in maintaining cycles of oppression in school and society" (p.8). This focus on complicity in maintaining cycles of oppression illustrates how this study combines notions of personal transformation and praxical transformation that means to change the status quo, since work was done to change the emphases of the teacher education program to address the new understandings concerning racism.

Cochran-Smith moves from a focus on her own transformation journey to present evidence of three other transformation journeys, noting "These excerpts make the point that the education of teacher educators with inquiry as stance has a critical purpose that challenges the status quo" (p.18). In the second example a group of 14 non-faculty teacher supervisors took a year to collaboratively "interrogate supervision". Cochran-Smith shows that, even as the group focused on knowledge and theory produced by others, they generated their own local knowledge of teaching. A third inquiry was conducted by education faculty and spanned four years. This inquiry focused on developing a clear and shared sense of social justice in teacher preparation. Cochran-Smith notes that the group's analysis of their learning suggests all group members developed broader understandings and some changed or expanded their views of social justice (p. 16). Cochran-Smith calls these kinds of changes "personal transformation" and also points out that was not the central purpose of the inquiry. Rather, "the purpose was collectively generating understandings and conceptual frameworks that allowed the group to take action" (p. 16) in terms of programmatic change. Much of the "unlearning" that

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this inquiry prompted *was* personal, however, pertaining to vulnerability occasioned by the “honest” sharing and airing of personal views related to race, language, diversity and other topics. Finally, in her fourth example, Cochran-Smith offers evidence of the reflexivity involved in collaborative inquiry. As a group of doctoral students facilitated inquiry seminars among K-12 teacher candidates, the learning of the students functioned as a “reflecting pool or mirror for the learning of their [doctoral student] teachers (p.19). Cochran-Smith shows how the teacher candidates’ emerging questions for inquiry were juxtaposed with those of the doctoral students who were studying the teacher candidates’ experiences with inquiry. My own purpose in discussing this study has been to focus on the intermingling in Cochran-Smith’s study of personal transformation featuring attitudinal and conceptual changes and praxical transformation featuring action, and the fact that a notion of journey is tacitly conveyed. This tacit reliance on a journey metaphor prompted questions. I wondered what might be the implications of this metaphor of journey for the teachers at the various stages of their careers, and wondered, “Does this sense of journey across the career liberate or constrain?” I wondered further whether Cochran-Smith was aware of a tacit reliance on a journey metaphor, and whether, or how, such awareness might play out in Cochran-Smith’s inquiry stance. These are matters I take up in my study. I turn now to a discussion of a study that explicitly relies on a metaphor of personal journey.

A multicultural education personal journey. One scholarly piece that explicitly denotes a teacher’s experience as a personal journey is Neito’s (2000) treatise, “Placing Equity Front and Center: Some Thoughts on Transforming Teacher Education for a New Century”. Neito’s own personal journey includes a shift from relying in her research and

practice on a discourse of culturally responsive/ multicultural education as endorsed by the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE) in the '70s (and described above under the section "Culturally responsive teaching and Multiculturalism") to the adoption of a more "critical" approach (Sleeter & Grant, 1992, Nieto, 2000) with a central focus on equity and diversity, including a focus on racism (p. 182). This stance is discernable in "Equity Front and Center" (Nieto, 2000).

In this piece, Nieto (2000) calls for the centering of equity through five means: 1) taking a stand on social justice and diversity; 2) infusing social justice throughout teacher preparation; 3) promoting teaching as an on- going process of transformation; 4) learning to challenge racism and bias; and 5) developing a community of critical friends (pp. 182-183). Of interest to my study, is Nieto's sense that teaching is an on-going process of transformation, a notion that is similar to Cochran-Smith's focus on transformation across the career as described above. Consistent with Cochran-Smith's call for teachers to take an inquiry stance across the career, Nieto, links the idea of "on-going" transformation to the notion of developing (through the five means stated above) a "habitual" awareness of teachers' own cultural and socio-political identities in relation to their students socio-political and cultural contexts – especially in terms of differences related to privilege, power and oppression. Nieto explicitly uses the word "journey" to refer to this transformational process:

The process of affirming the diversity of students begins first as a teacher's journey. A journey presupposes that the traveler will change along the way, and teaching is no exception. Moreover, if we expect teachers to venture on a journey of transformation, teacher educators must be willing to join them. Until we, as a profession and within our individual schools of education, take stock of ourselves by questioning and challenging our own biases and values, little will change for prospective teachers. (p.184)

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Nieto's focus here on prospective teachers' and teacher educators' personal journeys connotes the notion of "personal" as an interior journey, as opposed to a journey that is personal merely by being unique to an individual, or group of individuals. This more interior notion of "personal" is indexed by her exhortation to "take stock of ourselves by questioning and challenging our biases and values" (p. 184). Just such a focus on an interior personal journey is seen in another study in the multicultural conversation.

A spiritual multicultural education personal journey. A metaphor of journey is implied in the title of Vacarr's (2001) piece "Moving Beyond Polite Correctness: Practicing Mindfulness in the Diverse Classroom" and the journey metaphor is eventually made explicit. Vacarr's thesis is that in spite of greater attention paid (at both course and programmatic levels) to the preparation of "multiculturally competent" teachers, a "gap remains between conceptual understandings of diversity work and teachers' abilities to respond to challenging moments of encounters with difference" (p. 285). This study is an exemplar of a personal journey in two ways. First, Vacarr draws on her own "challenging encounter" with racial difference during her teaching of graduate students, and, upon analysis of that encounter suggests that,

a bridge must be built between our intellectual understanding of difference, power, fear, domination, shame, oppression, isolation, and connection and our capacity to enter into these human experiences vulnerably and fully. Only then might we perhaps realize a self that is not limited by the distortions of its own perceptions. We [Vacarr and her students] are at the very beginning of our journey across that bridge. (p. 294)

Second, as the reference to the practice of mindfulness in the title of this piece indexes, this is a personal journey in the spiritual sense, as well. Vacarr draws on her

personal experience of the Buddhist practice of meditation (mindfulness) and commends such mindfulness as a means of advancing a journey across the bridge of difference.

Vacarr's encounter with racial difference occurred while teaching a graduate class comprised of one African American and twenty-three White students. Connecting with the course content (the Holocaust), the African American student confronted the White students with what it feels like to be "tolerated"; the White students felt she was over-reacting. Vacarr sensed that to take the White students' part, and or the African American student's part would solidify difference. She describes the powerful urge to take the teacherly stance of teaching about the multiple meanings of the word "tolerance", an urge that was bound up with fear to alienate herself from her primal identity with the White students. She notes: "Our integrity, our honesty, and our fundamental trustworthiness is jeopardized by our need to belong, our need for validation, and our need to feel in control" (p. 287).

It is here that Vacarr's personal pedagogical journey and personal spiritual journey intersect, and out of her own experience she postulates that educators "require preparation that transcends pedagogical approaches and curriculum development" (p. 289). To accomplish a shift in consciousness from a teacher who knows all and is a truth-teller to a teacher who is a curious and vulnerable human being (p. 292) Vacarr first draws on Christian educator Parker Palmer's (1998) call for the development of self-consciousness through personal examination: "If I am willing to look in that mirror [of self-examination based on examination of the entanglements of teaching] and not run from what I see, I have a chance to gain self knowledge—and knowing myself is as crucial to good teaching as knowing my students and my subject...at the deepest level of

embodied personal meaning ” (p. 2). She then offers Zen Buddhist, Toni Packer’s (1990) stance: “Thinking ‘I know this’ blocks listening and seeing. Seeing is never from memory. It has no memory, it is looking now. The total organism is involved in seeing” (p. 2).

Vacarr’s organic seeing, in this instance, involved (physically) standing with the African American student, bridging difference by offering her own experience of feeling tolerated as a woman and as a Jew. An interesting aspect of this piece is that, while Vacarr suggests that the journey across the bridge is to be accomplished through acceptance of painful encounters of difference (rather than running from them through reliance on intellectual understandings of difference), in the end she seems to return from a place of transcendental knowing that may exist only in the condition of vulnerability, towards a self-conscious (and Cartesian) position of knowing, as she says: “In order to achieve this goal [of bridging intellectual understanding and personal encounters with difference] it is imperative that teachers open themselves to criticism and conversation, and engage in sincere self-reflection” (p. 294). This, in the end, seems to undercut Vacarr’s thesis that difference is bridged by experiencing difference, not by reflecting upon whom one is. Finally, while Vacarr describes a personal journey, by the tone of the piece accomplished through her use of words and expressions such as “imperative”, and “must” build Vacarr means to launch all prospective teachers on such a journey.

An anti-racism education personal journey. Another type of journey referenced in the scholarly literature describes White teacher transformation. One such journey is that of Peggy McIntosh described in her “1988” paper *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Backpack*. Coming from the perspective of Women’s Studies, McIntosh began

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to notice men's support of women's status did not include a willingness to lessen their own; her personal journey began when she used her experience of this hierarchical phenomenon to examine her own hierarchical position as a White person, as it intersected with her hierarchical position as a woman. Noting similarities between unacknowledged and unconscious privilege in both males and whites, McIntosh launched a self-study to discern, and seek to lessen the effects of white privilege in her personal life and her teaching. Framing her personal inquiry as the unpacking of an invisible backpack of the effects of white privilege in her life, McIntosh unpacked twenty-six conditions of daily life she had previously taken for granted, and concluded this meant giving up a myth of meritocracy: "If these things are true, this is not such a free country; one's life is not what one makes it; many doors open for certain people through no virtues of their own" (p. 5). I have included a brief description of this study in this review of the literature on personal and praxis journeys, because it illustrates, in my view, Vacarr's concern (above) that a "gap remains between conceptual understandings of diversity work and teachers' abilities to respond to challenging moments of encounters with difference" (p. 285). By this I mean that McIntosh's piece is widely used among teacher educators precisely because they mean to move White students beyond mere intellectual or conceptual understandings of diversity. However, this stance on the part of teacher educators may have unforeseen consequences. Thus, my study attends to Vacarr's concern in the context of the McIntosh study.

The studies discussed above are indicative of the reliance of teacher educators on a multiplicity of critical pedagogies broadly interested in a fairer (that is, "democratic") distribution of power in education. Moreover, this scholarly literature either implicitly or

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explicitly charges that a more democratic distribution of power necessitates a praxical journey leading to action that is the result of ongoing inquiry, and/or a personal journey that involves teachers taking stock of themselves and questioning their biases. While the studies discussed above exhibit reliance on a journey metaphor to convey the transformation of teachers over time and across the career, few researchers have interrogated this reliance on a journey metaphor by attending to how preservice teachers negotiate critical pedagogies, and how—or whether—they experience praxis and/or personal journeys.

Interrogating “Journey” as Structuralist and Post-Structuralist Concepts

The Merriam-Webster (online) dictionary defines the noun “journey” as an act of travel from one location to another, a definition derived originally from the Old Anglo-French, “jurnee”/”jorneee” (a day’s travel, a day’s work). Hence, “life journey” has become a figurative—and structuralist—way of connoting the lived experienced bounded by birth and death. The notion of a bounded day’s journey also undergirds commonsense understandings of any journey as a bounded entity that has a definitive starting point and is incomplete until a particular destination is reached, or a particular goal accomplished. When journey is understood as a noun it is also rendered as, for example, an expedition, a quest, a pilgrimage and a passage. Intriguingly, however, each of these words also connotes verb-like process or movement. The noun “passage”, for instance, is defined as the act of moving through, over, under or around something on the way from one place to another and, indeed, one definition of journey suggests that the use of the noun “journey” as opposed to say, “trip” or “jaunt” suggests the passage of considerable time and

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distance on the way to a certain place. Yet, the defined focus on an “act of travel from one location to another” seems to privilege the entity bounded by a beginning and an end as the journey, rather than valuing the process as the journey. Even when journey is rendered as a transitive *verb* (to journey, or “to be journeying”) emphasis is still placed upon the notion of arrival at some location, not on the process as the journey, as may be seen in the Online Dictionary’s example for journey as a transitive verb: “they journeyed south”. In a word, most definitions of “journey” appear to be based on modernist (structuralist) notions of truth telling, and I posit this structuralist sense of journey may influence conceptions of learning to teach as a journey.

Webster’s New World College Dictionary begins to get at a less stable, postmodern definition of journey. Webster includes the basic definition of journey as a noun—an act of traveling from one place to another—but also includes a second meaning “*any course or passage from one stage of experience to another.*” While this second definition still rests on structuralist legs Webster here opens the definition somewhat to make room for a more postmodern understanding of journey, in that, although “passage” may refer to an experience bounded by one stage and arrival at the next stage some valuing of the passage itself is inferred.

Turning to the notion of journey as a verb, Webster’s first example, “to go on a trip” still conveys the more bounded sense of the first nounal definition, “an act of travel from one location to another.” However, Webster’s alternate example of journey as a verb relates to the notion of journey as passage, and thus offers a more dynamic example: “journey through France on a motorbike.” This example suggests, by use of the preposition “through,” a less determinate, less finalizable sense of journey that privileges

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the ongoing passage rather than privileging the coordinates of the journey—that is, “from *one location to another*” as if finding a treasure at the end of a hunt. Rather, the hunt itself is the treasure—that is, the pursuit’s the thing—an idea aptly conveyed by the philosopher Alisdair MacIntyre with reference to quests for moral goodness:

The medieval conception of a quest is not at all that of a search for smoothing already adequately characterized, as miners search for gold or geologists for oil. It is in the course of the quest and only through encountering and coping with various particular harms, dangers, temptations, and distractions which provide any quest with its episodes and incidents that the goal of the quest is finally to be understood. A quest is always an education both as to the character of that which is sought and in self-knowledge. (1984, p. 219)

In a similar way the valuing of the pursuit as “the thing” constitutes a post-structural contest of structuralist notions of journey as an entity bounded by a certain beginning and a certain arrival point, and, instead privileges the experience of the journey as “the thing.” As McIntyre’s comment above clarifies this does not imply aimlessness, nor does it negate the arrival at a goal, but, importantly, the experience of such a journey does not depend on arrival at a pre-determined destination. In this regard the Alice epigraph that heads this chapter (repeated below) exemplifies both the promise and problems of poststructural notions of journey:

“Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?”
“That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,” said the Cat.
“I don’t much care where—” said, Alice.
“Then it doesn’t matter which way you go,” said the Cat.
“—so long as I get somewhere,” Alice added as an explanation.
“Oh, you’re sure to do that,” said the Cat, “if you only walk long enough”.
(Carroll, 1832—1898, in Gardner 2000, p. 65)

While Alice may appear to be aimless (and Cat, hopelessly relativistic), we know that Alice had an ultimate goal in mind, namely entrance into the garden she had seen

behind the little door after going down the rabbit hole. However, her declaration that she doesn't much care about where she is heading suggests that for Alice, the pursuit's the thing, that is, the pursuit—rich with encounters—is the journey. In the same way I argue that a poststructural notion of journey does not imply lack of purpose, intention or even destination. In the dictionary exemplar given above—“journey through France on a motorbike”—although there is a stated destination (France) neither the “beginning” nor the “end” of France is stipulated (nor, could it be); nonetheless an impression is conveyed of a sojourner purposing to experience a personal adventure that will be rich with unexpected encounters.

An indeterminate, post-structural notion of journey is consistent with Field and Latta's (2001) conception of what it is to become experienced as a teacher, and I discuss the parallel between the idea of becoming experienced as a teacher and the idea of a teacher's journey below.

Theoretical Framework

Journey as Experience

A poststructural journey is dependent on encounters with the unexpected. This study is guided by Field and Latta's (2001) conviction that becoming experienced as a teacher is dependent on embracing the vulnerability occasioned through perpetual engagement with the unexpected. Claiming that “the possibility of becoming more experienced arises only when something happens to us beyond what we anticipate” (p. 4), Field and Latta posit that when teachers mindfully accept (that is, get comfortable in body, mind and spirit with) vulnerability, the experiences they undergo change, or “re-member” them differently and so produce “phronesis,” or a practical wisdom that is

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comfortable with not-knowing. Because surprise is a necessary element, each act of teaching is an adventure: “One ventures forth to undergo something, and through this undergoing is transformed—that is, one returns from experience as a different person” (p. 9). In this view, becoming experienced is personal, ongoing, indeterminate and eventful – that is, bound up in what happens to a teacher engaged in the flux of practice, or, in the case of this study, the flux of “praxis.” While Field and Latta do not use the term journey, I posit that the notions of venturing forth, undergoing, and returning to re-encounter the unexpected are consistent with a post-structuralist stance toward the journey metaphor, one that values the pursuit as the thing, so to speak.

A poststructural journey will occasion vulnerability. Field and Latta’s understanding of what it means to become experienced is consistent with a definition of “experience” as a verb, derived from the Latin, “experiri” (“to try”), where, “to experience” means “to encounter” or “to undergo.” The idea that to “undergo” something will necessarily occasion vulnerability is implied by Heidegger’s words: “When we talk of undergoing an experience we mean specifically that the experience is not exactly of our own making; to undergo here means that we endure it, suffer it, receive it as it strikes us and submit to it” (Heidegger, 1971, p. 57). These notions of suffering, enduring, being struck and submitting suggest that to become experienced will involve comfort with discomfort. Field and Latta’s point is that, if experience is not experience without the element of surprise, then it follows that the discomfort of vulnerability must be welcomed across the teaching career, and, indeed, across the life-span. In this view, what matters is not that experience makes experience; rather, the important thing is that vulnerability makes vulnerability.

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A poststructural journey is characterized by action rather than by reflection.

The idea of taking experiences seriously is an important one, both in Field and Latta's conception, and for this dissertation study. For Field and Latta, to take a teaching encounter seriously involves embracing Arendt's notion of the "plurality and natality of experience" (Field & Latta, p. 15). By their recruitment of the terms "plurality" and "natality", Field and Latta draw on Hannah Arendt's (1958) understanding of human beings as active beings whose lives are defined not by their ability to think and reflect, but, by what they do (Biesta, 2007). Because these notions of plurality, natality, and action (as raised by Field and Latta) are important ones for my dissertation study, Biesta's (2007) explication of Arendt's notion of "action" (discussed below) will be useful.

The plurality and natality of experience. As Biesta (2007) explains, Arendt believes the capacity to act is a uniquely human potential to bring something new into the world, "something which could not be expected" (p. 170). Arendt compares this to the experience of giving birth—only not just once; rather, creativity is ongoing and refers not only to grand and glorious creative acts, but to everyday speaking and acting by which humans insert themselves into the world. For Arendt, that insertion of oneself into the human world through word and deed is like a "second birth" (pp.175-177, as cited in Biesta, 2007, p.); hence, Field and Latta's reference to the "natality" of experience. Moreover, Arendt's notion of human action does not imply individualistic agency; rather, human action is pluralistic, and, therefore utterly incomplete if it is not taken up by others. As Biesta (2007) well explains, "If I speak and no one listens, we might as well say that I have not spoken" (p. 755); hence, Field and Latta's reference to the

“plurality” of experience. Since action is not action unless it gets a response, this implies “plurality”—that is, respect for, and indeed reliance on the “otherness” of others who are also acting in concert with us. This helps to explain the import of Field and Latta’s assertion, that in the context of education, “experience...is not simply a private psychological affair or an individual accomplishment but a collective undertaking, what Arendt (1958) would call action—that which reveals our possibilities” (p. 12). Because of the plurality and natality of experience, then, to “take what one encounters seriously” (Field & Latta, p.12) does not imply an individualistic effort, but a pluralistic one in which everyone involved (teachers and students) is conjointly committed to the ethical responsibility of taking up each one’s attempts to creatively insert oneself into what is, at times a static educational enterprise.

According to Field and Latta, however, there are times when teachers’ creative attempts are not taken up by others in the education system—that is, they are not taken seriously, either by the teacher or by others, whether that be due to systematic constraints, poor mentoring, teacher discouragement or other factors. Recalling that “to experience”, etymologically means “to try”, if teachers are prevented from trying, or if their attempts are blocked or impeded in some way, we might as well say (extending Biesta’s metaphor) nothing was “tried”; no attempts were made, no action was birthed. In the context of a structuralist journey metaphor, there is no journey.

When such paralysis occurs, Field and Latta assert the need for teachers to engage in what Nietzsche (1980) might call “active forgetting.” This involves teachers mindfully stepping outside their experiences to clear a space to re-think (re-member) what is possible for themselves and their students. This space-clearing is akin to Nietzsche’s

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(1980) sense that active forgetting provides some silence, a clean slate, that allows for something new to emerge. While the past is not denied, neither is it reified through prescient rumination that takes on a life of its own—that is, it tends towards self-fulfilling prophesy and thus constrains hope, or, the thinking of new possibilities. Important to this dissertation study is the fact that Field and Latta combine their conceptualization of active forgetting with Arendt’s (1958) notion of “action”—that is, a collective (and conversational) undertaking that “reveals our possibilities” (p. 12). While a certain reflectivity is involved in this notion of action, Field and Latta mean to center reflection in the activity of teaching, not in the non-activity (in Arendt’s sense) of thinking back on experience. This is what Field and Latta say by the notion that one is required *by experience* to be a different person in a different place (p. 9). In short, it is the experience itself that changes one, not reflection upon it.

While Field and Latta are concerned about the paralyzing effects of negative memories on teachers, and while they are interested, as stated above, in action, rather than in constraining fresh experience by reflection on past experience that tends to hold one in the past, they do not *emphasize* reflection on past experience as a possible factor in occasioning such paralysis. However, it seems important to raise this possibility, particularly because thinking and reflection on past experience may be a human proclivity; what is more, reflection is often required of teachers during the teacher preparation years. Accordingly, I turn now to a brief consideration of Fendler’s (2003) interrogation of reflection, and in particular, her critique of the use of reflective journals as a pedagogical intervention.

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Reflection

Fendler's "Teacher Reflection in a Hall of Mirrors: Historical Influences and Political Reverberations" offers, first, a brief purview of the use of reflection in teacher education since the time of Dewey, and, while noting that some recent literature casts teacher reflection in a positive light, Fendler focuses on several critiques of the use of teacher reflection. Zeichner (1996b), for example, charges that reflective practices focus on instrumental teaching techniques and classroom management, do not support teacher research, ignore the social and institutional context of teaching and privilege individual, rather than collaborative sharing (1996b, p.201). Loughran, (2002) and Korthagen and Wubbels, (1995) charge that reflective practices act to shore up existing beliefs. Related to both these charges is a third, that the practice of teacher reflection focuses on instrumental knowledge of teaching and ignores concerns of social justice (e.g., Valli, 1992). On this point, Fendler notes that Gomez (1996) offers evidence that reflective writing may be used by students in ways that reinforce their racist assumptions. Fendler also cites critiques that suggest reflective practices support the new Right ideology of radical interventionism (Smyth, 1992) and masculinist thought (McNay, 1999). Fendler also notes that some studies offer remedies, such as the countering of conservative reflective tendencies by "making reflections public and available to critique among peers or critical friends (Loughran, 2002) or the introduction of a fresh perspective through spirituality (e.g., Mayes, 2001b).

Fendler joins the discourse of critique, but also extends it, offering a genealogical analysis of the multiple influences, including "conservative, radical, feminist, and Deweyan" (p. 17) that have combined to render teacher reflection a commonsensical

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Cartesian rationality: Following Nadler 1989 Fendler writes: “In a Cartesian scheme of self-awareness, the self plays both roles of subject-who-reflects and object-who is reflected-upon simultaneously” (p. 17). This rational ability to objectify the self implies that a self-knowledge of teaching will be produced through reflection, a belief Zeichner (1992) decries, positing that teachers’ actions are not necessarily better simply because they are based upon Cartesian intentionality (p. 167). Fendler also challenges the Cartesian notion that reflective teachers have agency, noting this view assumes “equal opportunity on a level playing field” (p. 18). Citing Diamond and Quimby, 1988; Foucault, 1997b; Popkewitz, 2002 and Rose, 1989, Fendler points out that, while thoughtful attention to practice is desirable assumptions that Cartesian rationality will result in agency “neglects both the effects of socialization and the workings of systemic injustices on the ways it is possible to be aware of ourselves both as subjects and as objects” (p. 18).

Deweyan reflectivity. Fendler locates her reading of Dewey’s views on reflection in the historical context of the Progressive era of educational reform, characterized by its focus on scientific and social scientific administration and moral order. Fendler succinctly points out, “Cartesian reflection is an enactment of self-awareness. In contrast, Dewey’s reflective thinking was meant to replace appetites and impulses with scientifically rational choices” (p. 18). Dewey’s reflectivity, notes Fendler, was forward-looking, involving the use of the imagination “toward future possibilities” (p. 18) as a means of preparing for various contingencies and emergencies of life” (Dewey, 1933, p.

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Schön's "Reflective Practice". Fendler notes that Schön (1983) promoted the value of tacit understanding, contrasting "positivistic 'technical rationality' with intuitive 'reflection-in-action'" (p. 19). Schön's notion of reflection was "artistic and practice based as opposed to positivistic and science based" (p. 19). While there are points of connection between Dewey's emphasis on reflective thinking geared to promote teaching as a professional (scientific) discourse and Schön's emphasis on reflective practice as a discourse of professionalism, in the main, tensions exist between the two readings of reflectivity, since intuition (Schön) categorically contradicts scientific method (Dewey). Fendler notes that current discourses of teacher reflection are fraught with these tensions.

Cultural feminism's reflectivity. Finally, Fendler attends to "feminist anti-establishment" influences on the discourse of reflectivity. Here, Fendler points to cultural feminism's promotion of reflectivity as a means of privileging women's ways of thinking (to counter masculinist ways of thinking they associate with scientific discourses). The important tension Fendler points to here is, "How can some feminists assume that society is structured by forces of domination and oppression and at the same time promote reflecting thinking as if it had not also been shaped by those forces of oppression?" (p. 20). Fendler rejects the notion that there is a way to somehow "tap into one's authentic inner voice" (p. 20).

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Next Fendler turns to a discussion of the political reverberations of the complex notion of reflection in educational contexts. Following Latour (1988) she rejects a hierarchical privileging of some forms of reflection over others. In particular, Fendler exposes the false dichotomy between technical reflection and social reconstructionist (that is, “critical”) reflection, noting that both may function as technical and instrumental discourses, and both may be employed with moral conviction towards the improvement of society. Finally, Fendler draws on Foucault’s notion of governmentality—that is, “the government of the self by oneself in its articulation with relations with others (such as one finds in pedagogy, behavior counseling, spiritual direction, the prescription of models for living, and so on” (Foucault, 1997a, p. 88). Thus, drawing on the lens of governmentality, Fendler argues that reflective practices may function to promote self-discipline and self-regulation. Fendler’s stance is clear: “One of the main purposes of education in 20th century democracies has been to promote self-discipline according to social norms” (p. 21), and, given the inseparability of democratic governance from self-discipline, the possibility of authentic reflection becomes problematic. Specifically Fendler notes, “When reflection is understood as a turning back upon the self, the danger is that reflection will reveal no more than what is already known” (p. 21), because of (unrecognized) complicity with existing power hierarchies. In other words, it is difficult to critique reflection. That said, Fendler ends with a critique of the use of journals and autobiographical writing in teacher education.

Fendler draws on Foucault’s concern that the human sciences have shifted from confessional disclosure (as in Christianity, for example,) to the use of verbal self-disclosure as a technique for constituting a new self. Fendler notes: “Verbalization

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resembles participation in a litany or catechism as a technique of reiteration that constructs a particular self-identity” (Fendler, 2003, p. 22).

She points out that, while teachers and students can come to know one another through their shared writings journal disclosure can also be a “form of surveillance and an exercise of pastoral power” (p.22), or may enable confession and/or therapy (Gore, 1993, p. 150). Concerns are also raised that the history of pedagogy shows a steady shift from “training behaviors, to educating minds, to disciplining souls” (p.22) and that this calls into the question “the normalizing and disciplinary effects of journal writing” (p. 22). Finally, Fendler provides a critique of the use of autobiographical narratives and life histories as another type of reflective intervention widely used in teacher education. As with the notion of reflectivity in general, tensions exist in multiple deployments of this practice. On the one hand, autobiographical writing assumes a Cartesian “self-awareness,” and, used as an anti-elitist intervention may provide visibility and recognition for those who are often overlooked. At the same time, Fendler notes that autobiographical writing may promote self-affirmation and uncriticality and, drawing on bell hooks’ (1994) critique of essentialism Fendler notes that it may inscribe stereotypes by “taking sociological constructs of identity (e.g., race, class, and gender) and applying them to individuals in the form of expectations” (p. 22). The problem here is that autobiographical writing tends to be organized around popular historically constructed assumptions about categories of race, class, gender, age ability, and sexuality, and when teachers write them—ostensibly to construct and/or affirm their own identities— they are disciplining themselves in ways that perpetuate the status quo, and, in a sense, through self-disclosure are renouncing (to return to Foucault’s 1997b point) rather than affirming

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the self. For this reason Fendler's critique of journals and autobiographical writing as reflective "devices" fits well with Zeichner's (1996a) conviction that "an illusion of teacher development has often been created that has maintained in more subtle ways the subservient position of the teacher" (1996a, p. 201, as cited in Fendler, 2003, p. 23). Fendler here extends Zeichner's thought, arguing that a variety of historical influences have both influenced and strengthened the concept of teacher reflection. The sense I make of this is that these influences act like threads that make up a complex woven fabric, where the individual threads and their contributions to the cloth are hard to discern. No one really wants to rip the fabric apart – it is worthy, serviceable and has a peculiar beauty—and since the threads are so deeply embedded in the fabric they are barely discernable. The trouble is, that the hidden constitution of the fabric may be problematic when the fabric is put to use, or, as Fendler has it with respect to teacher reflection, "common practices of reflection (journal writing and autobiographical narratives) may have unintended and undesirable political effects" (p. 23).

Research Question

While the concept of journey is (explicitly or tacitly) pervasive as a metaphor for describing the process of becoming a critical teacher the notion of journey is seldom questioned and implications of a journey metaphor in educating critical teachers have not been attended to in the scholarly literature. The discussion (above) comparing structural and poststructural notions of what constitutes a journey, Field and Latta's (2001) poststructural concept of becoming experienced, Field and Latta's conflation of experience with Arendt's (1958) notion of nascent and pluralistic action, and Fendler's (2003) critique of teacher reflection as a pedagogical intervention will be conceptually

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useful in answering the research question that guides this dissertation study: *How did one prospective teacher experience becoming a critical teacher while attempting to enact an integrative project for social justice purposes?*

Overview of Study

Below I provide overviews of the remaining chapters, Chapters 2 – 7; sub research questions are embedded within the chapter overviews.

Chapter two: Methods. In Chapter Two I introduce this dissertation study as an interpretive case study (Dyson & Genishi, 2005) of one preservice teacher's experience of becoming a critical teacher while attempting to enact an integrative project for social justice purposes. I discuss the affordances of an interpretive case methodology for this study, which allowed me to foreground the experience of this preservice student (Lisa Carryll) while backgrounding my involvement with Lisa as her teacher. The chapter includes details about the context of the study that explain the history of my involvement with the focal participant, and in particular my involvement as her teacher of an independent study on social justice teaching. The independent study is framed in the chapter, and I offer "snapshots" of Lisa's field placement, and snapshots of Lisa and her mentor teacher as well as explaining the (limited) involvement of auxiliary participants. Details are also included about data sources and collection. I discuss my analytical approaches, explaining that, for my goal of creating "a quilt of persuasive images—a coherent narrative" (Dyson & Genishi, p. 159) the ethnographic evidence was also enhanced through reliance on literary allusions from Lewis Carroll's (1832-1898) Alice's adventures in wonderland, and Through the looking glass. Finally, I explain the structure

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of the introductory sections of the data chapters 3 – 6, a structure adopted to differentiate the theories and texts Lisa was drawing on in the independent study from those I draw upon as the researcher of the study. To accomplish this I include a visual map of the study (Figure 1) accompanied by a written explanation of this figure, and a verbal guideline for the opening structure of each of the data chapters (3 – 6).

Overview: Chapter three. This chapter focuses on the vulnerability occasioned as Lisa experienced a “peculiar” praxis journey, that is, a uniquely personal journey that crossed borders among a number of critical pedagogies, toward a “practically moral” destination (a named problem to be addressed through social action). Drawing on Field and Latta’s (2001) focus on the “who” that a teacher is becoming through what happens to her in the flux of practice, the question that guides this chapter is *“What happened to Lisa as she attempted to name a problem that would lead to an integrative project?”* The central argument of this chapter is that vulnerability was occasioned as Lisa named problems of praxis in which she could not intervene. As the evidence presented in this chapter will suggest, Lisa experienced her attempts to pursue a praxis journey as rabbit holes of perplexity and constraint that impeded her praxis journey and prevented her from reaching her destination of an integrative project. In effect, this barred Lisa’s entrance into the “peculiar” Garden of social justice teaching she had envisioned.

Overview: Chapter four. Chapter 4 shifts to a focus on the vulnerability occasioned as Lisa underwent a journey integrally related to her praxis journey, that is, a personal journey characterized by going relentlessly “inward” in search of a fixed arrival point (a moral “self”). The personal journey was enabled by written reflection. The question that guides this chapter is *“What happened to Lisa as she experienced a*

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personal journey occasioned by written reflection on her praxis journey?” The central argument of this chapter is that, through written reflection Lisa shifted her focus from naming a problem of praxis, in which she could not intervene, to naming a problem of self, which could not be “fixed.” Since Lisa’s “peculiar” praxis was characterized by the conflation of naming problems and fixing problems, both the praxis and personal journeys were mutually compromised by the naming of an unfixable problem. As the evidence presented in this chapter will suggest, Lisa embraced vulnerability as a means of bridging the gap between her Whiteness and her students’ bi-racialness, but too much vulnerability ended up breaking the bridge.

Overview: Chapter five. Chapter five is a continuation of the investigation of Lisa’s personal journey effected through reflection. Whereas Chapter 4 focused on the vulnerability that was occasioned through writing a journal, Chapter 5 investigates the vulnerability occasioned through Lisa’s choice to share the journal with me and focuses on oral reflections prompted by the March 30th and other journals. The question that guides this chapter is, **“What happened to Lisa as she engaged in verbal reflection with Marjorie, prompted by the March 30th journal?”** The central argument of this chapter is that, whereas Lisa used the written reflection to name her white self and White identity as “the problem”, once the journal was shared with Marjorie, this afforded insider knowledge that allowed Marjorie to name Lisa’s White identity as “the problem”. In so doing, both the praxis and personal journeys were mutually compromised. Taken together the two chapters highlight an aspect of reflection and that has both promise and pitfalls, namely the social construction of identities.

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Overview: Chapter six. Chapter 3 focused on the vulnerability occasioned as Lisa experienced a “peculiar” praxis journey toward a “practically moral” destination (a named problem to be addressed through social action). Chapter 4 focused on the vulnerability occasioned as, through written reflection, Lisa underwent a journey integrally related to her praxis journey—that is, a personal journey characterized by going relentlessly “inward” in search of a fixed arrival point (a moral “self”). Chapter 5 focused on the underscoring of Lisa’s vulnerability through oral reflection related to the written reflection. In a word, the focus of Chapters 3, 4, and 5 was on “vulnerability remembered.”

In contrast, Chapter 6 focuses on “vulnerability forgotten.” The question that guides this chapter is *“What happened to Lisa as she constructed a video case of a student-led discussion facilitated by her mentor teacher instead of by herself?”* The central argument for this chapter is that making a pedagogical video case was an act of forgetting—a reflection forward rather than backward—that enabled Lisa to step outside the confines of her rabbit-hole history of defeat and failure and to take a step toward the Garden, her “practically moral” destination, and to find, in the end, that the Garden was something radically different than what she had imagined. As the evidence of this chapter will suggest, our conversation about the video case constituted a pluralistic action that changed the way both of us thought about “praxis” and “journey.”

Overview: Chapter seven. In this chapter, while recognizing that the contributions, limitations and implications of this dissertation study, as with any study, are inextricably interwoven for the sake of clarity I tease apart the fabric to reveal first, “contributions”; second, “limitations”; third, “implications” and fourth, “conclusions”.

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Accordingly, I first discuss some contributions of my dissertation study, noting that these contributions allow us to pose questions that suggest implications for both practice and research. However, in keeping with an agonistic stance, before offer suggestions for future practice and research, I turn to a discussion of “Limitations” of the study. Next, with reference to the earlier discussion of contributions, I discuss implications of my study for practice and implications of my study for further research. Finally, I offer some tentative conclusions.

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Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank, and of having nothing to do: once or twice she peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it, “and what is the use of a book,” thought Alice, “without pictures or conversations?” (Carroll, 1832—1898. As cited in Gardner, 2000, p. 11).

This dissertation offers an interpretive case study in the qualitative research tradition (Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Bogdan & Biklen, 1992) of one preservice teacher’s experience of becoming a critical teacher while attempting to enact an integrative project for social justice purposes. Following Dyson and Genishi’s approach toward interpretive case study, this case study is based on the epistemological stance that reality cannot be known apart from the knower and that knowing always happens in a cultural context. Consistent with this stance the study foregrounds one preservice teacher’s experience of an independent study on social justice teaching I (as her teacher at that time) facilitated with her in SS 2006. In one sense, this study is a case of a case. By this I mean that the focal participant, Lisa Carryll, was involved in making a case of how to collaboratively name a problem and conduct an integrative social justice project related to the named problem, whereas this dissertation study is a case of Lisa’s experience of this endeavor as a praxis and personal journey.

Whereas my position at the time of the independent study was one of participant/observer, by contrast, as the researcher in this current dissertation study, I position myself as an insider researcher, that is, I become the “main research instrument”

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(Sleeter, 01-02, p. 223) who brings a point of view nuanced by my insider involvement in Lisa's experience of the independent study. As explained later in this chapter, my involvement with Lisa during that independent study was entirely conversational; that is, I was not in her classroom placement with her and never saw her teach a lesson or facilitate a discussion. Thus the conversational nature of the independent study provided a naturally occurring means of focusing on Lisa's own sense of her experience rather than filtering it through my "take" on her enactment attempts. However, I do not suggest that Lisa's own sense of her experience was "truth" in any determinate, historical sense, only that it was true for her, in one moment of her life and in a particular place.

In making this decision to foreground Lisa's experience (as opposed to conducting a self-study of my teaching of the independent study, or designing a study that featured our collaborative construction of knowledge) I wanted to step outside my own subjectivity to try to understand Lisa's own sense of her experience and, as a by-product, to understand my own involvement better as well. With other researchers in the interpretive tradition I readily accept that the researcher is never truly absent from the work, and therefore I sought ways to write my "self" into my research (Weis, Fine, Weseen, & Wong, 2000). In particular I took a reflexive approach to Chapter 5. In the end, however, while writing my "self" into the research, my intent was to highlight Lisa's experience and this decision was made to honour the incredible courage, persistence and creativity of this young, critically engaged woman. With that in mind, following Dyson and Genishi (2005), my goal in adopting an interpretive case study methodology was to create "a quilt of persuasive images—a coherent narrative" (p. 159). Hence, this chapter has been written to satisfy the Alices among us, enriched, as it is, with "pictures and

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conversations” (Carroll, 1832—1898, as cited in Gardner, 2000, p. 11), or, pragmatically speaking, “ethnographic” details.

Context of Study

The focal participant in the study was a preservice teacher candidate, Lisa Carryll. At the time of the study, Lisa was a fourth-year, pre-service teacher candidate in a five-year teacher education program. Lisa had completed methods courses in Math and Literacy in the fall semester (2005) of her fourth year, and during that time she was my student in the literacy methods course. During that literacy course, Lisa responded enthusiastically to a critical stance toward literacy teaching that I had embraced in response to today’s increasingly multiracial schools (Greene and Abt-Perkins, 2003) where the “lines of social change have moved out far beyond the central cities” and into suburban areas differentiated by race and ethnicity (Orfield and Gordon, 2001, p. 2). By “critical” I mean that the course was organized around a culture of critique, or questioning of “the taken-for granted” (Britzman, 1991; Segall, 2002) acceptance of “balanced literacy” as the best approach to guiding all children to success as readers and writers.¹ For example, the assumptions of the No Child Left Behind Act were critiqued

¹ The notion of balance as applied to literacy teaching must be understood in the historical context of a 1980s debate that pitted phonics instruction (that is, direct instruction of discreet skills and a separation of reading and writing instruction,) against a whole-language approach to teaching reading characterized by its focus on integration of reading and writing, a disavowal of the value of teaching or learning phonics and subscription to the view that children are naturally predisposed toward written language (Adams, 1991). In response to this debate, in the 1990s an intermediate position arose that involved the notion that “extensive and systematic skills instruction could occur in first-grade classrooms featuring the reading of literature and extensive student writing” (Pressley, 2002, p. 25). This position was supported by key researchers (Adams, 1990; Cazden, 1992; Chall, 1967/1983; Delpit, 1986; Duffy, 1991; Fisher and Hiebert, 1990; McCalslin, 1989) and balanced literacy was born.

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by reading “Many Children Left Behind”,² a collection of essays by such advocates of democratic teaching as Deborah Meier, Alfie Kohn and others. One example of Lisa’s enthusiastic embracing of the course focus was that she was the only student in the class who worked to incorporate a critical stance in her lesson plans. For example, she designed a shared reading lesson for first-graders that challenged sexist drawings by a well-known African American author/illustrator of books for young children.

While I carefully prepared teachers in the current theories and methods of literacy instruction I also foregrounded questions about diversity and White privilege and explored what might constitute culturally responsive approaches to teaching reading and writing (Au, 1993; Gay, Ladson-Billings, Christiansen, 2000; Delpit, and c.f. Dyson, 1997).³ In this regard, I used an article by Luis Moll and colleagues (2001) that challenged prospective teachers to understand students’ home-based literacies and languages, make curricular connections with topics students could relate to, and not only allow, but encourage students to work back and forth between their first language and English.

One day an African American student challenged the Moll approach as being socially reproductive, and a great debate ensued around the pros and cons of using culturally responsive literacy curriculum as opposed to following the literacy curriculum

² *Many children left behind: How the No Child Left Behind Act is damaging our children and our schools.* (Deborah Meier and George Wood, Eds.) (2004). Boston, Mass: Beacon

³ The experienced literacy researcher will recognize the eclectic mix of theorists and pedagogies cited here, and I discuss the implications of this theory/pedagogy mix in the Implications chapter. As a doctoral student Teacher Assistant, I was not, at that time, aware of the debates that had ensued and spawned important distinctions, such as Ladson-Billings’ challenge of culturally responsive pedagogy as failing to challenge systemic racism. This challenge gave rise to culturally relevant pedagogy, grounded in reconstructionist theory.

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(and resources such as basal readers) prescribed in most elementary schools as the best means of giving marginalized students (and especially students of-colour) access to the dominant culture.

After that class, Lisa asked me to guide her in a one-credit independent study on social justice teaching, which is the focus of this study. The term ‘social justice teaching’ was Lisa’s expression; at the time neither of us had a clear sense of what this term might entail. What was clear, however, was Lisa’s frustration: she said she would “quit” teacher education unless she could figure out how to teach for social change (Personal Communication, November, 2005). She had a particular interest in equitable treatment of students of colour and expressed concern that the African American student who had sparked the debate in class that day (whose father had a secure and well-paying job with a large American car maker) was out of touch with the reality that many urban African American families were living out. Nonetheless, as a White student, she told me she felt insecure about openly challenging this student’s views. Thus, intersections of race and White privilege and the problem of ‘silencing’ were foregrounded from the very inception of the independent study that Lisa and I formally began in January 2006. Lisa’s “positive” response to my “blind vision” (Cochran-Smith, 2002), that is, my imperfect but well-intentioned focus on a critical literacy stance that challenged current trends in literacy instruction, may be seen in the first paragraph of her final assignment for the course, a written philosophy of teaching. By “positive” response, I mean that she mirrored my stance: whether or not that was, in fact, a “positive” response is another matter altogether, and is one of the foci of this dissertation. Nonetheless, it is important to

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understand what Lisa took away from my course as it contextualizes her construction of knowledge of social justice teaching during the independent study. She began, I believe that the goal of education is to utilize and develop the tools students already hold in order to change the problems they encounter in their society. Literacy, as in the power of reading the word and the world, is the tool I am focused on. Like the theorist Paulo Freire, I believe that there is a direct relationship between literacy, education, production and social change. Reading, writing, listening and speaking must be integrated with community and culture. My ultimate goal as a teacher is that students will leave my room believing that there is power in language and it is being used and can be used to construct their world. (11.05)

Of note, here, is the blurring of discourse boundaries as discussed in Chapter One, as Lisa brings together notions of Critical Literacy, (“reading the word and the world”) and Critical Pedagogy, (“relationship between literacy, education, production and social change”). At the same time her mention of integrating the language arts “with” the culture and community reflects the influences of the discourses of Culturally Responsive/Multicultural teaching, and Critical Literacy initiatives such as Vasquez’s work discussed in Chapter One. All these influences are traceable to the literacy course content.

Framing the Independent Study

As we planned the Independent Study, Lisa was also preparing to complete the required methods courses in social studies and science during the spring semester, 2006. Both the math and literacy courses taken in the fall (2005) and the science and social studies courses required during the spring (2006) semester included a practicum

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component. Lisa was placed in Greenside School, where she enjoyed an excellent working relationship with Sharon Harper, a mentor teacher who had served as a field-placement teacher for several years. When Lisa and I met to plan our independent study, we envisioned there would be a practical component that would involve co-planning and co-teaching a bounded social action project with the mentor teacher, the students and possibly me. Sharon supported this idea and was in full agreement with having Lisa work with her and the sixth-grade students, even beyond the two days Lisa was required to spend in the classroom for the social studies and science practicum requirements. We assumed an idea for a bounded social action project would emerge from either the social studies lessons or other discussions Lisa and the students would have during the semester, and the mentor teacher was willing to suspend regular teaching during a bounded period of a week or two, because she believed mandated standards would be met while the students were eagerly involved in a project they helped to frame. The independent study was designated by the College of Education as a Pass/Fail course.

At the time of the independent study, other responsibilities in my doctoral program coincided with Lisa's assigned practicum days at Greenside, and that reality meant I could neither observe Lisa's teaching nor co-teach with her. This changed the focus of the Independent Study from collaborative participatory action research, to what really became a semester-long "thought experiment" supported by long, regular, gut-wrenching, honest conversation in which I listened much, tried to understand, shared my own confusion and conflicts, sometimes supported and sometimes pushed Lisa to move along in her project, as will be seen as the dissertation unfolds.

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Snapshot of the classroom. Greenside Elementary is an urban school, part of a city-wide district serving 17, 000 students, Grades K through 12. As a magnet “school of choice”, it was one of nine schools and programs in the district offering theme-based learning environments. Greenside is an old, sprawling building that has a comfortable aspect in an “old-shoe” kind of way. The school is situated beside a busy, urban street, beyond which lies a park that gives the school its name. Greenside is situated in a lower middle-class, suburban neighborhood that houses predominately European American children. While some of these children attend Greenside, as a school of choice, the school mainly draws children from all across the city, and the families are predominately lower income and largely African American, Latino/a, or bi-racial.

In fact the markedly bi-racial demographic of the sixth-grade classroom was one of the features of the class that Sharon, the mentor teacher, stressed in our early conversations to establish the parameters of the independent study. The following transcript of a conversation with Lisa, the mentor teacher and me in April 2006, provides a window into this demographic and the way in which it played out in this classroom. Sharon is talking about a Nazi rally that some of the children had attended.

I thought about which kids came to that event – there were only a few. And [Nadia’s] very proud of the diversity of her ethnicity. She’s part Jewish, part Indian, I don’t think she says African American; I’m trying to think. I introduced her to a [unclear] the other day, and they right away said, “What are you? What are you?” And right away asked where is she from, because she’s got this veil on, and she told her she’s proud of – Iraqi PRIDE. She’s real into that. And um, I said, “Nadia, want to tell [other student] what your background is?” And she goes, “Jewish.” Just the way she said it, it was very

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sweet. But um, it reminded me too...the kids who actually were there, um, when I thought about it, had parents of, had mixed marriage of some sort. Like Ken's mom is Malaysian and his dad's Anglo, and that might have meant more to them –to connect with that group of people, and Nadia's family as well. And Jalisa, again, both of those as well. Maybe they identified with that a little more strongly because they think of themselves as bi or tri or different. (April 2006. Mentor teacher, with Lisa and Marjorie).

Lisa found the bi-racial nature of the classroom mix both interesting and challenging, as it seemed to set in bold relief her white identity, and the minority status it occasioned. She talked about the demographic this way, when she was reflecting back on the Independent Study in a conversation with me in June 2006:

Like a lot of my students are biracial, so identities were a discussion that came up constantly, which was amazing, like...that was one thing that I think was amazing about my students, because there are so many biracial families – there's a really high population for biracial families. But students are very aware of like, their two cultures ...and how that adds, and how they're viewed by other people, that they will ask you point blank, "Well, what do I do about race?" You know? They have no qualms about asking those questions because it's a conversation they have all the time. But when you're the minority in the classroom, it, it's hard to approach that discussion because I don't...it was hard for me to...I didn't want to be, I didn't want to ask questions that reinforced, um, I guess misconceptions or that hurt any person involved in the discussion. (Lisa, with Marjorie, June 2006)

This snapshot of racial and ethnic diversity in this sixth-grade class evidenced by the above excerpts is consistent with the official record of ethnic diversity in the school

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district; the statistical record of socioeconomic diversity in the broader school district was also mirrored in this sixth-grade classroom. As Sharon's words in the following exemplar show, many of the students were from families who struggled to make ends meet, which presented challenges with respect to homework completion. At the time, we were wondering about having the children do ethnographic studies in each other's homes, and Sharon wanted Lisa and me to understand that many children came from homes that might not reflect the middle class values that had characterized each of our backgrounds. In that regard, note in particular, her reference to "milk and cookies."

One day, we got into a really good discussion...It was about study habits and just trying to be really honest about what does happen when you go home? I can't follow you home. I give these assignments; I send you home – what happens? And I was stunned by the responses that I got... I said, "How many of you do childcare when you go home?" I was stunned at how many hands went up. I knew that some did, but I'd say 3/5 of the class probably did. And some - I realized that Mary has complete childcare duties for two nephews from here till Grandma gets home from work at who knows when. Little ones! And you know, that, talking about tracking their day. [A reference to our idea about doing mini-ethnographies in each other's homes] I think for all of us to realize what – that they don't go home to milk and cookies and Mommy waiting there to sit down at the kitchen table and do homework. It's something quite different, you know? And I think it was interesting for all of us to realize, "Oh." Or Jasmine said, "It's so noisy at my house. My little brother just follows me and follows me, and he just pounds on the door until I play with him." And I said, you know, coming from my perspective, "Well, tell your

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mother you need to have a quiet place to study!” You know...she said like, “That’s not gonna happen!” (4.06)

On the other hand, a few students who chose to attend Greenside were from the opposite end of the socioeconomic continuum. One of these students was related to a high government official, and another came from a split- marriage family where there was conflict between the father and mother. Sharon told Lisa and me,

[N’s] mom has a PhD – very high, very driven person who had many accomplishments, and she does not understand her daughter who is a dancer, you know, just 24/7, probably attention deficit, very disorganized... The note in the planner the other day was from dad saying, “Nadia did not finish her book – could she have a couple more days to finish it?” ...Mom sees that note and writes a note today in the planner, “Nadia will not be participating in extracurricular activities. Instead, she will be taking extra classes if things don’t improve.” In other words, dance is going to be gone – for better or for worse – until this gets straightened out. I mean, it’s just, think about the different perspectives that she juggles going between two households with a completely different set of ideals, and then she comes here and she’s I don’t know. [April 2006]

Such was the classroom setting in which Lisa attempted to construct a knowledge of social justice teaching.

Snapshot of Lisa. Lisa was from a working/middle class family, a reality she drew upon in her attempts to take an emic stance among these students. As will be discussed further in Chapter 3, she noted: “It’s like the whole emic/etic thing in research. I need to approach this from an insider’s perspective so that I am able to see and know the hidden curriculum that takes place every day at school for my students” (Lisa’s Reflective Journal, Feb. 18, 2006). She said that the students “were surprised” she didn’t drive a nice car and, as she expressed it to me, she felt her background “surprised them.

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The "me" Lisa alludes to here was characterized by an incident that had taken place when she was in fourth grade and the family had food stamps because her Dad had been laid off work. At that time she used her Christmas money to buy "Lunchables", because "when you're a little kid with your lunch, that's a big deal, what's in your lunch." In April, she told Sharon and me that her struggle to live out social justice was fraught with personal conflict. In other words, it was easier to talk about 'fixing' problems such as poverty, than it was to be poor and in fourth grade:

And I was on free lunch. So I had my free lunch tickets and they were a different color. So I wouldn't go through the hot lunch line. I didn't eat for probably until I got caught doing it, because I didn't want anyone around me to know that. Because yeah, I was. I didn't want people to realize I was poor. (4.06)

The neighborhood Lisa grew up in was, at the time of the Independent Study, "pretty diverse," but when she was a child there was only one Black family on her street, and they had been the target of malicious behaviour. As her mother later told her, people "were knocking their trash over all the time and like, harassing" (June, 2006). In fact, Lisa mentioned that her first experience of White privilege occurred when she was playing tag with the neighbourhood children and one of the Black boys chased a White boy into his yard. Even though they were only playing a game, the White mother flew into a rage and accused the Black boy of bullying her child. At that moment Lisa realized Black people were seen as "different," and as she put it, "I didn't realize why he was singled out when all the other boys and girls, you know?" (4.06). Lisa also recalled there

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were differences between her mother and father with respect to the issue of race. She told the mentor teacher and me:

I remember my dad having kind of. Not. Kind of a funny reaction when I would be over there and come home. And I remember my mom, and this makes total sense with my parents – they got in a fight one time, and I don't know what he said ... but I remember they got in a fight or something... which, that happens all the time, when my dad says something that comes across, well, bigoted. And my mom puts him back in line. (4.06)

Lisa's passion for social justice began early in her life. In June, 2006, as we met over coffee to reflect on the semester, she told me her sense that life was not fair had been an "always, always, always" concern. With respect to the unfair treatment of Native Americans she began with yet another "always," and the alliterative repetition of the word brings the past into the present:

Always, always, always...I remember always thinking that it wasn't fair. You can't take something from somebody that was already theirs, like that – and then you just push them away and you make them walk these miles and miles and miles? And it's presented in a way I do remember, you know, that people were dying, they were walking, children were dying – but it wasn't in a way that made you look. It didn't build empathy, I think, for most students because it was a very dry history book... in fifth grade. So I remember just being angry about it. (6.06)

In spite of her strong sense of justice – or perhaps because of it, as a high school senior Lisa told me she was conflicted because Affirmative Action cost her a scholarship to the university. As she put it,

I had a friend whose parents could've paid for her to go to college... and she got great grades but my GPA was two points away from hers, yet she was getting a full ride, getting paid to go to [a high-caliber university] based on one, culturally...when I...I felt like I'm a person who holds these beliefs and has supports this idea, and now it's come up against me. (2.06)

She told me she was still somewhat conflicted, but had begun to reconcile the conflict:

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I'm offered different loan packages than some of my other counterparts, but now I realize that sometimes that, you know, it...I mean, on a bigger level, it genuinely affects us different...I grew up with parents who were able to support me in more ways than just physically supporting me. So that's how affirmative action is supposed to work. (Personal Communication. 2.06)

Snapshot of Sharon, the mentor teacher. As mentioned earlier, Sharon was an accomplished veteran teacher and was also an experienced mentor teacher who had opened her classroom to students at the senior (fourth year), and fifth-year teacher internship level of the local university's teacher preparation program for many years. She was one of a select group of mentor teachers chosen to collaborate closely with the university on improving the classroom/university connection. Sharon was a white woman in her mid-forties, and at the time of our collaboration, was preparing written and video artifacts of her teaching in her bid for National Board Certification. Just prior to our collaboration for the Independent Study, she had been featured in an issue of "Viewpoint" a magazine published by State educators. The article focused on her perspective on multicultural education, that is, her philosophy of building inclusive classroom communities through connections to families' cultural interests (such as food) and languages. Important to her was a diverse curriculum that integrated the arts and featured meaningful content. As Lisa struggled to connect her interests in social causes with the mandated curriculum, she reported that Sharon told her, "If the lessons are truthful and meaningful, then the lessons will automatically begin to connect [to standards]" (Feb. 15, 2006). Sharon had particular concerns about the confining nature of the school's middle-class, White, structural norms with respect to race. For example, which box would her multi-racial students fill out under "ethnicity" for the standardized

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test? Moreover, it was frustrating that a child who could write a manuscript about life in the “Hood,” complete with a lexicon, continued to fall short on standardized vocabulary tests that privileged White talk.

As an outgrowth of Sharon’s stated philosophy of building inclusive learning communities, she had chosen two focal questions that year, “Who are we?” and “How does who we are affect what we do?” The sixth-grade classroom privileged small-group discussion in which students were required to come to consensus: the idea was that no matter what your background, you would use that as a means of enriching the group. Yet consensus meant that cultures would be melded such that something new – a new family in fact – would be formed. As it turned out, Lisa eventually began to question this notion of consensus that so characterized Sharon’s teaching, and that questioning became an important element in Lisa’s own construction of a personal knowledge of social justice teaching, as will be seen in subsequent chapters.

Moving into the Independent Study

The independent study was devised collaboratively by Lisa and me, and was comprised of three components, described as follows for the College of Education, dated 1.12. 06. We will research accounts of social justice pedagogy and enacted curricula in classroom sites across the U.S. and internationally. The student, collaborating teacher and university instructor will collaborate with 6th grade students to form a social justice project that will integrate the subject concentrations. Student will construct a video case in lieu of a course paper.

As discussed above under “Framing the Independent Study” we met frequently to discuss the literature Lisa was reading (Point 1) and to discuss her collaborations with

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students (Point 2). An important point related to requirements one and two, is that the accounts of social justice pedagogy and enacted integrative projects Lisa was reading about, for the most part, called for “finding what was natural occurring”, as Lisa wrote in a journal reflection (3.28.06). Consistent with Lisa’s understanding of praxis, tapping into students’ concerns was an important aspect of “naming” or “posing” a problem around which an integrative project would be formed. I discuss this in Chapter 3, to contextualize Lisa’s five attempts to enact praxis. While more detail about this “spontaneous” aspect of the independent study will be provided in Chapter 3, the important point I make here, is that at no time did Lisa plan a unit for the independent study: she was waiting for something to emerge naturally during unplanned discussions, or as a result of unplanned aspects of the two lessons she had formally plan and teach for the social studies practicum (as explained above under “Framing the Independent Study”). Note, as well, that there was no expectation for Lisa to provide written reflections on her experiences, however, Lisa chose to do so and I discuss this fully in Chapter 4.

We met weekly, over black coffee and mocha cappuccino, in the College of Education café. Whenever possible these meetings were convened early in the morning, which allowed us to choose a booth where high seat backs provided comfort and a sense of privacy. Consistent with policy for teachers at a research university, Lisa had agreed that I would be able to audio record our conversations to inform my future teaching. However, I was not approaching the Independent Study with the thought of future research, and usually did not arrive at these meetings equipped with a recorder. I did tape one of these weekly conversations.

Lisa and I also held 3-way meetings with the mentor teacher, Lisa and me, after school and in the mentor teacher's classroom. The conversations were recorded to provide a record of our ideas to aid in planning a project. We met once in January to discuss the idea of co-teaching, and shared Brian Schultz's integrative project that centered on his fifth-grade students' campaign for a new school (discussed in Chapter 3). Unfortunately this conversation failed to record due to equipment failure. Our next 3-way meeting was held in mid-April, and the purpose was to share Lisa's progress and pool ideas for the project. This session was recorded. I also facilitated one conversation with Lisa two teacher candidates (Marissa and Ruth) from a near-by, faith-based teacher education program. I had met these women (one White and one African American) during my graduate studies at their college of education a few years earlier and knew them to be strongly interested in intersections of race and teaching for social justice. We talked with them to get their perspectives on challenges Lisa was encountering. This conversation was audiotaped with the participants' consent, to permit reflection on my own future teaching, and also to keep a record of the ideas we discussed for Lisa's project.

In addition to the weekly meetings with Lisa, we met once for dinner at a local coffee shop, and our final conversation (to discuss Lisa's video case) was held in my office in the College of Education where we could view her case privately. Both these conversations were recorded.

Snapshot of Marjorie and Lisa. The independent study was approached in the spirit of research conceived as mutual inquiry. By this I mean to suggest what Cochran-Smith (2002) conveys about inquiry as stance:

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When inquiry is regarded as stance rather than as project or strategy, all the members of a community are regarded as learners and inquirers, and the model of an expert transmitting information to others with lesser or lower status knowledge or position is conspicuously absent. In this sense, everybody is equal in an inquiry community. However, it is often the case that some members of inquiry groups are “more equal” than others (Cochran-Smith, 2002, p. 11)

While Lisa and I approached the study in just such a spirit of co-learning and inquiry, and while we did think of the study as ‘research’ of sorts, we did not adopt a formal position as teacher researchers (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Loughran & Northfield, 1996), or conduct our study as an “action research” project. (Noffke, 1997; Dahlstrom, Swarts & Zeichner, 1999). As explained above, I was guiding the independent study at Lisa’s request, and although I had some familiarity with accounts of teachers engaged with critical literacy or critical pedagogy enactments in K-12 classrooms, my knowledge of how to help a student begin such enactments and my working, or practical sense of any personal transformation that might entail was entirely lacking. Thus, I mean to convey Neito’s (2000) conviction that “if we expect teachers to venture on a journey of transformation [change], teacher educators must be willing to join them” (p. 184).

To join Lisa in this way was an outgrowth of my position as a veteran teacher of more than 20 years who began graduate studies in 2001 believing I merely needed a credential to formally legitimize what I already knew; fortunately, my studies were both generative and humbling and I became a case of teacher “changing.” That notion is consistent with the idea of “unlearning” (Cochran-Smith, 2002; Wink, 2000) which, “across the life span... provides a kind of grounding within the changing cultures of school reform” (Cochran-Smith, 2002, p. 8).

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Together, then, Lisa and I informally researched how various educators were constructing local understandings of teaching for social justice in their own classrooms or communities. In this sense, we were “interpret[ing] and interrogat[ing] the theory and research of others” (Cochran-Smith, 2002). The books and articles I gave Lisa fell (somewhat loosely) into four categories: critical literacy (Comber & Simpson, 2001); Vasquez, 2004), critical whole language (Edelsky, 1999), Democratic Teaching/Integrative Teaching (Beane, 1997, 2004; Schultz, 2004; Kohl, 1984) and critical pedagogy (Wink, 2000). Two readings, Vacarr’s (2001) “Moving beyond polite correctness: practicing mindfulness in the diverse classroom”, and Palmer’s (1998) *Courage to Teach* were loosely related to critical pedagogy, in that they focused on personal transformation. These readings had been introduced by Lisa’s science methods course instructor and, finding them to be very provocative, Lisa brought them into our conversations and into her own inquiry.

In keeping with the journey motif, it is fair to say that while we were sojourners together, as the teacher, I was the “more equal” party, as Cochran-Smith (2002) has it. As explained above, I brought forward most of the readings and played a central role in shaping her engagement with the literature. I did not, however, formally assign any of the readings, and this makes her personal choices, that is which voices she found compelling, important to my investigation of her “local” construction of a knowledge of social justice teaching.

In addition to this work of interpreting and interrogating the theory and research of others, (Cochran-Smith, 2002), Lisa and I worked (I as facilitator on the sidelines, she in the trenches) to construct a local (specific to her sixth-grade students’ realities)

knowledge of what it might look like for Lisa to be a social change agent in her sixth-grade classroom. While I allowed considerable room for her personal engagement with the literature, I played a more directive role in facilitating conversations, where I attempted to hold her to her expressed interests and goals for the study, and to help her construct a video case that would fulfill the requirements we had mutually agreed upon for her passing grade in the one-credit course. Evidence of Lisa's expressed interests and goals and how these played out in her attempts to find a way in to "some kind of project or discussion" (May, 2008), and exemplars of my role and influence are woven throughout the story in subsequent sections. In the end, however, this is not my story, nor even an account of what Lisa and I accomplished together, but the story of what happened when one pre-service teacher, Lisa Carryl, tried to find a way in to social justice teaching in a sixth-grade urban classroom.

Data Sources

This study draws on artifacts accrued during the independent study. These artifacts include Lisa's journal entries, lesson plans, writing on social justice themes from other courses, email communication and notes from weekly discussions. These notes were few, however, as I was not approaching the independent study as a research project and my interest was in listening to Lisa. I did, however, write one extensive "field note" (3.31.06) after one conversation that is referenced in this dissertation study. The following artifacts were also collected from Lisa's work in Sharon's sixth-grade classroom: children's writing samples and one videotape of a mentor teacher's lesson. Sharon had written permission from parents to make videotapes of classroom lessons, save copies of student work, and discuss these artifacts with colleagues, including pre-

service teachers she was supervising at the time. As part of the independent study, Lisa used one of the videos and selected pieces of student work to reflect on social justice teaching. I also facilitated a series of reflective conversations that included the teacher candidate, the mentor teacher and two friends who shared their own perspectives on teaching for social justice (as discussed above, under “Moving Into the Independent Study”). With the participants’ permission these informal conversations were tape-recorded so Lisa and I could further reflect on their insights as part of our independent study. Once permission to use these artifacts from the independent study was obtained, transcripts of all conversations were prepared. The transcribed conversations were the main source of data for this current dissertation study, but I also treated Lisa’s written journals and email communications as conversation since they were openly shared with me. Lisa was not required to write journals, nor did I respond formally to them in any way, but the topics she raised in her journals either introduced or augmented ideas we also discussed orally.

Data Analysis

Ethnographic inductive analysis. The unit of analysis was Lisa’s reflections including her self-sponsored journaling, email communication, conversations with me and selected others and conversation about the video case that she constructed at the end of the independent study. All recorded conversations were transcribed. During the first phase of analysis I developed a general sense of the data by multiple readings of the transcripts of all the conversations. During this time I also re-read Lisa’s written communications (emails and journals) considering these written forms of conversations as part of the conversational data. Following Bogdan and Biklen (1992, pp. 165 – 172), I

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looked for and made note of recurring words and phrases. I next re-read the transcripts using different coloured markers to highlight places in the transcripts where these recurring words and phrases appeared. The recurrent words and phrases I made note of included “vulnerability,” “mirror,” “failure,” “race,” “authentic,” “finding a way in,” “jumping from,” “how to start,” “pushing through,” “doing it,” “not doing it,” and, “failure”. In making these notations I re-read the transcripts in their entirety four times during the months of May 2008—June 2008, and this practice, combined with the fact that I had been a participant in the independent study afforded an intimate and working knowledge of the chronological events that contributed to what I began to see as an emerging storyline, and the dominant themes contained within the transcripts. I re-read specific transcripts many times thereafter. At this stage, I made note of recurring themes such as concerns about co-teaching, group versus whole-class discussion, oppression, language and power, knowledge (of social issues) and insider knowledge of students.

Next, I returned to the electronic copies of the transcripts. Here, rather than using coloured marker, I used the search and find option on my computer to locate the recurring words and phrases, and made use of the bold key, font-size and underlining function to make visual reference to points of interest. Often, I wrote researcher comments within the electronic transcripts. The location of recurrent words and phrases within the transcripts promoted close reading that allowed me to look more closely at the tentative themes I had identified with markers on the hard copies of the transcripts. Because I was interested in Lisa’s sense making, I attended to her repeated use of the word “vulnerability,” and, especially to one strong statement that she was drowning in vulnerability, and looked for what this vulnerability could mean. When did she use this term? In what contexts? To

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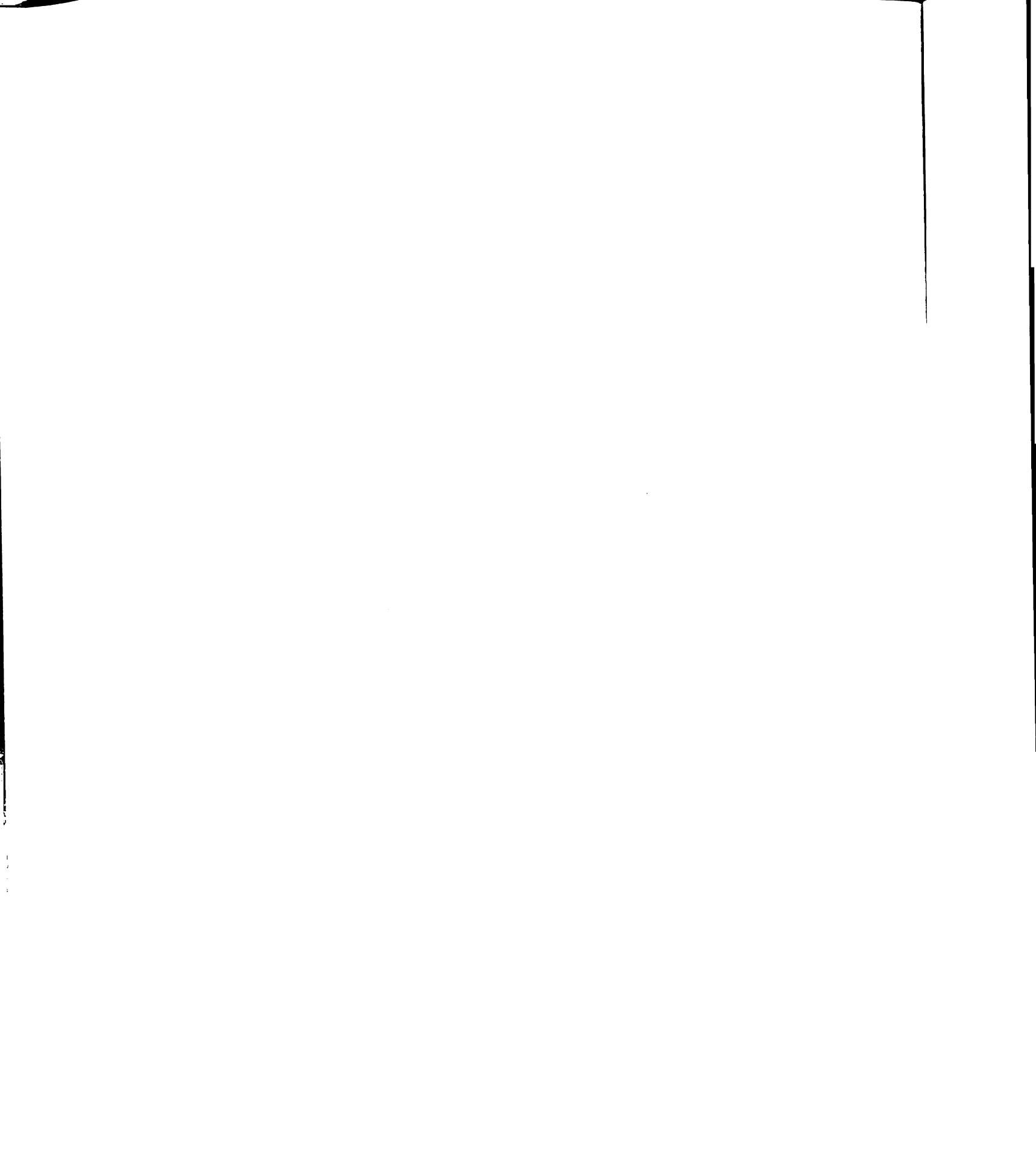
what effects? I clustered instances of vulnerability based on what she was doing and noticed that the words “vulnerability” and “mirror” were frequently used together with some reference to Lisa’s experience of race and White privilege. I also clustered instances of vulnerability to explore her praxis and personal journeys even though they were simultaneous. Given my theoretical framework, throughout this process, I referred repeatedly to Field and Latta’s (2001) article, and to Fendler’s troubling of teacher reflection. Recursive reading of the data and the Field and Latta piece, combined with a study of Lisa’s own texts, prompted my decision to choose the notion of vulnerability as a way of understanding Lisa’s experience of a praxis and personal journey. For example, Lisa brought to the study an article by Vacarr (2000) that called for vulnerability as a means of bridging “difference.” Field and Latta (2001) make much of the fact that an experience is not an experience unless there is an element of surprise. Lisa’s confession that she was nearly drowning in vulnerability was offered in the context of just such a surprise –in fact shock of disequilibrium, and Lisa wrote about this encounter in the context of the Vacarr article on vulnerability. While I could have focused solely on the one praxis attempt that featured this encounter, Lisa’s repeated attempts to complete a particular project were too persistent to be ignored and seemed to convey a notion of journey as arrival that also brought into focus the compelling theme of Lisa’s experience of “failure.” Therefore I embedded the study of vulnerability within and across her five attempts, and decided to focus on Lisa’s experience of a praxis and a personal journey (rather than solely on her experience of vulnerability). This study design allowed me to interrogate assumptions on the part of the field that enacting an integrative social justice project is a personal and praxis journey that has a fixed destination and is enabled

through reflection. In writing this account of Lisa's experience, consistent with interpretive case study approach, I attempted to provide "persuasive images" through insertion of segments of the conversations we engaged in, and excerpts from Lisa's (and on once occasion, my own) written reflections.

Alice. In this dissertation I made strategic use of Lewis Carroll's (1832—1898) *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, and *Through the Looking Glass* to contextualize my dissertation study. The idea of doing so first occurred as I explored Lisa's reliance on a mirror analogy, in both written reflections and oral conversations. Just as Carroll's personal fascination with mirrors and mirroring (related to his mathematical interests) provided him with another way of thinking about Alice and prompted imagination of Alice's further adventures—in a similar way, the connections I made with the Alice stories enriched my interpretation of Lisa's experiences. I therefore threaded an Alice theme throughout the dissertation, especially by my use of an "Alice" epigraph at the head of each chapter across the dissertation. I also made a few connections to the Alice stories within the data chapters as one means of presenting "persuasive images and a coherent narrative" (Dyson & Genishi, 2005, p. 159).

The Structure of the Study

In order to distinguish between Lisa's theoretical perspectives based on texts she encountered during the independent study and the theoretical perspectives that guided my work as the researcher in this current dissertation study I offer a visual concept map of the dissertation study (Figure 1, p. 76). A written explanation of the figure appears on the facing page (p. 75).



Explanation of Figure 1: Concept Map of Study

Social Justice as a Structural journey. The use of a common gray color for the ovals at the center of the figure shows that they are integrally connected. Taken together, the three ovals index the model of social justice Lisa was following, that is, a stance that involved first collaboratively naming a problem of social significance, then, collaboratively intervening in that problem through integrative curriculum. These ovals, and the rectangle in the center of the figure containing the picture of Alice, index that this kind of critical journey is a structuralist one, in that it treats journey as an ontological entity defined by a definite starting point (a named problem) and a certain end point (a collaborative intervention).

Poststructuralist lens. Note that each of the configured elements in Figure 1 touch, or are contained within a large oval configuration labeled "poststructural lens." This oval represents the research stance toward all the other configured elements. Specifically, as discussed in Chapter One, this dissertation study problematizes unexamined reliance on a structuralist view of journey as a metaphor for teacher learning and growth.

Alice. The central point of Figure 1 is the rectangle in the middle, labeled "Structural: student journey" and shows an enlarged Alice following the white rabbit with her gaze. The content of this rectangle, its central position in the figure, and its configuration as disconnected from the gray social justice ovals index Lisa's failure to complete the desired praxis journey. Hence, the picture of an enlarged Alice gazing after the white rabbit denotes Lisa's experience of an aborted critical journey as a rabbit-hole of frustrated intentions and expectations. In this dissertation study the "white rabbit" indexes the dominance of white and male theorists in Critical Pedagogy scholarship.

Lisa with students. The rectangle nearest the left margin titled "Lisa with Students" points to the five attempts Lisa made to orchestrate a problem-naming moment and an integrative social justice intervention. The line broken by an "x" connecting the attempts box with the intervention oval indicates that Lisa's attempts were aborted short of an intervention. The bracketed numeral (3) shows that this rectangle is treated in Chapter 3.

Lisa with Marjorie. The rectangle closest to the right margin titled "Lisa with Marjorie" points to the various critical pedagogies Lisa and Marjorie explored through literature during the independent study: these pedagogies are bounded by quotation marks. The two text boxes within the large rectangle, titled "Written Reflection" and "Oral Reflection" index two significant pedagogical activities Lisa and Marjorie engaged in. Once again, a line interrupted by an "x" between this right-hand rectangle and the intervention oval indicates that these two pedagogical interventions did not bring about the desired result of naming a problem and executing a social justice intervention. The Written Reflection is treated in Chapter 4, and the Oral Reflection is the subject of Chapter 5.

Video case. The rectangle closest to the bottom margin labeled "Video Case (and) Oral Reflection" denotes two additional pedagogical activities engaged in by Lisa and Marjorie, as shown by the solid line linking this video case rectangle with the "Lisa with Marjorie" rectangle to the right of the figure. The *solid curved line* connecting these two rectangles represents the fact that the video case was an idea suggested by Marjorie and strongly taken up by Lisa. The *dashed line* between the "Lisa with students" rectangle and the video case rectangle, and the *dashed lines around each of the five attempts* within that rectangle indexes the argument made in chapter 5, that Lisa's experiences during the five attempts were reflected in the video case she constructed, although no specific reference was made to these prior experiences. The video case is treated in Chapter 6. Note the solid arrow connecting the video case with the intervention oval. This solid arrow represents the fact that Lisa explicitly stated that the video case was a successful attempt to name a problem and imagine an intervention (discussed in Chapter 6) and thus indexes the fulfillment of this structural journey. The solid arrow is also strategically placed, running through the label "poststructural lens". This strategic placement represents Lisa's ultimate challenge of the structural journey as being a contradiction of her multiple perspectives/critical literacy stance. Because of this insight—albeit an embryonic one that occurred late in the discussion of the video case (structuralist) solution to her blocked (structuralist) journey problem, the video case rectangle was placed within the poststructural lens. These notions are discussed in Chapter 6.

Figure 1.

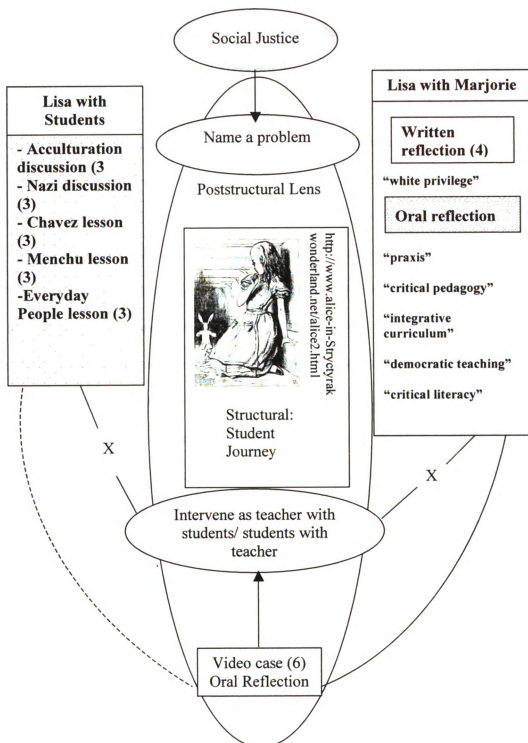


Figure 1. Concept Map for Study: Lisa's Experience of a Structural Critical Journey

Further Orientation to Chapters 3 - 6

The visual map (Figure 1 above), with slight chapter-specific adaptations, appears at the beginning of each chapter where I highlight aspects of the map that are applicable to each data chapter and also provide written explication. In addition, I adopted a common structure for the beginning of each chapter, beginning with a discussion of “Lisa’s Independent Study Texts”—that is, the theories or ideas she appeared to be drawing upon in any given chapter. Following these sections in each chapter I then identify my own theoretical framework, beginning with my mobilization of Field and Latta (2001), and, at times, drawing on other perspectives pertinent to the work of a particular chapter. This was especially the case in chapter 5 where I drew on Wortham’s (2001) notion of positioning and counter-positioning to accomplish my analysis.

I turn now, in Chapter 3, to a presentation of Lisa’s five attempts to collaboratively name a problem and enact an integrative project for social justice purposes in her sixth-grade classroom.

CHAPTER THREE:
“FAILING” DOWN A RABBIT HOLE: LISA’S EXPERIENCE OF REAL
ADVENTURES

...Alice started to her feet, for it flashed across her mind that she had never before seen a rabbit with either a waistcoat-pocket, or a watch to take out of it, and, burning with curiosity, she ran across the field after it, and was just in time to see it pop down a large rabbit-hole under the hedge. In another moment down went Alice after it, never once considering how in the world she was to get out again.
~Carroll, (1832, 1898). In Gardener 2000, p.12)

There is a paradox that teachers face when we think about letting students’ interests influence the direction of the curriculum. The paradox is that we need to know where we want to go with the curriculum, but we also need to be prepared to go somewhere else; to choose to follow the interests of the students and go on a real adventures. (Sylvester 1999, p. 117).

This chapter focuses on the vulnerability occasioned as Lisa experienced a “peculiar” praxis journey, that is, a uniquely personal journey that crossed borders among a number of critical pedagogies, toward a “practically moral” destination (a named problem to be addressed through social action). Drawing on Field and Latta’s (2001) focus on the “who” that a teacher is becoming through what happens to her in the flux of practice, the question that guides this chapter is “What happened to Lisa as she attempted to name a problem that would lead to an integrative project?” The central argument of this chapter is that vulnerability was occasioned as Lisa named problems of praxis in which she could not intervene. As the evidence presented in this chapter will suggest, Lisa experienced her attempts to pursue a praxis journey as rabbit holes of perplexity and

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constraint that impeded her praxis journey and prevented her from reaching her destination of an integrative project. In effect, this barred Lisa's entrance into the "peculiar" Garden of social justice teaching she had envisioned. Therefore, I argue that according to the structuralist view of journey that is defined by a movement from one location (a named problem) to a destination (an intervention) Lisa experienced a non-journey. Said another way, when journey was construed as arrival, there was no journey. On the following page (80) the reader will find a written explanation of the concept map of the study (see chapter 2) modified to reflect the overview of this chapter given above. The modified map for this chapter then appears on facing page 81. (See Figure 1 and explanation (in Chapter 2) for more details).

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Explanation of Figure 2: Concept Map of Chapter 3

The dotted rectangle labeled “Lisa with Students” indicates the aspect of the concept map that pertains to Chapter 3. It shows that Lisa made five attempts to enact praxis beginning by collaboratively naming a problem to be addressed by an intervention in the form of an integrative curriculum featuring social action.

The solid line broken by an “x” between the “attempts” rectangle and the Intervention oval indicates that the structural praxis journey was not completed.

The solid, but broken line between the “Lisa with Marjorie” rectangle and the Intervention Oval indicates that the texts Lisa was reading and the advice she was relying on was not helping her enact her goal.

The picture of a stretched-out Alice with an elongated neck represents Lisa’s experience of misalignment between the goals and commitments of praxis and the goals and commitments of critical literacy. The picture of a distorted Alice also indicates that Lisa, like Alice, made repeated attempts to reach her goal, but, like Alice, Lisa had trouble “getting it right.” Finally, the picture of an over-sized Alice represents Lisa’s experience of “liberatory” praxis as a paradoxically confining rabbit-hole.

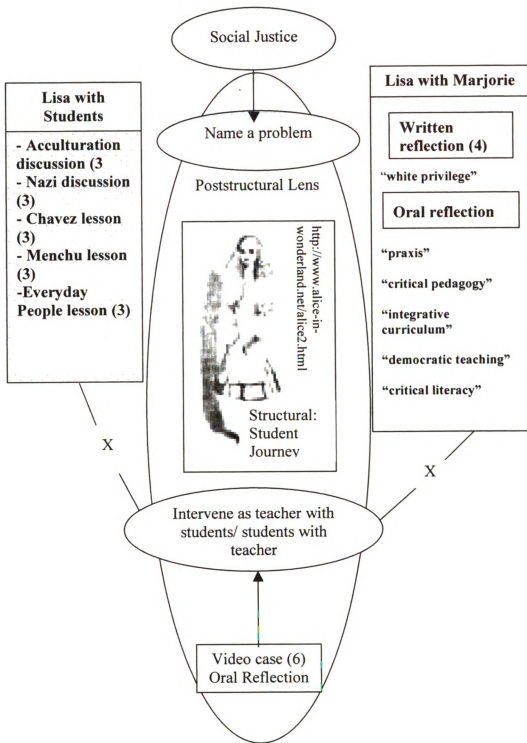


Figure 2. Concept Map of Chapter 3: Lisa's Experience of a Praxis Rabbit Hole

Critical Bunny Trails Towards a “Peculiar” Praxis: Lisa’s Independent Study Texts

My purpose in this section is to provide a context for Lisa’s attempts to enact praxis. As discussed in Chapter 1, the term “praxis” in the context of education is most often associated with Critical Pedagogy where it refers to the conflation of the Aristotelian notion of “practical morality” and a distinctly political teaching stance. Critical Pedagogy is mobilized by the urgency, or moral imperative (Giroux, 1988) to interrupt the status quo through “liberatory praxis” (Freire, 1970). Liberatory praxis refers to a practice of teaching characterized by a critical stance toward literacy—that is, a political commitment to teach “the word” (in any given disciplinary context) through the “world” (Freire, 1970). Such teaching involves posing, or naming a “real-life” problem, or “mess” (Wink, 2000) that students and teachers together work to solve using the tools of literacy. Integrally related to the notion of teaching the word through the world is the concept of “dialogue.” While dialogue involves talk, in the context of praxis, it refers to a kind of Hegelian resolution of the dialectic power structure of teacher as expert knower and students as novice learners. Freire’s “higher/new truth”—that is, his Hegelian synthesis of the knower/learner tension was to promote a dialogic truth. As Freire (1970) expressed it, “the teacher of the students and the students-of-the teacher cease to exist, and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teacher” (as cited in Reed and Johnson 2000, p. 194). In short, “dialogue” is virtually synonymous with praxis, and in day-to-day teaching it invokes the notion of collaboration, or negotiation.

While the terms praxis and dialogue, and the phrase “teaching the word through the world,” are descriptive of Critical Pedagogy, the concepts of power sharing, naming problems and collaborative action are not exclusive to Critical Pedagogy. As Lisa

pursued an independent study on social justice teaching she developed a “peculiar” praxis that blurred the borders of a variety of critical pedagogies, including Critical Literacy and Critical Whole Language, Critical Pedagogy, Culturally Responsive Teaching, and Democratic Teaching. The particular literature Lisa drew on from these pedagogical conversations shared a modernist critical perspective on the teacher/learner tension. Hence, Lisa’s key texts—that is, the texts and/or educators Lisa chose to focus on in the independent study all urged transformation of the way school is done through dialogue construed as power sharing.

From Critical Pedagogy and Critical Literacy, Lisa adopted a political stance toward teaching, mobilized by the moral urgency to change (re-write) the world of school through dialogue/power sharing. In an oral reflection on the Independent Study she noted,

I want my kids to know that they can question things, because that’s what being literate is. And once you question, that’s when you realize you can have the power to change it because you don’t see the world in black and white. It’s not one way. The world can change. And I guess that’s what I see literacy as, is power. There’s power in language, and I want my kids to know, because I realize you have the power to change language. You have the power to change the way words effect [sic] the world, so the next generation, it can change. That’s the only way it ever has. You’ve gotta rewrite it. You have to rewrite your history. (6.06)

From Wink’s (2000) explication of Critical Pedagogy for practicing teachers, Lisa adopted a focus on praxis as the dialogic “naming” or “posing” of a problem—or, a “mess” as Wink has it, and addressing it through action-based curriculum (Friere, 1970; Wink, 2000). Wink’s (2000) definition of “mess” is important here. In the context of school, “a mess is anything that is not working for someone” p. 158). The object (according to Wink) of critical pedagogy is to collaboratively identify “messes” and to work collaboratively to “fix” them.

Related to this focus on the dialogic naming of a problem, and of particular importance to Lisa, was Friere's notion of dialogue as power sharing that involved negotiating curriculum with students. In a March journal entry reflecting, she wrote, "I understand what Friere means now when he says...that the ultimate goal should be for the educator and learner to share places" (3.28.06). Lisa's comment was based on her discomfort at having been required by her Social Studies professor to dispense information, a lesson designed to talk "at", rather than "with" students.

These foci were laminated through engagement with a Critical Literacy/Critical Whole Language focus on social action (Edelsky, 1999); more specifically, Lisa recruited Sylvester's (1999) call to "follow the interests of the students and go on "real adventures" (p. 117). Finally, drawing on the Democratic Education literature Lisa engaged the notions of "Sprache," or "informed dialogue and open-ended exploration of ideas" (Kohl, 1984, p. 119), and "Integrative Curriculum," or curriculum "that is concerned with enhancing the possibilities for personal and social integration through the organization of curriculum around significant problems and issues, collaboratively identified by educators and young people, without regard for subject-area lines" (Beane, 1997, 2005; Schultz, 2004, 2005). While Kohl does not explicitly use the term "integrative", his notion of "sprache" is consistent with integrative curriculum commitments, in that "sprache" involves the dialogic naming of problems that students choose to address. Lisa's reliance on these authors will be evident throughout the chapter.

Among all these voices, Lisa's praxis journey was chiefly informed by the discourse of Integrative Curriculum (Beane, 1997, 2005; Schultz, 2004, 2005). Like Critical Pedagogy, Integrative Curriculum calls for de-centering both the teacher and the

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prescribed curriculum by featuring classroom power sharing and co-constructed curriculum (c.f. Critical Pedagogy's notion of "dialogue" (Freire, 1970), and begins with collaborative naming of problems, or real-life issues (c.f., "problem-posing" (Freire, 1970)). Central to the notion of integrative teaching is Beane's sense that in asking, "What knowledge is of most worth?" the traditional, 'separate-subject' approach has tended to privilege white (and male) convictions that the intellectual grasp of high-status knowledge translates into life success (Beane, 1995; Apple, 1990). Instead, with Apple (1990), Beane (1995) asks, "Whose knowledge is of most worth?" He recommends framing curriculum around the use of "real-life" themes that demand a wider range of content and the placement of that content in thematic contexts so as to make it more accessible for all students (irrespective of social privilege). Beane wonders, What possible integrity could there be for any kind of knowledge apart from how it connects with other forms to help us investigate and understand the problems, concerns, and issues that confront us in the real world? (p. 234)

Lisa did not read any integrative curriculum theory; rather she was deeply influenced by an account of Integrative Curriculum that featured educator Brian Schultz's work with his fifth-grade students who lived in a high-density, high-poverty urban housing project in a large Midwestern city. Inspired by Schultz's account of his year-long curriculum ("Project Citizen") organized around his fifth-graders' campaign for a badly needed new school (Schultz, 2004, 2005), Lisa e-mailed Schultz to explain her own interest in doing a similar project:

I want to tell you how inspiring your class project was for me. I was ready to leave the field of education before I even began because I felt as if there was no possibility for me to teach in a way that promotes critical responsiveness and a

sense of social justice and action for my students due to the mandates and scripts that are used in many schools (2.03.06).

Lisa went on to ask Schultz's advice on getting started with such an integrative project, and expressed particular concern about dialogic power sharing—that is, how to access students' interests without imposing her own. Lisa wrote,

I am just wondering if you could give me any tips about how you started [your project]. I am at the phase that I have done a great deal of investigations about different projects but I am not sure how to introduce this idea to my students without imposing my own curriculum. (2.03.06)

While many instances of Integrative Teaching do not necessarily result in social action, Schultz's e-mail reply to Lisa tends to conflate co-constructed curriculum and social action as a moral response. In this sense, Schultz's reply is consistent with the political cast of Critical Pedagogy. In short, aspects of Integrative Curriculum are consistent with antagonistic critical modernist assumptions about power as a dialectic tension between those who have power and those who do not. This philosophical stance may be seen in Schultz's focus on power sharing in his reply to Lisa:

One way that I have learned to get started is to really let the students co-construct the curriculum. Let them tell you what are their priority concerns and let them try and solve problems that they feel are most important to them. Often the beginning is slow coming and finding consensus of the most pressing issues is the hardest part, but I have found that when you break down the barriers of power and strive for the democratic space, the students will rise to the occasion, seek higher moral ground and create curricula that is one of social action. You really have to be willing to share authority. You have to want to learn from and with your students.⁴ (2.3.06)

⁴ Consistent with a poststructural lens, this dissertation means to critique structural notions of critical pedagogy and integrative curriculum. However, this in no way negates my respect for Mr. Schultz's inspiring project with the Cabrini Green students, a success story that influenced my work with Lisa in the independent study. Moreover, I wish to point out that I have made selective use here of Schultz's email communication with Lisa, but Schultz's advice was prefaced by an exhortation to study curriculum theory and

As the evidence presented in this chapter will suggest, just as the storybook Alice followed the White Rabbit down a rabbit-hole, so Lisa, following first, Schultz, and then others as named above, found herself in rabbit-holes that were, at once, constraining and compelling.

Experiencing Vulnerability: Theoretical Perspective

Experience as an indeterminate (post-structural) journey. In this chapter I draw Field and Latta's (2001) conviction that becoming experienced as a teacher is dependent on embracing the vulnerability occasioned through perpetual engagement with the unexpected. When teachers mindfully accept (that is, get comfortable in body, mind and spirit with) vulnerability, the experiences they undergo change, or "re-member" them differently and so produce "phronesis," or a practical wisdom that is comfortable with not-knowing. Because surprise is a necessary element, each act of teaching is an adventure: "One ventures forth to undergo something, and through this undergoing is transformed—that is, one returns from experience as a different person" (p. 9). In this view, becoming experienced is personal, ongoing, indeterminate and eventful – that is, bound up in *what happens to a teacher* engaged in the flux of practice, or, for my dissertation, the flux of "praxis." While Field and Latta do not use the term journey, I posit that the notions of venturing forth, undergoing, and returning to re-encounter the

he supplied a detailed list of theorists. It was certainly problematic that the one-credit independent study did not allow time for full immersion in the suggested curriculum theory and I discuss the need for attention to theory in Chapter 7.

unexpected convey a sense of a *never-ending journey* based on a post-structural notion of journey.

Experience as vulnerability. Field and Latta's conviction that experience is dependent on a perpetual engagement with the unexpected is consistent with a definition of "experience" as a verb, "to experience," derived from the Latin, "experiri" ("to try"), where, "to experience" means "to encounter" or "to undergo." Taken together these four infinitives quintessentially convey Lisa's praxis journey: She tried something, encountered the unexpected, underwent—that is, accepted what she encountered, and tried again, and again. Something of this dynamic is expressed by Heidegger: "When we talk of undergoing an experience we mean specifically that the experience is not exactly of our own making; to undergo here means that we endure it, suffer it, receive it as it strikes us and submit to it" (Heidegger, 1971, p. 57). These notions of suffering, enduring, being struck and submitting convey vulnerability suggest that to become experienced will involve comfort with discomfort. Moreover, if experience is not experience without the element of surprise, then it follows that the discomfort of vulnerability must be welcomed across the teaching career, and, indeed, across the life-span. In this view, what matters is not that experience makes experience; rather, the important thing is that vulnerability makes vulnerability.

Experience as pluralistic and nascent action. This chapter is also guided by Field and Latta's reliance on Hannah Arendt's (1958) understanding of the "plurality and natality of experience" (p. 15). Here Field and Latta draw on Arendt's conviction that human beings are active beings, who, in concert with others (plurality) continually bring something new into the world (natality). Field and Latta note that a teacher—working in

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concert with students and the mentor teacher and others—must be given the chance to try new things, to insert his or her own new meanings into the teaching space, noting that in the context of education, “experience...is not simply a private psychological affair or an individual accomplishment but a collective undertaking, what Arendt (1958) would call action—that which reveals our possibilities” (p. 12). Biesta (2007) brings what Field and Latta mean to say here into bold relief, in noting that, because human activity (action) is pluralistic, this means that it is utterly incomplete—that is, there is no action— if it is not taken up by others.

Framing Lisa’s Praxis Adventures

It will be important for the reader to understand that there is an aspect of spontaneity implied in praxis, due in part to the notion of dialogue/power-sharing, where students’ interests, at least at times, might be expected to emerge in unplanned moments. Even in the case of Integrative Curriculum as framed by Beane (1993, 1995, 1997, 2005), the named problem might emerge through a planned discussion (as suggested by Schultz), but, students’ priority concerns might just as easily arise in spontaneous conversation or in the course of lessons planned within the regular curriculum. With respect to the independent study, this element of spontaneity, and even uncertainty, may be understood in the light of the epigraph that heads this chapter, repeated here to help make this point:

There is a paradox that teachers face when we think about letting students’ interests influence the direction of the curriculum. The paradox is that we need to know where we want to go with the curriculum, but we also need to be prepared to go somewhere else; to choose to follow the interests of the students and go on a real adventures. (Sylvester, 1999, p. 117)

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Lisa quoted these words in her March 28 written reflection prior to teaching one of two lessons required for her Social Studies practicum, and this helps to explain that she was hoping to begin with a planned lesson, then, follow students' interests as they emerged within that lesson to name a problem and "go on a real" adventure with her students. I discuss this later in the chapter under the section, "Down the rabbit hole of the César Chávez lesson," but the important thing to understand here, is that while her social studies lesson was planned according to the requirements of her social studies professor, the problem-naming moment was NOT planned, nor could it have been within the particular understanding of Integrative Curriculum Lisa was working from. To reiterate, Lisa did not approach the independent study with a planned unit of any kind. Rather, both she and Ms. Harper were continually listening for the students' "priority concerns" to emerge in the course of everyday teaching. This claim is corroborated by Lisa's reflection on her experience as we talked at the end of the independent study:

I hoped that I could do some kind of project with the students that, I guess made them reflect on the society around them, and made them think critically about, I guess their place in the world and what's going on around them. And I didn't know where or what that was gonna come from, but more than just a discussion, but to the point where, I guess, they felt empowered that they could do something about it, or even maybe, like we did some kind of writing. Either way, it empowered them to realize that they have an effect on what happens in the world...And that I'd be able to, I guess, plan something like that. (6.06)
Lisa's expression, "I didn't know where or what that was gonna come from"

supports the point made above, that there was an element of spontaneity and uncertainty built in to the independent study as Lisa looked for a way to engage students' priority concerns and move into an integrative project. This focus recalls Lisa's expressed concern in her email to Schultz (above) about how to engage students' interests without imposing her own: "I am not sure how to introduce this idea to my students without

imposing my own curriculum” (2. 3.06). It also helps to explain my use of “Alice’s” experience of jumping down a rabbit-hole, since, like Alice, Lisa was full of curiosity, but—in more senses than one, did not know quite what to expect once that initial decision had been taken!

“Failing” Down a Structural Rabbit-Hole

Schultz’s wording in his e-mail reply to Lisa (shared above under “*Lisa’s Key Texts*”) suggests that praxis teaching is a process—“Sometimes the beginning is long in coming”—but that very wording implies that the “beginning” will end in an integrative social action curriculum. The problem is, that to bound social justice teaching in this way configures “journey” as an expected destination, privileges an end product, and raises the “possibility” of failure. This begs the question, “When is journey not a journey?”

Evidence of perpetual striving toward a fixed end point is indexed across the months of Lisa’s independent study with me in verbs of process such as “finding,” “moving,” “starting,” “pushing,” and “jumping,” combined with variations of the noun phrase “way in.” For example, at the inception of the independent study Lisa and I met to discuss her progress, and in my handwritten field notes, I wrote, “Lisa and I talked long (one and a half hours) about how *to start...finding a way in* to a social justice approach” (1.31.06). In March Lisa wrote, “I feel I’m ready *to push through*.” In April it was “We’re just waiting to get this one thing that I can like *go with...and jump from* it” (4.06). Yet, as late as the final week of April 2006, at the end of the independent study, Lisa was still pursuing that elusive jumping off point as may be seen in my comment during a conversation with Lisa and the mentor teacher: “But I think what we’ve been finding out is, well, “Where do you start?” “How?” “How do you *move into that kind* of teaching?”

By late May a language of defeat permeated Lisa's written reflections and communications: "I'm sorry that I haven't *pushed* enough...I'm sorry for quitting" (5.18.06). Later that same day she wrote, "I guess today was a failed *attempt to break into some kind of project or discussion*" (5.18.06).

Finally, in August, I wondered, "How did you feel about the experiment we tried this year?" Lisa said that she had learned a lot and reiterated her hopes for the integrative social action project that she had envisioned at the beginning of the independent study. I asked, "Did you accomplish what you hoped?" To which Lisa replied: "Um, I don't, I guess I don't think that I did, because I feel like I never had some kind of um, product to show it. I think I started to get there, and find, I saw ways that I could get into it" (8.06). I probed further: "So, so you had some ideas, um, you had some lesson plans, you had some thoughts, um, and *what happened* in your admission? Um, it's really estimation." My slip of the tongue (admission instead of estimation) suggests that, constrained by the notion of journey as an end point, it really *was* an "admission" I was after.

The cumulative evidence recorded above suggests that when journey was construed as arrival, vulnerability was occasioned, because the expectation of arrival/success positioned Lisa for failure to complete her project and failure to please me, her teacher. Throughout the months of Lisa's field experience, the "beginning" was, as Schultz' indicated, "long in coming," and the relentless pursuit of the specific goal of a social action project not only created a sense of urgency, but prefigured a sense of failure for not getting "there." Hence, in contrast with Alice's experience of *falling* down her rabbit-hole, the evidence in the above section shows Lisa's experience was one of "*failing*" down a rabbit-hole from which, like Alice, she seemed unable to emerge. Taken

together, the evidence of this section complicates the notions of liberation or democracy that lie at the heart of power-sharing praxis and suggests that vulnerability was occasioned as Lisa experienced a praxis journey as bondage rather than freedom. Confined to this rabbit-hole, there was no journey, when journey is understood in structuralist terms as defined by an act of travel from one location (a named project) to another (an intervention to address the named problem.)

Holes in “Whole” (Integrative) Praxis

Having presented the broad-stroke overall finding (above) regarding Lisa’s experience across the months of the independent study, in the following sections I offer my findings based on fine-grained analysis of Lisa’s experience of five attempts to dialogically name a problem to be addressed through integrative curriculum. These attempts included two impromptu discussions, the *Acculturation Discussion* and the *Nazi Rally Discussion*, and three planned lessons, the *César Chávez Lesson*, the *Rigoberta Menchu Lesson*, and the *Everyday People Lesson*.⁵ In each attempt Lisa encountered unexpected and unforeseen aspects of dialogic power -sharing that, in effect, prompted her to name a problem of praxis in which she could not intervene. In its own way, each praxis attempt was a rabbit hole that impeded Lisa’s journey towards the enactment of an integrative social action project.

Down the Rabbit-hole of the Acculturation Discussion

⁵ I remind readers, here, that this dissertation study is based on conversations that Lisa and I had about the lessons. For reasons discussed in Chapter 3, I did not observe Lisa’s praxis attempts; her “tries” at dialogically naming a problem for an integrative social action project are described only minimally in the following sections and these descriptions are based solely on Lisa’s reports, as explained in Methods Chapter 2.

On February 22, 2006, Lisa wrote, “Today I was able to lead a discussion on acculturation.” However, in spite of this language of hope, the evidence of this section suggests Lisa experienced her first attempt to follow Schultz’ advice to “seek the democratic space” as a confining rabbit-hole that created an obstacle in her path toward the “peculiar praxis” garden she had envisioned.

Sharon Harper, the mentor teacher had originally framed the Acculturation discussion as a challenge to American Thanksgiving customs. Extending this topic, she invited the (largely bi-racial and ethnically diverse) students to think about the influence of other cultures on life in America and, at that moment, invited Lisa to (extemporaneously) take over the discussion, although, consistent with the unwritten rules of collaborative teaching, Ms. Harper continued to step in and out of the discussion. After the discussion, Ms. Harper sent the students back to their groups to come to consensus about the topic. This habit of seeking student consensus was a key facet of Ms. Harper’s vision for an inclusive classroom community.

The background of this kind of spontaneity in inviting Lisa to step in to a topic related to societal issues was Ms. Harper’s commitment, as explained in Chapter 3, to help Lisa frame an integrative project, coupled with her own comfort with working backwards from the standards. Moreover, Schultz had followed this inverted-standards approach in his integrative “Project Citizen” curriculum and Lisa’s e-mail message to Schultz implies her intention to follow this approach when she says, “I felt as if there was no possibility for me to teach in a way that promotes critical responsiveness and a sense of social justice and action for my students due to the mandates and scripts that are used in many schools” (2.3.06).

However, as a journal entry early in the independent study suggests, Lisa had serious doubts about this approach:

I'm struggling with connections [to social justice curriculum]. Something Sharon had said about, "If the lessons are truthful and meaningful, then the lessons will automatically begin to connect [to standards]" keeps returning through my head but I feel like I can't trust that for the sake of the imposed standards. That is something I really need to develop but I believe it will come with teaching and experience. (2.15.06)

This expressed worry helps to explain why, in reflecting on her February 22

"Acculturation Discussion" Lisa noted,

Most of the time, Mrs. Harper will ask me if I would like to take over which I always do, but many times I feel like I might be shortchanging the students because I do not have enough knowledge of the subject in order to really push the envelope of discussion with well prepared and challenging questions. (2.22.06)

Vulnerability was occasioned as Lisa conducted the Acculturation Discussion because she was confronted with a multi-faceted dilemma related to her "peculiar" praxis journey. If Lisa "took over" when invited to spontaneously jump into discussions in which students were engaging in social justice concerns she risked shortchanging the students; if she did not take over she risked shortchanging her personal goal (as expressed to Schultz) of dialogically naming a problem based on students' interests. Moreover, if she did not "take over" she would risk breaking trust with the mentor teacher who was trying to set her up for the mutually agreed-upon integrative project. This dilemma was a rabbit-hole from which there was no easy escape. The complexity of this experience may be seen in the following analysis of Lisa's reported dialogue with the students during the Acculturation Discussion.

Even though the mentor teacher had originally framed the discussion around the influence of other cultures on American ways, when Lisa took over she went so far as to override the mentor teacher's "one speaker" rule to promote the student's and her own agenda, which was to talk about the influence of African American Vernacular English. Lisa wrote,

I wanted to bring up the idea of dialects... I overheard Lori whispering to Kendra about "ghetto." Ms. Harper interrupted to tell them that they were not respecting the speaker and even though I didn't want to override her authority, I wanted Lori to share what she had just said with the class. (2.22.06)

The power sharing work going on here among Lisa and the students is evidenced in that it was a student who "brought up the idea of language," yet Lisa had an agenda as well. Lisa began by ensuring she understood the student's perspective (which was that other languages were combined to form English) and then extended the student's thought to advance her own agenda:

I wanted to bring up the idea of dialects, so **I** asked the students if they could think of any languages that are combined with English or influence English. **We** talked about Spanglish ... Then **we** brought up the idea of African American dialects. **I** overheard Lori whispering to Kendra about "ghetto." Ms Harper interrupted to tell them that they were not respecting the speaker and **even though I didn't want to override her authority, I** wanted Lori to share what she had just said with the class (2.22.06, emphasis mine).

The orchestration here between "I" (that is, Lisa's goals) and "we" (that is, the students' interests) has a dance-like quality and seems to exemplify "negotiation"—that is, the kind of reconfiguration of the balance of power that critical literacy educators believe is necessary to interrupt the binary opposition of "either" the teacher "or" the students leading a discussion (c.f., Comber and Nixon, 1999; Edelsky, 1999a; Damico, 2005). Yet the interruption of binary opposition advocated by Comber and Nixon (1999) overlooks

the discomfort one might expect in any reconfiguration of power. Here, Lisa finesses a discussion that is mutually led by both the students and her. However, as is evident in her move to override the teacher's one-speaker rule, Lisa here demonstrates what Freire & Shor (1987) call "radical direction of the process" (p. 46), and this move ends up reinforcing the binary opposition between the mentor teacher and students, as well as between mentor teacher and student/teacher. In this particular discussion about acculturation, the students appear to be "with" Lisa, and she with them. Moreover, as the following segment suggests, Lisa stood up for the students, in a performance that exemplifies Shor and Freire's (1987, p. 46) exhortation to be "radically democratic, responsible and directive":

[Lori] said "ghetto" and someone from the class said, "yeah like slang" (at what time Ms. Harper said there should be only one speaker, so whoever said slang needed to be respectful). I asked Lori what she meant by "ghetto" and she threw out different terms that came out so fast I couldn't keep up, but we were able to get into a conversation about Standard English versus "Ghetto." I talked about how "Ghetto" is a completely acceptable form of English even though in school and other places we are supposed to use Standard English. I asked Lori if she would write a paper for Ms. Harper in Ghetto, which the whole class responded to with laughter. Lori replied with, "No way, she wouldn't be able to understand it!" (2.22.06)

Here, binary opposition is further evidenced as Lisa clearly positions herself in this reflective discourse as an insider with the students. The rabbit-hole narrows here, because, as the students position themselves alongside Lisa, they also position the teacher as an outsider who "wouldn't be able to understand." This was a rabbit-hole dilemma for Lisa, because she had explicitly told me that she wanted to "jump inside" her students' heads, and become an insider so that she would be able to discern their "hidden curriculum" (2.18.06).

Moreover, in the same February 18th journal entry, Lisa expressed some concerns about the mentor teacher's particular view of inclusion as social justice:

I truly believe Sharon is excited about this project, but I think a major part of it for me will be learning how to voice my thoughts without making anything seem critical of her teaching and curriculum. I felt apprehensive when the subject of governmentality came up in a talk with Marjorie and Sharon because I realized that Sharon might take the topic itself as an attack on her use of "community"(consensus) in the classroom. (2.18.06)

What Lisa had not anticipated in her February journal was that, no matter how careful she might be not to verbally criticize her teacher, such criticism happened "spontaneously" as she attempted to uphold a moral imperative to access students' "real-life" concerns. Lisa's experience of the Acculturation Discussion occasioned vulnerability, because her move to stand with the students performed exclusion that flew in the face of the teacher's vision for community.

Overall, the evidence of this section suggests that Lisa experienced her first attempt to follow Schultz' advice to "seek the democratic space" as a rabbit-hole that complicated the principle of democratic inclusion that is implied in the notion of co-construction of curriculum. This quandary rendered her vulnerable to pain: Either she would hurt the teacher, or she would hurt the students and her own goal to enact an integrative project. Here, consistent with the praxis goals of problem-naming/mess identifying, Lisa (in effect) named the principle of democratic "inclusion" as a problem in which she could not intervene. Hence, Lisa experienced the Acculturation discussion as a rabbit-hole that (at least temporarily) blocked her goal of enacting an integrative social action project.

A similar complication arose as Lisa engaged the students in a second spontaneous discussion, the Nazi Rally Discussion.

Down the Rabbit Hole of the Nazi Rally Discussion

In early April 2006, Ms. Harper once again plummeted Lisa into the midst of an unplanned discussion. Whereas Lisa experienced the Acculturation discussion as a rabbit-hole of democratic “inclusion,” she experienced the Nazi discussion as a rabbit-hole of democratic “exclusion.”

The occasion for this discussion was a local protest in response to a Nazi party rally that was held in the urban city in which Lisa’s school was located:

Well, when the neo-Nazi party was coming to Capitol City, I was actually asked to sit down and have a discussion with the kids about it, and we pulled our desks into a circle and started talking about it. And they would ask questions, I’d try to find answers, if I didn’t have them, I’d look them up, and we talked about you know, is this right? Who’s right in this situation? Who should be protected in this situation? What about freedom of speech? How does this work? Is freedom of speech allowing something bad to happen, or is, do we have to protect it at all costs? (4.06)

The students connected to the topic in ways that exemplified Lisa’s goals for dialogue/power sharing. In terms of freedom of speech, one student made a connection with “freedom of dress”—that is, he told about his uncle, a local pastor, who dressed “hip-hop.” He was African American and his wife was Hispanic, and in a store one day with his bi-racial children, he was confronted by the police and asked what he was doing there with “these children.” Lisa reported feeling “blown away” by the students’ stories of being racially profiled:

And they started talking about race really affected them in their lives, and at sixth grade, they’ve had a lot of experiences, and it just blew me away at the same time, because you know, I realize it, but at the same time, like I said before, I don’t think I had taken, I think I let things pass that I don’t know. (4.06)

Lisa's comments "they've had a lot of experiences" and "I let things pass that I don't know" index her growing sense during the independent study that, in spite of her commitment expressed in a February journal entry to be an "insider" and discern her students' "hidden curriculum," Lisa could not ever experience racism as an insider. I discuss this concern in depth in Chapter 4. Here, I mean only to point out that Lisa experienced "race" as a rabbit-hole from which there was no escape. Vulnerability was occasioned because, in dashing her hopes to be an insider, Lisa experienced a supposedly "inclusive" democratic space as an exclusive space that complicated her "peculiar" praxis goal of collaboratively naming a problem close to the students' hearts and lives. As mentioned above with the Acculturation Discussion, consistent with the collaborative goals of the independent study and Ms. Harper's role in being part of a problem-naming moment leading to an integrative project, Ms. Harper stepped in and out of the discussion. When she took over to gather up the threads of the talk and then send the students' off to their groups to seek consensus, she gave an exemplar that left Lisa speechless:

Well, the teacher steps in and she goes, "Well, don't you think people dress that way to intimidate and to make this point, and like, to intimidate people that are watching them, um, and that they come across more violent?" is how it was brought up. That was the situation, and it was frustrating because I didn't know...how to step in. The kids had a big reaction. Like, a big backlash kinda came up. I think it didn't surprise them as much, because I'm sure they're used...and she gave the example, "What if I came in and I wore all black and spiky bracelets and I was dressed like a Goth?" She goes, "Wouldn't I be dressing then to intimidate other people?" She made that point. And the backlash of the kids, they said "No. We should be able to dress however we want to dress and it's not, we shouldn't be, you know, discriminated against because of that," was a lot of the reaction. And it was uncomfortable to sit in because, you know, my CT [Cooperating Teacher/mentor teacher] was, she was, she was kind of being challenged, and that was uncomfortable, and I think maybe her own ideas too

came into place. So, yeah, I just don't know how, you know, to really go about that. 'Cause it is, it's scary. (4.06)

By the utterance, "I just don't know how...to really go about that," Lisa reflects the same concern she experienced during the Acculturation Discussion—that is, the problem of being positioned either with the students and against the teacher, or against the students and with the teacher. Thus, here in the Nazi Rally discussion, Lisa once again found herself in a rabbit-hole from which there was no clear escape.

Lisa's unfinished assertion "I'm sure they're used" serves as an introduction to a speech in which she performs Sharon's stance through quasi-direct quotes by which she distances herself from Sharon's opinions. This distance is increased as she reports the students' "backlash" contradicting the teacher, and the speech concludes with an evaluative statement, "and I think maybe her own ideas too came into place." This infers that, even though the teacher's performance of racial profiling was rhetorical, it suggested (to Lisa) a thinly veiled racist stance and left Lisa "scared" to jump into the conversation. This interpretation is strengthened by Lisa's oral reflection on this episode, in which she explained that Sharon's performance had left her voiceless, (or speechless, as I said above), because she "didn't want to give that [impression of racial profiling] either":

I think it was overwhelming for me when I think about it last year, because it was...they're so aware of inequalities that existed and willing to discuss it and wanting to discuss it that sometimes it put you in a vulnerable position too... But when **you're the minority** in the classroom, it, it's hard to approach that discussion because **I don't...it was hard for me to...I didn't want to be, I didn't want to ask questions that reinforced, um, I guess misconceptions or that hurt any person** involved in the discussion. For example, I remember one time with my teacher, this is something you and I have talked about, um, the discussion about James' uncle. And she said, "Well, what about people who dress with their pants lower or wear the jewelry or, you know...do they deserve to be treated with respect by you?" or kind of the thought process that if they're dressing like hoodlums, so they kind of got what they deserved. So it was scary

for me to be part of those discussions sometimes because I didn't want to give that impression either...But she gave that as an example, which I felt like, was just as, I guess - Maybe it was good, at the same time, that she felt comfortable enough to do that, because at least she was being honest with some of her, uh, I guess biases, too. (6.06).

The vulnerability occasioned through Lisa's experience of the Nazi Rally discussion is role-played (performed) with the stumbling for words to explain her discomfort: "I don't -it was hard for me to-I didn't want to be." Further vulnerability is indexed by the "um, I guess," in the utterance, "I didn't want to ask questions that reinforced, um, I guess misconceptions." Here, once again, Lisa avoids an outright claim that her teacher is racist, but implies that at the very least the performance could be perceived as racist, and, as "the minority in the classroom" (that is, as the White minority) she is afraid the students will position her alongside Sharon's challenge of the students' position. On the other hand, further vulnerability is indexed by Lisa's concern not to "hurt any person involved in the discussion," where "any person" may be taken to mean the students, the mentor teacher, or herself.

As the (White) "minority in the class" Lisa experienced the Nazi Rally Discussion as a rabbit-hole of exclusion. While, in the Acculturation Discussion she had interpreted the "democratic space" as inclusion of the students' voices and had positioned herself with them, by contrast, in the Nazi Rally Discussion she believed herself to be an outsider who could not ever experience racism as an insider; her outsider stance was laminated by her mentor teacher's position that set up an us/them discourse. Hence, Lisa was afraid to take up any position. While this may have prevented "hurting any member of that discussion," it also impeded her praxis journey. Lisa found herself in a confining rabbit hole in this instance because the students had divulged a "priority concern" (Schultz,

2.3.06) which—according to Schultz’s email advice— was the first step in moving into an integrative project. However, having named a problem with “democracy” (that the principle of inclusion rests upon the principle of exclusion) that she could not fix, Lisa was blocked from taking the next step of planning an integrative social action response to the students’ “named” problem. Once again, when journey was construed as arrival, there was no journey.

Critical literacy as a Rabbit Hole. Moreover, the critical literacy/multiple perspectives stance Lisa adopted for her part in the Nazi discussion also had unforeseen consequences with respect to the problem of democratic inclusion. For example, she asked the students:

Who’s right in this situation? Who should be protected in this situation? What about freedom of speech? How does this work? Is freedom of speech allowing something bad to happen, or is...do we have to protect it at all costs? (6.06)

This stance ‘obligated’ Lisa to acknowledge her mentor teacher’s right to an opinion:

But she gave that [the dress stories] as an example, which I felt like, was just as, I guess - (Long pause) Maybe it was good, at the same time, that she felt comfortable enough to do that, because at least she was being honest with some of her, uh, I guess biases, too. (6.06)

Thus, Lisa’s own stance of critical literacy may have contributed to her verbal paralysis in the Nazi Rally discussion. That is, Lisa’s experience of *exclusion* from the “democratic space” in the Nazi discussion was related to her experience of *inclusion* in the “democratic space” in the Acculturation Discussion. By this I mean that, in the Nazi Rally discussion Lisa appears to have become more aware of the complexities of collaboration and dialogic power sharing, but, it is plausible to suggest that the Acculturation experience re-membered Lisa (that is, changed her) negatively. That is,

Lisa's experience of the complexities inherent in power sharing as "learned" through her experience of the Acculturation Discussion may have "taught" her not to take any position at all. Field and Latta (2001) admit this possibility, noting that memories of experiences may have a paralyzing affect. I address this in Chapter 6. Here, it is reasonable to suggest that Lisa experienced the Nazi Rally Discussion as a rabbit-hole that impeded her praxis journey, since she named a problem of race (her own White identity) and racism (her teacher's challenge of the students' concerns) in which she could not intervene because her critical literacy stance demanded inclusion of all persons' opinions.

Down the Rabbit Hole of the César Chávez Lesson

Preparing for prison. The César Chávez Lesson was one of two planned lessons on the topic of "Protesting Social Injustice" prepared for her Social Studies practicum that Lisa also hoped would also lead to a problem-naming moment that would result in an integrative "social action" curriculum. Once again as Lisa prepared for the "Chávez" lesson, she named a problem of praxis in which she could not intervene and experienced praxis as a kind of prison.

Lisa expressed her aspirations – and concerns - thus: "I feel as though I'm ready to push through to the critical aspect of teaching for social justice but I'm not sure if we are all on the same page" (Reflective Journal, 3.26.08). At the insistence of the Social Studies professor the lesson consisted of informational background on Chávez, and the planned discussion had to be scripted (that is, Lisa's comments and the students' possible answers had to be written out in advance). The point of Lisa's lesson was to teach students about the place of planned protests in a democracy, and, to encourage dialogue

about concerns students had that might lead to such protests. The following excerpts from Lisa's reflective journal on the lesson represent her struggle with two conflicting expectations for the lesson:

I have been struggling with my social studies plan for the class and I am starting to wonder if part of it is because I'm feeling the strains of [my social studies professor] asking me to be neutral to an extent and my feelings pull me towards a place of political opinion that may go against the dominant ideology behind protesting. Each day I read more, think more, and listen more; I find it more difficult to fit into this [Teacher Education] program and submit to what a teacher is asking if I do not feel that it will ultimately lead to the empowerment of the students. (March 15, 2006)

Praxis as prison. By "neutral to an extent" Lisa may be referring to her teacher's insistence (as stated above) that the lesson be informational and based on historical "facts." Lisa lamented that the strict parameters blocked her power sharing praxis goal-- that is, the parameters of the Teacher Education program held her back from extending some of the "amazing ideas" the students had raised:

It would be so cool if I was in this class and I could keep going with this. And that's what Sharon [the mentor] does all the time, and that's what, that's what I want to do... And a lot of students actually started responding to it, but at the time, I felt like, **"Oh, we have to get to these Venn Diagram comparison things,"** which the kids detested doing, and grumbled and complained the whole time, I mean, because it seems so simplistic for them. But that's what the assignment called for, and it was a struggle for me. I don't know how to balance that. And that's what I would like, yeah, **that's what I wanna do with the Critical Literacy program.** (Oral reflection, 3.06)

Here it is evident that vulnerability is occasioned as Lisa is caught between a rock (the fixed expectations of her Social Studies Teacher) and a hard place --the expectations of arrival at an integrative social action project through collaborative problem-naming. The net effect was vulnerability, as she felt unable to "balance" the two demands. Praxis became "imprisonment" in this instance, as indexed by the placement of what happened

as a fulfillment of her social studies practicum requirement (Venn diagrams and grumpy kids) in the center of the discourse, rhetorically enclosed by two statements that refer to her praxis goals: “It would be so cool if I could keep going with this...” — “And that’s what I...wanna do with the Critical Literacy Program.” Lisa’s experiences of tensions in what was supposed to be a “liberatory” praxis were further complicated in her teaching of the César Chávez lesson, this time, these complications were directly related to the problem of “journey” construed as “arrival.”

Fixing it fast. The constraints of the Teacher Education program aside, Lisa’s experience of a liberatory praxis journey that was expected to have an arrival point that was “a curriculum of social action” (Schultz, 2006. E-mail Communication) presented its own “peculiar” constraints, including a sense of urgency to get “there,” or “in” that may be seen in the following excerpts from Lisa’s written reflection on the Chávez lesson. At first Lisa used her March 28th journal reflection to continue to lay blame on the strict parameters imposed by the Social Studies professor:

I figured out why my social studies lesson and teaching for social justice would not work...[T]he ideas were not brought up by the kids...this lesson seemed to pretty much be designed for me talking AT them... Wouldn’t it be better if we had time to talk about what we thought about protests, César Chávez, boycotts etc? If we would do that, I could give suggestions from my knowledge that would enable the students to push their thinking, while at the same time they could do the same for me and their peers. This is what I need and want. I understand what Freire means now when he says there is a time and place for both [transmission and dialogic teaching], but that the ultimate goal should be for the educator and learner to share places... I want to be able to do that. (3.28.06)

Later, in the same journal, however, after reading an account of social action curriculum taken from Edelsky’s (1999) *Making Justice our Project*, Lisa problematized her own part in the “failure” of the lesson. She drew on the story of Celia, an elementary school

teacher who shared with her students her discomfort with the school's "star student awards" program that seemed always to advantage certain children while systematically marginalizing others. The children took up the problem as their own (some felt entitlement, and some felt marginalized) and worked together through the promise and problems of a boycott on this practice. Lisa ended her March 28th journal reflection by noting,

I re-read the "Super Stars" piece and thought more about what was different in that class compared to mine. The difference was based on what was natural occurring... Celia taught in way that things that naturally happened were used as opportunities to give students new information. **Celia, living as a social change agent, unpacked all of the meanings and affects of the "superstar" problem.** By bringing her thoughts to the students, she opened up an opportunity for them to break down the idea together. (THIS IS WHAT FREIRE IS TALKING ABOUT!!!) She would suggest different types of protests without forcing them on the students. The exact lessons I was trying to teach happened naturally in this case, where as mine came across as me forcing information down the students' throats. (3. 28, 2006. Uppercase emphasis in the original)

Note here, Lisa's use of capital letters to express her enriched understanding of Friere's point (above) about teachers experiencing the act of knowing together with their students. Moreover the central placement of the phrase "Celia, living as a social change agent, unpacked all the meanings and affects of the "superstar" problem" indexes Lisa's conflation of a social action curriculum and practical morality, which helps to explain why the notion of arrival was a compelling force in her peculiar praxis journey.

Having "named" a praxis problem of imposing ideas on students, Lisa appeared constrained to complete the contract between naming and action, and to do so quickly. Thus, after confessing in her journal that the idea of protesting injustices based on the César Chávez lesson had not come from the students but had been "shoved down their throats," she wrote, "I guess, the difficult question is: "How do I change this before

Thursday?” This was a reference to a companion lesson – the *Rigoberta Menchu Lesson* – to be taught two days later. Lisa’s concern to name a problem and act to “fix” it –is not only internally consistent with the goals and hopes shared with Schultz and me, but her urgency reflects Critical Pedagogy’s moral imperative to bring about Utopia--that is, a new (and better) society. Vulnerability was occasioned as Lisa experienced this urgency as a tension between the praxis goal of practical morality and the impracticality of ‘fixing’ her named problem so quickly – if at all. By saying, “How do I change this before Thursday?” Lisa once more positioned herself for failure to reach her arrival point, because, in so saying, she named an unrealistic problem that would be (all but) impossible-to-fix. In the next section I discuss Lisa’s attempt to “fix this before Thursday” as she taught the partner lesson in the two social studies lessons on protesting social injustice.

Down the Rabbit Hole of the Rigoberta Menchú Lesson

The Rigoberta Menchú “Fix it before Thursday” Lesson was a continuation of the César Chávez lesson, and the theme of **Protesting Social Injustice**. Although Lisa hoped to “fix” the “shoving it down their throats” problem she had named through the César Chávez lesson by committing to leave emotional and intellectual space for students’ concerns to emerge, she experienced a tension between a notion of space that fit her Critical Literacy commitment to value multiple perspectives), and her praxis conception of the “democratic space” as one of problem-naming and social action.

In order to fulfill the Social Studies practicum requirement, the lesson began with information on the problems that had led to Menchu’s protest, the nature and extent of her protest and the results. The object of this lesson was that children, too, could make a

difference in the world and fight injustices. Although this, like the Chávez lesson, was a requirement for Lisa's social studies practicum, it was planned as a joint venture, beginning with the fulfillment of her Social Studies practicum requirement, but with the hope that a problem-naming moment would emerge from the topic of Protesting. Recall that Lisa was concerned NOT to shove things down students' throats, but instead she wanted to emulate Celia's stance (see below) of bringing forward a topic that she, the teacher, knew to be one that impacted her students' lives (the Star Student program).

Celia taught in way that things that naturally happened were used as opportunities to give students new information. Celia, living as a social change agent, unpacked all of the meanings and affects of the "superstar" problem. By bringing her thoughts to the students, she opened up an opportunity for them to break down the idea together. THIS IS WHAT FREIRE IS TALKING ABOUT!!! (Uppercase notation in original. 3.28.06)

Get out of "My Space." Lisa planned to unpack the meanings and affects of a problem she, as a careful observer in her sixth-grade classroom, had discerned to be a "natural" problem that affected her students' lives in school; that is, problems related to social injustices related to race. In the following excerpt, note that the students appeared to contest Lisa's understanding of what constituted a "natural" problem:

L: Well, this is at the point where it moved into "Can kids make a difference?" For some reason it moved to that, and they, one girl said adamantly, "No." "Kids... like us can't make a difference." I remember that's exactly how she put it. And that's when the sub interjected and said, "Well, but what about Ruby Bridges?"

M: What kind of a difference did, were you trying to get, um, her – or anyone else in the class – to see they could make in their communities? I mean, were there any specific examples that came up?

L: Well, that they can see the world through – not through different eyes. See the world for what it is, but that it can be changed. Things can be different, but you have to see it first to make it different.

M: So what kinds of things do you think that she was naming or not naming that she couldn't do anything about?

L: Well, racism. Um, the fact that she is a kid...[T]wo of them were very vocal about, "No way, we cannot make a difference." And the other girl said, "Well, we're kids. Adults never listen to us. Teachers never listen to us. You know, we can talk about this, but it's not gonna happen." So, the fact that they are kids and they don't feel they have a voice, you know?

M: Hmm.

L: And when they do try to have one, they're told what to do, when to do it, (6.06. Oral Reflection)

In the face of this resistance, some students wanted to debate the issue: Can children make a difference?

And one girl raised her hand, she goes, "Well why don't we do a debate about it?" And then I go, "Uh -Oh." That wasn't, you know, the plan of the lesson there. It wasn't a contest about who's right or who's wrong, because that's what I wanted to come across, that there is no right or wrong in this. (Oral reflection, 6.06)

Lisa's concern "Uh - Oh" - and her comment that she wanted to encourage multiple perspectives reflects her stated Critical Literacy stance, about which she said, "you know that there's different, I guess multiple perspectives, and there's different ways of seeing a problem depending on who you are" (6.06). Such a critical literacy stance suggests a notion of space that presupposes that individuals are given room to follow their own agendas. However, as Lisa attempted to engage her students in a problem-naming moment during the Rigoberta Menchu lesson, vulnerability was occasioned as Lisa experienced a tension between a notion of space that fit her stated stance of Critical Literacy, and the praxis delimitation of a democratic space as one of problem-naming and

social action. This may well have had an unsettling affect on Lisa, since her goal was to empower students, yet they construed the space she tried to open as an unsafe and disempowering one.

Justice social. As Lisa moved into the final weeks of the Independent Study and her tenure in this sixth-grade classroom, she continued to grapple conceptually with a conflict inherent in praxis as social justice writ large and praxis as privileging students' concerns. This conflict is visible in the following excerpt of conversation during which Lisa told me about some poetry the students had been anxious to share with her:

I feel like there's a lot of real issues coming up in them. Not that any issue is more real than another – they - I guess I mean a lot of issues of social justice keep coming up in here...Slavery –um –death -the war -trying to graduate -struggling just to stand up -struggling with not having a dad...(4.06)

It is noteworthy that Lisa self-corrects when she hears herself delimit what constitutes 'real issues. However, in her move to self-correct, she aligns "real issues" with "issues of social justice." Moreover, she then begins her list with topics related to social justice writ large. This seems to evoke a second self-correction as she moves from slavery, death and war – to students' more personal concerns. This rhetorical move from macro to micro interests of social justice that related to everyday concerns of students was tantamount to an un-learning (Cochran-Smith, 2002) of "Social Justice" to a re-learning of "Justice Social". Such a move was played out in Lisa's final attempt to enact a problem-naming, integrative social action curriculum project through the *Everyday People Lesson*.

Down the Rabbit Hole of the Everyday People Lesson

The “*Everyday People*” Lesson was based on a song of the same name by a Rock group, Sly and the Family Stone. In this final attempt to enact praxis Lisa experienced an unforeseen consequence of ethical action that aborted her journey as she had originally conceived of it.

Writing and talking justice. This attempt was influenced by Herbert Kohl’s (1984) notion of “*sprache*,” meaning “informed dialogue and open-ended exploration of ideas” (p. 113). Kohl shared an exemplar of such “*sprache*,” where his students had connected a popular song, “Another Brick in the Wall” to oppression they were experiencing as students; then, on their own initiative but guided by Kohl, the students pursued this issue with a research project. At one of our weekly meetings, Lisa and I talked about Kohl’s book, and she noted his way of facilitating students’ interests:

L: That’s what he did – he didn’t force anything on the kids, he just took what they naturally brought in, and sometimes he, and it’s a similar thread I’m starting to see coming between all these teachers is they can ask certain questions that the kids brains...So they brought the lyrics for it, ‘cause that was what the song was of the time, and then they were able to break down the lyrics, and dig into, you know, how they connected to the songs.

M: So it’s like he was able to move in on a personal interest in school learning, that would be the way he handled the discussion, and that took off, it seemed to me, into a further self study by the students, and I know that’s the kind of thing we’ve been talking about, you’ve been looking for ways into that kind of teaching...(4.06)

The above conversation took place in early April, and, I return to it in Chapter 5 for a fuller treatment of my role (as a teacher) in Lisa’s experience of this final attempt to have her students name a problem for an integrative project. Here, while Lisa does not explicitly refer to either Kohl’s book, or this conversation, the influence on her final

lesson seems undeniable. Lisa described this final lesson as “a failed attempt to break into some kind of project or discussion” (5.18.06). The lesson was planned as an ethical response to a real-life concern related to an ongoing conflict between two of the female students’ foster families. Lisa had witnessed this conflict and its effects on the students throughout the semester, and when several of the girls came to talk to her about it, they named “gossip” and meanness as the number one problem in the class. Thus, a sub-group of the class was allowed to “name the problem” for the class, and Lisa believed, in retrospect, that this had once again violated the principle of power sharing: “[T]he subject didn’t come from the students so it was pushed away as another imposed idea” (5.18.06). That said, Lisa tried to involve the students in an ethical response by listening to the song, “Everyday People” that stressed respect for diversity, making personal connections to the song through a free-writing activity, and, finally, sharing these personal connections during a group discussion.

While Lisa spent time at the beginning of the lesson clarifying the kind of respectful attitudes she was hoping to inspire, many students refused to write or participate in the discussion because “we don’t want to change or be friends with everyone” as Jalissa put it. The biggest problem for Lisa, however, was that one of the girls DID both write and share. The girl (Kristian) identified with the line in the song that named obesity as a diversity:

My line is: “There is a fat one trying to be a skinny one.”
People misjudge me because I’m a little heavyer (sic) than others, or they make fun of me because I’m shorter than others. My turners (sic) syndrome. They talk about me because I’m not good at math. (5.17.06)

Not only did she connect to the song during the free-write, but also she “came out” so to speak, sharing her written response in the full-class discussion. Sadly, she was mocked:

One particular student, Kristian, shared her thoughts and was backed down by Lori’s laughing until she ended up yelling back and the whole room went from the impenetrable silence into what sounded like a funhouse of screaming, grumbling and side discussions. I wonder what went wrong? (5.18.06)

Lisa’s lament, “I wonder what went wrong?” performs the torment and suffering Lisa underwent as she experienced this baffling “tension” moment that complicated the meaning of praxis as practically moral action. At the end of the independent study I asked Lisa, “Were there any interesting consequences of promoting ethical action?” Her reply points to her experience of an ethical dilemma:

L: Well, for example, when I brought in the song, tried to have that discussion. And things, I feel like, got worse, not better. I mean respect wasn’t something that this discussion ended up being centered on.

M: Had you ever – had you anticipated that?

L: No, not at all. I was really surprised, ‘cause I thought, “Oh, you know.” When I look back, I think I hated that Lori did that, because Kristian was being – Kristian was being vulnerable and at the same time, I didn’t anticipate that, but it’s real. It wasn’t a staged discussion. (8.06)

Lisa’s comment, “I hated that Lori did that, because Kristian was being vulnerable and at the same time...it’s real”, mirrors her conflict with Ms. Harper’s attempt to compare public reaction to Goth dress with local police reaction to students’ Hip Hop dress (stated above in the section, *Down the rabbit hole of the Nazi discussion*). There, too, Lisa felt confused, since Ms. Harper was “being real.” It is evident here that Lisa is struggling further with tensions of power sharing. That is, the collaborative naming of

“real-life” issues may bring up aspects of “real-life” that are patently uncomfortable and painful, such that to expose students in this way amounts to being unethically ethical.

What matters, here, is that for Lisa, this was unanticipated. The conversation excerpt below not only tells, but shows (performs) Lisa’s experience of this tension:

L: You know what? Having kids deal with these social issues can affect their lives when they go back into their neighborhoods and they take a stand on something. I mean that puts them in danger.

M: Yeah? Did you see any evidence of that?

L: I didn’t - but well -I mean, Kristian. Did we put her in danger? And she has pretty fragile self-esteem, so, I kinda did.

M: Right.

L: Definitely put her – I set her –I didn’t set her out to be a target... Yeah, it’s kinda like setting her out to be a target.

M: Right, mmmhmm.

L: And if kids really go out in the world, I mean, it is setting them up to deal with justice. I mean that’s a scary thing. (8.06)

Lisa begins this conversation by verbalizing the ethical tension she was experiencing with respect to praxis, or practical moral action, that “having kids’ deal with these social issues” may endanger them and not be so practically moral after all! Lisa’s personal experience of this tormenting incongruity between the planned *ethical* action and the *unethical* result is played out in the center of this conversation, when Lisa positions herself in a place of guilt alongside her students by use of the collective pronoun “we”— “Did we put her in danger?”— but quickly changes her mind, naming herself (“I”) as the guilty person— “So, I kinda did”. She off-loads the guilt at first by use of the qualifier “kinda,” but appears to feel further pangs of conscience, so that later

she acknowledges that she definitely put her in danger. She tries again to soften the moment, but honesty wins out: “ I set her;”“I didn’t set her;”“Yeah,” I did (after all), set “her out to be a target.” My small comments, “Right” and “Mmhmm” are enough to feed the confessional stance. The tension is then highlighted (but not resolved) by the ending of her speech, “And if kids really go out in the world, I mean, it is setting them up – to deal with justice. I mean, that’s a scary thing” a statement that mirrors the opening statement, “Having kids deal with these issues can affect their lives.”

Overall, the evidence of this section suggests that, as Lisa made this final “try” to connect power sharing (opening space for students to name personal problems related to diversity) with social action (respectful sharing of hurts related to diversity and some kind of group response) she encountered further resistance from the students. Once again, the students decided the opened space was an unsafe one and exercised their (democratic) right not to step into the “democratic space.” Hence, vulnerability was occasioned as Lisa experienced a conflict with what constitutes morality. As her comment above – “Kristian was being vulnerable...at the same time...it’s real” – suggests, Lisa was caught between two moral obligations. On the one hand she was obligated by praxical morality to open spaces for students to name and address close-to-the-heart issues, but, on the other hand, her obligation as a teacher was to create a safe space for all students. Hence, vulnerability was occasioned as Lisa experienced praxical morality as practical immorality and, trapped in this rabbit hole, there was no journey.

Discussion

When Journey is Not a Journey

Each attempt Lisa made to name a problem for an integrative study resulted in the surfacing of unforeseen conflicts, tensions and problems of praxis Lisa had not anticipated. Like the storybook Alice, she found herself in a rabbit-hole (or, in Lisa's case, several rabbit-holes) that were at one and the same time, confining and compelling. Like Alice, Lisa seemed sometimes to be too large for her enclosure. This was the case with the Acculturation discussion, for example, when she suddenly found herself to be taller than Ms. Harper, an uncomfortable stance indeed. She was also too large for comfort in the César Chávez lesson, when she felt it was all about her, and her own ideas that she "shoved" down students' throats, as she "talked at them". On the other hand, she experienced feeling too small during the Nazi discussion and Rigoberta Menchu lesson since her Whiteness worked to silence her. Finally, during the Everyday People lesson, Lisa knew what it was to eat Alice's magic mushroom and become disproportionately tall and short: tall enough to take an ethical stance, yet too short to deal with the resultant perplexity and complexity. It seemed that Lisa's experiences of the rabbit-holes worked to impede her progress toward her praxis goal; like Alice, no matter how hard she tried, Lisa could not find "the way in" to her peculiar social justice Garden. One way to understand what happened to Lisa "in the flux of" praxis, as Field and Latta have it, is to propose something audacious, namely that there was no journey, because there was no action in Arendt's sense of action. As Beista 2007 aptly characterized Arendt's notion of pluralistic action, "If I speak and no one listens we may as well say I did not speak (p.775). I make a parallel argument here in saying there was no journey because Lisa's

attempts to perform praxis conceived as an integrative social justice intervention—that is, her creative interventions— were not taken up by others.

To make the audacious argument that there was no journey is consistent with the spirit of agonistic inquiry that seeks to perform change by troubling the structural understanding of journey that has entered the realm of cultural common sense (compare Fendler, 2004). I do not say, however, that there was no journey, rather, I argue only that when journey is understood in structuralist terms defined as movement from one location to another—that is, when journey is defined as an entity between coordinates that stipulate a definitive beginning (in this case, a named problem) and a definitive destination (in this case, a collaborative intervention to address the named problem), we may infer there is no journey when these conditions are not met.

A poststructural lens: Where there's a sojourner there's a journey. By contrast, when journey is conceptualized along poststructural lines that value the process as the thing, there WAS a journey, because a poststructural journey values the process and the sojourner as the thing. In this sense each of Lisa's praxis attempts was "the thing", and therefore there was a journey even though she "failed" to complete the structural social justice journey she originally embarked upon. In addition to privileging the process as the journey it is also the case that a poststructural notion of journey locates the journey in the journeyer; hence *when there is a sojourner there is always a journey*. Just such an emphasis is discernable in Field and Latta's (2001) focus on the way in which to experience something (and in this dissertation that "something" is a praxis journey) means to experience an ongoing process of "encounters with the unexpected" that leave an indelible mark on the one who is experiencing these encounters. In the framework of

this dissertation I extend Field and Latta's conception of what constitutes becoming experienced in teaching and learning and make a parallel argument about what constitutes a praxis teaching journey, positing that Lisa's process and consequent change in the "flux" of her praxis attempts, taken together, constitute a journey.

To say that where there is a sojourner there is always a journey implies a fruitful intersection between a practice or praxis teaching journey and a personal journey. However, the following chapter probes such an assumption. Once again, as Field and Latta (2001) have it, teaching encounters "re-member,"—that is, change, or transform one, if one "takes seriously" (p. 9) the things one encounters and undergoes in the classroom. The next chapter presents evidence of how Lisa was "re-membered" as she used a written reflective journal to "take seriously" an unexpected encounter with difference that occurred as she taught the Rigoberta Menchu lesson (treated earlier in this chapter).

CHAPTER FOUR:

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS AND WHAT LISA FOUND THERE

“I wonder if I’ve been changed in the night. Let me think: was I the same when I got up this morning? I almost think I can remember feeling a little different. But if I’m not the same, the next question is, ‘Who in the world am I?’ AH, that’s the great puzzle!” (Carroll, (1832-1898). In Gardner, (2002), pp. 22, 23)

Chapter 3 focused on the vulnerability occasioned as Lisa experienced a “peculiar” praxis journey toward a “practically moral” destination (a named problem to be addressed through social action). Chapter 4 shifts to a focus on the vulnerability occasioned as Lisa underwent a journey integrally related to her praxis journey, that is, a personal journey characterized by going relentlessly “inward” in search of a fixed arrival point (a moral “self”). The personal journey was enabled by written reflection.

The question that guides this chapter is “What happened to Lisa as she experienced a personal journey occasioned by written reflection on her praxis journey?” The central argument of this chapter is that, through written reflection Lisa shifted her focus from naming a problem of praxis, in which she could not intervene, to naming a problem of self, which could not be “fixed.” Since Lisa’s “peculiar” praxis was characterized by the conflation of naming problems and fixing problems, the naming of an unfixable problem mutually compromised both the praxis and personal journeys. As the evidence presented in this chapter will suggest, Lisa embraced vulnerability as a means of bridging the gap between her Whiteness and her students’ bi-racialness, but too much vulnerability ended up breaking the bridge.

On the following page (121) the reader will find a written explanation of a visual concept map of this chapter that appears on the facing page 122.

Explanation of Figure 3. Visual Map of Chapter 4.

Figure 3 (on facing page) will orient the reader to the place of this chapter within the whole study. The shaded and filled areas of the map index the portions of the map pertinent to this chapter. The filled rectangles (vertical line fill) index that Lisa's personal journey was accomplished through written reflection on the Menchu lesson (represented by the line-filled rectangle within the "attempts" rectangle titled Lisa with Students"). Note that the failure of the written reflection /personal journey to facilitate Lisa's experience of the desired journey (a named problem followed by a collaborative intervention) is represented by a disconnected line between the "attempts" rectangle and the intervention oval.

The picture of Alice going through the looking glass represents Lisa's reliance on a metaphor of looking in a mirror to promote self-examination and personal change. The broken line between the "Marjorie with Lisa" rectangle and the intervention oval indicates that the motivation for mirror-gazing came from a text Lisa encountered during the independent study and discussed with Marjorie; the fact that the line is broken indexes that this article and the resultant mirror-gazing brought Lisa into a Personal Rabbit Hole that compounded Lisa's inability to enact her praxis goal, and kept her confined in the Praxis Rabbit Hole.

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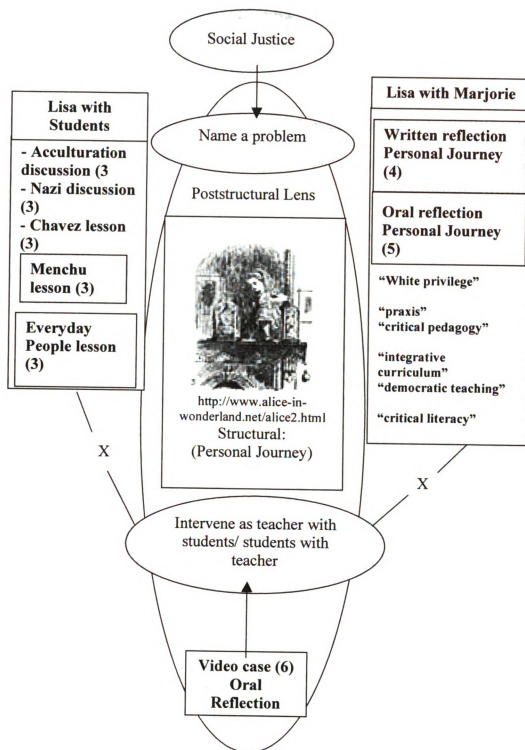


Figure 3. Concept Map of Chapter 4: Lisa's Experience of Looking in the Mirror through Written Reflection

Bridge Building and Mirror Gazing: Lisa's Independent Study Texts

This personal journey was influenced by two key pieces of literature that Lisa encountered in her teacher-preparation coursework and voluntarily introduced during the independent study: Barbara Vacarr's (2001) *Moving Beyond Polite Correctness: Practicing Mindfulness in the Diverse Classroom*", and Parker Palmer's (1998), *Courage to teach*, a text cited by Vacarr. In a move reminiscent of the literature on unpacking white privilege (MacIntosh, 1988) Vacarr urges white teachers to bridge cultural differences by dwelling vulnerably in confrontational moments with students rather than retreating behind a mask of professional and theoretical distance. In Vacarr's words:

As scholarship in the field of diversity and multiculturalism grows and expands, a bridge must be built between our intellectual understanding of difference, power fear, domination, shame, oppression, isolation, and connection and our capacity to enter into these human experiences vulnerably and fully. (Vacarr, p.294)

Vacarr shares an experience from her teaching where an African American student challenged attitudes of "tolerance" towards differences. Rather than reinforcing "us" and "them" positioning by taking either this student's or the White students' sides, Vacarr connected with the African American student's complaint in a way that modeled what it feels like to be tolerated: this allowed everyone in the room to find a personal point of connection with what had previously been a problem for the "other". In elaborating her notion of bridging the cultural differences by embracing one's own "vulnerability and ineptitude" (Vacarr, 2001, p. 285), Vacarr blends Buddhist and Christian practices of meditation, citing Christian Parker Palmer's (1998) metaphor of "looking in a mirror." According to Palmer, reflecting on one's teaching reveals insights about oneself:

The entanglements I experience in the classroom are often no more or less than the convolutions of my inner life. Viewed from this angle, teaching holds a mirror to the soul. If I am willing to look in that mirror and not run from what I see, I have a chance to gain self-knowledge – and knowing myself is as crucial to good teaching as knowing my students and my subject. (Palmer, 1998, p.2)

Both Palmer's and Vacarr's texts prompted Lisa to examine her White identity in the written reflection upon which this chapter is based. She told Sharon, the mentor teacher about the Vacarr article, saying "It was all about being able to see yourself and you have to be completely open and honest with yourself before you can do it with your students" (4.06). However, it was Palmer's metaphor of the mirror, in particular, that excited Lisa, and she explained that it meant that just as a mirror provides a reality check on one's perception of physical appearance, so a metaphorical gaze in the mirror could provide a similar reality check on the lived reality of social justice. That is, teaching about social justice and 'living it' might be two different things. In order to feel comfortable with the self, the metaphorical mirror must reflect an integration of teaching about and living as a social justice teacher. Just as a physical glance in the mirror might prompt personal adjustments (to one's hair-do, for example), so a look in the metaphorical mirror might call for change. (Personal Communication. Field Notes, March, 2006).

Lisa went on to personally apply the mirror metaphor, as she understood it, in a written reflection on a difficult moment in her teaching that is the subject of this chapter. Therefore, I recruit Palmer's notion of looking in the mirror as a characterization of Lisa's written reflection. Both Palmer and Vacarr promote personal transformation in response to one's teaching, echoing Nieto's (2000) observation: "A journey presupposes that the traveler will change along the way, and teaching is no exception" (p. 184). Such

“change along the way,” in both Palmer’s and Vacarr’s frameworks, is characterized as an interior journey with an implied outcome – connectivity with students based on mutual experiences of vulnerability.

Writing Vulnerability as Openness to Wounding: Theoretical Perspective

Both Palmer’s (1998) and Vacarr’s (2001) calls for teachers to engage in self-examination that renders them personally vulnerable and thus professionally available to students are reminiscent of Field and Latta’s (2001) sense that teaching experiences “re-member,” or transform one, if one “takes seriously” (p. 9) the things one encounters and undergoes in the classroom. Nevertheless, key distinctions between Palmer’s and Vacarr’s recommendations and Field and Latta’s remain. For Field and Latta, it is the “entanglements of teaching” (to use Palmer’s words) themselves that effect transformation, not reflection upon them, and self-examination is never mentioned by Field and Latta. Rather, Field and Latta argue for mindful (that is intentional) openness to ‘go on undergoing’ experiences, and this occasions practical wisdom that is always growing. While I locate the work of this chapter in Field and Latta’s (2001) notion of journey as a process of “undergoing” that occasions vulnerability, since Palmer’s and Vacarr’s texts were personally “owned” by Lisa, I also engage throughout this chapter Vacarr’s and Palmer’s texts for what they make possible in answering the question of this chapter.

Writing Vulnerability: Written Reflection

According to Ochs and Capps (2001) humans exhibit a proclivity to resort to written narrative in order to construct a coherent storyline that is comforting in its regularity. Lisa exhibited this proclivity during the Independent Study, and since there

was no formal requirement to write and/or submit journal reflections, for Lisa it was a genre of choice. In fact, journaling had been a life-long habit. For example she told me she had kept her childhood journals which revealed her “always, always” interest in social justice (6.06). As Ochs and Capps have it, coming to terms with life’s experiences through writing (as opposed to talking) offers a relatively soothing resolution to bewildering events” (p. 4), but at the same time, it “flattens human experience by avoiding facets of a situation that don’t make sense within the prevailing storyline”. (p. 4). In other words, writing allows one to name and characterize a problem, and to position oneself toward the problem in ways that offer some satisfaction to the writer.

Lisa’s written reflections on her praxis “journey” did not seem to be soothing. Rather than flattening her experience, journaling lifted it in ways that made it harder to resolve. Through writing, Lisa positioned, or cast herself in ways that were increasingly self-critical, and that were also defeatist, since the positions were, to a large extent, unattainable. Working from a definition of vulnerability connoting susceptibility to harm, (from the Latin “vulnare,” to wound) I examine how journal writing enabled Lisa to open herself to unsettling ideas and/or episodes that occasioned three distinct, yet interrelated experiences of wounding vulnerability.

While I foreground evidence from the March 30th journal in this chapter, I support these excerpts with evidence from oral reflections that took place during conversations with various informants whom Lisa consulted during the Independent Study, noting that these oral reflections were enabled by the written reflection. Additionally, I use Lewis Carroll’s phrase, “Through the Looking Glass” throughout this chapter to connote Lisa’s reflective gaze in her inner-life mirror, and the phrase, “What Lisa found there” to index

various unsettling insights that rendered her vulnerable. In the following sections I show that, as Lisa went “through the looking glass” she found a racist self, a guilty self, and an excluded self.

Through the Looking Glass and what Lisa found there: “I’m racist.”

Lisa experienced vulnerability in ways that unsettled her perception of herself (since childhood) as someone who was “color-blind... open and accepting” (4.06). This unsettling is indexed in the following excerpt from her Journal:

True education for social justice includes looking at the “whole issue”, those that go deeper than celebration of our cultures. It centers around the idea of silent oppression. It’s frightening to think... overt racism is more blatant in other parts of the world, yet, it is even more frightening to think about the silent oppression that occurs everyday and that I am even a part of. (3.30.06)

Here Lisa equates “looking at the whole issue” with “the idea of silent oppression” and clearly states she is part of such “silent oppression.” By inference, then, in order to be part of true education for social justice, she will need to change being a part of silent oppression. This sets the tone for her reflection. Lisa’s use of the written reflection here to confess being a part of the problem of oppression and racism suggests that she finds the problem of “living as an agent of social justice” (March 28th) a lot more demanding and complex than ‘fixing’ her teaching methods and approaches. Just as the storybook Alice jumped willingly and innocently down the Rabbit Hole, Lisa uses the vehicle of written reflection to “go deeper” into what she calls “true” social justice.

The unsettling of her prior sense of herself as “color-blind” and “accepting” continues as she reflects on the Rigoberta Menchú lesson:

I realized that I was practically drowned in vulnerability. When I walked to the front of the classroom to begin teaching, I was incredibly intimidated by the faces staring back at me. The most intimidating person was the substitute, an African-

American woman. I suddenly had an overwhelming feeling of “Who am I to be discussing oppression and racism?” I was so worried about being politically correct and stumbling to find the right word, “black or African-American” and “should I say minority?” that I ended up going blank. (3.30.06)

The excerpt above makes clearer what Lisa means by “silent oppression” and what she means by being part of that. What Lisa sees in the mirror as she analyzes a difficult teaching moment is a person whose status as a privileged white woman makes her silently complicit with the very oppression and racism she wants to challenge. The language here (Who am I to be discussing racism and oppression?) suggests that Lisa believes she (that is, something connected to her white identity), rather than some aspect of her praxis is the barrier to the bridge she wants to build with students. Suddenly, when face to face with an African American woman she experiences the shock of disequilibrium.

The link between Lisa’s discomfort here and something about her white identity is made more explicit through analysis of her repeated question, “Who am I to be discussing racism and oppression?” Lisa’s reliance on a quasi-direct quote of her own recalled thought (“Who am I to be discussing oppression and racism?”), phrased in the present tense, works to bring the lived moment forward into the present. Moreover, “Who am I” not only suggests the profound effect it had on her in the first place, but also indicates that it is an ongoing problem. Implied in this question is the sense that she, a white person, has not personally experienced racism and oppression and therefore has not earned the right to speak. Thus, Lisa positions, or casts herself as a fraud. This is corroborated by a comment she made while reflecting orally on this incident at the end of

the Independent Study, “I think I felt like, invalid, at the time, and that she [the sub] was valid in what she had to say, because she had probably experienced it” (8.06).

An oral underscore. As Lisa wrote a “racist” character into being in her journal (above) the written account prompted oral reflections on the same episode, the encounter with the African American substitute teacher. For example, in a conversation I facilitated with Ruth (an African American teacher candidate) and Marissa (a white teacher candidate) ⁶ Lisa told the women,

I got worried starting to talk about ideas of race, and ideas, like, these ideas in front of this substitute, because she was, she was, she was a different race than I was, and it was really, really uncomfortable because I was worried that I would say something that would come out the wrong way and that I would come across like not how I actually feel, and I actually, I shut down, we just stopped talking about it. We just did the worksheet thing and I was so angry at myself, and I ended up leaving. I literally had like an anxiety attack over it because I felt so uncomfortable not having the right words that I just couldn’t...

Note that in this oral conversation event Lisa’s representation of her experience of vulnerability and intimidation in the written journal is mirrored and actually acted out, or performed as she appears to struggle to identify the substitute teacher as “African American” as she clearly does in the March 30th journal. Instead, she enacts the moment of groping for the right words as she stammers, “she was, she was, she was a different race than I was.” This particular occurrence of being tongue-tied as performed in the repetition of “she was, she was” and finally the utterance, “she was a different race than I

⁶ As explicated in Chapter 2, I facilitated this conversation with two other teacher candidates from a neighboring college of education. One of these women was African American and one white, and both were highly engaged with personal interrogations of how their own racial identities played out in their commitment to living in neighborhoods that were largely populated by African American people. I had met these two students during my Masters graduate work and later interviewed them for a doctoral course research project. Lisa often talked about feeling alone in her commitment to social justice and I thought a meeting with other interested students who were actively and openly promoting discussions about race in their neighborhood might help move Lisa along in her own project.

was,” was re-enacted in a conversation that took place in late April with Lisa, Sharon (the classroom mentor teacher) and me. In this conversation, as Lisa fills her mentor teacher in on the details of the Sub incident she once again performs the stumbling for words that she writes about in the March 30th journal, and thus relives the experience of vulnerability. This conversation took place three weeks after the March 30th lesson (and written reflection), and just as was the case when she told the story to Marissa and Ruth (in early April) she avoided using the descriptive term “Black” or African American with reference to the substitute teacher.

I struggled with how to talk about issues of race with someone else in here that I didn’t know...And, and she was, um, what her, she was a different ethnicity, and it really, I struggled with it. I felt bad. (4.06)

Note the repetition here of two complete (though short) utterances, “I struggled.” The repetition of these two cohesive statements serves to highlight the incoherence of the words sandwiched between these two assertions, where the very incoherence acts out, or performs the struggle: “And, and she was, um, what her, she was a different ethnicity”. Ochs and Capps (2001) distinguish oral reflection from written reflection, pointing out that while writers and speakers are both pulled by conflicting desires for coherence and authenticity, oral conversation tolerates more fragmentation and “flights into authenticity” (Morson, 1983). Thus, writing may enable more control over the kind of self a writer constructs than is possible in oral conversation. Rather than pitting journal reflection against oral conversation, based on the evidence above I posit an interconnection between written and oral reflection where the oral reflection became a double encounter, or undergoing that occasioned further vulnerability. The act Lisa performed through her oral reflections heightened the role she cast for herself in the

written journal. Moreover, had Lisa not first written her “racist” character into being in her journal it is possible we would not have talked about it in our conversations. Thus, the written account of the incident with the African-American Sub prompted oral reflections on the same incident that acted in much the same way as does the habit of underlining aspects of one’s writing for emphasis. Thus, oral reflections deepened, or underscored Lisa’s vulnerability as the incident was relived, and the vulnerability re-enacted.

Through the Looking Glass and what Lisa found there:

“I’m fundamentally flawed.”

The coda, or evaluative statement that concludes the utterance above, “I felt bad,” taken together with the phrase, “I was so angry with myself,” as confessed earlier in April to Marissa and Ruth positions Lisa as penitent, suggests a growing sense of “*mea culpa*,” or “my badness”. Granted, saying one “feels bad” is not the same thing as acknowledging that one is bad. However, Lisa uses her journal to position herself as being “bad,” rather than merely feeling bad. As the journal excerpt below suggests, in response to her frustration at being silenced by political correctness, which Lisa says is a “force”, or a problem, or a “mess” (3.30.06) Lisa believes that, although it will take much courage, she must jump into that mess and learn to connect with her students, even at the cost of personal vulnerability.

I believe what I need most at this stage is the assurance that I can look into the mirror and see into myself so that I can examine my own faults and self in order to gain self-knowledge. If I run from myself, how am I ever going to help my students see beyond the image? I need to learn to hold real dialogue and jump into the mess in order to define it. I have been realizing that this takes more courage than I previously thought. It seems like it should be natural, but with every layer I uncover; I become more vulnerable. (3.30.06)

Of particular note here is that Lisa wants to look into the mirror and see “into herself,” and to examine her “faults and self” so that the reflected image her students will see will be a new, or changed self – which, by extension, suggests there is something wrong with the former image. Since the entire journal is Lisa’s attempt to confront her white privilege, it is plausible to believe that in the phrase “see beyond the image,” by “image” Lisa refers to the white face she sees in her mirror, the white identity it represents, and the privileged status that goes along with it. Thus, Lisa expresses here that she wants her students to see her as a changed person, one who wants to challenge, rather than trade on the privileges she enjoys by having been born white. As she told me in June,

If I had that discussion about race again, I would say, “Me, coming from the culture I come from, and the race that I am, I have had benefits.” And, you know, giving stories and explanations where, you know, “Wow, that has never happened to me. And it won’t happen to me”. You know? In...explaining that...Until last year, I didn’t realize that I contribute to it by not...by taking all these advantages. (June 2006)

In the above oral reflection Lisa engages in a moment of imagined praxis that is distinctly reminiscent of the above journal entry. Lisa creates a scenario of “jumping into the mess” – that is, the mess of being silenced by political correctness that made her afraid to say anything in case she said the wrong thing. The June oral reflection also mirrors the acknowledgement of guilt (for “taking all these advantages”) expressed in the March 30th journal with her question, “Who am I to be discussing racism and oppression?” But by saying, “that... won’t happen to me,” Lisa implies that in spite of all her efforts, she will never be able to change the fact that she is white, no more than a leopard can change its spots. While she never refers to herself as that leopard, I argue

here that she represents herself as “spotted,” that is she pathologizes her ‘self.’ We may infer she feels bad she thinks there is something fundamentally problematic (flawed) about her white identity and being in the world as a white woman. Lisa’s experience of vulnerability, then, is related to this sense of futility.

Through the Looking Glass and What Lisa Found There: I’m an Outsider!

Lisa prefaced her March 30th journal by quoting Vacarr:

As scholarship in the field of diversity and multiculturalism grows and expands, a bridge must be built between our intellectual understanding of difference, power fear, domination, shame, oppression, isolation, and connection and our capacity to enter into these human experiences vulnerably and fully. (Vacarr, p. 294)

By choosing to treat this quote from Vacarr as an epigraph for the March 30th journal Lisa demonstrates a commitment to Vacarr’s notion of bridging the gap between a theoretical and a lived experience of human suffering. In this way Lisa brings her critical stance of practical morality (as explicated in prior chapters) and the spirituality and education goals that mobilize Vacarr’s stance into conversation with each other in her “peculiar praxis”. Lisa’s intention to bridge difference is aligned with her praxis goal, expressed in a February journal, of identifying with her students. She wrote,

Over the next few weeks, I am going to observe and talk with the students about their lives, school and community and use these ideas to help frame the question [for a project]. It’s like the whole emic/etic thing in research. I need to approach this from an insider’s perspective so that I am able to see and know the hidden curriculum that takes place everyday at school for my students. As an outsider, I may miss some of this or misconstrue the meanings of certain actions, dialogue and events. As an insider, I need to jump into my students’ heads and see things from their perspectives so that I can help make this project meaningful for them and find ways to give them ownership. (2.19.15)

In spite of this stance, rather than “jumping into her students’ heads” Lisa used her March reflective journal to jump into her own head:

I believe what I need most at this stage is the assurance that I can look into the mirror and see into myself so that I can examine my own faults and self in order to gain self-knowledge. If I run from myself, how am I ever going to help my students see beyond the image? I need to learn to hold real dialogue and jump into the mess in order to define it. I have been realizing that this takes more courage than I previously thought. It seems like it should be natural, but with every layer I uncover; I become more vulnerable. (3.30.06)

Lisa's words clearly reflect Palmer's explication of mirror gazing and show Lisa's reliance on Palmer's (1998) thought as seen below:

The entanglements I experience in the classroom are often no more or less than the convolutions of my inner life. Viewed from this angle, teaching holds a mirror to the soul. If I am willing to look in that mirror and not run from what I see, I have a chance to gain self-knowledge – and knowing myself is as crucial to good teaching as knowing my students and my subject. (p.2)

In the context of Palmer's exhortation not to run from what one sees in the reflective mirror, Lisa's utterance "If I run from myself how am I ever going to help my students see beyond the image?" indexes that Lisa does, in fact "see things from her students' perspectives" as she had hoped to do (1.19.06). However, this happened not by jumping inside their heads, but inside her own head. As evidenced in former sections, Lisa uses the journal to cast herself as "the oppressor", and that is what she believes her students see when they look at her. Paradoxically, then, instead of becoming an "insider", as Lisa uses the March 30th journal to cast herself as a white oppressor, she positions herself as the "other" – an outsider – and this breaks down the bridge she hoped to build.

This positioning of herself as "other" may be seen as Lisa used the March reflection to locate in the collective "we" white teachers:

The political correctness of the classroom and world is a force that I constantly struggle with. Beyond being a force, it is practically an institution. It seems as though it is another barrier that is imposed to stop us dealing with what Wink

refers to as “the mess.”⁷ We struggle over the definition; particularly, as white teachers in minority schools. (See, I even hate the connotation minority holds). It’s as if there’s an elephant looming in the room, that even those people who are aware of it are unable to come up with the language to define it. (3.30.06)

Moreover, by the end of the Independent study Lisa was naming herself as the minority:

I think it was overwhelming for me, when I think about it, last year, because it was... They’re so aware of inequalities that existed and willing to discuss it and wanting to discuss it that sometimes it put you in a vulnerable position too... But when you’re the minority in the classroom, it, it’s hard to approach that discussion because I don’t... it was hard for me to... I didn’t want to be, I didn’t want to ask questions that reinforced, um, I guess misconceptions or that hurt any person involved in the discussion. (6.06)

Hence, Lisa’s positioning of herself as a “White” problem in the March 30th journal opened the way for her to explicitly position herself as “the minority” as seen in the excerpt above. This flew in the face of her hope to be an “insider.”

To return to the March journal, Lisa’s experience of feeling silenced in the face of political correctness helps to explain what she means by writing that she is part of what she calls “silent,” as opposed to overt racism. It is as if “the mess” Lisa set about originally to name and address, that is, the mess, or problem of “oppression and racism” is no longer a social reality that exists “out there” somewhere, but more poignantly, a reality that exists within herself. That she wants to – or feels the need to change this – is suggested in her words, “If I run from myself, how am I ever going to help my students see beyond the image?” The fact that she wants to help her students see something other

⁷ Wink’s (2000) definition of “mess” is important here. In the context of school, “a mess is anything that is not working for someone”. The object (according to Wink) of critical pedagogy is to collaboratively identify “messes” and to work collaboratively to “fix” them.

than what she sees in her mirror strengthens the claim that she is positioning herself here as an outsider, not the insider she hoped to be.

In positioning herself as one of “we white teachers” it is noteworthy that Lisa personifies political correctness as a force; this works to shift culpability from herself to an elusive elephant in the room. Lisa also off-loads guilt by positioning herself in the collective “we white teachers in minority schools” (3.30.06), then catches herself on the problem of language that inscribes difference: “See, I even hate the connotation of the word minority”. In the overall context of this March 30th journal, the words “we” white teachers “struggle over the definition” reference Lisa’s personal struggle to find words to talk about racism and oppression that will not “other” – as do words such as “minority.” However, Lisa’s use of the word “real” in her self-remonstrance: “I need to jump into the mess and hold real dialogue” implies more than word choice and instead references her commitment to “real” change through examination of her “own faults and self” (3.30.06).

The word *real* then, suggests that Lisa believes “real dialogue” will involve becoming “real”, by aligning her outward stance of anti-racism with the white-privileged self her mirror examination has revealed. All these thoughts, in spite of their expressed intentionality of alignment with students, work to position Lisa apart from them.

Recall, Lisa’s personal philosophy of literacy education (Fall, 2005) included the statement, “My ultimate goal as a teacher is that students will leave my room believing that there is power in language and it is being used and can be used to construct their world” (Literacy Course paper, 2005). At the end of the Independent Study Lisa repeated this stance as she described how she thought of critical literacy: “You have the power to change the way words effect the world so the next generation, it can change. You’ve

gotta rewrite it. You've gotta rewrite your history" (June 2006). Here, the modalizer "gotta" conveys her personal sense of urgency and moral compunction. However, in the March 30th journal, by the very act of mirror-gazing/self-examination she writes herself into being as a silent oppressor -- a racist -- and thereby ends up positioning herself as the quintessential outsider! This would preclude the hope of connecting so intimately with students and their concerns as to "jump inside" their heads.

Once again, the March 30th reflection prompted an oral comment several weeks later:

I had to take myself back and go look in the mirror and think about the language I was using, and how, "What was I actually thinking?" 'Cause yes, I'm so interested in these issues, but even I realize that I talk from a white perspective of - an "us" perspective. And I go, "Whoa." It kind of knocks you for a loop. (April 2006).

Since the above utterance constitutes an oral revisiting of the encounter with the African American substitute teacher, the question "What was I actually thinking?" parallels, or mirrors Lisa's concern in her March 30th written reflection on the same incident, "Who am I to be discussing racism and oppression?" With the words, "Who am I to be discussing racism and oppression" Lisa clearly positions herself as an outsider, someone who, in effect, has not paid her dues. Rather than building a bridge of connectivity with students, Lisa's self-examination in the March 30th journal opens her to further vulnerability as she highlights her own "otherness." As she explains in April, "I come from a white perspective" which sets up an us/other discourse where whiteness is the default standard. Thus, Lisa "others" not necessarily by intention -- but merely by being white, and because that is something she cannot change, it seems her hope of

assuming an insider stance is threatened and a profound vulnerability is thereby occasioned.

Discussion

The Bridge to Nowhere

The evidence presented in the sections above enhances an understanding of Field and Latta's (2001) notion of being "re-membered" by experience, where such re-membering is consistent with something unsettling, or disturbing that, according to Field and Latta, "requires one to be a different person in a different place" (p. 9). The evidence provides windows into the vulnerability occasioned as the beliefs she had become accustomed to holding about herself were shattered - "I'm so interested in these issues - but even I realize that I talk from a white perspective" (4.06). However, the evidence challenges Field and Latta's assertion that experience transforms one if one "takes seriously what happens" (p. 9). Lisa's thoughtful analysis in the March 30th journal bespeaks the seriousness with which Lisa took what happened to her: as she explained in April, "I had to take myself back and go look in the mirror and think about the [white perspective] language I was using," and the "shattering of an accustomed way of life" (Risser 1997, p. 90.) is performed in her utterance, "And I go, 'Whoa'. It kinda knocks you for a loop" (4.06).

What is not clear, however, is whether the vulnerability thus occasioned is necessarily productive. As Friere (1993) reminds us, "discovering himself [sic] to be an oppressor may cause considerable anguish, but it does not necessarily lead to solidarity with the oppressed" (p. 31). Indeed, in Lisa's case, I argue that, in writing the reflective journal she not only underwent the pain of the original episode all over again, but, in

“taking it seriously” through insightful analysis, she underwent something much more profound, that is, the re-membering of her white identity. This had a paralyzing impact on both her personal and praxis journeys.

As Field and Latta (2001) contend, in citing Heidegger (1971), “undergoing” may be construed as “suffering”: “When we talk of undergoing an experience we mean specifically that the experience is not exactly of our own making; to undergo here means that we endure it, suffer it, receive it as it strikes us and submit to it. (Heidegger, 1971, p. 57). While the evidence of Section 2 leaves little doubt that Lisa experienced suffering by encountering the unexpected, the same evidence challenges notions of suffering and submission as necessarily productive. What happens now that Lisa’s fundamental “rightness” has been challenged by her self-examination?

Additionally, Field and Latta draw on Weinsheimer’s (1985) sense that “having an experience means that we change our minds, reorient and reconcile ourselves to a new situation” (p. 203). These ideas of reconciliation and re-orientation are consistent with Field and Latta’s (2001) conviction that one is “re-membered,” or required by experience to be a different person in a different place (p. 9). However, what happens when it is not possible (as in Lisa’s case) to become a different person, that is, when you believe yourself to be a problem just by being white? Through her reflective journaling, it is as if Lisa is not re-membered, but almost dis-membered. Again, is there a point where too much suffering is counterproductive?

In conclusion, the evidence presented in Section 3 above challenges Vacarr’s (2001) conviction that vulnerability (necessarily) becomes a bridge of connectivity with the “other” because Lisa used the March reflective journal “to bind herself in a fixed past

and a frozen future” (Field and Latta, p. 12). This happened as, enabled through written reflection, Lisa named a problem - her white identity – that could not be “fixed.” The vulnerability thus occasioned worked to distance her from her students, augment her sense of difference, and, set up an impossible task of completing a moral praxis journey that conflated problem-naming and moral action. The evidence of this chapter suggests critical, that is agonistic conversations might be opened among teacher educators that invite us to wrestle with unforeseen consequences of currently accepted practices of teacher education. Below I suggest three such critical conversations.

Complicating the urgency to unpack White privilege. The findings reported in this chapter complicate three durable practices in Teacher Education; the practice of urging teacher education students to “unpack” white privilege, the practice of teacher reflection through written journaling, and the practice of urging teacher education students to go on “personal” journeys of transformation. McIntosh (1988), in her seminal work on uncovering white privilege notes, “As a white person, I realized I had been taught about racism as something that puts others at a disadvantage, but had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, white privilege, which puts me at an advantage.” I suggest something of this order is going on as Lisa comes face to face with the African American substitute teacher. She is about to launch a lesson geared to teach precisely what McIntosh wrote about – that is, to teach that racism is something that puts others at a disadvantage. Suddenly, with the recognition that by an accident of birth she has never personally experienced oppression and racism she becomes brutally aware of her own advantage and is virtually catapulted into an experience of unpacking white privilege.

One thing that McIntosh's essay does not account for is the difference between unpacking white privilege intellectually and unpacking in the moment.

Additionally, McIntosh's essay does not address the effect of the audience for, and the atmosphere in which, white people unpack their privilege. I suggest Lisa's experience of struggling for words, and of finding a way of talking about societal problems (in her case, racism and oppression) may be at least partially understood as a difficulty in undergoing such vulnerability in a particular context. As Lisa tried to speak about racism and oppression, her words entered a tension-filled environment based on, among other things, Lisa's conflicted feelings about her status of privilege and what that may say (wordlessly, silently) to someone who has experienced some level of oppression and racism either personally or structurally. Of course a tense atmosphere may consist of many more factors other than the one Lisa raised with respect to race. Lisa acknowledges this. She says, for example, that she was dealing with "outside tensions" (March 30) in her personal life before the Menchu lesson, and she also told Marissa and Ruth that "it got really uncomfortable for me, because I didn't know who the substitute was at all – I had never met her, she just was in there watching the lesson, which was awkward for me anyways" (April, 2006). Aside from these expected tensions common to new (and even more seasoned) teachers, Lisa's representation in her March 30th journal of an experience of devastating speechlessness as a white woman interacting with a woman of color, combined with her performance of searching for the "right" words when speaking to another woman of color suggests that teacher educators would do well to pay attention to audience and atmosphere in their preparation of teacher candidates. Lisa's disequilibrium in the original incident and her repeated episodes of stumbling for words, as she later

conversed about the original incident, suggest that intellectual preparedness and will on the part of prospective white teachers to work for social change among an increasingly diverse American student population are not enough to prepare prospective teachers for the difficulties they may experience in their commitments to “know” their students and connect with their concerns.

Lisa’s perception of being silently part of the problem (3.30.06), that is, of being silently oppressive “by taking all these advantages” (6.06) without openly admitting them is consistent with Critical Race Theory’s position that white privilege constitutes individual and institutional manifestations of racism even if it is indirect or unintentional, a stance that also reflects Critical Race Theory as it touches education (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). That said, attempts to unpack white privilege may give rise to a debilitating sense of guilt, as the evidence of this chapter suggests was the case with Lisa, who even began to doubt her self worth in the process.

Complicating the use of reflective journals. I was another audience with whom Lisa contended in the tension-filled atmosphere of our Independent Study. Even though Lisa’s journaling was voluntary and I did not “grade” these written reflections, I did function as an important audience for these texts. As Fendler (2003) points out, referring to the history of pedagogy that shows a steady shift from “training behaviours, to educating minds, to disciplining souls” (p. 22), journal disclosure can be a “form of surveillance and an exercise of pastoral power” (p. 22), or may enable confession and/or therapy (Gore, 1993, p. 150). I explore my interactions with Lisa in greater detail in Chapter 5; however, I will note here that, as readers of preservice teachers’ written reflections, teacher educators complicate the practice identified by Ochs and Capps’

(2001), namely that people use writing to seek regularity and resolution of bewildering events, making selections that hide, in the finished product, the “oscillations, ambiguities and uncertainties of real-time experience” (p. 22). While agreeing, in general, with that point, I argue that the very same selectivity allows writers to hide some things, and set others in bold relief in ways that may be dangerous. I have shown throughout the chapter, that, while the original experience of teaching the Menchu lesson was debilitating in itself (she “shut down”, and left that day with an anxiety attack) it was only as Lisa made sense of this experience in her journal, that she openly cast this as an act of “silent oppression,” and, by extension, cast herself in increasingly negative ways. Moreover, through the writing Lisa opened herself to revisit unsettling (and potentially painful) episodes, and did so in front of me.

Complicating the notion of transformation as a personal journey. Chapter 3 explored Lisa’s engagement with a praxis journey. Consistent with critical pedagogy’s reliance on a utopian solution, this journey was supposed to begin with naming a problem and addressing it through integrative curriculum, but this bounded expectation promoted feelings of failure. In the midst of Lisa’s attempts to move toward a utopian solution, however, she was confronted with the expectation for a related, but more personal journey that also had a utopian expectation of transformation, and was similarly mobilized by urgency.

While, as I have stated above, the concerns raised by the evidence of this chapter suggest it may be useful for teacher educators to problematize the practice of teacher reflection through journaling, there is no doubt that in Lisa’s case, the openness to danger was heightened by literature that urged self-examination and, in effect, to go on what

Nieto (2000) calls a “teacher’s personal journey” (p. 184). Just as the storybook Alice caught sight of the White Rabbit and plunged without concern “Down the Rabbit Hole,” Lisa, following Vacarr (2001) and Palmer (1998) jumped willingly down a metaphorical rabbit hole, and found herself in a place that, while it promised to be liberating turned out to be confining. Like Alice, Lisa could not seem to find her way in the Garden of Change she sought. While it is true, as Nieto says, that the journey metaphor implies change “along the way,” that very language implies a fixed destination one will arrive at sooner or later. In the case of a personal journey, a personal transformation, the metaphor implies a changed self. This, as the evidence of this chapter suggests, may take the teacher into a realm of self-blame that invites questioning of one’s fundamental “rightness” that can be not only frightening but debilitating. I repeat here Vacarr’s proclamation:

As scholarship in the field of diversity and multiculturalism grows and expands, a bridge must be built between our intellectual understanding of difference, power fear, domination, shame, oppression, isolation, and connection and our capacity to enter into these human experiences vulnerably and fully. (Vacarr, p. 294)

Vacarr’s use here of the modal verb “must” reflects a Modernist reliance on the notion of “moral imperative” to bring about ultimate, or utopian change. While she describes one experience of dwelling vulnerably in a race-related moment in her own practice, the article features only the desired end product of that personal journey, without featuring the woundedness and pain that is (by definition) the essence of vulnerability. Moreover, Vacarr implies that whatever the cost of vulnerability to an individual, it is a worthwhile cost since it will (and “must”) build a bridge that links, instead of divides one from another.

However, the evidence of this chapter has told a different story. A sampling of Lisa's written expressions describing her experience of looking in the mirror to achieve self-knowledge is telling; these include "I was practically drowned in vulnerability," "I was incredibly intimidated," "I suddenly got an overwhelming feeling" (3.30.06). What is more, those expressions are mirrored in her oral expressions: "I was worried," "It was really, really uncomfortable," "It was scary" (4.06). Taken together, these and other utterances with which this chapter is replete suggest the cost of the vulnerable stance advocated explicitly by Vacarr, and implicitly in Palmer (1998) as a means of knowing oneself in order to know (and connect with) students, must be accounted for.

What is more, the experience of vulnerability occasioned by Lisa's self-examination (recorded in her journal and echoed in a number of oral conversations) rather than building a bridge, created a barrier that distanced her from the students she so wanted to identify with. Thus, by using her journal to uncover layer after layer of "fault" and "self," Lisa did "practically" drown in vulnerability, and – with the bridge crumbling – the entire journey was threatened. Not only was there a great personal cost to Lisa through her soul-searching, but the resultant vulnerability proved to be too suffocating to allow her to notice that the very experience of drowning itself was (potentially) that bridge that might have enabled her to "jump inside her students' heads" as she had hoped to do (2.19. 06), a point that will be pursued in Chapter 6.

Chapter 4 has shown that in contrast to her difficulty in naming a problem with respect to the enactment journey, in the case of the personal journey Lisa did name a problem – that is, the problem of her whiteness. Since this was not something she could ever fix, or change, the journey threatened to come to a halt.

In the next chapter (5), I continue to probe how vulnerability was occasioned through reflection, focusing on what happened when Lisa shared her journal with me.

CHAPTER FIVE:

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS: A REFLEXIVE (P)TOOL OF TEARS

The way Dinah washed her children's faces was this: first she held the poor thing down by its ear with one paw, and then with the other paw she rubbed its face all over, the wrong way, beginning at the nose: and just now, as I said, she was hard at work on the white kitten, which was lying quite still and trying to purr – no doubt feeling that it was all meant for its good. (Carroll, 1832-1898. In Gardener, 2000, p. 141)

“What have you got to say for yourself? Now don't interrupt me!” she went on, holding up one finger. “I'm going to tell you all your faults. Number one: you squeaked twice while Dinah was washing your face this morning. Now you can't deny it, Kitty: I heard you!” (Carroll, 1832-1898. In Gardener, 2000 p. 141)

Chapter 4 focused particularly on Lisa's personal journey of transformation, an interior journey characterized by vulnerability that created a barrier, instead of a bridge (Vacarr, 2001) of connectivity with her students' life concerns. Thus, Lisa's vulnerability impeded passage to either a transformed self or a transformed practice; defined by structsturalist coordinates both the personal journey and also the praxis journey were non-journeys, since the designated end was not reached. A key finding was that writing a reflective journal enabled Lisa to cast, or position herself in ways that tended to provide a script that influenced *oral reflections* on the same events, thus embellishing her vulnerability.

Chapter five is a continuation of this investigation of Lisa's personal journey effected through reflection. Whereas Chapter 4 focused on the vulnerability that was occasioned through writing a journal, Chapter 5 will investigate the vulnerability occasioned through Lisa's choice to share the journal with me and will thus focus on oral

reflections prompted by the March 30th and other journals. The question that guides this chapter is, “What happened to Lisa as she engaged in verbal reflection with Marjorie, prompted by the March 30th journal?” The central argument of this chapter is that, whereas Lisa used the written reflection to name her white self and White identity as “the problem,” once the journal was shared with Marjorie, this afforded insider knowledge that allowed Marjorie to name Lisa’s White identity as “the problem.” In so doing, both the praxis and personal journeys were mutually compromised. Taken together the two chapters highlight an aspect of reflection and that has both promise and pitfalls, namely the social construction of identities.

On page 149 (following) the reader will find a written explanation of a visual concept map of this chapter that appears on the facing page 150.

Explanation of Figure 4: Concept Map of Chapter 5

The areas shaded in patterned gray, index that the oral reflection was related to the Menchu Lesson and to the Everyday People Lesson. The broken line between the “Attempts” rectangle and the Intervention Oval and the broken line between the “Lisa with Marjorie” rectangle and the Intervention Oval index that the oral reflection complicated, rather than facilitated Lisa’s praxis goal.

The picture of Alice and Mouse indexes that the oral reflection became a reflexive pool of Marjorie’s and Lisa’s mirrored—and disappointed— hopes and goals. The picture also represents Marjorie’s involvement in Lisa’s experience of “shame”; hence, the oral reflection was a pedagogical intervention that occasioned a (P)tool of tears.

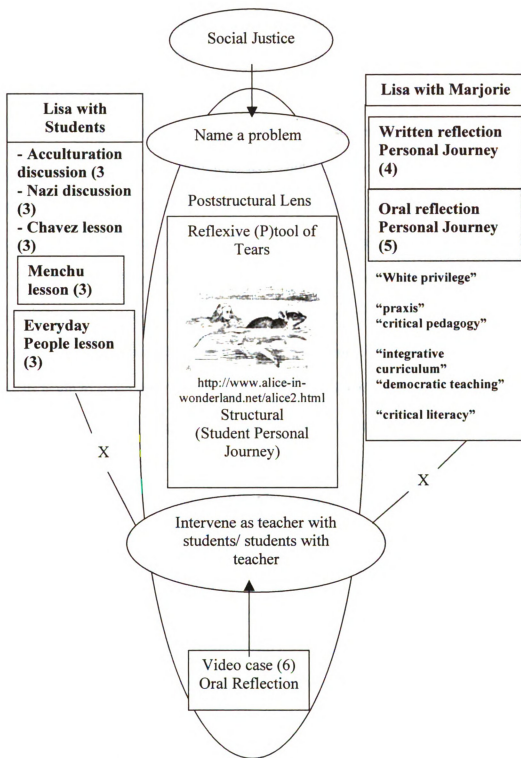


Figure 4. Concept Map of Chapter 5: Lisa's Experience of a Personal Journey Rabbit Hole Enabled through Oral Reflection

Learning to be White: Lisa's Independent Study Texts

Lisa's experience of this oral reflection was influenced by two key pieces of literature. The first of these was Thandeka's, (1999) *Learning to be White: Money, Race and God in America*, a book I gave to Lisa after her encounter with the African American Substitute teacher detailed in Chapter 4. This study complicates treatments of white identity as accounts of power and privilege, as Thandeka argues the origins of white identity are created out of shame. According to Thandeka this "shame" arises as white people feel defeated and ashamed, not necessarily by their own early encounters with the "other," but as those in their primary care circles react to their color-blind choices. This sets up a cycle whereby, says Thandeka, whites draw their circle tighter in order to preserve their primary alliances. The unforeseen consequence, however, is that individuals begin to sense that "something about one's white identity is not quite right" and shame grows. Thandeka argues that Martin Luther King missed something important when he focused on the need for "white America's humble acknowledgement of guilt and an honest knowledge of the self" (p.22). What he missed, according to Thandeka, was the ways in which whites feel racially abused, based on experiences "of feeling diminished by their own communities" (p.83) if they crossed racial lines in actions such as bringing friends of color home. This is but a brief abstract of a complex argument, but I mention it here because during the April conversation with Ms. Harper and me (that forms the basis of this chapter), Lisa mentioned how influential this book had been, and referred back to her encounter with the African American substitute as an exemplar of its influence:

That book just really opened up my, like I was explaining to Sharon how I even, I mean, I did. I shut down in here because I realized I'm going – I had to take myself back and go look in the mirror and think about the language I was using, and how, "What was I actually thinking?" (4.06)

Ms. Harpers' instantaneous response was to say, "May I tell you mine?" (4.06), that is to say, she was eager to offer her story of learning to be white. Lisa said that after reading the book she began to recall some bigoted remarks made by her father, and her mother's reaction to "keep him in line" (4.06). The reader may recall I included more details about Lisa's account of learning to be white under "Portrait of Lisa" in Chapter 2.

A second piece of literature that influenced Lisa in terms of this chapter is Herbert Kohl's (1984) *Growing minds :On becoming a teacher*, and in particular Kohl's notion of "sprache" (thoughtful talk). This book, and its influence will be discussed in the final section of this chapter.

Speaking Vulnerability: Theoretical Perspective

This chapter draws on Field and Latta's (2001) assertion that: "Educational experience...is not simply a private psychological affair or an individual accomplishment but a collective undertaking, what Arendt (1958) would call action – that which reveals our possibilities" (p. 12). Consistent with Arendt's conception of "action" as moral praxis in the Aristotelian sense, Field and Latta argue that mutually interdependent learning and teaching is an "ethical responsibility" (p.15). They do not imply co-teaching (between the mentor teacher and the preservice teacher), nor participatory action research; rather—and also consistent with Arendt's focus on the conversational aspects of "action" (moral praxis)—Field and Latta highlight what is made possible (for teachers and students) by "engaging... in a conversation oriented towards" the teacher's experience (p. 15).

These notions are particularly salient to the conversations featured in this chapter. The central conversation featured in this chapter's analysis was facilitated for the purpose

of catching Sharon up on Lisa's experiences that had taken place in her absence, and moving forward to frame the long-awaited project. In that sense, this conversation was not based on what Lisa had done "wrong," or technical things she could "improve" upon; rather, it was a conversation that was intended to be "oriented towards" Lisa's experience—that is, "action," in Arendt's (1958) sense. However, the evidence of this chapter challenges Field and Latta's assumption that conversation oriented towards experience will be a conjoint ethical endeavor.

Bridging the experience of written and oral reflection. Consistent with Field and Latta's (2001) contention that educational experience is a conjoint ethical responsibility, in order to highlight the interconnection of this chapter on oral reflection and the preceding chapter on written reflection, I extend Vacarr's (2001) notion of the bridge metaphor to the concept of vulnerability as understood in terms of venturing forth to play the game "Bridge." Whereas the storybook Alice jumped down the rabbit-hole and found herself enmeshed in a game of Chess, Lisa jumped into a rabbit-hole of self-examination and became involved in a game of Bridge with Sharon (the mentor teacher) and Marjorie, the teacher of the independent study.

In "Bridge" partners who are ahead in a "rubber" (or "set: or "match") have more to gain if they win overall, and, by the same mathematical accounting, more to lose if they fail. It is not just the point value that is at stake, but the fate of the partners is inextricably interwoven. Because the winning partnership has more to lose and because so much depends on the partner's decisions, a winning team is said to have "vulnerability." In a word, if you are not vulnerable you can afford to take more risks,

but, at the same time, if you are willing to risk it, being vulnerable means you stand to gain a lot in the long run.

The point I wish to make here is a socio-cultural one having to do with the notion of connectivity and the way a Bridge player's vulnerability rating (and partners' actions taken in response to that vulnerability), mutually affect the connection – that is, the bridge! Once Lisa openly shared her journal with me, she moved to increase the risk – and possible benefits— of reflection. Just as in a game of Bridge, much would depend on how I might respond to her move. This analogy is consistent with Field and Latta's (2001) assertion that educational experience is not a private psychological affair, but an intra-subjective collective undertaking (p. 12). It is also reminiscent of Wortham's (2001) notion of positioning and counterpositioning in oral conversation, explained below.

The Game of "Bridge" as positioning and counterpositioning. Wortham contends "the self emerges as a person repeatedly adopts characteristic positions with respect to others and within recognizable cultural patterns in everyday social action" (p. 12). Since social contexts and the players within them are not fixed, but dynamic, so too, are self constructions complex and open-ended, unfolding through the "unpredictable counterpositioning of others" (p. 12). To explain this phenomenon of counterpositioning and its function in the construction of (unfixed, indeterminate) identities, Wortham draws on Cain (1991), who argues that members of Alcoholics Anonymous learn (through their own experiences) the exact moment to effectively perform a narrative of "bottoming out" and seeking transformation through A.A. For the transformation of the conversational partner to be accomplished, the bottomed out co-locutor must locate herself in the narrative, step into the performance, and enact an analogous transformation.

Throughout the remainder of this chapter, I will draw on the notion of counterpositioning to examine the circulation of power between Lisa and me as I explore further the experience of vulnerability Lisa highlighted in her March 30th journal and detailed in Chapter 4. In order to highlight positioning and counterpositioning, in this one chapter I conduct an analysis of one segment of conversation among Lisa, Sharon and me, relying on Wortham's five analytic tools. Specifically, these tools are reference and predication (use of nouns and modifiers) metapragmatic descriptors (use of verbs of saying and nominalized verbs that describe common speech genres), quotation (use of both direct and indirect quotative utterances), evaluative indexicals (use of recognizable expressions used habitually by recognizable types of people or groups) and epistemic modalization (the adoption of a god's eye or participant stance) (pp. 70-74). Finally, I will make use of the devices of double voicing and ventriloquating used by speakers. As Wortham explains, double voicing is the means by which "narrators articulate their own voices [and thus position themselves] by juxtaposing themselves with respect to other voices" (p. 66). This is accomplished in narrative utterance through the process of ventriloquation, whereby the narrator positions herself either close to, or far from others' words, thus revealing her position, either harmonizing or colliding with a particular represented voice. In the following section I make the claim that access to Lisa's journal gave me "written consent" to insert my own meanings into and upon her own, and offer evidence to support that claim.

The Bridge Connection: Inside(h)r Knowledge

While Lisa's journey of self-examination as detailed in Chapter 4 was unsettling she (like Alice), through her own volition, jumped down a rabbit-hole of self-

examination, “never considering how in the world she was to get out again” (p. 12).

Granted, the influence of Vacarr and Palmer was consequential, but, by sharing her journals with me, thus granting me inside(h)r knowledge, Lisa yielded herself to more direct influence than that of Vacarr or Palmer. This may be compared to Caterpillar’s relentless probing of Alice’s identity:

“Who are *you*?” said the Caterpillar...

“I – I hardly know, Sir, just at present – at least I know who I *was* when I got up this morning, but I think I must have been changed several times since then.”

“What do you mean by that?” said the Caterpillar, sternly. “Explain yourself!”

“I ca’n’t explain *myself*, I’m afraid, Sir,” said Alice, “because I’m not myself, you see.”

“I don’t see,” said the Caterpillar... “Who are *you*?” (pp. 47, 48). (Italics in Original)

Caterpillar’s fuss is related to Alice’s own confusion over her identity *du jour*, and this gets at the heart of what happened when Lisa granted access to her inner thoughts through her journal. That is, in the context of the Bridge game analogy, Lisa came to our conversations with high vulnerability that was multifaceted. Like Alice, above, Lisa (through her mirror-gazing) had already troubled her own self-confidence. Left to her own reflections she might have changed direction and written another self into being – but that choice was no longer hers alone.

Reflection on demand. Lisa’s habit of journaling appears to have been encouraged by her doctor. This was definitely the case the day she left the class with an anxiety attack after the Thursday (Menchu) lesson. Lisa told me: “and when I went in on Friday to my appointment, that’s what the doctor said. He goes, ‘You need to sit down and write and get some things out of you.’ So I started writing...and I read over [other] journals I wrote...” (Personal Communication, 4.3.06).

Of note, however, is that during this same conversation – which took place just a few days after the lesson - rather than discussing the lesson we had the following brief exchange:

Lisa: The Thursday lesson I taught to the first class, and it didn't go very well.

M.: So, which, which is the lesson you're talking about right now?

Lisa: The Tuesday lesson.

M: The Tuesday lesson, okay. (4.3.06)

Thus, Lisa chose not to discuss the upsetting “Rigoberta Menchu/African American Substitute” episode at that time. However, once she had recorded her reflections (“to get some things out of her” as her doctor had advised) and taken the next step of sharing those reflections with me, vulnerability was occasioned because reflection was no longer a matter of personal choice, as the following exemplar will show.

Through the looking glass and what Lisa found there: “Marjorie!” By sharing her journal Lisa invited me to look at her looking at her(self) in the mirror. Thus, sharing the journal occasioned further vulnerability because it gave me access to things about Lisa I could not have known had I not read her March 30th journal. Bluntly, Lisa's journal allowed me to be “in her face.” Said another way, vulnerability was occasioned through Lisa's decision to share her journal with me, since the available “inside(h)r” knowledge prompted a shift from reflection by choice to reflection on demand. This stance was not stated explicitly, but was performed in our conversations.

My own shock, upon reading how Lisa shut down when faced with the African American substitute was profound. Even had I witnessed the episode, I would have made my own, not Lisa's sense of what happened. Once I read the journal, however, I followed

up on the sense Lisa made of the moment and made the decision to have Lisa visit Marissa and Ruth as described in Chapter 4. This was particularly because Ruth is African American and I hoped an open discussion of Lisa's discomfort as described in the journal might benefit all of us.

During the conversation with Ruth and Marissa as shown in Chapter 4, Lisa had trouble saying outright that the substitute teacher was African American and instead stammered, "she was, she was, she was of a different ethnicity." I was surprised at this, because in the journal Lisa had clearly declared the source of her intimidation to be the "African American substitute teacher." I assumed Lisa was experiencing a parallel situation, only now she was worried about offending the African American woman, Ruth, instead of the African American substitute teacher, and this assumption was made possible by my inside(h)r knowledge of the journal. Although I did not say anything at the time, in a later conversation with Lisa and the mentor teacher, I drew on that inside(h)r knowledge and confronted Lisa about her hesitation:

Marjorie: Um, and by the way... did you notice that, that you weren't explicit; you didn't say, "The teacher was black and so I had trouble?"

Lisa: Oh, I didn't?

M: Mmmhmm. You talked around it, and, so, because Ruth's black, so you know, she –

Lisa: Yeah. Well, especially because I wasn't sure. Like, I can't –

M: You're not sure?

Lisa: —look at someone and –

M: You're not sure if [the substitute teacher] was African-American?

Lisa: Like Antonio, [one of the students] for example. I can't look at Antonio and tell you... What Antonio's ethnicity is... And so I think that was part of it, and part of it is I do like, decide... I don't know... now I'm trying to change doing that, and

it's hard!...And then I don't know, you know, when to use a description and when not...And how it's coming across. (4.06)

In this exchange I name Lisa's stammered utterance, "she was, she was, she was of a different ethnicity than me" as avoidance ("talking around"), a challenge made possible by my inside(h)r knowledge, since Lisa had clearly identified the substitute teacher as African American in the written journal. I also openly suggest in this exchange that Lisa's avoidance had to do with this situation paralleling the original shutdown in front of the substitute, since Ruth was also an African American. This is accomplished by my use of the word "because" in the phrase "because Ruth's black, so you know, she..." which suggests a link between Lisa's avoidance and Ruth's being a Black woman.

Naming the problem. This exchange illustrates that Inside(h)r knowledge achieved through the shared journal enabled me to assume co-authorship of Lisa's identity construction, accomplished now through oral reflection rather than through writing. The significance of this shift in terms of Lisa's ownership of her "personal" journey of transformation is striking. As the evidence of chapter 4 showed, when Lisa embarked on a personal journey of transformation she fulfilled an implicit expectation of critical pedagogy, that is, she "named" a problem: the problem she named was her own white identity. The excerpt of conversation featured above, however, suggests that I am now naming the problem: the problem I name is Lisa's white identity, and this implies co-authorship of her interior journey.

Inside(h)r knowledge and selectivity. As detailed in chapter four, Lisa made use of the attribute of selectivity that characterizes written reflection to position herself in certain ways, and not in others. Throughout the journal Lisa selected language that

constructed an identity of White privilege and cast herself as an oppressor – that is, she used verbalization “as a technique of reiteration that constructs a particular self-identity” (Fendler, 2003, p. 22). In the following analysis I show how the shared “inside(h)r knowledge enabled me to position Lisa –in certain ways, and not in others – making use of the attribute of selectivity to co-construct a “Lisa”- identity. It was, after all, Lisa’s journey—perhaps.

(S)Electing to Talk about Race

My reason for conducting a discourse analysis here was to probe for new insights that might illuminate the findings from Chapter 4. That is, I wanted to “see inside” a conversation, so to speak, in order to achieve a more nuanced perspective, and to invite the reader into the performance. Thus, in order to further examine the intersection of my positioning and Lisa’s experience of vulnerability, I turn now to an analysis of positioning and counterpositioning in the late April conversation among Lisa, Sharon Harper (the mentor teacher) and me.

The mad tea party. 8 We met in the classroom after school to discuss Lisa’s experiences up to this point, and to try to formulate a collaborative, integrative social justice project, one of the predetermined requirements of the Independent Study. In this segment of the conversation Lisa and I are telling Sharon about a conversation we had had one week earlier with Marissa and Ruth, whose involvement in the independent study is explained in the Chapter 2. This conversation was referenced repeatedly in Chapter 4. I remind the reader here, that, the transcript is presented in conversation format, in speaker turns, and as explained in the Chapter 2, in order to make the talk accessible to critical

⁸ A literary allusion to the famous tea party in Carrol’s 1832-1898, *Alice in wonderland*.

educators who may not be familiar with formal discourse analytic conventions, I have not adopted Wortham's (2001) or any other transcription conventions. Instead, as with other analyses throughout the dissertation, I have used informal conventions such as the use of the bold key, underline key and italics to highlight aspects of the talk. The quote below from "Alice" is intended to convey my assumption of a leadership role (in spite of the fact this was Sharon's classroom).

At last the Mouse, who seemed to be a person of some authority among them, called out "Sit down, all of you, and listen to me!" (Carroll, 1832-1898. In Gardener, 2000, p.29).

Discourse Segment 1

M Thanks very much for the iced tea, by the way.

L: It's really good, actually!

SH: It's good when it's cold.

M: We were talking because, um, I took Lisa out to meet the two young women [Ruth and Marissa] from, um, [a near-by faith-based college with a TE program] that I did life-history interviews with last summer. Um, they're just two young people I happen to know who are very interested in social justice teaching. One of them has the perspective of being African-American, and the other one has the perspective of being um, white and deeply concerned to bring issues of racial identity into the classroom. That is, "What is it about who we are that affects, um, what we do, what we say, what we think, in terms of teaching?"

My words in this segment serve as an abstract (Labov and Waletzky, 1967) introducing the content to follow, and by selecting the topic of conversation - the intersection of white identity and the practice of teaching – I position Lisa to move forward in both the personal and praxis journeys suggesting the praxis journey is dependent on (successful) completion of the personal journey.

Non-present voices. Of significance to a dialogic account is the way a position is accomplished as a speaker interacts with the non-present as well as the present voices. The first of such non-present voices in this speech act, is Lisa's own voice as heard through her written reflection of March 30th when she began to interrogate her white identity. Because she had openly stated in the March 30th journal that she was concerned to confront her privileged status, I now invoke this shared knowledge and reintroduce the need for further self-examination. This illustrates the point above that the shared journal provided access to aspects of Lisa's personal journey that I could not otherwise have known. Here, in this conversation, I make use of that knowledge to bring Lisa back to her own stated concerns about her white identity and white privilege.

I also conscript non-present voices (that of an African American woman, Ruth, and a White woman, Marissa) and bring them into dialogue with me to add more ballast to my position, and this is particularly the case since Lisa had taken part in the original conversation with these women. Thus, the tool of selectivity prompted a re-experiencing of that conversation. Linguistically, this is accomplished here via the devices of reference and predication, epistemic modalization, and quotative speech, discussed below.

By specifically referring to, or qualifying "one" woman as African American and to "the other one" as a white woman, I voice them as recognizable "types" of characters in the social world. This typecasting is further mobilized by the devices of parallelism and repetition (Georgeacopolou & Juzwik, 2002). I highlight here (by bold type) the parallelism accomplished by the repetition of the verb "to have", interspersed with the verb "to be":

One of them **has** the perspective of

being African-American, and
the other one **has** the perspective of
being um, White ...

In addition to the poetic persuasion of repetition, the peculiar verb choice, that is the present progressive forms of “to have” and “to be” instead of the more common “was”, has the curious effect of essentializing race and foreclosing interruption and change in spite of the possibilities suggested by the progressive tense. The entire utterance functions as a modal judgment of essence. Thus, what is performed is the stance that teachers are certain kinds of racially nuanced “whos.” This both recalls and inscribes Lisa’s prior construction of herself as a white “who,” who “comes from a White – an ‘us’ - perspective” (3.30.06) and is (by default) complicit with “silent oppression” (3.30.06).

Next, that stance is extended to convey the idea that being a certain kind of “who” will necessarily play out in that person’s approach to teaching, and this is accomplished by inhabiting, or recruiting Marissa’s words. At this point in the conversation I position myself alongside that voice to advance a stance that racial identity may intersect with the project of teaching in significant ways. I then solidify my position by conscripting Marissa’s [the White woman’s] voice and I ventriloquate, that is speak through it, to infer my own moral stance, that is, who “we” are intersects with “our” teaching. The positioning is accomplished by way of a quasi-direct quote attributed to Marissa, the white woman, “ What is it about who we are that affects, um, what we do, what we say, what we think, in terms of teaching?” This recalls Palmer’s sense (in his explication of

the mirror metaphor) that “knowing myself is as crucial to good teaching as knowing my students and my subject” (1998, p.2).

Marissa’s words, “What is it about who we are that affects, um, what we do, what we say, what we think, in terms of teaching?” have a second text (Wortham, 2001, p. 21) that indexes a “recognizable voice from the social world,” the discourse of White identity and its subtext of White privilege (McIntosh, 1988; Thandeka, 2002). Of particular significance in the segment of speech (above) is that I do not state my stance with respect to white privilege but ventriloquate my stance through Marissa’s voice (which, once again, functions to strengthen my position), using the device of quotative utterance. Not only do I conscript the utterance and ventriloquate it to make it speak for me, but also by the repeated use of “we” in the quotative utterance I make it speak for the three white women (Marissa, Marjorie and Lisa) present at the prior meeting I’m referring to in this segment. What is more, by so doing, I position Ruth, the African American student, as “other”!

Discourse Segment 2

SH: That’s a lot.

M: Exactly.

M: So, I knew that we, and Lisa actually told me that Wanda, her science teacher, had given her an article, um, by somebody who was into Buddhist meditation in some way,

And this person was saying something about looking in the mirror and how you, you need to –

Lisa: **Face yourself in order to be able to face everyone else.**

The connection between Segment 1 (above) and Segment 2 is the little word *so*, “So, I knew that we...” which, as a continuative cohesive conjunction, links the utterance, “What is it about who we are that affects, um, what we do, what we say, what we think,

in terms of teaching?” with the imperative for self-examination and change, “Face yourself in order to be able to face everyone else.” This is accomplished by a seamless rhetorical move in which Lisa takes over the floor and positions herself to speak the coda that completes this part of the narrative: “face yourself in order to face everyone else.” It is noteworthy (see lines highlighted in bold) that Lisa picks right up from my preamble about the mirror idea and doesn’t miss a beat, so that my words—

**and this person was saying something about looking in the mirror and how
you, you need to —**

and Lisa’s words —

Face yourself in order to be able to face everyone else—

form one utterance that supports the notion advanced by me (and, so I claim, originally by Marissa), that who we are as white teachers affects our teaching. Thus, to extend the mirror analogy, Lisa is here mirroring my stance and reflecting it as her own, so seamlessly that there is now only her own face in the mirror. Lisa’s linguistic move here indexes her ownership of the discourse of White privilege, and she now assumes control of the conversation. Once again, the word *so* (below) functions as a continuative conjunction connecting Lisa’s explanation of the mirror metaphor to my introduction of the topic of white privilege in Segment 3.

Discourse Segment 3

L: So if you can look in your mirror and start looking at what you see there. That’s when you can start even deconstructing and finding out what you really believe, too. And, like how I was just talking about power and language. And how I actually had just explained to Sharon part of what had happened to me when I was teaching my lesson. And how I realized I, Even my language sometimes focuses on an ‘us’—And I’m mainstream—and them. And I

SH: Mmmhmm. Well, sort of.

L: Yeah.

SH: Not, not all the way.

L: And I, I really struggled with how to talk about issues of race with someone else in here that I didn't know. And, and she was, um, what her, she was a different ethnicity. And it really, I struggled with it. I felt bad.

I was telling Sharon about that. It just –

SH: I told her it was too bad she didn't know her because she would have found her very –

L: Yeah.

SH: open and very helpful with the attitude.

M: Mmmhmm.

L: Yeah.

M: So there were at least two things going on there. Power issues that you feel watched, you don't know who this person is

L: Right.

M: Um, and secondly, just that mainly, it was

L: Who am I to talk about these things?

M: As a white person, who am I to talk about these things, um, with, uh, people who are not.

Of note first, is the mentor teacher's attempt to temper the discourse of self-

blame: "sort of," "not all the way," and her positioning alongside the African American woman: "I told her it was too bad she didn't know her because she *would have* found her very open and very helpful with the attitude." Sharon's use of the epistemic modalizer "would have" positions her as having a god's eye, insider knowledge of the African American woman's stance. This helps to position Lisa here as an outsider. Secondly, it is noteworthy that both Lisa and I ignore Sharon's attempts to change the direction of the conversation, and continue with our symbiotic, that is, mirrored narrative of the original "African American Sub" event. The bold-faced phrases highlight the perfect mirroring of my utterance, "just that mainly, it was" and Lisa's, "Who am I to talk about these things?" The word *so* "So there were at least two things going on there..." functions to connect the words that follow to Lisa's words, "I actually had just explained to Sharon part of what had happened to me when I was teaching my lesson."

Hence, with the word *so*, I reclaim my control of the conversation and am positioning myself to utter the evaluative stance, that is, to offer my (authoritative) take on the meaning of the incident with the African American substitute teacher.

By her move to conscript my voice (“who am I to talk about these things”) on the one hand Lisa reestablishes her own control, but on the other hand, by reclaiming control of the conversation Lisa positions herself as the culpable one—“Who am I to talk about these things?” Thus, even though we have spoken as one voice, mirroring each other’s thought throughout this narrative, in the end it is Lisa who is positioned to take responsibility, Lisa who ends up stepping into a performance of a racist identity.

I suggest that something similar to the analogous transformation explained by Cain (1991) with respect to the use of experience narratives among A.A. members may be going on in the conversation between Lisa and me featured above. That is, I position Lisa to perform the confessional stance she took in her March 30th journal and she steps into the performance. To clarify this argument I present it here using numbered bullets:

1. The purpose of the meeting described here is to facilitate the integrative social justice project. By beginning the discussion with the stance that “who we are affects how we teach” (Segment 1) I position Lisa to continue her personal journey of transformation.
2. I position Lisa for further self-examination by re-introducing the mirror metaphor in Segment 2: “and this person was saying something about looking in the mirror and how you need to...” Lisa “steps into” the performance by finishing my sentence: “face yourself in order to be able to face everyone else. ”

3. In Segment 3, I provide a summative (and god's eye) argument about the meaning of the African American Sub incident: "So there were at least two things going on there...mainly it was..."
4. Lisa again steps into the performance saying: " Who am I to talk about these things?"
5. I seal the performance by attributing to Lisa the quasi-direct quote, "As a white person, who am I to talk about these things, um, with, uh, people who are not?"
(End, Segment 3.)

*A pool of tears.*⁹ During the talk with Marissa and Ruth I brought up the mirror article and suggested that Lisa share her encounter with the African American substitute. This time, when she repeated the story she omitted the quotative, "Who am I to be discussing racism and oppression?" Instead, she ended the story with the fact that she'd had an anxiety attack and had to leave the classroom. As the excerpt below shows, I position Lisa to relive the moment (thus reaffirming the moral stance she adopted in the March 30th journal that she was silently complicit with racism), and she steps into the performance:

M: Okay, so when somebody who was African American was watching you, you told me that you just felt, "Who am I to say that?"

L: "Who am I to be talking about these things?"

⁹ A literary allusion to the pool of tears experienced by Alice, in Carroll's 1832-1898, *Alice in wonderland*.

Earlier in the conversation Lisa had shared her frustration with Sharon's challenge of the students' belief they had experienced racial profiling (detailed in Chapter 3). Her conflict about taking the students' side in that incident was related to her feelings of being "the minority" which she said made her "vulnerable"(6.06). At the same time, in Lisa's March 28th journal, she had explicitly stated she wanted to live as a social justice agent – beginning with going against the grain by challenging her teachers' positions at times. And I had it in writing:

Each day I read more, think more, and listen more; I find it more difficult to fit into this program and submit to what a teacher is asking if I do not feel that it will ultimately lead to the empowerment of the students. (3.24.06)

In that same journal, Lisa asked herself,

How do I change this, or be an agent for this change in the current situation I am in?" One of my replies would be some of the things I took a stand on in Monday's class. We were reading some of the lessons that [her professor] has included in her book and I decided to ask the question that I've been thinking all of along. "Where is the critical piece?" (3.24.06)

The next segment of conversation suggests that, seeing that I "had it in writing," I decided to hold Lisa to her stated stance, and I did this by re-introducing the mirror, or self-examination metaphor.

So... this relates to...the article that [Wanda, the science methods professor] gave you, which is another thing we wanted to talk about, which is about being able to look in the mirror and being able to face yourself. So I think what I'm hearing is that you were troubled by Sharon [pushing her agenda about racial profiling]...Because the reason I brought up the article and the "look at yourself in the mirror" is I think that um, Lisa, you're realizing that part of the social justice program for you is right at the in school level with Sharon, and it's not, it's not just an outside in the community thing, it's in standing up for...

L: I had to face that for me, part of this big thing is I'm coming to terms with who I am too ...and learning to challenge some of the beliefs some of my professors hold and, I don't know, coming up with a dialogue for that has been probably the

biggest part of my project at this point... And that I'm open and accepting, and then I realized that sometimes some of the words -that I was contributing to everything. I wasn't challenging anything, I wasn't -so yeah, learning to like, live the way I want to teach –

Ruth: Yeah.

L: Not just saying it, but actually doing it too...But I do like the idea of doing some kind of image – representing who you are in the class. I'm afraid -how to do it to get the kids to really push, and dig beyond just what's - It's really hard. Yeah, surface. Yeah, I don't know the questions I might ask. (4.06)

Playing bridge. Lisa's sense of being a "silent oppressor" (3.30.06) has been elaborated in chapter 4. Here, I mean rather to highlight the interactional positioning – similar to moves in a Bridge game – that is going on between Lisa and me as, playing to her high vulnerability (evidenced in the fact that she shared her journals with me) I try to get her to take the next risk. Consistent with the Bridge analogy, this was a partnership game. Note how *we* dialogically and incrementally arrive at *Lisa's* moral perspective on white privilege and its connection to 'living' social justice as Lisa says: "I had to face that for me, part of this big thing is I'm coming to terms with who I am too...I was contributing to everything. I wasn't changing anything."

Here, by asserting that the mirror article "is about being able to look in the mirror and being able to face yourself" I subtly remind Lisa of her own sense (explained in Chapter 4) that facing oneself in the mirror involves fixing the faults one's self-examination exposes. As Lisa expressed this in a March journal entry:

I believe what I need most at this stage is the assurance that I can look into the mirror and see into myself so that I can examine my own faults and self in order to gain self-knowledge. (3.30. 06)

I follow this subtle moral challenge by an explicit, or overt challenge, suggesting that rather than continuing to verbally express frustrations with Sharon, Lisa should take action:

So I think what I'm hearing is that you were troubled by Sharon [pushing her agenda about racial profiling]...Because the reason I brought up the article and the "look at yourself in the mirror" is I think that um, Lisa, you're realizing that part of the social justice program for you is right at the in school level with Sharon, and it's not, it's not just an outside in the community thing, it's in standing up for...(4.06)

Here I explicitly position Lisa to take action by putting words in her mouth: "I think...you're realizing," which holds Lisa to her own *expressed-in-writing* stance (above) of not running from herself. Here, I move to raise the stakes of the game, that is, I place Lisa in a more vulnerable position, as she has repeatedly spoken of feeling frightened about challenging Sharon. Recall, however, that the overall prize, or point of this Bridge game is to help Lisa complete her enactment journey, via the personal journey. Thus, I was playing (and so, by her mirrored stance was Lisa) for a successful completion of those goals. The counter risk – what would happen if Lisa did not rise to the challenge was not, at this point considered.

Lisa's response is complex. At first she side-steps my challenge about taking a stand with Sharon (talking instead about the past-stand mentioned above when she asks her professor "Where is the critical piece?") However, later in the conversation she actively steps into that performance, that is, she steps into the role of challenging Sharon, which occurred later in this same conversation as examined below.

Sidestepping the challenge. Recall that during the Feb. 22nd ("today I was able") acculturation discussion, Lisa overturned Sharon's rule about hand raising, even though

she “did not want to go against her authority” (Feb. 22, 2006). This was in stark contrast to Lisa’s speechlessness during the Nazi discussion (in early April) when Sharon interjected her agenda about racial profiling causing an outcry from the students. Moreover, while talking with Ruth and Marissa about the Nazi discussion, Lisa felt Sharon’s hand-raising rule might have constrained her efforts to facilitate dialogue among the students during that discussion, noting, “When we started to talk about it, everyone still had to raise their hands, and so they weren’t talking to each other so much.” With this as background, then, Lisa appeared to decide that no matter what the final project might end up looking like, it would need to be dialogic. The following segment of speech shows how difficult it was for Lisa to speak up. This is evidenced partly by the care Lisa takes (illustrated below) to justify Sharon’s use of the hand-raising rule - “because otherwise, “Ahhh!” you know, everywhere” and the lengthy exemplar about her own reliance on the mentor’s “respect” rule by grounding her suggested innovation in mutual respect among friends – “you don’t raise your hand, but you’re also respectful and listen to each other.” We will also see that it is the case that Lisa’s precipitous departure to the restroom after presenting her request is noteworthy. Lisa and I had numerous very lengthy conversations across the months of the independent study, where we consumed gallons of coffee and cappuccino, and this was the only time she ever excused herself for this reason. Several months later I asked her if she recalled why she had left the room that day, and she replied with a characteristic chuckle, “I don’t remember exactly, but that always happens when I get nervous” (August 2006). In any case, she was gone for several minutes, leaving me to defend her petition:

L: Well, just another quick thing with the discussion is - um, could I set it up in a way that we are all, besides we’re all looking at each other, but maybe set it up in

talking about different kinds of discourses in the class and how, you know, the rules are in discussion so that everyone can hear what's going on, and like you said, it's not mass chaos, that everyone needs to raise their hand and answer a question or two and contribute, because otherwise, "Ahhhh!" you know, everywhere. But I, could I set it up in a way to talk to them about how in certain discussions, if you're having a discussion with three friends - a really important discussion - you don't raise your hand, but you're also respectful and listen to each other. And that way, maybe to even get out of - getting them to talk to each other too

SH: Yeah.

L: - to build into it, 'cause that's something I would like to be able to see, how if James comes up with an idea, um, Jasmine could add on to it or question to get him to elaborate on it and maybe somehow give them an example to talk about before we even got into a discussion, so that way I'm not the person who's being asked to respond to everything, but they're responding to each other.

M: - being asked to respond.

L: I don't know how to do that, to really - It'd be really big to talk about, you know, with like, Lorrie today: "These are really serious things". "You don't laugh at what your classmates are saying."

M: Mmmhmm.

L: I don't know. The issues of respect in there, I don't know.

M: Um, I think what Lisa's after...is the kind of literacy discussion that is called "talk-story."

L: I'm going to use the restroom really quick. (4.06)

Note that the teacher's response has been restricted to "Mmmhmm" and Lisa moves into the dead space to say, "I don't know. The issues of respect in there. I don't know." This utterance performs the vulnerability Lisa expressed verbally in a February journal entry: "I truly believe Sharon is excited about this project, but I think a major part of it for me will be learning how to voice my thoughts without making anything seem critical of her teaching and curriculum" (2.18.06). Lisa repeated this fear in June 2006, noting if I didn't agree on something, it was very scary to be able to say that, because

she's still, you know, to me, she's a level above me. It was her classroom." Perhaps as a reaction to this fear, by embedding the utterance "The issues of respect in there" between the twin utterances "I don't know", "I don't know", Lisa positions herself as a subordinate ("it was her classroom") and a learner, with the parallel construction highlighting the performance. This utterance also suggests she is positioning the mentor to refuse the request. At this moment I move to reposition Lisa to pursue her request to dispense with hand raising - but at this point, rather than moving into the performance, Lisa departs for the restroom.

After Lisa left the room Sharon repeatedly said she believed the kind of student-centered talk Lisa was petitioning was already "going on" in this classroom, and in many respects Lisa believed this to be true, a point I take up in the next chapter. Here though, perhaps to defray a defensive reaction I shifted the responsibility to Lisa, positioning her as a learner, not as one who was challenging Sharon's authority. My insistence also works to further position Lisa to try this dialogic – or "sprache" (Kohl, 1984) approach:

I think Lisa sees that they still are seeing her as the person that they have to – and she's trying to set up something where they will um, speak to each other and with each other and with her involved in the conversation and with you involved in the conversation but that **they don't need to raise their hands.** (4.06)

Lisa was absent from the discussion for the next three-four minutes. When she returned from the restroom I once more soothed the teacher by positioning myself alongside her with the words "I agree" and defrayed any possible concerns about power-moves by positioning Lisa as a learner, although that flew in the face of the collaborative arrangement that was supposed to characterize their work together:

M: Sharon was just saying that – and I agree – that there's a comfort level in the classroom already, but with - with talking. But they may also feel sensitive with

you being, um, that they know you're just a learning teacher and so on and so forth, but it's, you know -**You were saying it's okay for her to do that, right?**

SH: Yeah...It would be easy to work that in there.

L: So that's why I really want to bring it as "This is your [the students'] discussion".

SH: Mmmhmm.

L: "I'm here to learn how to do this, and I'm part of it, and you're part of it", and you know?" (4.06)

The utterances "they don't need to raise their hands" and "You were saying it's ok for her to do that, right?" highlighted above in bold type, function in this speech act to reposition Lisa – almost lock her in - to do what I set her up for three weeks earlier during the talk with Marissa and Ruth: "Because the reason I brought up the article and the " look at yourself in the mirror" is I think that um, Lisa, you're realizing that part of the social justice program for you is right at the in school level with Sharon...". This time, Lisa does step into the performance using the quotative device to soliloquize a speech to her students: "This is your discussion. I'm here to learn how to do this, and I'm part of it and you're part of it." This dialogic performance, in turn, positioned her for actively stepping in to the real-time performance of dialogue that she hoped would be the "way in" she had been searching for throughout the semester. As Lisa expressed it, this was to be "more than just a discussion":

I hoped that I could do some kind of project with the students that, I guess made them reflect on the society around them, and made them think critically about, I guess their place in the world and what's going on around them. And I didn't know where or what that was gonna come from, but more than just a discussion, but to the point where, I guess, they felt empowered that they could do something about it, or even maybe, like we did some kind of writing. Either way, it empowered them to realize that they have an affect on what happens in the world, I guess. (8.06)

Stepping into the challenge. While the last part of this chapter will focus on two written communications, an email of May 18th, 2006 and a written journal sent as a Word attachment the same day (May 18 2006), echoes of each of the segments of conversation featured throughout this chapter reverberate in Lisa's final attempt to orchestrate an integrative project. In the final section of this chapter I mean to focus not on the details of Lisa's attempt at dialogic teaching (without hand-raising!) but to examine her vulnerability in the light of the dialogic positioning this chapter reveals. I referred to this lesson in Chapter 3, where my intent was to show Lisa's engagement with an ethical dilemma that complicated her intent that the lesson should be an ethical intervention. Here, I review the episode that so troubled Lisa, but my intent in referring to the *Everyday People* lesson in this chapter is to demonstrate the positioning and counterpositioning that was at work in the April 3-way conference—the "Mad tea-party" conversation that has been featured in this chapter.

Recall that the lesson took place on May 17 2006, and once again Sharon was absent and Lisa taught with a substitute teacher in the room, a programmatic requirement for an undergraduate education student. The essence of the lesson is captured below:

I played the song "Everyday People" by Sly and the Family Stone and asked students first to listen to the music with their heads down. When the song finished, I asked them to write down any lines that they liked/diskliked or related to. The second time, I placed the lyrics on the overhead for the students to follow. After this finished, I asked them to write about how these lyrics related to their lives. (Email message, 5.18.06)

The idea for the lesson had arisen from a lunch hour discussion with three girls who were complaining about classroom gossip and ill will. Lisa hoped the message of the song (naming and valuing difference) would prompt thoughtful and honest talk (based

on the three girls' concerns shared over lunch hour) among the students about valuing themselves and each other. She planned to videotape the discussion in order to make a video case about the collaborative project, to satisfy point 3 of the Independent Study requirements: "Student will construct a video case in lieu of a course paper", but, as Lisa wrote, "for some reason it failed to record (probably my fault)." The use of a song recalls Kohl's use of a popular song of the day (the sixties) to promote thoughtful discussion and related investigations. True to her commitment (above) to dispense with hand-raising and promote "respectful" talk amongst the students, Lisa tried to establish some parameters, but she ended up "feeling like a broken record that kept repeating "please be respectful" while writing names on the board (Email Communication, 5.18.06). Lisa was disappointed that some students refused to engage the message of the song, and even though the students' assignments reveal a remarkable level of engagement (making personal connections with racism, Mexican immigration, and body size), it seemed to Lisa at the time that the students only talked about the "Scooby- dooby- doo parts". Ultimately chaos – "Ahhhh!" - reigned, leaving Lisa feeling like a failure – " I guess I can't do this without Mrs. Harper."

It was not, however, Mrs. Harper (that is, Sharon, the mentor teacher) who positioned Lisa to dispense with hand raising, it was I, (although, Mrs. Harper seems to have been conspicuously absent for every one of Lisa's *planned* attempts, which may be a positioning of sorts). My point, however, is to focus on the verbal interactional positioning taking place particularly between Lisa and me.

Mirror, mirror. Lisa's written communications of May 18 2006 are replete with the language of shame, self-blame and failure. The email letter began: "Dear Marjorie:

I'm ashamed to say that I have not been into the school yet this afternoon." It is significant that Lisa's expressed shame was addressed to me. As I have shown above the thought mirroring between Lisa and me in the segment of conversation I have labeled (following Carroll, 1832-1898) "The Mad Tea Party," emerges from the way I positioned Lisa to re-enact a confessional stance: "I had to take myself back to the mirror." To further probe that mirroring I offer an account of our conversation (in very early April, 2006) about educator Herbert Kohl, and his use of a popular song to inspire students' probing of oppressive social institutions. Lisa's use of a song by Sly and the Family Stone for her final attempt to find a "way in" to an integrative project appears to reflect this influence. This is not a bad thing in itself, and Lisa says in her May 18 journal, "I still think the idea was a good one for a future lesson if it ever came up in the classroom." However, the evidence of this chapter suggests there is another way of thinking about the influence on Lisa's lesson:

M: Did you read the part about the...Pink Floyd?

L: Mmmhmm, I read the whole thing.

M: Okay, do you remember the part about Pink Floyd? What did you think about that?

L: Mmmhmm, that was the Sprache chapter? Um, I'm trying to think about it. I should have taken more notes when we did this. I actually reread that one twice.

M: Yes, okay.

L: That was where the students took the lyrics, right? And he talked about how you can use literacy in all of these different forms? Is that right?

M: Didn't they start talking about the, the brick walls that they, as they perceived them?

L: Yeah.

M: So I was wondering about how you perceived that chapter with respect to your project of hoping to connect with kids' real beliefs and real feelings about stuff.

L: Yes. Well, just...not even just that chapter, but particularly, it just showed up. That's what he did – he didn't force anything on the kids, he just took what they naturally brought in, and sometimes he, and it's a similar thread I'm starting to see coming between all these teachers is they can ask certain questions that the kids brains...So they brought the lyrics for it, 'cause that was what the song was of the time, and then they were able to break down the lyrics, and dig into, you know, how they connected to the songs.

M: Because he says, "We even examined a few textbooks, and as an exercise, rephrased some questions to allow for more open ended answers. My role was to keep the questions open to let the students think about their answers and imagine other possible answers. My role is also occasionally to provide information or change the subject when fatigue set in or a dead end seemed to have been reached." **That's the kind of teaching we've been talking about.** "And then after our discussion, two groups of students decided as a special studies project to see how textbooks over the last hundred years treated the issues of slavery and integration." **So it's like he was able to move in on a personal interest in school learning, that would be the way he handled the discussion, and that took off, it seemed to me, into a further self study by the students, and I know that's the kind of thing we've been talking about, you've been looking for ways into that kind of teaching –**

M: So, **I** was wondering if [after reading the book] **you'd had any insights?**
(4.06)

Of particular note is the relationship between my use of "we," "I," and "you." The utterance "we've been talking about, you've been looking for" almost poetically captures the balance of power between Lisa and I in the Independent Study: I lectured and encouraged and cajoled: she "did" or was expected to do so in any case, as evidenced by the god's eye epistemic stance, "*I know* that's the kind of thing we've been talking about." The three questions that open this segment—Did you read? Do you remember? What did you think?—work to corner Lisa, especially when I refresh her memory with another question, "Didn't they start talking about the brick walls...?"

My insistence on Lisa's recall of Kohl's exemplar about the "sprache" that emerged from his reliance on the students' interest in a popular song becomes clear in the middle of this speech act when I make sure she "gets" the connection between what Kohl was doing and "her" goals: "So I was wondering about how you perceived that chapter with respect to your project of hoping to connect with kids' real beliefs and real feelings about stuff." Possibly to ensure she "gets" the connection I then perform Kohl by reading aloud one section and assert that it exemplifies the kind of teaching "we/you" have been trying to move into – another phrase for finding the "way in."

In one sense, by uttering "we've" and "you've" without more than a breath pause— the kind of teaching "we've been talking about, you've been looking for"— I intimate that this is *Lisa's* project (not mine). At the same time, another plausible interpretation is that the quick move from "we've" to "you've" constitutes a slip of the tongue, and together with the overall persuasive tone of the entire segment I position myself as the owner of the project. My repeated use of "we" and "we've" coupled with "you" and "you've" is yet another exemplar of the mirroring that is evident in the dialogic work discussed above in the conversation with Lisa, Sharon and me.

If the mirroring going on in the conversation about Kohl's use of "sprache" positions the project as mine, and if the mirroring discussed reinforces a confessional stance, this helps to explain why I continue to press Lisa's petition to dispense with hand-raising for her final project/discussion: in effect, it is *my* project. Finally, taken together the mirroring throughout this chapter helps to explain why Lisa begins her May 18th 2006 email letter with a personal confession offered to me, "I'm ashamed to say that I have not been into the school yet this afternoon." She goes on to say that the "Everyday People"

lesson “ended up bombing,” or as she expressed it in the reflective journal written the same day (May 18 2006), “I guess today was a failed attempt to break into some kind of project or discussion.” In between these two expressions that inscribe the failure of the lesson there appears a litany of self-blame:

I felt as though I had no control...I set the tripod up... it didn't record (probably my fault) so I missed the whole lesson...I read so much and talk so much about everything, that I pretend I am able to do this. Then when it comes time, I can't.... I overestimated my ability to find ways to get the students to talk... Lorrie hit it right on the head, "She don't know how to teach us. She's going to be a bad teacher someday."...I guess I just wasn't structured enough, open enough or skilled at finding the right questions to help the students talk to each other...I ended up feeling like a droning record that kept repeating "please be respectful" while writing names on the board...I can't do this without the support of Mrs. Harper... I'm sorry that I haven't pushed enough, I guess there's just some things I need to learn about myself before I can do this...I'm sorry for quitting. I am just afraid that if things get worse, I will quit teaching all together. I know quitting is not the answer but ruining the last three weeks of school isn't either. (5.18.06. Email communication)

I return to Lisa's experience of this lesson in Chapter 6. In this chapter, however, I argue that Lisa's "failure" here is related to Arendt's (1958) notion of "action," which, in this case was not action, since Lisa's nascent, that is creative insertion into the life of the classroom was clearly not taken up by others. Conceptualized within the structural journey metaphor, there was no journey. While these pluralistic "others" certainly included Lisa's students, the argument of this chapter is that action was foreclosed because Lisa and I were not engaging in what Field and Latta (2001) would call a "conjoint ethical activity" (p. 13); I mean to say that Lisa and I were mutually involved in positioning and counterpositioning as the mirroring evidence of this chapter suggests.

Discussion

The evidence of this chapter introduces some doubt regarding Field and Latta's (2001) conviction that conversation oriented towards experience will necessarily be a conjoint ethical endeavor. Although the conversations reported in this chapter were collective undertakings, and were action oriented as well, in that I sought to move Lisa along in a project both of us seemed committed to, it is probable that the urge to attain Lisa's "peculiar" praxis goal got in the way and, once again, impeded Lisa's entry into her praxis "Garden." Said otherwise, Lisa's and my unexamined reliance on a structuralist metaphor of journey defined by a starting point (naming a problem) and an arrival point (the finessing of an integrative project) meant that, in effect, there was no journey. While this is a strong statement, I argue that it is the logical outcome of a structuralist stance on journey. As my own written reflection of Jan. 31 shows, I had an intuitive sense of the pitfalls of mirroring and, plainly, an intuition about using Lisa as a warm body—namely, my own!

As her teacher I mirror her own issues—her worry the CT will pull back, her worry that she is imposing activism on kids and so on. In the back of my mind I am thinking the same. In Lisa I have a willing participant – I don't want that to be a willing victim." (Cooper Reflection, Jan. 31.) I return here to a point made near the beginning of this chapter, that, by sharing her journal with me, Lisa invited me to look at her looking at herself in the mirror of self-examination. I suggest that, in spite of my expressed fear of victimizing Lisa, the evidence of this chapter is that just such victimization is what happened. I do not say (as the final chapter will show) this was the *whole* story of our relationship and "our" project.

What is more, I do not here attempt to shift “blame” from Lisa to me, rather I suggest a danger inherent in reflection—be it written or verbal—that is evidenced throughout this chapter and that Fendler (2003) illuminates. In the “2003” piece Fendler probes some downsides of reflection related to the pedagogical practices of journaling and writing autobiographies. Fendler draws on Foucault’s concern that the human sciences have shifted from confessional disclosure (as in Christianity) to the use of verbal self-disclosure as a technique for constituting a new self. Fendler notes: “Verbalization resembles participation in a litany or catechism as a technique of reiteration that constructs a particular self-identity” (Fendler, 2003, p. 22).

I have already noted the “litany” effect of the cumulative effect of self-blame in Lisa’s May 18th emails and journal, and this chapter calls attention to the overall litany effect of the various *conversational* segments selected for analysis in this chapter. Fendler’s interrogation of journaling as a possible disciplinary technique may illumine the performance of shame and failure evidenced here. As Fendler points out, while teachers and students can come to know one another through their shared writings (and I include shared conversation that tends to be autobiographical in nature), journal disclosure can also be a “form of surveillance and an exercise of pastoral power” (p.22), or may enable confession and/or therapy (Gore, 1993, p. 150).

As explained in the Chapter 2, Lisa’s use of journals in the Independent Study was not a requirement, and I have noted with evidence in that chapter that journaling was a technique used by Lisa on a personal level from the time she was a very young child. At the same time this personal propensity to use journals does not negate the concerns raised by Fendler that the history of pedagogy shows a steady shift from “training behaviors, to

educating minds, to disciplining souls” (p.22) and that this calls into the question “the normalizing and disciplinary effects of journal writing” (p. 22).

In the final chapter I explore what happened when Lisa engaged in another reflective pedagogical intervention through the making of a reflective video case.

CHAPTER SIX:

STEPPING OUT: ACTIVE FORGETTING AND RE-MEMBERING FORWARD

“Living backwards!” Alice repeated in great astonishment. “I never heard of such a thing!”

“—but there’s one great advantage in it, that one’s memory works both ways.”

“I’m sure mine only works one way,” Alice remarked. “I ca’n’t remember things before they happen.”

“It’s a poor sort of memory that only works backwards,” the Queen remarked.

(Carroll, 1832-1898. In Gardner, 2000, p. 196)

Chapter 3 focused on the vulnerability occasioned as Lisa experienced a “peculiar” praxis journey toward a “practically moral” destination (a named problem to be addressed through social action). Chapter 4 focused on the vulnerability occasioned as, through written reflection, Lisa underwent a journey integrally related to her praxis journey—that is, a personal journey characterized by going relentlessly “inward” in search of a fixed arrival point (a moral “self”). Chapter 5 focused on the underscoring of Lisa’s vulnerability through oral reflection related to the written reflection. In a word, the focus of Chapters 3, 4, and 5 was on “vulnerability remembered.”

In contrast, Chapter 6 focuses on “vulnerability forgotten.” The question that guides this chapter is “What happened to Lisa as she constructed a video case of a student-led discussion facilitated by her mentor teacher instead of by herself?” The central argument for this chapter is that making a pedagogical video case was an act of forgetting—a reflection forward rather than backward—that enabled Lisa to step outside the confines of her rabbit-hole history of defeat and failure and to take a step toward the Garden, her “practically moral” destination, and to find, in the end, that the Garden was something radically different than what she had imagined. As the evidence of this chapter

will suggest, our conversation about the video case constituted a pluralistic action that changed the way both of us thought about “praxis” and “journey.”

On page 187 (following) the reader will find a written explanation of a visual concept map of this chapter that appears on the facing page 188.

Explanation of Figure 5. Concept Map of Chapter 6

Lisa with Students. The dashed lines surrounding the five “attempts” rectangles and the dashed line connecting the “Lisa with Students” rectangle to the video case rectangle represent **active forgetting**. The dashed lines indicate that Lisa’s experiences during her five attempts are reflected forward in the emphases of the video case but this is an **indirect connection**.

The video case rectangle. The solid arrow connecting the video case rectangle to the dark gray structural journey oval “Intervention” (and therefore, by implication to the other dark gray structural journey ovals “Naming the Problem” oval and the “social justice”) indexes completion of the structuralist social justice journey.

Lisa with Marjorie. The solid line connecting the rectangle “Lisa with Marjorie” to the video case rectangle represents the fact that the suggestion to construct a video case came from Marjorie and was readily taken up by Lisa. The solid line also represents the completion of the structural journey in two senses. First, Lisa stated that the case was her way of completing her structural journey goal, and second, the construction of a video case fulfilled the final formal requirement of the independent study.

Alice picture. The picture of Alice pulling back the curtain to reveal a little door (behind which was the key to the garden) has three meanings.

First, the curtain picture represents Lisa’s estimation that she had completed her **Structural Journey**, in that, through the video case, she found the key to the problem that had plagued her for the months of the independent study, that is, how to “leap into critical literacy” (8.06) by accessing students’ social concerns without imposing her own. For this reason the **praxis rectangle is gray-filled** indexing its connectivity with the structural critical social justice journey.

Second, the idea of pulling back the curtain connotes a move toward a **Poststructural Journey** in that it represents Lisa’s insight that, after all, there was no single moment of critical literacy to be leapt into after all. Thus, pulling back the curtain represents a move to contest the structuralist social justice journey she had been engaged in throughout the duration of the independent study.

Third. The placement of the Alice picture in the poststructural lens oval with one foot remaining in the structural journey box depicts that Lisa used the video case to take an initial step out of her rabbit-hole praxis history.

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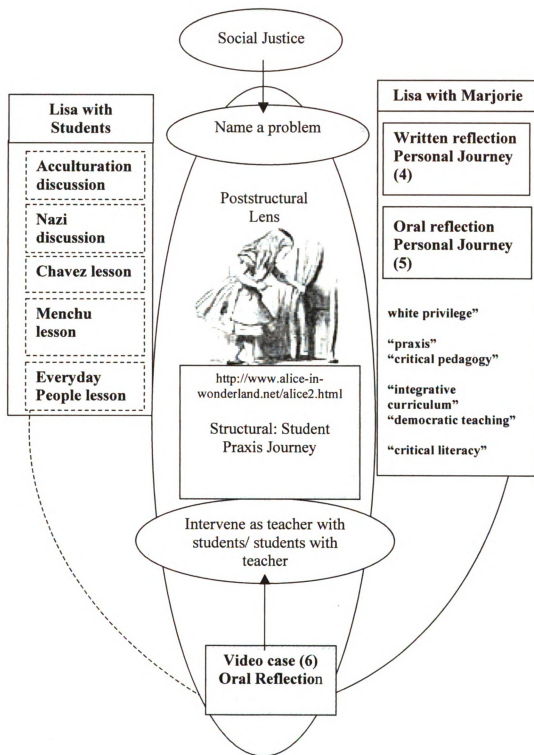


Figure 5. Concept Map of Chapter 6: Lisa's Experience of Stepping out of a Praxis and Personal Rabbit Hole

Towards an Improved Memory: Lisa's Independent Study Texts

This leg of Lisa's (proposed) praxis journey was influenced by another piece of literature that she encountered in her teacher-preparation coursework and voluntarily introduced during the Independent study, Karen Gallas's *Talking Their Way Into Science* (1995). The aspect of this book that interested Lisa was Gallas's explication of "science talk," based on the notion of theory building as irrational activity. Lisa explained this notion of theory-building meant that a thinker must first run through the "muck" of an idea before it will make sense. About her students' interactions in the video case, Lisa wrote, "From an outsider, this looks like the classroom has run "amok" ; you cannot understand the exchanges or make sense of the discussion. To the participants, this is a perfectly normal way of making sense of things that reflects their natural sense making." Lisa explained that making the case helped her make connections with her coursework. She explained that as she was watching the video of the student-led discussion facilitated by her mentor teacher she would move back and forth between literature on teaching and learning and the video: "Oh, that reminds me of the science talk. What does Gallas have to say about this? Oh, oh my gosh, that's what she was always saying! I see it here!" Lisa also brought Parker Palmer's (1998) focus on subject-centered teaching to her case construction. In fact, when I asked Lisa to explain the reasoning behind her video clip selection, she mentioned both Gallas and Palmer and then introduced a third influence from her teacher-preparation coursework:

I was reading Palmer right then, so I had influence. If I read someone else, I'm sure that would have influenced my thinking as well. But when he talked about, you know, subject centered and, you know, Gallas and irrational sense being named. [Also], that's when you and I had talked about fertile moment a lot. I think that's when I looked at all these separate clips and said, "That's what these are." (8.06)

With the statement “we had talked about fertile moment a lot,” Lisa refers to a focus in the literacy methods course she had taken with me in fall semester 2005 (detailed under “Context of Study” in Chapter 2). During one session I showed the students in this literacy methods course a video case made by a prospective teacher in our teacher education program during her fifth year, or internship. In order to forestall negative criticism and instead promote productive critique, I asked the students to watch this teacher’s lesson as if they were making a video case of their own teaching—that is, as if they had taught the lesson themselves. I asked them to apply theoretical constructs from the course and to look for “fertile moments”—that is, places in the video where something new or different could happen, some new life from the old, even though the old might not necessarily be bad or wrong.

As the evidence of this chapter will show, Lisa experienced her case “with” Gallas (relational teaching), “with” Palmer (subject-centered teaching) and “with” me (fertile moments) in ways that enabled reinterpretation of her experiences. In addition, Lisa’s video case was impacted by a fourth influence, the February 3rd e-mail communication with Brian Schultz that had originally prompted her “peculiar” praxis journey down a Rabbit-Hole. The evidence will suggest that Lisa experienced her video case “upon” her e-mail communication with Schultz in ways that introduced hope. However, I will argue that she also experienced her video case “against” the notion of praxis that she had received from Schultz in ways that opened space for a radically new view of praxis.

Forgetting Vulnerability: Theoretical Perspective

In this final chapter, I continue to draw on Field and Latta's (2001) sense that, because of the "plurality" and "natality" (Arendt, 1958) of experience, becoming experienced involves gaining the lived experience (practical wisdom/phronesis) that enables a teacher to respond to and expect the unexpected. When teachers mindfully—that is, intentionally and thoughtfully—choose to embrace the vulnerability thus occasioned, the experiences they undergo change, or "re-member" them differently. While this living with vulnerability promotes the development of "phronesis," or practical judgment, memories may also be debilitating and paralyzing, particularly when such paralysis is related to conflicting expectations. When such paralysis occurs, Field and Latta (2001) assert the need for teachers to engage in what Nietzsche (1980) might call "active forgetting." This involves mindfully stepping outside their histories to clear a space to re-think (re-member) what is possible for themselves and their students. This space-clearing is akin to Nietzsche's (1980) sense that active forgetting provides some silence, a clean slate, that allows for something new to emerge. While the past is not denied, neither is it reified through prescient rumination that takes on a life of its own and constrains hope. Important to this current chapter is the fact that Field and Latta (2001) combine their conceptualization of active forgetting with Arendt's (1958) notion of "action"—that is, a collective (and conversational) undertaking that "reveals our possibilities" (p. 12). Following Field and Latta, I highlight in this chapter what is made possible (for teachers and students) by "engaging... in a conversation oriented towards" the teacher's experience (p. 15).

While Field and Latta (2001) are concerned about the paralyzing effects of negative memories on teachers, they do not name reflection on experience as a possible factor in occasioning such paralysis. This is surprising, since Nietzsche's (1980) notion of active forgetting is based on concerns that excessive reflection on the past, constrains hope, or the thinking of possibilities. In Chapters 3, 4 and 5, I showed that Lisa's reflections on praxis and her reflective self-examination appeared to become prescient ruminations that had an immobilizing impact on her journey. Reflection combined with conversation did not result in hope; rather, Lisa felt apologetic for not accomplishing her goal and this seemed to laminate, or compound, her sense of failure. While Field and Latta (2001) adopt Risser's (1997) view that becoming experienced involves the shattering of "an accustomed way of life" (p. 90), Field and Latta maintain that this does not leave a teacher in "despair or disarray" (p. 10). However, the litany of failure in Lisa's May 18th e-mail communication and May 18th reflective journal entry suggest just such despair and disarray. Hence, it would appear that, upon beginning the construction of a video case of her students' self-led discussion, Lisa was ripe for an experience of active forgetting.

In the discussion at the end of this chapter I also draw on Fendler's (2004) critique of praxis as framed in the critical modernist terms Lisa was basing her project upon.

Remembering Forward

Lisa's two communications following her final attempt to move into an integrative project were full of the language of defeat, as detailed in Chapter 5. For example, she wrote that the lesson "ended up bombing," and it had been a "failed attempt" (5.18.06). Nonetheless, her closing statement in the May 18th journal entry contained a ray of hope: I still believe that this is possible, I just realized that there are some things that need I needed to pay more attention to and will in the future" (5.18.06). That final comment in the May 18th journal entry helps to explain why, a few days later when the students were presenting a project on a social studies topic, "Oil in the Amazon," Lisa "grabbed the video camera and started taping" (Personal Communication, 5.06). Lisa was trying "to pay more attention" to students' engagements with social justice initiatives.

As the teacher of the independent study, I believed Lisa's personal investment in this particular student discussion was high, as evidenced not only by the fact that she had "grabbed" the camera and started taping, but because, as she told me about the students' animated discussion, she orally and verbally exuded intense interest. I saw an opportunity for Lisa to fulfill a key requirement of the independent study (as presented to the College of Education, 1.11.06), namely, "In lieu of a course paper, the student will construct a video case," and suggested that Lisa use this video for that purpose. This option seemed to make sense from a practical standpoint as well, since, due to either equipment failure or human error, her attempt to videotape her Everyday People lesson had failed. Lisa agreed to my proposal and completed her work on the case in early June, right after the end of semester. Due to summer commitments, we agreed to meet in August to discuss

her case, which made sense, because Lisa wished to continue her efforts to enact a project during her tenure in this same classroom during her internship the following school year.

Context of Lisa's "Case of Ways to Leap into Critical Literacy"

When Lisa and I met to view the clips that she had selected and to talk about the pedagogical case that she had made, I asked her how making a case differed from a general analysis of the video. She explained that it had to do with “being forced to isolate several clips all, you know, answering my question, or what I want to tell someone”

(8.06). The following excerpt indicates Lisa's process, and what her video case was a case of:

And I think I just found things that interested me in questions that were asked or a statement that was made, that, you know, spoke to me, I guess. And then I, yeah, I started looking at themes within them and thinking about, “What do I want to say about these? What, what am I trying out of this to make sense of?” I was making sense of how to get to critical literacy... and ways to leap into critical literacy and that, that was the case I made. (8.06)

What Lisa meant by “leaping into critical literacy” in the context of her video case will be further elaborated in this chapter. However, her statements about “getting” to critical literacy, and finding “ways to leap into critical literacy” help to explain why, as she watched the video she isolated what she called “fertile moments”—that is, places where she saw ways to promote critical perspectives and capitalize on students' interests to introduce a comprehensive (integrative) project: “[You and I] had talked about *fertile moment* a lot. I think that's when I looked at all these separate clips and said, ‘That's what these are’” (8.06).

Background of Lisa's Case

As Lisa explained in a written commentary on her clips (6.06), the social studies lesson she videotaped began as a way for a group of students representing Ecuador to teach the class a lesson about their chosen country. Their lesson was based on an article about oil in the Amazon assigned by Ms. Harper, the classroom teacher. Thus this discussion was student-led, although it was loosely guided by the classroom teacher.

Lisa's first clip highlighted the students' poster-board questions: "Where is the war at?" "Who are the owners of the Amazon jungle?" "Which country is rich with oil?" "What have the Indians done to the oil company?" Lisa noted that she would have wanted to use this last question "to set up a frame for looking at the question from different perspectives" to help the students consider a critical question, "Whose voice is being heard?"

Clip 2 highlighted one student's frustration with the article and the students' feisty work to "help" him figure it out.

Clip 3 focused on Ms. Harper's response to the students' questions about how the article would help them answer their quiz about Ecuador. Instead of providing a direct answer to that query, Ms. Harper sent the students back to their small groups to discuss the article with the question, "What is the big idea?" Lisa selected this clip because she believed this was the question that began "the ultimate discussion."

Clip 4 was chosen to highlight one student's (Tony's) statement, "I still didn't get the big idea." Lisa considered this to be a key moment, and, drawing on Palmer's (1998) notion of subject-centered teaching she wrote, "What if the big idea is not a simple statement that can be taken from the lesson, but, rather, the subject becomes bigger than

the teachers or the students and yet it brings them all together in a discussion?” Lisa considered Tony’s statement to be a “fertile moment,” something that she could use as a means of introducing an integrative project that would go deeper into the critical aspects of oil and the Amazon.

Clip 5 was selected to illustrate Karen Gallas’s notion of theory building as running through the muck of an idea. Although an outsider to the student-led discussion might not be able to make sense of the students’ exchanges, insiders in the classroom would understand this talk as important sense making. Lisa wrote:

This clip represents the theory building in this classroom community. Although the students make sense of things in their groups, they are able to bring their ideas back to the class and this, paired with Tony’ “big idea” question leads to the fertile moment. (8.06)

Lisa chose Clips 6 and 7 to highlight the students’ thinking and how that was “pushed by strategic statements and questions that Ms. Harper makes.” About her selection of Clips 6 and 7 Lisa wrote,

These are the clips that I would view as the fertile moments...I believe that these clips would be the basis for leading into an investigation about oil and war...The points raised here are incredibly complex. They are leading to the great question that surrounds our century, “Is oil the 21st century’s gold?” (8.06)

The “incredibly complex questions” to which Lisa refers here included one student’s (Christiana’s) question, “What about the war in Iraq?” The mentor’s response to this apparently divergent question was, “Is the war on our soil?” and this extension prompted more interpersonal connections to the topic of oil. One clip Lisa “deleted by accident” showed the students “talking about alternative fuel sources, and they start grappling with

um, the difference between fuel and oil and, because something led into that conversation, they started talking about gas prices and being at war makes the gas go up.”

I have provided this background to Lisa’s pedagogical case and its overall focus—that is, what the video case was a case of—in order to contextualize the conversation Lisa and I engaged in around her clip selection. By this move, I mean to background both the process and content of her case and foreground our conversation about her case as a conjoint action of “forgetting vulnerability” that involved 1) forgetting co-teaching, 2) forgetting incompetence, 3) forgetting chaos, 4) forgetting failure, and 5) forgetting journey. Said another way, in the following five sections I present evidence that Lisa did not deny the painful and messy experiences she underwent during her attempts to enact a peculiar praxis journey; rather the vulnerabilities occasioned by the past experiences were present, yet “forgotten”—“remembered”/reconstituted—through the possibilities for her and her students that were opened up through video case construction.

Forgetting Co-teaching

It was not about HER. As explained above, Lisa’s video case was based upon a lesson that she observed in her internship classroom. The reason that Lisa was *observing* her mentor teacher’s loose facilitation of the students’ self-led discussion, rather than *facilitating* it herself, was that this discussion followed the “bombed” Everyday People lesson, as documented in her May 18th e-mail communication:

I don’t want the last three weeks in the class to be mass chaos for the kids, so I told Ms. Harper that I thought it would be best to follow the book plans she laid out... I'm sorry that I haven't pushed enough, I guess there's just some things I need to learn about myself before I can do this. (8.06)

The fact that Lisa's video case was based on Ms. Harper's facilitation of the student-led discussion meant that it was "not about *her*." The video case thus provided a unique opportunity for Lisa to engage in active forgetting of the vulnerability occasioned through her praxis attempts, particularly the Everyday People attempt, in that it physically allowed her to step outside her Rabbit-Hole of defeat. At the same time, one of the unique aspects of Lisa's work in constructing a pedagogical video case was that, paradoxically, it *was* about her, as the evidence below will suggest.

It WAS about her! Lisa's choice of clips and the focus of her oral commentary explaining her clip selection demonstrate an insider knowledge of the students. For example, while sharing one clip she said of one student: "Notice what she does? She normally doesn't talk like that. She normally looks around the room. Oh, she is." In another clip, with reference to two other students Lisa noted,

And I was able to see their expressions, which made a huge difference for me to be able to tell if they were really interested. Jalisa's the one, especially. Erin, too. Look at how serious her face. She's, she's thinking. Like that is an Erin "I'm thinking" face. You can tell when Erin's being on task or off task, 'cause she can't fake being on task. (8.06)

Such intimate knowledge of students indexes Lisa's history among them. I asked Lisa if she had purposely focused the camera on a particular group. She told me that at first, she just began to film the group closest to her, but later her choices were intentional. She told me, "I remember this time was on purpose":

I remember Jasmine...Jasmine is a student who's not in this class all of the time. She goes into the special education room...um, but watching their expressions in that they were very intense. They were really talking about the subject. And Jalisa, I mean, there were a lot of times, Jalisa, Ms. Harper would kick her out of the room because she wasn't on task. (8.06)

Not only does this comment suggest Lisa's history among these students, but also her choice to focus this clip on the special education students demonstrates Lisa's personal investment in these children based on the fact that she was a special education major. This recalls a conversation at the beginning of April 2006, during which Lisa shared with me some poetry that her students had written. The work of the special education students, in particular, sparked her impassioned comment:

And don't tell me these kids aren't interested in real things. And some of the children who wrote, they're in special education classes, and they wrote, I believe, just as well as the other students. And I feel like we're not [in special education courses] told about those things, you know, that they can do. (8.06)

Lisa's verbal commentary on her case not only demonstrated insider knowledge of the students but of the classroom context. A burning question she brought to her video-case analysis was whether the mentor teacher had prepared for facilitating this discussion or whether it had been impromptu:

Well, and then that question. She says, "Well, how does that relate to us? Do our actions affect other parts of the world?" And it was like, "How?" Did she just have that question? Did she just come up with it?" And I think that maybe that's what she was thinking. If that's the theme of their class, "How does who we are affect how we see the world?" And essentially, she takes that a step further. "How does [do] our actions affect other parts of the world?" I feel like. (8.06)

Here, Lisa indexes a working knowledge of the class theme for the year, "How does who we are affect how we see the world?" and uses that participant knowledge to propose a reading of her mentor teacher's mind: "And I think maybe that's what she was thinking."

Moreover, as Lisa pursued her question about questions (an inquiry which will be discussed in detail later in this chapter), she demonstrated insider knowledge of Sharon,

the mentor teacher. As Lisa and I discussed Ms. Harper's evasion of a direct answer to a student's query, I talked about the idea of "wait-time" and commented the teacher could have said, "You know you've done a good job and I think you've offered some unanswered questions, but we'll get back to those at some other time." Lisa responded:

L: I would have been shocked if she did that, 'cause I just can't imagine her ever doing that. But...

M: Why can't you ever imagine her doing that?

L: That was the culture of her classroom. She always sent the questions back to the group. Even in math lessons, when she taught math. That was the first thing I ever wrote about her, was students said, "Well, what does...?" They were doing decimals that never end, and they talked about, "What's the word when something goes on and on?"

M: Infinity.

L: Yeah, infinity. And she just sent it back. "What is infinity?" And it was this amazing math lesson that she did have trust that the students were going to be able to talk about that. (8.06)

It WOULD be about her. Not only was this video case about Lisa, as evidenced by her insider knowledge of the students, classroom context and teacher, but Lisa's language across the transcript of our conversation also demonstrates her personal involvement in the present, not in the past. For example, the following excerpt suggests Lisa is planning "her" next lesson:

When she [Christiana] made that connection [between the war in Iraq and oil in the Amazon] that could be a point where I could show the kids, "Ms. Harper asked this question. Christiana made this connection. What," you know, "What is there to learn about this?" "How does it affect us?" I mean, thinking about the books I could read. Thank God I have books on this. *War and Oil*. Like I called it the 21st century's gold. Because it really is. (8.06)

The piling up of present tense verbs—“What *is* there to learn?” “How *does* it affect us?”, “*Thank God I have* books on this”—conveys a sense of excitement and suggests a “next” lesson.

Lisa went on to share an insight about using her video case to help her students “leap” along with her into “critical literacy”:

I made the case, and then I came up with, well, it helped me think of a way to jump into it, wouldn't it then give them, realizing that these, I mean, the topic came from Ms. Harper, but the topic they started talking about came from the students. So if they could see themselves thinking about it, then it becomes their idea, not mine, not Ms Harper's. Well, we are all a part of it, 'cause I remember the idea of bringing it back to them. But then they can see themselves thinking about it there. So that's something I really want to think about more, 'cause I did realize, you know, after conversations with you especially, that's going to be so important if we went back to the issue of just Ecuador. (8.06)

Lisa's idea is treated more fully later in this chapter. Here I mean to point out that the present-ness of Lisa's comments are explainable by the fact that she planned to serve her teaching internship in this same classroom, with Ms. Harper and the same students. Thus in the context of her idea of going back to “the issue of just Ecuador” and using the video case to let the students “see themselves thinking about,” the topic of oil was not merely an imaginative foray, but a near-tangible idea for a future lesson.

It was about being a co-teacher. Taken together, the above excerpts suggest that Lisa is the teacher of these students—not has been, or will be, but *is* their teacher, or more specifically, their co-teacher. As explained in the Chapter 2, Lisa and I had envisioned the independent study as a co-teaching enterprise, which helps to explain why Ms. Harper “quite often” just “handed me [Lisa] the reins” of a discussion and then stepped back into it later. I argue that the evidence of this section connotes a similar moment of co-teaching of which Lisa was an integral part—not merely an observer, but a

participant-observer, even though she did not formerly step into this “oil” discussion.

The following excerpt from our conversation strengthens this claim where Lisa is studying Ms. Harper’s role in promoting student talk that diverged from the original topic:

L: So it’s like she took Tony’s question, rephrased it, and sent them back, which I think is something that I would need to learn to do, and I think am learning to do, to be able to do

M: Can you go back to the one where Ms Harper does that?
(L and M refer to video clip.)

M: Why do you think she does that?

L: I think because she knew. I think she had some idea that this was gonna go somewhere. But if you asked her afterward, she had no idea.

M: She didn’t? You did ask her?

L: Yeah, she’s so. When the kids left the class, I said, “Oh my goodness.” And she didn’t even see some of the things I had seen from sitting back. (8.06)

Here, I mean to focus on Lisa and Sharon’s co-involvement, during which, as in this instance, Lisa became the mentor’s eyes. My claim that Lisa was present in this discussion as a co-teacher is important to the larger claim of this section, that this particular instance of co-teaching afforded just enough distance to create a space for Lisa to re-member what was possible (Field and Latta 2001, p. 12) for her and the mentor teacher as co-teachers of an integrative project. In other words, creating the pedagogical video case based on this student/mentor teacher discussion enabled Lisa to engage in active forgetting of co-teaching, where “forgetting” means to re-member her experience of vulnerability in this collaborative arrangement differently—forgetting as thinking anew the possible meanings of a given experience.

Forgetting co-teaching as re-membering co-teaching. Recall that back in February, Lisa wrote, “I truly believe Sharon is excited about this project, but I think a major part of it for me will be learning how to voice my thoughts without making anything seem critical of her teaching and her curriculum” (2.19.06). Moreover, in late March she mused,

I feel as though I’m ready to push through to the critical aspect of teaching for social justice. However, I’m wondering if we are all on the same page. I believe that the point Marjorie made was something along the lines of: celebrating our differences and likeness is not enough. True education for social justice includes looking at the “whole issue,” those that go deeper than celebration of our cultures. (8.06)

At the same time, in early May Lisa noted she would have preferred to have had the freedom to branch off from her written lesson plan (for her social studies methods professor) to allow students to follow their own paths of discussion, noting “It would be so cool if I was in this class [all the time] and I could keep going with this. And that’s what Sharon does all the time, and that’s what, that’s what I want to do with the critical literacy program” (4.06).

Yet in June, Lisa explained one reason why she had not been able to enact her project:

I think sometimes, even with Ms. Harper if I didn’t agree on something, it was very scary to be able to say that, because she’s still, you know, to me, she’s a level above me. It was her classroom. I think that will change this year, because I will come in an intern teacher. (6.06)

These four excerpts of conversation specifically related to Lisa’s relationship with the mentor teacher recall and capture the vulnerability occasioned through Lisa’s experience of co-teaching across the months of the independent study. The conflicted

memories revealed here point to a key feature of “active forgetting,” namely, that in constructing something new, the past is not denied. Lisa’s past experiences of co-teaching are present in the moment of video-case construction even though—and, I argue, even because— past co-teaching moments are never specifically referred to at any point in Lisa’s written or verbal commentary.

Active, rather than regressive, or even retrospective forgetting is evident, for example, in Lisa’s excitement over Ms. Harper’s encouragement of the students’ connections among the war in Iraq, oil in the Amazon, and gas prices in their Midwestern, high-poverty region. This invitation to engage in critical literacy stood in marked contrast to Ms. Harper’s former multicultural emphasis on celebrating students’ cultural diversity in ways that foregrounded what students had in common. Here, Lisa’s fear—“I’m wondering if we are all on the same page”—is actively forgotten, that is “re-membered,” or reconstituted, through Lisa’s active focus on the possibility of doing a project related to the topic of oil and social justice.

I return here to evidence cited above in order to strengthen my claim that, through video-case construction, Lisa did not deny her past experiences but “re-membered” them, or reframed her negative memories by focusing on new possibilities for action. In the following excerpt, notice how Lisa tells me about her “new” idea of bringing the video back to the class, thereby actively forgetting/“re-membering” her fear that Ms. Harper was not as concerned as Lisa with discussion that goes “deeper than celebration of our cultures”:

When she [Christiana] made that connection [between the war in Iraq and oil in the Amazon] that could be a point where I could show the kids, “Ms. Harper asked this question. Christiana made this connection. “What,” you know, “What is there to learn about this?” “How does it affect us?” I mean, the topic came from

Ms. Harper, but the topic they started talking about came from the students. So if they could see themselves thinking about it, then it becomes their idea, not mine, not Ms Harper's. Well, we are all a part of it, 'cause I remember the idea of bringing it back to them. But then they can see themselves thinking about it there. (8.06)

Here, without a single reference back to her expressed concern about not being on the same page, Lisa actively “forgets” this concern by refocusing on possibilities, and this is accomplished as she actively constructs a new creation firmly rooted in the “concrete” evidence of the video, which affirms Ms. Harper’s interest in a topic that goes beyond the celebration of cultural diversity, defined as food and music preferences. What is even more significant, however, is that Lisa also actively “forgets” the vulnerability occasioned by her experience of co-teaching as *subordinate* teaching, as evidenced by her statement above, “even with Ms Harper if I didn’t agree on something, it was very scary to be able to say that, because she’s still, you know, to me, she’s a level above me. It was her classroom.” Lisa does not reify this memory by referring back to it specifically, nor does she deny it. Rather, Lisa “re-members”—that is, moves through and beyond her subordinate position without having to directly confront her teacher about what constitutes a “true social justice” emphasis. Lisa does this by proposing to “use” the students’ visible interest as ballast for her own idea to continue with an integrative project related to oil.

Thus far in this chapter, I have argued that Lisa’s engagement in active forgetting through video case construction was enabled by her unique position as a co-teacher. I do not wish to suggest, however, that Lisa’s experience of co-teaching had been entirely positive. Rather, as Field and Latta (2001) have noted, Lisa needed, not to deny her past experience, but, in effect to selectively “re-member it,” or reconstitute it as something

new that bears the same relationship to the old as a butterfly bears to the caterpillar from which it owes its new life. Following Field and Latta, I have argued, in this chapter, that pedagogical video-case construction allowed Lisa “to forget certain aspects of [co-teaching] to clear a space to become something other than her [Ms. Harper’s] partner teacher” (p. 12). In the next section, I explore further this matter of becoming something other than the mentor teacher’s partner, focusing on Lisa’s close analysis of her mentor teacher’s questions.

Forgetting Incompetence

Lisa brought to this moment of case construction a slate etched with reflections “back” on her attempts. On May 18th, after her final “bombed” lesson, she explicitly spoke of ending her praxis journey in an email to me: “I’m sorry that I haven’t pushed enough. I guess there’s [sic] just some things I need to learn about myself before I can do this. I’m sorry for quitting. I am just afraid that if things get worse, I will quit teaching all [sic] together.” Here, with the words “I guess there’s just some things I need to learn about myself before I can do this,” we see once again the intersection of Lisa’s praxis journey and personal journey and her use of reflection to name herself as “the problem.” Lisa’s experiences appeared to have “re-membered” her negatively; this was prescient rumination, which, as with worrying a loose tooth, kept her focused on her failures and inadequacies and deferred hope.

In contrast, hope is palpable in Lisa’s explanation of her process in constructing the pedagogical video case:

And it took me a long time because first of all, I had to learn how to do the editing, and I kept accidentally deleting clips that I wanted, but then I had to sit

and think about, and re-watch the clip, re-watch the clip, re-watch it, several times and really think about, “Why did she ask that question?” or “What was Christiana thinking here? What got her to that point? And like, what, how could this be related to critical literacy? Or how could I jump from these points?” You really have to sit and reflect on it. That alone takes a long time outside of the editing and picking clips out. And I remember I had, I looked kinda funny. I figure this is what it must look like to do a thesis, ‘cause I had note cards all over and piles of books that I’m opening. “Oh, that reminds me of the science [methods course]. What does Gallas have to say about this? Oh, oh my gosh, that’s what she was always saying! I see it here!” And then I’d sit down and start to write before I lost my thoughts. I don’t know. You know that feeling when you get a really deep thought and you can’t even articulate it? I felt like that’s what was happening. Like my brain’s going so fast and I. It gave me something concrete to think about, rather than reflecting back and writing about it, I had something that I could look at and just go in depth (8.06)

In the excerpt above, note, first, that in contrast to her May 18th utterance of self-blame—“For some reason, [the video camera] didn’t record (probably my fault) so I missed the whole lesson”—Lisa’s deletion of clips here is referenced as “accidental” and her mention of it serves to draw the hearer into the intensity of her process rather than into the anguish of her defeats. Note as well the focus on the present in Lisa’s utterances related to reflection during her case construction process: “You really have to sit and reflect on it,” and “it gave me something concrete to think about, rather than reflecting back.” Here, even though this discussion was an instance of backward reflection on her process, she re-names reflection as mindful, or thoughtful and purposeful engagement with the present. Lisa’s rich description “I looked kinda funny...I had note cards all over” also brings that past moment into the present. Moreover, the stacking of quasi-direct quotatives—that is, semi self-quotes related to her focus on questions and thinking going on in the video, such as “Why did she ask that question?” and “What got her to that point?” is poetically paralleled by the stacking of quotatives related to her excitement in bringing theory and practice together: “Oh, oh my gosh, that’s what [Gallas] was talking

about.” Both the stacking and parallelism perform Lisa’s reflective work as a mindful involvement in the present.

Lisa’s focus on questions in the above excerpt, for example, “What was Christiana thinking here?” and “What got her to that point?” reflects one of the key foci of her case work. For example, as we examined Lisa’s clips she often had to think about why she had made particular selections, because our conversation took place two months after she had actually done the work. Upon examination of one clip, she noted the following:

L: Oh, I know exactly why I chose this clip.

M: Why?

L: Um, first of all, I think anyone watching this. I think some people would regard like, Christiana’s comment as this off the wall comment. The war in Iraq? How could that relate to oil in the Amazon? And the reason I chose that clip is I think it was really valuable. First of all, that Ms Harper didn’t disregard her questions whatsoever. I think it easily. That could’ve happened. Okay. First of all, I paid a lot of attention to Ms. Harper’s, the type of questions she asked, and quite before that, a question again, she sends it back out to them. “We have a lot of ideas, but I’m not sure we know the answer.” And I mean, she’s admitted, she doesn’t know the answer either, which, that is somewhere. I mean, that’s how you start. You don’t know the answer. There might not be one right answer, but I think that’s what it is to look at an issue of social justice. There isn’t one right answer. There’s a lot of ideas. (8.06)

The phrase “first of all” is repeated three times across this excerpt, and this repetition performs a narrowing of Lisa’s analytic lens, as she hones in on her mentor teacher’s moves in response to Christiana’s engagement in the discussion. The phrase, “and quite before that” indexes Lisa’s process of moving backward and forward within the video clip to draw my attention towards some facet that caught her attention. Here, she is interested in both the type of questions being asked by her mentor teacher, and, in

the mentor's handling of the questioning process. Also of note is the phrase, "And...she's admitted, she doesn't know the answer either, which...I mean, that's how you start. You don't know the answer." This comment recalls Lisa's personal belief about critical literacy:

I guess I kind of look at it like a mirror, like when you go into a funhouse with all the mirrors, being able to see all the different angles, like that's what I see reading the world as. And you know that there's different, I guess, multiple perspectives, and there's different ways of seeing a problem depending on who you are. (6.06)

Lisa's inquiry about Sharon's questions deepens to include the intersection of the mentor's questions and students' engagement, as is evident in her continued justification of her clip selections:

L: Um, but then this clip, one thing I noticed about a lot of her questions is she kind of leads um, Christiana when she says, "Well, is the war on our soil?" just to lead her to something that—

M: Right. I noticed that too.

L: —to rephrase it. Which, it's almost like she's correcting one of Christiana's misconceptions. But um, at the same time, I don't know. I think she helped make the connection for the class there, you know? So that everyone was on the same page, but once again. She trails off. I can't, I don't know what she said. I have to go back. It's somewhere in here.

[L and M refer to video clip.]

L: Right there. Yeah. She trails off. I mean, it's like she's not giving a definite answer or anything. She's just helping the, she's facilitating the discussion, but I don't feel like she's giving an exact, she's not I-R-E. Is that what we call it? (8.06)

The sensory present-ness and urgency of Lisa's reflective (that is, mindfully embodied) study of the mentor teacher's questioning strategy is performed here as she searches for a specific aspect of her clip: "She trails off. I can't, I don't know what she said. I have to go back. It's somewhere in here. Right there. Yeah. She trails off."

The weight Lisa attaches to Sharon's act of "trailing off" may be seen in the repetition of that phrase, "She trails off," encapsulating the clipped utterances—"I can't, I don't know," "I have to go back," "Right there"—which perform the rummage through her memory and her rummage through the film: "It's somewhere in here." The sense Lisa makes of this "trailing off" moment is suggested by her statements "...It's like she's not giving a definite answer or anything. She's just helping the, she's facilitating the discussion, but I don't feel like she's giving an exact, she's not I-R-E. Is that what we call it?"

Lisa's focus here on "trailing off" reflects a curiosity evident throughout the independent study about teachers' roles in discussion. For example, in early April we met to discuss Herbert Kohl's (1984) facilitation of his students' discussion about the oppression that they were experiencing, and Lisa mused:

...he didn't force anything on the kids, he just took what they naturally brought in, and sometimes he, and it's a similar thread I'm starting to see coming between all these teachers is they can ask certain questions that the kids' brains...
[unfinished thought] (4.06)

Lisa's intense focus on her mentor teacher's questions as evidenced in this section indexes a key aspect of "active forgetting," namely, that it does not deny the past, nor reify it by specific attempts to improve upon what was done before. Rather, the past is remembered into something radically new. Recall Lisa's statements at the beginning of this section "You really have to sit and think about it" and "it gave me something concrete to think about, rather than *reflecting back* and writing." Note that there is not a single instance of backwards reflection to former praxis attempts in any of excerpts shared

here.¹⁰ While not looking back is partly explainable by the fact that she was involved in reflection based on a “concrete” moment, which promoted a sense of mindful involvement in the present, I posit that Lisa’s personal experience related to questioning strategies is visible beneath the surface of her active construction of a pedagogical case on someone else’s teaching.

For example, the focus evidenced above on the mentor teacher’s questions seems to mirror Lisa’s puzzlement expressed in early April, “it’s a similar thread I’m starting to see coming between all these teachers is they can ask certain questions that the kids’ brains [unfinished thought].” What matters here, with respect to the notion of active forgetting, is that there is no specific reference by Lisa to the fact that she had ever specifically named “teachers’ questions” as a personal problem for study, yet her focus on the mentor’s questions *in the act* of case construction is an instance of active forgetting that “re-members,” that is, reconfigures her own past experiences with facilitating discussion. Stated more explicitly, I posit that Lisa’s focus on Ms. Harper’s questioning strategies was an engagement in active forgetting that allowed Lisa to “re-member” (think differently about) her problem of not knowing how to pick up on and extend students’ questions and interests (without imposing her own)—a concern of Lisa’s that was elaborated in Chapter 3. The focus on Ms. Harper’s questions was an instance of active forgetting, because, without explicit focus on her past difficulties, these memories were not denied. Rather, through close observation of a co-teacher she was able to imagine a new beginning for herself,

¹⁰ There was not a single reference to any past praxis attempt across the entire transcript of the case construction.

A similar puzzlement from Lisa's past is suggested by her further query into Ms. Harper's process. A burning question (to which Lisa referred twice during our conversation) was whether or not Ms. Harper had anticipated the questions that the students had ended up raising, and whether or not she had specifically prepared (intellectually) for facilitating this discussion. Lisa at first reasoned,

L: So it's like she took Tony's question, rephrased it, and sent them back, which I think is something that I would need to learn to do, and I think am learning to do, to be able to do –

M: Can you go back to the one where Ms Harper does that?
[L and M refer to video clip.]

M: Why do you think she does that?

L: I think because she knew. I think she had some idea that this was gonna go somewhere. But if you asked her afterward, she had no idea.

M: She didn't? You did ask her?

L: Yeah, she's so, when the kids left the class, I said, "Oh my goodness." And she didn't even see some of the things I had seen from sitting back. (8.06)

Ms. Harper's answer did not apparently satisfy Lisa.

However, Lisa returned, later in our conversation, to this unresolved dilemma, noting her reason for selecting the clip was precisely to draw attention to her own query:

[L refers to video clip.]

L: That definitely, first of all, this clip was picked because Ms. Harper said she didn't expect that conversation to take place, but the more I watch it and think about it, she had to have had an idea, because she was very prepared with how to take students' questions and facilitate that discussion. Maybe she's done it so often it was natural. What do you think? You think she was prepared? (8.06)

I suggested that Ms. Harper may have been generally, if not specifically prepared, due to her knowledge of the social studies curriculum and the fact that she had assigned the article on the social implications of oil in the Amazon, but we were unsure as to whether the mentor would have anticipated the students' connection with the War in Iraq.

Finally, Lisa went on to answer her own query drawing upon her insider knowledge as a co-teacher (as stated in the section “*Forgetting co-teaching*” above) to put words in the teacher’s mouth, even though the teacher had denied speaking them!

Well, and then that question. She says, “Well, how does that relate to us? Do our actions affect other parts of the world?” And it was like, how, did she just have that question? Did she just come up with it? And I think that maybe that’s what she was thinking. If that’s the theme of their class, “How does who we are affect how we see the world?” and essentially, she takes that a step further. “How does our actions affect other parts of the world?” I feel like. (8.06)

Lisa’s query about the teacher’s preparation seems reminiscent of her worry expressed after teaching the Acculturation Discussion, as detailed in Chapter 3:

Today I was able to lead a discussion about acculturation. Ms Harper led into the discussion by bringing up a part of the book about Columbus Day and the trading of goods. She talked about how her son had a friend who was Native American and how his family didn’t celebrate Thanksgiving. The first reflection I had was the realization about how much research and knowledge I need to have in order to hold discussions. Most of the time, Ms. Harper will ask me if I would like to take over which I always do, but many times I feel like I might be shortchanging the students because I do not have enough knowledge of the subject in order to really push the envelope of discussion with well prepared and challenging questions (2.22.06).

Overall, Lisa’s focus on Sharon’s questioning strategies recalls the full-slate of negative memories Lisa brought to the case-construction moment, as may be seen in these utterances culled from her May 18th e-mail that told of the Everyday People lesson that “ended up bombing:”

I was hoping to get everyone to discuss the lyrics and relate them to their lives, culminating in a discussion about whether we agreed with the message or disagreed, etc. I felt as though I had no control. I guess I overestimated my ability to find ways to get the

students to talk. I guess I just wasn't structured enough, open enough or skilled at finding the right questions to help the students talk to each other. I guess I can't do this without the support of Ms. Harper because the kids respect her (at least most of the time) and she knows how to get everyone to talk. (5.18.06)

Forgetting incompetence as re-membering incompetence. Once again, while Lisa never once refers to this painful memory, which would be to solidify it, to reify it, Lisa's close analysis of Sharon's questions as evidenced throughout this section suggests that the vulnerability of the past experience is "re-membered," or reconfigured by affirming the now, without specific and painful recollection. As Lisa constructs her case, vulnerability, related to "not being open enough or skilled at finding the right questions to help the students talk to each other," is actively forgotten. Stated otherwise, Lisa's active case construction was an instance of what Nietzsche (1980 might call "slate-cleaning," or what Field and Latta (2001) call "clearing a space to remember what is possible for our students and ourselves" (pp. 12-13). Just such space clearing is evidenced in Lisa's focus on chaos, as the evidence of the next section will suggest.

Forgetting Chaos

Lisa believed case construction helped her capture elusive thoughts. As she put it,

You know that feeling when you get a really deep thought and you can't even articulate it? I felt like that's what was happening. Like my brain's going so fast and I. It gave me something concrete to think about, rather than reflecting back and writing about it, I had something that I could look at and just go in depth. (8.06)

She went on to suggest that by “concrete,” she meant that she was able to study the students’ engagement in the discussion by watching their facial expressions:

And I was able to see their expressions, which made a huge difference for me to be able to tell if they were really. Jalisa’s the one, especially. Erin too. Look at how serious her face is. That is an Erin, “I’m thinking face”. (8.06)

In the section “Forgetting co-teaching” (above) I suggested that this evidence revealed Lisa’s insider stance in this classroom. Here, I piggy-back on that claim, to suggest why it made “a huge difference” for Lisa to be able to tell if the students were really “on task”—that is, to tell if they were really talking about the question Ms. Harper had posed (“Is the war on our soil?”). Lisa went on to point out that the video allowed her to watch “their expressions, in that they were very intense. They were really talking about the subject,” and it was particularly interesting to Lisa that often, the students who were exhibiting such intense interest in this particular discussion were the same ones who had sometimes not been so engaged: “And Jalisa, I mean, there were a lot of times Jalisa. Ms. Harper would kick her out of the room because she wasn’t on task.”

Lisa’s interest in the *students’* interest is further evidenced in the following excerpt of our conversation. As she viewed a particular clip, Lisa muttered, “I think I should have edited this a little more,” which led to the following exchange:

M: So, your first reaction was, “I think I should have edited this a little more.” Why did you say that?

L: Because it looks so unorganized. You can’t hear one thing. I remember trying to zoom in on the discussion, and I just couldn’t pick up on anything, so I sat back and taped. This is when I’m just taping it all. The reason I put this clip in is I took the quote right from Karen Gallas about how it looks irrational. It looks like, and I think if someone came into this, if the principal walked in, she’d be like, “What in the world is going on? Because it looks like just chaos. (8.06)

Lisa's use of the word "chaos" here echoes her use of that word in the May 18th e-mail in which she told me about the Everyday People lesson that "ended up bombing": "I don't want the last three weeks in the class to be mass chaos for the kids, so I told Ms. Harper that I thought it would be best to follow the book plans she laid out. To return to her reasoning behind this clip selection, she described chaos:

L: Everyone's talking...I mean, have you watched this? I mean, they're talking in their groups, to each other. I mean, Jalisa is one of my favorites, probably because it centered on her, but I noticed it a lot, she goes, "Yeah!" and like, gets really excited. I, it might be in the next clip that she does it more, but they're making sense of the question Ms Harper sent them back with. You know, "Does it matter?" "Is the war on our soil?"

M: Right.

L: "What is the big idea? Why don't you talk to your groups about this?" And I think, I don't think people really give kids the benefit of the doubt that they can do this in a group. Or that if you leave them unstructured [unfinished thought]. (8.06)

Here, the word "unstructured" recalls Lisa's use of the same word in the May 18th e-mail: "I guess I just wasn't structured enough, open enough or skilled at finding the right questions to help the students talk to each other."

Lisa went on:

L: So at first, I thought, "Why'd I keep this clip in there? It just looks like chaos." But then I remembered that's why! To show that when they went back to their smaller groups. You can also see everyone seems to be talking. So, I talked [in the written commentary] about, about how it was a chapter out of the science textbook RE: talking being an irrational activity, how it's so natural, how it's the kids were talking. If someone came in they'd be like, I don't know, I just think [unfinished thought].

M: How Gallas says it might look like the classroom has run amok?

L: Yeah! And it does! That's when I thought when I thought, "Why'd I put this clip in there?" But when you go on, you can't hear anything they're saying, but when you go on, and they're talking in their groups as a whole group and sharing

that they came to a consensus, or what they talked about, then you realize, they, they were building their theories in their group. That's what they were doing. But I think as an outsider, you wouldn't know that. (8.06)

Lisa's focus in this clip on "chaos"—that is, her deliberate selection of a clip that seemed so chaotic that even she had to rethink her selection, echoes her experience of chaos in the final praxis attempt, the Everyday People lesson.

Recall Lisa's May 18th journal entry, where, in reflecting back on her "failed attempt to break into some kind of discussion or project" she lamented:

One particular student, Kristian, shared her thoughts and was backed down by Lori's laughing until she ended up yelling back and the whole room went from the impenetrable silence into what sounded like a funhouse of screaming, grumbling and side discussions. (8.06)

Moreover, in the same journal entry Lisa stated as a cause of the chaotic response, "they were not familiar with the song so for many their take on 'Write about what the lyrics mean to you' meant to write about the "Scooby- dooby- doo" parts.

As an interesting side note, whatever was said verbally, in the "funhouse of screaming, grumbling and side discussions," my examination of the students' work revealed that out of 38 students, only three students mentioned the "scooby-doo" lines. One of these students was Lori (the offending student mentioned above); however, Lori also wrote an entire page explaining that the song meant: "We should stick together and should not be enemies towards each other. It doesn't [doesn't] matter if you are short black or white we should all stick together." This sentiment was echoed in almost all the students' free-write responses.

More nuanced development of this theme was also discernable in the students' connections to the song. Several connected to the line about fat/skinny people; one student wrote, "And it reminded me (the part when it said that the fat one was trying to be

the skinny one) that some people (white people) trying to be African people.” Sounding another note, a student wrote, “This song reminds me of illegal immigration because of the blue one who dosint [doesn’t] get along with the green one and that these lines symbolize racism in America.” Another student made a more personal connection to immigration: “To top that, when I was little there were a lot of blacks that said, “We don’t want to play with you white boy.” Then I told him, “I am Mexican not white, well I am little bit white.”

For another student the song spoke of rich folk acting “like they know everything and all the new outfits they have...Also one Day. If one of the rich people become poor then now they are going to wish they haven’t braged [bragged] about everything.” Finally, one child wrote that the song “was about racism and how it effects [affects] life,” but ended his piece on a cutting critical edge: “And I think trying to make people do things through music is sebliminal [subliminal] messaging.” Yet Lisa’s memory of this lesson admitted only that she had “failed” to prepare the students for close reading of passages of the song: Lisa believed that many students had only written “about the ‘Scooby- dooby- doo’ parts” (5.18).

Forgetting chaos as re-membering chaos. Thus I argue that the painful memory of noisy failure was present behind Lisa’s focus on chaos in her pedagogical video case. Following Gallas (1995), Lisa was able to forget chaos by renaming it—that is, by “re-membering” it, reconfiguring it as irrational sense making. Selecting this clip about chaos allowed Lisa to step outside her experience, become the outsider (like the principal) who walked in and found chaos, and then, repositioning herself as an insider who paid close attention to students’ expressions and eventual oral theory building, Lisa was enabled to

“re-member” chaos as students’ perfectly reasonable means of building theories and making sense. By using the video evidence to pay close attention to the students’ expressions, Lisa was able to actively forget the noise of Lori’s laughing, and the “funhouse of screaming, grumbling and side discussions” (5.06)—not by blocking out the reality of what went on but by “clearing a space to remember what is possible for our students and ourselves” (Field & Latta, 2001, pp. 12-13). A particularly poignant exemplar of what Lisa envisioned as being possible by engaging with the space-clearing of video case construction was her focus on “fertile moments.”

Forgetting Failure

As Lisa and I discussed her video case construction process I was interested in what her work was a “case of.” Lisa told me,

I didn’t pick out clips originally, I don’t think, to prove a point or to, to say anything at first. I was just looking at several clips, and I’m like, “That’s profound.” You and I had talked about *fertile moment* a lot. I think that’s when I looked at all these separate clips and said, ‘That’s what these are.’” (8.06)

As explained in the “Forgetting Vulnerability: Theoretical Perspective” section above, Lisa’s comment, “You and I had talked about *fertile moment* a lot” refers to an metaphor that I had introduced to guide students’ work with video cases in my literacy methods course, which Lisa had taken in fall semester 2005. Now, many months after that course had ended, I was interested in Lisa’s personal application of that metaphor and asked her to explain. The background to Lisa’s answer is that one student, Tony, had interrupted the discussion (presented above) about intersections between the war in Iraq and oil in the Amazon to pose a question to the group: “What is the big idea?”

Lisa's justification of her selection of this clip helps to get at her sense of "fertile moments":

M: Anyway, let's go back to this clip for a minute, and I just wanted you to clarify what you mean by "fertile."

L: Okay. Um, I guess, "fertile" meaning, a synonym maybe being "profound." In a sense that, I'll use Tony's big statement, her asking for a big idea, to me, as a teacher, *is* a big idea. You can go somewhere from that. You can go into a whole realm of social justice from that, I felt like. She was the one that brought it up. (8.06)

A full understanding of Lisa's choice of this clip depends on her written explication, where she said that Tony had actually said she "still didn't get the big idea." Lisa considered this to be a key moment, and, drawing on Palmer's (1998) notion of subject-centered teaching she wrote, "What if the big idea is not a simple statement that can be taken from the lesson, but, rather, what if the subject becomes bigger than the teachers or the students, and yet it brings them all together in a discussion?"

This focus on a compelling "big idea" introduces another aspect of active forgetting made possible by Lisa's construction of a video case. The most telling statement is the last one in the excerpt above: "She (Tony) was the one that brought it up." While there is no explicit reference here to Lisa's past difficulties in enacting her "peculiar" praxis (a named problem leading to an integrative project), this short statement is reminiscent of Lisa's struggle to "take what is naturally occurring" and not "shove" something down students' "throats" as she put it, in a March reflective journal entry (3.28.06). The statement here—"She was the one that brought it up"—contains echoes of Schultz's e-mail advice: "Let them tell you their priority concerns" (2.3.06), an effort which Lisa sustained through all five praxis attempts (see Chapter 3). As Lisa reflected back on her final "failed attempt to break into some kind of discussion or project," she

lamented, “the subject didn’t come from the students so it was pushed away as another imposed idea. This was an issue I saw and wanted to change and it stemmed from a discussion with 3 girls, not the entire class” (5.18.06. Written Reflection).

Moreover, as has been elaborated throughout Chapters 3-6, Lisa represented her efforts to access students’ “authentic” (“real-life”) concerns, using the verb phrases “finding a way in” and finding a “jumping off” point, notions associated with a structural journey. For Lisa, teaching an integrative project meant moving toward the destination of social justice. Lisa’s destination orientation is discernable in the above excerpt when she states, “You can go somewhere from that. You can go into a whole realm of social justice from that...She was the one that brought it up.” Lisa’s past is not denied in the new work of the pedagogical video case but, rather, “re-membered” to become dynamically integral to the creation of new meaning, as the following excerpt suggests:

That’s why I put that clip in, ‘cause I think you can *get* from that fertile moment. Maybe the fertile moment means more like when Tony asks a question and Ms. Harper responds to it, and then sends that question back to them. So it’s like she took Tony’s question, rephrased it, and sent them back, which I think is something that I would need to learn to do, and I think am learning to do, to be able to do. (8.06)

What turned out to be “fertile” about Tony’s “big idea,” as Lisa saw it, was that it led to discussion around Christiana’s apparently disconnected question, “What about the war in Iraq?”

Once again, I return to evidence used above, in order to make a different argument:

L: I think some people would regard like, Christiana’s comment as this off the wall comment. The war in Iraq? How could that relate to -

M: Right.

L: - You know? Oil in the Amazon. And the reason I chose that clip is I think it was really valuable, first of all, that Ms. Harper didn't disregard her questions whatsoever. I think it easily, that could've happened, and the fact that that's a fertile moment, because she was making that connection. She thought about oil and connected it to her.

M: Right.

L: The Amazon didn't connect to her. Ecuador didn't make a connection to her. But this is why all of a sudden this became important to her.

L: And I think that was interesting, and I wrote, you know, this is a moment where you could go into, you know, um, oil and war, or the War in Iraq. I mean, there's a lot of issues with social justice in that that aren't looked at very often with kids. You know? Well, even with people my age. It's just the War in Iraq, and you don't really look at what's really going on there. So I just thought that was really profound on film. (8.06)

As detailed above, Sharon responded with, "Well, is the war on our soil?" which led to Lisa's intense search to locate the part in the video where this question occurred to see if it had been said to correct Christiana's misconception, or to prompt students' own sense-making. Whatever the motivation, Lisa decided that student theory building had been the effect.

The fertile moment, then, was also fruitful for Lisa, leading directly to a "big idea" of her own:

L: Um, but, when she made that connection, that could be a point where I could show the kids, "Ms. Harper asked this question. Christiana made this connection. What, you know, what is there to learn about this?"

M: Mmmhmm.

L: "How does it affect us? I guess my thought that is a way, I mean, thinking about the books I could read. I don't know any titles. I don't even know. Thank God I have books on this. War and Oil. Like I called it the 21st century's gold. Because it really is.

M: Right, yeah.

L: But, I mean, a lot of people would say that's a really big idea for sixth graders to comprehend, but it's "Building a new school. Do you want a new school?" (8.06)

Here, beneath the surface of Lisa's outburst about building "a new school," we discern the image of Brian Schultz's (2004) teaching project, in which students obtained a badly needed new school for their high-poverty urban housing area. This social justice project was the one that had originally inspired Lisa's e-mail to Schultz (2.3.06), in which she asked for ideas about how to start such a project.

The parallels with Schultz's students' project continue to be reflected in Lisa's elaboration of her "big idea":

L: But it's something they, they are grappling with it, and they have no resources. That's where I as a teacher, I could have jumped from that point and brought in articles that I found, and maybe they were at a level above what these students are used to reading, but I could have helped them decode them and break them down, and that would have been a way, one, that was connecting to standards. Maybe not social studies standards but definitely literacy standards. I mean, even I'm sure there'd be words in some of these articles that develop civic awareness, for sure. They'd have to break down these words. I guess that's, that's trailing off, but a way I see that skills would definitely be learned by doing something like this, and I guess. Yeah. I think that.

M: Great.

L: It's out of habit now that I'm doing that. (8.06)

Lisa's words here recall her past experience with the central feature of Schultz's argument which was that the students read and wrote well-above their "tested" levels, simply because they were personally invested in their "getting a new school" integrative curriculum project. Recall that, although she had received a reply from Schultz to her February 3, 2006 e-mail, she continued to grapple with lack of confidence, as seen in a later written reflection:

I'm struggling with connections. I think perhaps I am trying too hard to think of ways to connect all curriculum to social justice. Something Sharon had said about, "If the lessons are truthful and meaningful, then the lessons will automatically begin to connect [to standards]" keeps returning through my head but I feel like I can't trust that for the sake of the imposed standards. That is something I really need to develop but I believe it will come with teaching and experience. (2.15.06)

Returning now to Lisa's words above related to her proposed integrative project about oil, "I see that skills would definitely be learned by doing something like this", notice that Lisa ends her speech with the phrase, "It's out of habit now that I'm doing that." This statement illustrates Lisa's engagement with active forgetting in that, while she does not explicitly mention her "struggle with connections" (to standards), her reference to the fact that she is now in the habit of trusting that meaningful lessons will meet the standards suggests that she has "re-membered," or reconfigured this prior experience of vulnerability.

Lisa's comment that the students would not have the necessary classroom resources to pursue a study related to oil but that she might "jump in" to provide these resources recalls Schultz's self-described role in his students' "new school" project, and it is also reminiscent of her written reflection on the César Chávez lesson, in which she worked to resolve a dilemma about a teacher's role in Freire's notion of "dialogue," or power sharing. In that journey entry, Lisa drew on the example of an educator (Celia) who "taught in a way that things that naturally happened were used as opportunities to give students new information" (3.28.06). Celia provided resources to students to enable their pursuit of their own interests.

Active forgetting through the construction of Lisa's video case continued as Lisa conceived a nascent idea:

L: Um, but, when Christiana made that connection, that could be a point where I could show the kids, “Ms. Harper asked this question. Christiana made this connection. What,” you know, “what is there to learn about this?”

M: Mmmhmm.

L: “How does it affect us?” (8.06)

Here, without any specific reflection on past failures despite her reference to her final praxis attempt about which Lisa had previously used language of defeat—“I guess today was a failed attempt to break into some kind of discussion or project”—Lisa “re-members” that failure to “jump in” as she proposes a plan to bring the video back to the students in order to remind them of their interest in the topic of oil.

Later in our conversation, I asked Lisa to tell me more about this plan:

M: Where did the, when did the idea, for one thing, occur to you that you could bring this back to your students, um, as a way of showing them and?

L: Well, when you had asked me where could I go from here, and then I came up with, well, it helped me think of a way to jump into it, wouldn’t it, then give them, realizing that these, I mean, the topic came from Ms. Harper, but the topic they started talking about came from the students, so if they could see themselves thinking about it.

M: Right.

L: Then it becomes their idea, not mine, not Ms. Harper’s. (8.06)

Forgetting failure as re-memembering failure. Once again, Lisa does not make specific reference to her struggle to “find what was naturally occurring” in order to depart from the curriculum and go on “real adventures” (3.28.06 Written Reflection), nor does she castigate herself for having “shoved” her own ideas “down students’ throats” (Written Reflection 3.28.06). Lisa does not deny these memories but, rather, actively forgets them, proposing to use the discussion video to support student inquiry. In

particular, her idea of letting the students “see themselves thinking about” the topic of oil helps her to actively forget the pain of the Everyday People lesson, which she believed had “bombed,” drawing on scant evidence from only a few students—“from a discussion with 3 girls, not the entire class” (5.18.06)—to formulate this interpretation. While Lisa does not mention this “failure,” her new idea of letting the students see themselves thinking about oil is a means of actively forgetting her failure, of “re-membering” the failure into a new possibility for her and for her students.

Forgetting Journey

In this final section, I focus on Lisa’s last comments on her video case of “leaping,” or “jumping in,” to critical literacy. As Lisa talked to me, a radically new thought emerged: As Lisa announced, “I didn’t know this until now!”

L: And I think I just found things that interested me in questions that were asked or a statement that was made that, you know, spoke to me, I guess. And then I, yeah, I started looking at themes within them and thinking about, “What do I want to say about these? What, what am I trying, out of this, to make sense of?” I was making sense of how to get to critical literacy.

M: Right, mmmhmm.

L: And, you know what changed my thinking is that this is critical literacy, and I always saw it as, “This isn’t critical literacy,” because I didn’t believe we did any writing. We did something with it. So maybe that’s what changed too, is that this is. ‘Cause literacy to me, to me for a really long time, especially last year, was reading and writing. Those are parts of it. This is part of it, too. Talking. You know, just discussing. Oral discussion. Aren’t those all parts of literacy: speech and comprehending?

M: Wow. Okay. So it gave you actually the sense that, um, that more happened than you thought. What was it about making the case that made that happen, you think?

L: Well, I think that while looking at critical moments and ways to leap into critical literacy, and that, that was the case I made. But when you realize, it’s not

like all of the sudden, that one of them leads into critical literacy. All of them do. So that way, making the case made me realize you can't just jump into critical literacy. It's there.

M: It helped you see what was already there?

L: Yeah. You can't just say, "At this point, it's not critical literacy." I mean, I'm sure you could if you're copying something out of a workbook. But you can't just say, "And then, at this..." you know, I couldn't pull a clip out and say, "This is critical literacy," if we hadn't done the project. Because everything about critical literacy, I guess, it's not saying, "Well, this is the point that it wasn't; this is the point that it was." That's how I think I changed. I didn't even know that till just now. (8.06)

Forgetting journey as re-membering journey. The freshness of this insight that emerged at the end of two hours of discussion about Lisa's video case was remarkable. Lisa noted that as she focused on separate clips, "it's not like all of the sudden...one of them leads into critical literacy. All of them do." Here, she associates the close focus on separate clips with "making the case" and notes that, since each clip was rich with critical potential, "you can't just jump into critical literacy. It's there." In their discussion of active forgetting as a way for teachers to clear space to become something other than their partner teachers, Field and Latta (2001) draw on Risser's (1997) conviction that forgetting allows one to open space for new things. In this chapter, I argue that making the video case of the student-led discussion on oil enabled Lisa to forget the fixed point of arrival associated with social-justice teaching as structural journey. In Lisa's words, the notion that one could say, "Well this is the point that it wasn't; this is the point that it was," contradicts the very essence of critical literacy's focus on multiple perspectives. In constructing her video case, Lisa opened space to "re-member," refigure the journey of her independent study project as present-centered mindfulness: "You can't just jump into

critical literacy. It's there." Lisa learned—and taught me—that, like Alice, she had been in the Garden all along.

Discussion

In conclusion, I return here to the point made earlier (see Chapter 3) that “to experience” something necessarily entails the embracing of vulnerability, since the etymological meaning of “to experience” is “to undergo” something “not exactly of our own making” (Heidegger, 1971, p. 57). While, as the evidence presented in Chapters 3-5 suggests, vulnerability during teacher-preparation field experiences may be too great, crushing the spirit and constraining hope of the teacher candidate, the evidence provided here in Chapter 6 suggests that this suffering, when actively forgotten, produces new possibilities for meaning making. Moments of abject humility during student-teaching may be “re-membered,” retilled like “humus” (decomposed organic matter) into the teacher candidate’s present earth, to “fertilize” the growth of new insights and new pedagogical practices. This chapter extends the work of Field and Latta (2001), offering further empirical evidence that new possibilities “for ourselves and our students” (pp. 12-13) may emerge from the repurposing of disappointed hopes and failed aspirations. Constructing the video case was, from the outset, an engagement in active forgetting when understood in terms of Arendt’s (1958) notion of praxis as the human ability to birth something new. The fact that Lisa had decided to “quit”, after her “failed” lesson, and apologized for doing so, might be seen as a moment of non-action in the Arendtian sense. Lisa’s creative insertion was not “taken up” by the students, so there was no act, no journey. However, when I proposed making the video case, partly as a means of salvaging one of the requirements of the independent study, Lisa readily took up my idea:

that was praxis, that was action—THAT was journey in the open-ended sense. Moreover, Lisa taught me, especially by her insights with respect to critical literacy not being something one could say was there one minute, and not at another minute. In effect, without using the terminology, Lisa opened up to me the fruitful possibility that there was no such a thing as an emergent critical literacy, which ought to have been obvious to me, but was not. This, too, was praxis, this was action, because Lisa spoke, and I heard in ways that will affect my future teaching and research and writing. THIS is journey.

In constructing the video case of the student-led discussion on oil, Lisa actively forgot her journey toward critical literacy to “re-member” the newness/nowness of student learning. She took a step out of her Rabbit-Hole of defeat, failure, and shame to reimagine her co-teaching relationship with Ms. Harper and envision new possibilities for her mentor and herself that would be important for their work together during the Lisa’s internship the following year. In making the video case, Lisa refigured her memories of the chaos that had erupted during her final lesson as vital student sense-making. Finally, Lisa’s focus on “fertile moments” allowed her to “forget” her frustrated attempts to facilitate, rather than to force, the collaborative naming of a student-relevant social justice problem around which an integrative curriculum could be planned. Instead, Lisa “re-membered” what was possible for “her students and herself” in her internship year. It was as if she said to herself, with Alice, her storybook counterpart,

“Now, I’ll manage better this time”... and began by taking the little golden key, and unlocking the door that led to the garden. Then she set to work nibbling at the mushroom...till she was about a foot high: then, she walked down the little passage: and then—she found herself at last in the beautiful garden, among the bright flower-beds and the cool fountains (p. 78).

As Alice nibbled away at the mushroom, so Lisa nibbled away at her task of finding ways to “leap into” her peculiar praxis Garden, and, as she did so, she was “re-membered”, or changed, as she came to realize that critical literacy could not be treated as “emergent”; rather, each fertile moment in the video was a Garden in itself. This insight is suggested by her conviction that it would be distinctly “un”critical to say, “Well, this is the point that it wasn’t; this is the point that it was” (8.06).

What is more, I argue that Lisa’s insight about the fertile moments in the video is an embryonic insight by which she is just beginning to forget a view of praxis that legislated and circumscribed a fixed notion of power-sharing and social action. She is in a position now, to forget a view of praxis based on the modernist conviction that some groups have power, others do not—and when it all comes out in the wash nothing changes because “the same people who did not have power still do not have power” (Fendler, 2004, p. 454). On this point Fendler argues,

to legislate new ways is praxis to bestow agency; to perform new ways is praxis to assume agency. To be an emissary of knowledge is to defer agency; to take on the responsibility of performing new ways of knowing and new forms of political participation is to exemplify agency. The former is characterized by a didactic pedagogy/praxis; the latter is characterized by an exemplary pedagogy/praxis. (Fendler, 2004, p. 456)

I do not say Lisa has thoroughly forgotten a legislative view of praxis, only that her experience across the months of the independent study detailed in chapters 3, 4, 5 have “re-membered” her, and will require her “to be a different person in a different place” (Field and Latta, 2001, p. 9).

Finally, like Alice, Lisa grew “till she was about a foot high” as she “re-membered” failure. At the end of our talk that evening Lisa told me,

I think, having the guts to sit down with a group of kids that you're in the only in the classroom two days a week and have these discussions. Whether I was at the point where I would have liked to be at to fully have been honest myself, at least I was making an attempt to and I wasn't shutting down their ideas and things that they were very interested in talking about. And I think bringing real life into the classroom was, first of all, one way that I did that. (8.06)

In a word, Lisa began to “re-member” her experience of the independent study as performative praxis. I asked her whether there had been any final thoughts or other interesting consequences of the “attempts” she had had the “guts” to engage in:

L: For me? Or the students?

M: For you or the students.

L: Well, for me, like I said, it really makes you question. You're vulnerable when you do that. You're very vulnerable and I think in my life, I think it's changed who I am completely, making myself vulnerable about that. (8.06)

As Lisa constructed her video case in conversation with me, she, like Alice, grew just big enough to move into a new, freeing space: this was vulnerability forgotten. Notice, however, that here, at the end of Lisa's story, she is in the Garden only because her experiences have “re-membered her” into the kind of teacher who is open to further experiences—and further vulnerability. And this—this embracing of vulnerability— is Lisa's golden key.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

DISCUSSION

“Everything’s got a moral, if only you can find it.” (Carroll, 1832-1898. In Gardener 2000, p. 91)

In this chapter, while recognizing that the contributions, limitations and implications of this study, as with any study, are interwoven, for the sake of clarity I have teased apart the fabric to reveal first, “contributions,” second, “limitations,” third, “implications,” and fourth, “conclusions.” Accordingly, I first discuss some contributions of my dissertation study, noting that these contributions invite questions that suggest implications for both practice and research. However, in keeping with an agonistic stance, before offering suggestions for future practice and research, I turn to a discussion of “Limitations” of the study. Next, with reference to the earlier discussion of contributions, I discuss implications of my study for practice and implications of my study for further research. Finally, I offer concluding remarks.

Contributions of the Study

Complicates “journey”. The praxis goals of integrative teaching pursued by the preservice teacher in this study were consistent with the fixed coordinates of a structural conception of journey based on dictionary definitions that construe journey as an act of travel from one location to another. In this case, praxis was supposed to begin with a collaboratively named social problem and end with a collaborative intervention to address that problem; hence, in this study praxis is construed as a *structural praxis*

journey. Although the preservice teacher made five attempts to find a problem and enact an intervention, she was unsuccessful in these attempts. Therefore I argue that, according to the structural definition of journey that determined the coordinates of this integrative praxis goal, there *was no praxis journey*. Said otherwise, the preservice teacher experienced a non-journey.

Moreover, the personal goals of praxis (the moral imperative to bridge difference and share power) pursued by this preservice teacher were also consistent with the fixed coordinates of a structural conception of journey. In this instance the goal (enabled through written reflection) was personal self-examination to name and change a problem of the self in order to promote connectivity with students; hence, in this study personal self-examination is construed as a *structural personal journey*. Since the written reflection (and the oral reflection that resulted from the written reflection) resulted in the naming of a problem (the preservice teacher's whiteness) that could not be changed, according to the structural conception of journey that determined the coordinates of this personal self-examination goal, there *was no personal journey*.

Accordingly, this dissertation raises the possibility that "journey" is not the most apt metaphor for learning to teach critically, since dictionary definitions that (unanimously) render the noun *journey* as an act of travel from one location to another may lead to unnoticed (and therefore unexamined) structural conceptions of journey that—paradoxically—circumscribe criticality. The focal participant in this study appeared to be an ideal candidate to accomplish a (structural) praxis journey, exhibiting uncommon intellectual curiosity, and being one of a very few teacher candidates expressly committed to making justice their teaching project. Nonetheless, even for such a student,

the journey was circuitous and tenuous—in fact, a non-journey as defined by its structural coordinates as explicitly set forth in the syllabus for the independent study and as implied by the more general goals of praxis. I claim that structural conceptions of journey may result in non-journeys; therefore, a structural conception of journey has potentially serious implications for teacher efficacy, and in a related sense, also has implications for teacher assessment. Does one assess a non-journey as a failure?

An argument for a poststructural notion of journey. Consistent with an agonistic approach to research, to make the audacious statement that the courageous preservice teacher in this study who engaged in five months of rich encounters with students during her attempts to enact a certain kind of critical project did not experience a journey is to disturb complacency about durable (commonsensical) notions of journey. In fact, conceived in poststructural terms, this preservice teacher did experience a journey when, following Field and Latta (2001), it is understood that *to experience* something means to undergo, submit to, suffer and encounter the unexpected!

In the spirit of agonistic inquiry, the evidence of this dissertation makes us a little less certain that “journey” is always a journey, and in that regard, it contributes to the available literature on critical literacy/critical pedagogy by offering an empirical account of an experience that is not triumphal—yet, conceptualized in the poststructural terms discussed above—is nonetheless a journey. Few studies stretch out the moment of finding a way to start an integrative project, and while some studies do elaborate the problem-naming moment, none offer an exclusive focus on a teacher’s search for a “way in” that ends there – with the search for a way in. This study makes a unique contribution in that it both values Lisa’s process, and, at the same time discloses her sense of failure to

outside analysis in ways that may encourage other teachers (at both the teacher education and practitioner level) that their work is nonetheless worthy. There are implications here for practice, assessment and research, and I discuss these later in the chapter.

Suggests further conversations about diversity. This study offers some empirical evidence (Chapter 4) that there is a difference between un-packing White privilege intellectually and un-packing in the moment; this evidence supports claims that prospective teachers need more actual experiences with diversity in the teacher preparation years (Ladson-Billings, 2005). Moreover, the evidence suggests that, rather than bridging difference, an awareness of White privilege may end up inscribing difference and creating distance. As Lisa tried to speak about racism and oppression, her words entered a tension-filled environment based on, among other things, Lisa's conflicted feelings about her status of privilege and what that may say (wordlessly, silently) to someone who has experienced some level of oppression and racism either personally or structurally. Lisa's disequilibrium in the original incident and her repeated episodes of stumbling for words as she later conversed about the original incident, suggest that intellectual preparedness and will on the part of prospective white teachers to work for social change among an increasingly diverse American student population are not enough to prepare prospective teachers for the difficulties they may experience in their commitments to "know" their students and connect with their concerns.

Problematizes "liberatory" praxis. Related to the complication of a structuralist journey metaphor that appears to underlie critical pedagogies based on a discourse of democracy, a contribution is made here to the available literature on the phenomenon of the circulation of power among teachers and students interested in these critical

pedagogies. The study provides some empirical evidence (see, in particular, Chapter 3) that complicates received notions of dialogue/power-sharing as necessarily “empowering” for either students or teachers. It offers a case that is an exception to the dialogic (power-sharing) “rule” and suggests the possibility that the moral imperative placed upon teacher candidates to enact specific practices may occasion the potentially immoral consequence of constraining possibilities in a teacher (in effect, impeding the possibility of a journey) and may even open prospective teachers and their students to unforeseen harm. Questions for teacher preparation and research prompted by this evidence are discussed later, under the Implications section.

Challenges assumptions about the preservice practicum. This study offers a case of a teacher operating within the programmatic requirements of the senior year of teacher preparation, which limits (in this particular Teacher Education program) participation in the field placement to two complete days. Students’ field commitments are divided between two methods courses, Literacy and Math in one semester, and Social Studies and Science in the other semester. The presentation of this case challenges assumptions of what is possible for teacher education students to “practice” (that is, to “try doing”) in their classroom placements during the teacher preparation years prior to the full-year internship required by this particular teacher education program. This is not to downplay the difficulties inherent in such work during the junior and senior level field placements, but only to open the door to re-thinking what is possible for interested teachers and students working in time-bound settings. In particular the study offers a case (see, in particular, Chapters 3 and 6) that suggests both the promise and pitfalls of incorporating literacy in the subject-areas—in this case, social studies and science; in an

era where strict parameters are drawn around what counts for reading and writing instruction, this dissertation provided evidence of places in the mandated curriculum where less-restricted literacy practices may flourish.

Critiques “critical”. As previous chapters have shown, Lisa gathered together a range of texts introduced through the independent study and other teacher-preparation courses, out of which she constructed a uniquely personal—“peculiar”—critical pedagogy that blurred the borders among a multiplicity of discourse communities (see, in particular, Chapter 3). In Lisa’s case these discourse communities included (mainly) Critical Pedagogy, Critical Literacy, Culturally Responsive Teaching and Democratic Teaching/Integrative Curriculum design. The evidence collected in this dissertation study suggests that Lisa was unaware of the multifarious epistemological commitments of the discourse communities represented in her texts and did not consider whether their commitments were commensurable. It was just such incommensurability that helped to paralyze her as she named problem after problem that seemed to fly in the face of either her (agonistic) Critical Literacy/multiple perspectives stance on the one hand, or her (antagonistic) commitment to accept the moral imperative to work toward a “fixed” notion of social change. Once again, questions for teacher education are posed, and further research suggested.

Questions teacher reflection. Some empirical evidence is offered (see Chapters 4 and 5) supporting Fendler’s (2003) argument that, while teachers and students can come to know one another through their shared writings, journal disclosure can also be a “form of surveillance and an exercise of pastoral power” (p.22), or may enable confession and/or therapy (Gore, 1993, p. 150). A doubt is introduced regarding the helpfulness of

teacher reflection as it relates to a teacher's journey, proffering the possibility that reflection might promote a personal journey that paralyzes, and impedes the praxis journey instead of advancing it. Moreover, evidence is offered that challenges Loughran's (2002) suggestion that conservative reflective tendencies may be countered by "making reflections public and available to critique among peers or critical friends (Loughran, 2002, as cited in Fendler, 2003). Finally, the evidence calls into question Mayes' (2001b) suggestion that a "fresh" perspective on teacher reflection may be introduced through spirituality (as cited in Fendler, 2003).

Re-members teacher reflection. Tentative evidence is offered in support of Field and Latta's (2001) claim that "active forgetting" may allow a teacher who is unable to "act" (in Arendt's 1958) sense because his or her creative beginnings are not taken up by other stake holders in the educational milieu, to gain fresh perspective that opens new possibilities for both the teacher and the students. The dissertation offers evidence (see Chapter 6) that allows cautious optimism about the potential use of video case construction as a means of promoting such active forgetting among prospective teachers who may be struggling with overwhelming vulnerability occasioned by experiences related to personal or programmatic expectations, to gain fresh perspective that opens new possibilities for both the teacher and the students.

Re-members problem-naming. Finally, a "case of a case" (see Chapter 6) is offered that points to the promise of video case construction for fostering dialogic teaching that begins with a problem-naming component. Lisa's insight about bringing a video back to the students to let them see themselves thinking about a particular issue offers both pitfalls (of manipulation, for example) but also promise for helping

prospective critical pedagogues interested in initiating a critical modernist “integrative” curriculum project find a “way in” to a problem-naming moment. Related to this particular contribution of the study is a more general one, namely that this study contributes not only to scholarly conversations about critical dialogic teaching, but also adds an important voice to the scholarly conversation about discussion-based teaching across the disciplines.

Limitations of the Study

A close study of one preservice teacher’s experience of a praxis journey is in line with an interpretive research tradition that features the research participant’s own sense-making. However, with other researchers in that tradition I readily accept that the researcher is never truly absent from the work, and that ways must be found to “write the self” in our research (Weis, Fine, Weseen, & Wong, 2000). In this regard Behar (1993) remonstrates “We ask for revelations of others, but we reveal little or nothing of ourselves; we make others vulnerable, but we ourselves remain invulnerable” (p. 273). Behar’s words seem almost poignantly applicable to this dissertation, given Lisa’s focus on her feelings of vulnerability, particularly related to her identity as a White woman. In my analysis of the intra-subjective knowledge constructed by Lisa and me during the Independent Study, I tried to take seriously what Corbin and Strauss (1990) call “theoretical sensitivity,” and to draw on four sources of such theoretical sensitivity outlined by Delgado-Bernal (1998): my personal experience, close reading of existing literature, my professional experience, and what I learned about my own personal identity in the analytic research process. In particular, I sought (in Chapter 5) to make myself

vulnerable by opening what was a painfully revealing mis-use of the Insid(h)er knowledge proffered by Lisa through her journals.

A more specific limitation of this study is that it freezes Lisa and her experience in a bounded time frame, whereas it is possible that she had other experiences after leaving the teacher education program. In that regard, it would have been interesting to have followed Lisa's pursuit of praxis as she completed her teacher internship. In fact, Lisa remained (and still remains) in touch with me, and during the first part of her internship (in a Special Education placement prior to returning to Greenside with Ms. Harper) and she shared spontaneously wrote to share exemplars of departures from the standard curriculum she "sneaked" into the classroom while her Special Education field placement mentor was away sick for a week.

Moreover, this study presents a case of one student's experiences. A study of the nuances and complexities of other prospective teachers' experiences as they tried to enact critical pedagogies in their field placements prior to the internship year would have prompted fresh questions that would potentially shed further light on teachers' experiences of praxis journeys at the preservice moment of teacher preparation. In particular, Lisa often spoke of one other student in her social studies course who shared her keen interest in what Lisa called the "critical piece." Together Lisa and this young man sometimes facilitated discussion among their classmates about this piece they believe to be "missing" from the social studies course. Like Lisa, here was a student who represented a departure from the norm in teacher education with respect to an unsolicited interest in wanting to learn to teach for social justice. His status as a male student would also have added an interesting and important dimension to a study. In this regard, the

very limited involvement of the two recently graduated students from a faith-based college of education in this dissertation provided a nuanced perspective that would have been interesting to pursue further.

Finally, an entirely different, but fruitful study would have resulted had the Independent Study been a case of participatory action research, according to the original vision for the independent study Lisa and I engaged in together. However, I do not say such a study would have “improved” on this study that relied solely on Lisa’s verbal and written accounts of her experience; that is expressly not the case, and in fact, it would have complicated a close study of Lisa’s own sense-making.

Implications of the Study for Teacher Educators

Greater attention to epistemological underpinnings of critical pedagogies. This study points to some of the complications that can arise when teacher educators interested in the relationship between pedagogical practices and social practices do not attend sufficiently to the epistemological foundations (and the consequent journey metaphors) of the broad range of “critical pedagogies” they may draw upon as they frame their courses. Some of the complications Lisa experienced are traceable to the unexamined eclectic mix of pedagogies I adopted as a doctoral student Teaching Assistant. I do not say that teacher educators should go through a kind of “pedagogical discourse” cleansing ritual, but an unexamined reliance on a variety of pedagogies spanning multiple discourse communities fails to discern important distinctions. For example, I was personally inspired by Vivian Vasquez’s (2004) integrative curriculum (from a Critical Literacy perspective) and saw similarities with Brian Schultz’s integrative project (that was located in a different

discourse community closer to Critical Pedagogy), but, at the time of the independent study, I did not know this, nor attempt to discover it. Would this knowledge have made a difference to Lisa's experience? It might have helped me discern a problem with the notion of journey as arrival that is implicit and/or explicit in pedagogies that lean more to modern "solutions" to the operations of power. Understanding the "multiple perspectives" of various discourse communities that are based on democratic ideals opens questions about the durability of the construct of democracy as it touches the preparation of future teachers. What might be important to understand about the different notions of democracy and underlying assumptions about teachers' journeys that operate among different discourse communities? I believe the evidence offered in this dissertation study suggests teacher educators need to pay diligent attention to epistemological underpinnings of the multifarious critical pedagogies that are based on a discourse of democracy, asking such questions as: "Why?" "How?" "To what effects?"

Designing and assessing praxis assignments. The evidence of this study not only suggests that structural notions of what is popularly thought of as a "teacher's journey" may constrain possibilities in a teacher and even position a teacher for failure, but the study also points to related constraints regarding the assessment of teachers engaging in praxis experiments as an aspect of their teacher preparation programs. According to the criteria set forth in the syllabus for the independent study Lisa engaged in, by not completing her structural journey, Lisa (strictly speaking) would not have merited a "pass" without the completion of the video case. This necessitated an adjustment to the course requirement that resulted in a fruitful compromise, but had the independent study syllabus been designed along lines consistent with the epistemological

commitment of critical literacy (rather than along structural lines consistent with critical pedagogy) such a compromise may not have been necessary. Hence, the evidence of this study suggests that teacher educators must give serious thought to epistemological underpinnings of the various critical pedagogies they may be relying on and consider what will constitute a concomitant “success” or “failure” given that epistemological framework. This is not to suggest “laissez-faire” and a lowering of standards in order to assign a “pass,” but it is to draw attention to the complications that may arise when there is a mismatch between an educator’s critical commitment and the commitments of both structural and poststructural critical pedagogies. Such incommensurabilities must be addressed as assignments are crafted and assessment benchmarks designed. The implications of epistemological mismatch for designing assignments and assessing teacher progress may be especially important in teacher preparation programs staffed largely by doctoral students in the process of sorting out their own epistemological stances.

Designing integrative courses. Programmatic constraints at the university and elementary school level render attempts to depart from the parameters of the mandated curriculum difficult. In particular, tight controls related to what counts for literacy in an era of accountability constrained by the *No Child Left Behind* legislation offer little room for experiments in integrative curriculum. At the same time, the focus on “big ideas” and teaching for understanding in the subject-area methods courses (especially social studies, but also science and math) experienced by the focal participant in this dissertation study, suggests that literacy teacher educators might productively attend to *liaisons with subject-area methods faculty* in providing prospective teachers with opportunities to teach the

word through the world in practicum lessons that count for both literacy and subject-area courses. That said, there are complications involved in adopting such an approach that are illuminated by Beane's (e.g., 1995, 1997) discussion of the similarities and differences of multi-disciplinary, integrated and integrative approaches to curricular design as explained in Chapter one. The political ramifications (as discussed in Chapter One) hidden within each aspect of the discourse of curriculum integration (in its various forms) must be attended to by teacher educators. As Beane (1995, 1997) notes, many teachers' refusal to relax their grip on their particular subject has a long history with political overtones. At the time of the independent study, as a doctoral student Teacher Assistant, I was not aware of this background of integrative curriculum. That knowledge would have promoted a more nuanced understanding of Lisa's teacher's grip on her subject. Lisa wanted to connect the protest lessons to the class's study of a young adult novel, *Esperanza Rising*, and it is possible (if not probable) that, even as a Teaching Assistant, had I located my interest in Schultz' integrative project in integrative curriculum theory, I may have been able to persuade the Social Studies professor to allow the use of the novel. As it was, she remained adamantly opposed. I will also note here, that Brian Schultz's email (2.3.06) to Lisa included the strong recommendation that she inquire into curriculum theory, and he listed a full page of theorists. We did not (in a one-credit, independent study) have time to investigate all of these; however, the pursuit of Beane's (1997) discussion of the historical roots of integrative curriculum to ground our interest in Schultz's project would have been important.

Co-teaching. This dissertation also has implications for the phenomenon of *co-teaching*, an important, yet little understood and sometimes problematic aspect of some

teacher-education programs. The evidence of Lisa's video analysis suggests that a more collaborative interaction among mentor teachers and preservice teachers may be made possible when there is a mutual inquiry based on both teachers' interests.

Reflective Pedagogical Interventions. The evidence presented in this dissertation suggests the need for caution in the use of written (and related oral) reflection, not only in the teacher preparation years, but also in elementary classrooms where the use of reflective journals is a widespread practice. In terms of the use of written reflection among teacher educators, the findings of this study suggest the potentially fruitful use of pedagogical video case construction as a tool for active forgetting.

Implications of the Study for Future Research

Integrative Teaching. The discourse community border crossing that occurred during the independent study suggests that a fruitful line of research might be opened by designing a study that would offer a comparison of an integrative curriculum grounded in the discourse community of Critical Literacy, the discourse community of Critical Pedagogy, and the discourse community of Democratic Education. Such a study might pose such questions as: How does a metaphor of journey play out in this exemplar of integrative curriculum? How is "democracy" understood by the teacher and children in this curriculum? What do students and teachers do in this curriculum? Who decides?

Co-teaching research. The evidence of my study suggests that the phenomenon of co-teaching is ripe for further attention by researchers. A study might be designed to focus more deeply on what happens when a seasoned and a novice teacher co-teach from a common inquiry stance regarding a common problem of study—as was informally the

situation between Lisa and Ms. Harper. Such a study might be grounded simply in the familiar critical questions: What knowledge is of most worth? Whose knowledge is of most worth? Who decides? A study might then be designed to focus on co-teaching as it is currently practiced in some teacher preparation programs, posing the same questions. I posit that such studies might yield valuable insights that may illuminate some promises and pitfalls of co-teaching that may productively influence this practice.

Negotiation of power. While critical literacy and critical pedagogy educators believe the concept of “negotiation” is an important one for teachers to understand in order to interrupt the binary opposition of “either” teacher-centered “or” student-centered approaches to education, this phenomenon has not been well-researched. Damico (2004), for example, called for a comprehensive examination of how power is negotiated and shared among teachers and students who embrace the notion of dialogic and liberatory praxis (Freire, 1970; Burbules and Berk, 1999; Giroux, 1983, 1988; Segall, 2002). Moreover, Wooldridge (2001) proposed documenting and analyzing classroom practices where students and teachers are engaged in negotiating critical literacies, suggesting analytical pursuit of the question, “What do teachers and students in these classrooms say to each other?” My use of Wortham’s (2001) construct of positioning and counter-positioning in oral conversations offered a preliminary step towards answering both Damico’s and Wooldridge’s research call, and suggests the potential of discourse analysis featuring the phenomenon of positioning and counter-positioning in future research of the circulation of power among teachers and students.

Video. Wooldridge (2001) called for more research exploring classroom and school communities where critical literacies and innovative pedagogies are being created,

and wondered “where do we put the camera to capture critical literacies, where and when do we turn on the sound?” (p. 279). Damico (2004) also called for more research into the potential of video case construction in critical literacy teaching and teacher preparation. My dissertation study stepped into the questions raised by both Wooldridge and Damico, as one of the key features of Lisa’s video case construction was that she, as a co-teacher, made the decision about where to put the camera and when to turn on the sound. Her case construction process not only contributes to the very question Wooldridge raises above, that is, “What do teachers and students engaged in critical work say to each other?” but suggests as well, that *a* study might be designed that would take as the unit of analysis teachers’ construction of video cases pursuing just such a question (that is, what students and teachers say to each other) and/or teachers’ personal lines of inquiry into the negotiation of critical literacies and pedagogies. Finally, a study might be designed that would incorporate Lisa’s idea of searching for “fertile moments,” and of facilitating problem-posing by using video to “let [students] see themselves thinking.”

Conclusion

This study extends Field and Latta’s notion of experience to the notion of journey. Following Field and Latta’s (2001) troubling of commonsense understandings of the notion of experience in teaching, this study troubles commonsense notions of journey as applied to the process of becoming a critical teacher. While Field and Latta ask, “What constitutes becoming experienced in learning and teaching?” this dissertation study in effect asks a related question, “What constitutes a critical teaching journey?” The study argues that failure to notice the structural underpinnings of the word “journey” (defined

as an act of travel from one location to another) may result in the related failure to discern structuralist influences that complicate—if not completely compromise—the possibility of critical journey. This is to say, first, that the possibility of becoming a critical teacher in the postmodern sense of criticality that welcomes tensions, embafflements and cruces related to what is involved in teaching for social justice is compromised, as was the case with the preservice teacher in this dissertation study up to the moment of insight about critical literacy that occurred at the end of the independent study. However, it is also to say that the moral imperative to engage in modernist critical pedagogies based on discourses of democracy may be compromised, since, by definition, failure to begin at a certain coordinate and end at an equally certain coordinate constitutes a non-journey that may have a paralyzingly “uncritical” affect on a teacher.

Thus, the overarching argument of this dissertation study is that it behooves teacher educators to interrogate commonsense notions of journey and, rather, to invoke poststructuralist notions of journey that value teachers’ perpetual embracing of perplexities and uncertainties as the thing—that is, the critical journey. In effect, the “new” view of journey purported by this dissertation is conflated with a “new” (albeit old) view of praxis that is consistent with Arendt’s (1958) re-conceptualization of praxis as creative action. By this I mean to say that a journey is a journey when one’s creative insertions, one’s attempts, one’s actions, one’s experiences are “taken up” (as Biesta 2002 has it) by others involved in the critical enterprise. When they are not so “taken up,” (and Field and Latta, 2001 point out this is too often the case in teaching field placements) this dissertation has suggested and offered some empirical evidence in

support of the notion that creative action and journey are made possible *as teachers engage in active forgetting*.

In the structuralist sense, this dissertation represents the end of a long journey that began at a certain point and will end with the conferral of a doctoral degree. In the poststructuralist sense this dissertation will be a journey only when, as a creative insertion (Field and Latta, 2001; Arendt 1958) its offering is “taken up” (as Biesta 2007 has it) by others who will, like Lisa, jump down the rabbit-hole of inquiry with both feet and learn to dwell comfortably with critical tensions inherent in durable notions of journey.

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