THE BRAID OF TEACHING:
Exploring the weave of elementary school contexts
in an Appalachian school district

Randall A. Ward

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Dr. Jan Nespor, Chair
Dr. Jerry Niles
Dr. Rosary Lalik
Dr. Jim Garrison
Dr. Sandra Moore

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(ABSTRACT)

This dissertation examines how elementary school teachers in a small rural district set between two state universities talked about the contextual elements that interacted with their teaching roles. The school district served a predominantly European American population, socio-economic ranging from middle-class to working class and some families living in poverty.

Fieldnotes collected during a year of teaching third grade in a small rural school, artifacts in the form of paper material collected in schools (e.g. memos, newsletters, handouts, etc.) as well as news articles, and interviews with twenty six participants, provided the data for this study. The interviews, mostly with elementary school teachers, were the focus of the research.

Findings make problematic the way most research conducted on elementary schools makes sense of school environments. Teachers described how processes within and external to their school environments entwined in a constantly changing manner. This inquiry raises questions about the impact of innovative programs, technology, the commodification of teachers' time and space and the hierarchical distribution of power in schools on teachers' work. It also reveals a lack of fit between the organization of schools and how they function. Finally, it shows problems with inquiry done by researchers positioned between public schools and research settings.

DEDICATION

This is dedicated to Thomas Ward
for his patience, support, and the example he has provided,
and to our family, a source of strength and inspiration.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

This dissertation is about the interweaving of elementary classrooms, as teachers experience them, with the world outside, or more precisely it is about the contextual flows out of which "classroom" experiences emerge. Before I try to define "context" let me attempt to evoke the feel of it. The following vignette is a composite drawn from fieldnotes I recorded while substituting during the past few years.

A Substitute's Tale

Now that I've finished my graduate assistant teaching assignment I've decided to substitute during May to earn a little cash. This will allow me a bit of freedom to concentrate on research this summer. Beyond income, it creates an opportunity for me to touch base with the action of classroom practice and school cultures, even if only from the limited view of a substitute teacher. And, perhaps I can gain insight into current issues in education to make my teaching more relevant next fall at Virginia Tech.

So here I am negotiating morning traffic, school buses, the 25 mph school zones and the final swing through the crosswalk where kids with backpacks and lunch boxes are escorted by safety patrols to the grounds of Fletcher Elementary school. My mind has been engaged in the old pattern of sorting through the demands of the day since I received the call from the automated substitute list at 7:45 this morning. I pull into one of the last remaining parking spaces (some of the regular classroom teachers have been here for two hours already, squeezing extra work into their compressed workday) and hurry toward the building past parents dropping off kids of various ages, shapes, and cultural backgrounds.

A mother waves to me and smiles from her mustard yellow Volvo station wagon. I taught her son during his first grade at this same school and it feels good to see an affirming face. It seems very natural to walk into this school, just the same, yet with different details.

The foyer of the school is filled with child-sized paper mache' sunflowers supporting tempera butterflies and frogs, there is even a plastic frog motion detector set up at the base of this display which croaks as I pass. I recognize a few children, larger and taller than when I was here, but many of the faces are new -- especially the little guys. I chat for a moment with Mr. Ray, the custodian, his younger brother and my eldest son played sports together when they were in high school. Then I hurry on into the office to register for my class assignment.

As I step through the office to the faculty lounge, Mr. Mann, the principal, nods a hurried hello on his way to talk to a bus driver. The smells of coffee and permanent marker combine with the burn of the laminating machine jolting me further awake. A parent volunteer is chopping paper at the paper cutter in the work room and some kids are setting up the school store. There is a buzz of hurried staff moving through this area, phones ring and personnel are called to the office for varying reasons by a P.A. system. Fifth grade safety patrollers in bright yellow rain ponchos return from their stations carrying orange safety cones. Several parents with children, and a couple of volunteers wait to talk with someone. A marker board contains a

reminder about a faculty meeting after school and last minute messages about end of year stuff to do. Scrawled to one side is an added comment "You've got to be kidding!" about something that must be turned in today.

In the lounge several teachers are filling coffee mugs and exchanging information about rescheduling times for library and specialists because of an assembly that will take the place of those activities. Several others are lined up beside the bathroom door, last chance for some til lunch time. A resource teacher talks openly about an incident with a student the previous day with two of his teachers. She details a history of problems she's had with the parents and recounts a phone conversation with them. The students from the school store wait patiently within earshot to ask the location of new pencils for their inventory and parent volunteers come and go though the lounge.

I check the mailbox and one of the teachers asks, "Who are you today?" I smile and say, "I'm here for Maggie, Mr. Mann says she's pretty sick, should have stayed home yesterday, but at least she's home today. Might be out the rest of the week, doctor's orders. If she isn't considerably better soon, they may have to hospitalize her." The other teachers shake their heads. One says, "It's a bad time of year to be out, so much to do here at the end of the year." Another comments, "She has been out a lot lately, and has a rowdy group. This time of year it's hard to get subs, and the ones we get just can't handle them. Last week one went home in tears." An older teacher adds, "It's good to have someone here that has experience. Keep us posted on Maggie and let us know if we can help." "Thanks, believe me, I may call on you." I reply.

I grab the attendance sheet from Maggie's box along with a Scholastic book order and several stacks of handouts and head down the hallway toward the first grade room where I teach today. Former colleagues interrupt my progress to bring me up to speed on school news and gossip, "So many changes since you were here." "Things are really different now." Someone mentions curriculum meetings, another the state new standards of learning and all the extra documentation they require, still another comments on a series of policy changes initiated by the central office administration and what the local teachers' association is doing to combat them. Someone mentions the superintendent and a bit of the political maneuvering that surrounds his departure.

Mrs. Goodwoman, Maggie's teammate, brings me back to the immediacy of the day, "There's a new system for lunch count, I'll help you out if it's confusing, and turn on TV at nine, that's where we get morning announcements now, and make sure you have the students bag their coats and backpacks in their trash bags when they come in, we have to do that because of lice. The nurse may come by today to do a follow up check on heads so don't be surprised. Just let me know if you need help. We eat lunch pretty late this year, and some of Maggie's students get a little rambunctious. I'm right across the hall if you need me."

I am hearing about the flow of people through this environment, who is new and who has left, illnesses, deaths, new babies, marriages and separations. It seems so much the same and yet, it isn't. Nor do I continue as part of this community. Clearly I am welcomed as a visitor returning to an old neighborhood would be, but I don't live here any more.

I walk down a corridor lined with white plastic trash bags, each labeled with a child's name and hung on a coat hook, they float ghost-like in the slight breeze my passing creates. As I enter the classroom Mz. Pigglewiggle, a black and white guinea pig begins to whistle. I check her food and water and my mind turns to a visit in this same room at the end of last summer.

I had come to see Maggie about her engagement in a project of interest to me. Then an energy of anticipation seemed to charge the entire school, teachers were engaged in grade level meetings preparing for their new classes, their quick-paced interactions putting the final touches on classrooms before orientation (the time when students, parents and teachers check each other out and exchange information during the last teacher workday.) This room sparkled with fresh paint, burnished floors, bright bulletin boards, neatly displayed books and materials, many purchased with Maggie's own money, and new name tags on empty, carefully arranged desks. She had worked late hours during the two weeks before teachers were officially expected to be here.

Eight months ago this room was a work of art. Now papers hang loosely on faded displays. The area rug that was new last fall now is dingy and frayed at the edges. Books and papers spill from bunched desks that don't quite fit together, their tops covered with pencil smudge, glue spills, and peeling name tags. There is a thin layer of dust on everything and chalk trays are filled with yellow powder and chalk stubs. The room looks worn and tired.

Maggie Smiley has missed a lot of time this spring caring for her own sick children, ear infections and such. And, she has had flu, allergy problems, kidney infections and is now out with pneumonia. She has always been one to come to school sick, to "be there for the kids," but this time her doctor has said she must stay home and rest. Even so, she was in her classroom this morning to put finishing touches on lesson plans and board-work.

I look over Maggie's plans, to get an overall understanding of the day. In her planbook minute by minute scheduling of the day is narrated on four pages of notebook paper. Each lesson is carefully attached to a specific standard of learning. Special learning and behavior management plans for identified students along with details about how to handle their needs are included in a sub folder which rests atop stacks of materials, manuals, handouts and additional notes for each lesson throughout the day. There is another folder with bathroom and playground rules, medication schedules and procedures, bodily fluid safety policies, fire drill instructions, and teachers who can render assistance if I need it, as well as which children can be counted on to give accurate information and be "responsible" helpers. Behind her desk tacked to a bulletin board is a ten page list of duties titled "End of Year Check List." It is improbable that anyone can complete all of this by the end of the year, especially with only two teacher work days after the kids are gone.

I get a general read of the day, glance at the lesson already neatly written on the board along with today's schedule and assignments, and distribute the teacher letter that students are to respond to during homeroom. There are not quite enough to go around so I head to the copy machine down the hall. There I find a line of teachers all holding materials to be copied, the machine jams and everyone is trying to help, but there seems to be no remedy. One of the

teachers says she is going to the other copier but another says it is out of order, the first blurts out, "Shit!, I guess we'll do this tomorrow!" then we all disperse to get to our classrooms before students flood down the hall. As we turn the corner a former colleague says, "Oh, I guess you wouldn't know, we have to bring our own paper to make copies. New, policy, all about not using so much paper. I think Maggie keeps hers in her closet. Let me know if I can help you, Jack and several of the other boys can get out of hand at times. Just send them to me with work to do if there is a problem." I say, "Thanks!" and wonder about what Jack and his buddies are like since this is the third offer of help concerning behavior, not a good sign. I get to the room just as the bell rings.

A group of children come in all together then the flow slows to one or two at a time. As they enter many stop by the jars of Swallow Tail Chrysalises in the wet area. Maggie collected them from her dill plants last fall and has kept them in a refrigerator until now. They are part of a science unit she has been working on for several years.

I speak to each child and remind about signing up for lunch, using the restroom, sharpening pencils, bagging coats and packs and mention the teacher letter on their desks. A cluster of four boys enters the room, jostling one another and laughing loudly. One grabs the hat of another and tosses it across the room. This must be Jack and his cronies. I retrieve the hat and give it back to the boy who lost it saying, "Wow, What did you guys have for breakfast? Jumping beans? Say, I need someone to help me clean off the chalk tray. What's your name?" The one in blue answers, "Jack." "O.K. Jack, do you think you could use this sponge to get these trays clean without getting a lot of water on the floor?" "Yeah, I can clean good." "Great, Mrs. Smiley will be so surprised to see such a clean tray. If you do a good job you can clean it again at the end of the day. And you three guys, How about if each of you takes a damp paper towel and clean one of the tables (clusters of desks) but don't disturb people who are working on their morning letter." I turn my attention to the other students, the assignments on the board, and the morning letter on their desks, then I pitch in to help the helpers in their tasks and to get them situated with their morning work one at a time.

Kids are still coming in, several have money and permission slips for the Friday field trip. A mother comes in to chat about her daughter's pickup arrangements, a child hands me a note about riding home with a friend, another has a library book to return, and still another needs to go back to the school store for a pencil, and one last boy covered with poison ivy has a note with details about the application of an antihistamine cream sent in his backpack and instructions to call with several phone numbers and locations of both parents if the itching gets too bad. My thoughts flicker with something I read in the paper about students being suspended for having aspirin in school. What's the legal policy about medication in the room, I wonder. I write a note to the secretary including it with the parent note and medication and ask the boy to take it to the office.

Students are settling in their desks. I ask them to open their homework folder so that I can check for their parents' signatures adding that when they complete responses to the teacher letter they need to put them in their writing folder and that they may either read or write in their

journals until morning announcements. I float around the classroom checking folders, directing their attention to morning seat work, trying to be generous with compliments, especially for Jack and his crew.

Little bits of torn paper already litter the floor surrounding Jack's desk. He' s made a paper football and is flipping it with a pencil to a friend seated opposite him and has not begun to respond to the morning letter. I tell him I haven't had a chance to read what Mrs. Smiley wrote, and would he tell me what she said. He has trouble reading and so we read it together and I get him started on a response. Then I ask him to put the football away or on Mrs. Smiley's desk if he feels it would be safer there. As an afterthought I ask two girls identified as "responsible" in Maggie's plans to share the morning letter handout with Jack and his buddy since we don't have enough to go around.

Randall, a boy with a buzz cut who was part of Jack's entourage, is fooling around with the computer, I get him back on task and see that Jack is at the water fountain wetting paper towels. I speak to him quietly saying that I need him to get his work done and that I will have him sit out and do it during recess if necessary. He grins and says, "Aw, man! I'm not doing nothing." I get him back to his seat just as James arrives and gives me a note about being absent yesterday. He complains that someone has raided his desk and removed all of his NFL pencils. He is very upset, saying this has happened before and his mother said the next time she was going to call the principal. Several children begin to accuse Jack. I ask for quiet, and try to determine what might have happened, but give up when it seems clear that I cannot. I get James a pencil with a promise I'll do my best to find his special pencils. And then I have my "we are going to have a good day" talk. This is when I share with them all of the people in the school who are willing to help me see that we have a good day and how that might be done. It is a last bid for control using veiled threats with a positive spin.

It seems to work, at least for the moment. When they settle in I walk to the board and write my name in chalk saying, "I'm Mrs. Ward." Someone says, "Mrs. Wart?" Here it is, the test, "Who is this substitute and how does she handle a challenge?" I say, "No, that's close but there is a "d" on the end, not a "t", and I'm going to be your substitute teacher today. I used to teach here a long time ago, and like I said, I know Mr. Mann and Mrs. Smiley and a lot of the teachers really well. I know some stuff about the school but I'm sure I will need your help with lots of things. I have heard such good things about you, I know we are going to have a good day. I will talk to Mrs. Smiley this afternoon and I want to be able to brighten her day with a good report. Jack and Randall have already been good helpers. Look at what a good job they did on the chalk board, and Mitch and Frank really cleaned up our desks. I might return tomorrow, if so maybe I could bring a treat or give you extra break time. We'll just have to see. Just look at how great you are all being right now. I am really proud of you! Lets keep this up." I continue to sing praises, hoping a verbal tidal wave will turn the current in a positive direction.

There are twenty students in the room. There is a girl from mainland China and a boy from Taiwan. Neither is very fluent in English, and though they can understand each other they will not interact because of a cultural animosity. Several children are on Ritalin, several are labeled

as learning disabled, several are labeled gifted. Some are from families in lower income brackets, some are from higher brackets, and many are from families affiliated with Cutting Edge University with parents who range from grounds keepers and custodians to those in powerful administrative positions.

It is 8:55. I check the schedule and turn on the television, but have trouble getting the channel. Finally, with the help of the students we figure out that the VCR is hooked in a way that disrupts the closed circuit broadcast. The announcements come on and I return to the teacher desk to do lunch count and take attendance.

"Good morning, Fletcher Elementary students. Today is Tuesday, May eight, 1998 and the following people have birthdays." On the television screen a fifth grade girl that looks vaguely familiar lists students with birthdays, then a boy in a yellow soccer shirt reads the menu and does a weather report, finally the librarian lists overdue books and reminders for teachers about meetings and paperwork due today, the sign up list for the Field Day in two weeks and some of the agenda for the Spring Carnival this weekend. The morning school news ends the girl saying, "Please stand for the pledge, I pledge allegiance" Her voice is at odds with Maggie's first graders as she spits out a rapid fire salute to the flag and we drag to the end after her. Mr. Mann closes commenting on the good citizen behavior he noticed the previous day and follows up with, " Let's all have a good day!"

I place the field trip permission forms, check list and money in an envelope to organize during planning period, and send the attendance and lunch count to the office along with forms returned by parents giving permission to use social security numbers as identifying codes for an impending battery of standardized tests. Miss Ready, an aide, comes in to work with some of the children, and we begin morning work.

I ask a child to read the Daily Oral Language, a set of sentences on the chalkboard that students are to correct, and I go over the assignments and daily schedule posted for today. Mrs. Smiley has students working on novel units funded through the Gifted Program. Various teachers worked independently or with other teachers to develop these units. They integrate reading and writing with other subject areas like math, science and social studies. This morning the children are to work with partners on various projects associated with these units as Miss Ready and I circulate to each group and do mini-lessons on the reading material.

We have just begun when five service learning students from Cutting Edge University appear at the door wanting to know what they are to do. I check the plans and find no instructions and step across the hall to Mrs. Goodwoman. "Oh my goodness, we didn't expect them til Thursday. The gifted resource teacher, Mrs. Friendly, set it up. I'm not sure what they are supposed to do. It is part of some technology grant collaboration that has to do with research skills. I think Mrs. Friendly has developed something related to Maggie's Swallow Tails, but for now just match them up with someone and let them read or something and we'll figure it out when Maggie gets back." I thank her and return to the room.

Jack and four other boys are racing around the room, Miss Ready giving chase. The university students look amused. I flip the lights and say "Please get to your seats and put your

heads down, right now." The boys settle down, I turn the lights back on and match the students up with various children. The aide leaves after her forty five minutes in the room and I fear that the disruptions have prevented her from helping students with their work.

The morning proceeds with periods of calm and chaos. Jack and Randall continue to test limits. They ask repeatedly to go the restroom, or get a drink. Mitch puts Mz. Pigglewiggle in Molly's desk where it urinates on her math homework. Two girls are in a spat about something that happened on the playground yesterday. A specialist stops by to tell me about a change in her schedule, the guidance counselor picks up a child who requested a session with her, and a parent volunteer, Mrs. Bonvive, comes in to work on the book orders.

She says she heard about Mrs. Smiley's illness from a friend who saw Maggie in the doctor's office and wants to know if her absence will effect the testing next week. Then she begins talking about the "challenges" in this class, meaning, I suppose, the children who do not fit seamlessly into school environments. Finally she mentions her daughter's contact with another child, and the lice situation saying , "I was talking with Lydia's mother at soccer practice yesterday about Tammy's uh, head situation. Bless her heart, she's one of those Smith kids, you know they all have problems. Their parents just don't care, or don't know any better. I mean they live in filth. I told my Linda to stay away from her after she came home with lice. I know it's not her fault but she shouldn't be allowed in school with those bugs." I say, I don't know anything about this, and that things are confused right now in the room, could she do the book order in the library? I just want her out of the room, fearing that some of the children may have already heard her comments.

Mid-morning there is a fire drill and while we are outside a parent with a toddler astride her hip hunts us down to pick up her son for a dental appointment. The toddler squirms until she is placed on the hard top when she takes off in a headlong, out of control run. She trips and hits face down on asphalt. When she looks up wailing, her little mouth is bleeding profusely. I am thinking, lawsuit? The mother hurries toward the baby but Maryjane, one of Maggie's students, gets there first and picks up the baby covering herself with blood. The mom assures me, "It's O.K., Happens all the time." But she looks worried and takes the baby into our room. I'm thinking, it's a good thing they are on their way to the dentist.

When we return to the room the mother has departed with her children, leaving behind spatters of blood and bloody towels around the sink and a few drops on the rug. I think about the folder on bodily fluids and try to figure out how I am supposed to handle the mess in the room and on Maryjane. Fortunately it is time for library and I can use the planning time to find out what I should do about the blood, fill out an accident report, call the "contaminated" little girl's parents if need be and, if there is any time left over, sort out the field trip stuff.

In the office Mr. Mann tells me what I should do to document the incident and sends the custodian down to clean the area. I pick up more stuff from Maggie's mailbox and return to the room to take care of loose ends but I'm intercepted at the doorway by the counselor. She's come by to offer support and to share a little about the student who came to see her earlier. She makes vague comments that imply abuse, and says that if this child seems upset to send him down to

her. She also tells me that Jack has only been here a few weeks. He's moved in from a neighboring state and his records have not arrived yet. Maggie has been keeping track of his behavior on a form that combines a check list and commentary. Handing me a stack of forms for the remainder of the week she asks if I will follow though and fill out one each for morning and afternoon behavior. After she leaves I look over the next lesson, clean the chalkboard, peek in desks trying to spot NFL pencils, and then head down the hallway to pick up the students. I am tired and stressed. I need to use the restroom and it is still forty minutes until lunchtime. I know too that this is the time when some of the students are most fragile. They are used up by morning work, hungry, and for several, a morning dose of Ritalin is wearing thin.

I make it to lunch staying with my charges until they are through the cafeteria line. In the teacher's lounge the restroom is still occupied, so I go across the hall to the girl's room for students. There are paper towels on the floor and several stalls have unflushed toilets. Two girls giggle, exchanging glances at my presence. They whisper as I leave seeming to find it odd to have a teacher use this area for its intended purpose.

Lunch offers little down time. Most of the twenty minutes is consumed with a hunt for a pack of materials that Maggie was supposed to have completed for the Hunterstown Science Museum and returned prior to the fieldtrip. Mrs. Goodwoman says she will figure out what to do. So between spoonfuls of yogurt, I check permission slips to see which children have not returned one, get extra ones to send home and fill out the check list for those returned today. I write notes to parents about poison ivy, stolen pencils, contamination by blood, and fouled math homework photocopying them in the office so that Maggie will have documentation of what I said. Then I pick up the class from the cafeteria.

The afternoon is not unlike the morning, toward the end reversing the order of things as Jack cleans the chalk tray and other students clean off desks, pick up litter, and do various jobs. Then we fill out homework folders, I distribute handouts to go home, give new permission slips to students missing them, check bus notes and pickup arrangements, give out the originals of the notes I have photocopied, send Mack to the office for his antihistamine cream, unbag our coats and backpacks and listen to afternoon announcements. Students line up by mode of transportation (walkers, pickups and buses) and depart.

I clean the boards, tick off what we have done on the lesson plans inserting comments as needed and write a page note to Maggie on what has transpired during the day. I look over Wednesday's schedule and check for handouts that I might need to copy if I were to return. I write the morning and afternoon comments for Jack and turn to check papers. I water plants, feed Mz. Pigglewiggle, straighten a few desks and book shelves and with a final look around, I turn out the lights and leave.

The halls are deserted except for Mr. Ray who has amassed a pile of debris from the day behind a wide dustmop, the teachers are in a faculty meeting. In the office the secretary says that Maggie has not called yet, Mr. Mann will call me at home if they need me tomorrow. He seemed sure they would, and did I think I could come the rest of the week and do the field trip on Friday if needed? Yeah, I guessed so. "Sure."

As I walk to my car I consider returning to the room to take materials home, but realize that Maggie will probably have someone bring her today's student work and that she'll call me at home if she needs my assistance. My mind is racing ahead to tomorrow and how I can avoid some of the problems of today. I'll pick up some kind of reward on my way home, maybe stickers, and I'll get to school a lot earlier tomorrow.

Comments on the Vignette

In this vignette I try to make visible the details of school environments that attach to other responsibilities, the many roles that teachers assume, teachers' inner and external conflicts; the physicality and embodiment of their work, legal worries, relationships with others, the micro and macro political frames of their work, and the professional caring that takes over personal time beyond work hours.

My experience of school life as a substitute and my representation of it in this vignette differs from how Mrs. Smiley or another regular teacher might experience or represent teaching. My responsibilities were limited to a single day and one set of instructional procedures determined by someone else. They did not include performance evaluation, collegial relationships, or many other elements, and when the day was over, I left, and the responsibility for what occurred in this classroom shifted back to Mrs. Smiley.

I shared this vignette with two elementary teachers. One felt it came closer to capturing what she experienced during a day than anything she had read, or "even movies, except for Kindergarten Cop," a film in which a policeman working undercover as a kindergarten teacher is overwhelmed by the demands of the job. Even so, it did not show all of the things she felt "real" teachers (as opposed to substitutes) had to do. Moreover, she worried that parents were presented in a negative light, "Not all parents are like that. I wouldn't want someone reading this to think teachers feel this way about parents." I asked her later if some parents <u>are</u> like that, and had she ever experienced anything like this? She said yes, that probably every year she had one or two parents like this, and that this was mild compared to some experiences she had had.

The other reader's reaction was similar. She felt that the story "captures the weirdness of teaching kids. I showed this to my husband hoping he'd understand why I'm a basket case some nights. I'm not sure he believes it can really be like this." This teacher expressed concerned about the portrayal of a teacher using the word " shit." She commented in a margin note, "Most teachers don't talk like this." When I asked her if some teachers might use this kind of language if they were sure parents, principals, or students wouldn't hear them, she replied that yes, there were some, but a lot of teachers did not, and would not want to be represented this way. She was also concerned about the scene in the teachers' lounge where the resource teacher talked openly in a way that could violate a child's right to privacy. Again, she said this could easily happen, but people wouldn't know that this was the only time many teachers could share information.

The differences in my picture of a classroom day and the picture the two teachers might have drawn is indicative of differences in the way we're contextually aligned with the classroom. My distance from it as writer producing an academic work an academic audience, and my aim of creating a window to let readers see how teachers find their ways through the layered demands of

their work, lead me to write an encompassing and exhaustive version of the contextual elements which might shape events in schools.

In contrast, the teachers' on-going engagement in an environment where they are vulnerable to the interpretations of others gave them concern for how the teachers' in the story might be construed as representative of teachers as a category. Although I share a common teaching background with the two teachers, the immediate demands of our differing contexts shape our views of this writing in distinct ways.

I included the "negative" elements the teachers objected to because they were drawn from actual occurrences from my own experiences and my interviews with teachers. They show the compression of time produced through increased demands on teachers and the lack of private places or "back regions" (Hargreaves, 1994) where teachers may act spontaneously. Many of the teachers I interviewed articulated a keen awareness of being in the public eye, "on stage" for parents or students, and thus needing to police their behavior. This self-repression is an overarching factor in teachers' work. The "negatives" in the vignette and the two teachers' responses to them highlight the importance of teacher image in school environments. They also suggest how their modes of self-presentation differ across audiences.

Thus in addition to evoking my topic, the introductory vignette foregrounds some of the themes of subsequent chapters in which I seek to unravel strands of context and examine how elements twine together in particular segments of the braid. I discuss contextual elements by topic rather than in the looping non-linear way they actually percolate through school practice. This allows for more analytical clarity, though in approaching context through a discussion of categories I lose some of the complexity of school environments suggested in the vignette.

Context

A common conception of context which I find problematic portrays individuals as surrounded by, but separate from stable , "objective" circumstances. Bronfenbrenner (1979), for example, posits a series of systems beginning with immediate interactions which occur within a "microsystem" and extend outward through widening circles of ever more distanced influence to "mesosystems" and "macrosystems." The linear and hierarchical qualities of this image fail to show the agency of individuals and their production of, or resistance to, these "surrounds."

Lave (1993) describes a more useful conception of context that "encompasses mind and lived-in world" (p. 7). Lave and others examine a range of factors which situate "relations between action systems and persons acting," building on Engestrom's (1993) idea that,

> Contexts are activity systems. An activity system integrates the subject, the object, and the instruments [material tools as well as signs and symbols] into a unified whole . . . [that includes relations of] production and communication, distribution, exchange, consumption. (p. 18)

I find the related idea of context as "situated activity" (Lave, 1993, p.17) helpful in understanding how teachers talk about their feelings, learning, actions, and reactions in complex environments. Each individual brings a unique set of resources to bear in the task of negotiating his or her work. Each acts upon and is acted upon in these settings. One teacher may be able to use a particular contextualizing element (e.g. grant writing) in entrepreneurial ways which give her access to power, while others may not find grant writing empowering at all. Two teachers may engage in similar behavior resulting in one being dismissed while the other is not.

McDermott describes context as "not so much something into which someone is put but an order of behavior of which one is a part" (McDermott, 1980, p.14). He quotes the work of Ray Birdwhistell to describe this conception of context:

> I like to think of it as a rope. The fibers that make up the rope are discontinuous; when you twist them together, you don't make them continuous, you make the thread continuous. . . The thread has no fibers in it, but, if you break up the thread you can find the fibers again. So that, even though it may look in a thread as though each of those particles are going all through it, that isn't the case. (McDermott, 1980, p. 14)

In this work I use the terms "braid" or "strand" to examine how elements common in schools intertwine to create unique circumstances for each teacher. One braid, for example, might include administrative policy concerning inclusion of special needs students and how parents' reaction to this policy around particular events involving particular students affects the teacher's time and collegial relationships. These elements, though common to elementary schools across the county, become particularized by how they braid together in each school.

In this conception of context, schools become a cloth produced through the weaving of braided elements, some braids being thicker than others or thickening in some places and thinning in others, some fraying into other braids. Strands within the braid differ in the tautness of their twist. Time, politics, administrative policies, the history of the district, place tensions on different parts of the fabric. Finally, there are the actions and interactions of the spindle and the loom: the spindle being the teacher, negotiating between individual elements of context, and the loom the "others" with whom she must interact.

Narration

A word about how I present my thoughts in this work. In much of my discussion of methodology I use a confessional approach in which I become highly visible (VanMaanen 1988): I am intimately tied to the system I studied and this familiarity raises questions about participant/observer research. My fieldnotes tend to use a realist perspective (Van Maanen, 1988) where I present my observations as first person "truth." This presentation allows the reader to feel some of the immediacy and complexity of school environments through my direct

response to them. Finally, the vignettes about my experiences and the quotations from interviews introduced an "impressionistic" perspective to the writing.

> The impressionists of ethnography are also out to startle their audience. . . ..such series of tales comprise a series of remembered events. . . What makes the story worth telling is its presumably out of the ordinary or unique character. Impressionist tales are not about what usually happens but what rarely happens. (Van Maanen, 1988, pp. 101-102)

I diverge from Van Maanen's definition of impressionistic writing by presenting insight into what usually happens in schools but is rarely seen. Each selection from interviews becomes an individual point of color, a unique truth that is reinforced by or, in some cases, contrasted with other data. I use the voices of participants to "startle" the reader into the immediacy of teachers' work and to make our "ordinary" view of schools problematic. The intention is not to write an expose' or cautionary tale, but to draw the reader into the day to day experience of this study's participants.

Plan of the Dissertation

In my methodology chapter I talk in detail about how my changing location and relationship to schools influenced my research. I discuss the various lenses I use to interpret data and locate myself as a writer. Because I am so intimately tied to this inquiry as a participant/observer, I feel it is important to provide background for the reader foregrounding my biases and exploring the intricacies of doing research from this location.

I use personal history and excerpts from fieldnotes to take the reader into my journey from classroom teacher to university student to researcher, spotlighting personal conflict in making these transitions. These conflicts include those of identity and connection to others, ethical conflicts between my role as a researcher and that of a classroom teacher, and between confidentiality and access to social networks which might enhance my understanding and knowledge.

This section of chapter one is followed by a discussion of how participants were chosen. In discussing methods of data collection I detail how fieldnotes and artifacts were collected, analyzed and used in this inquiry. I also discuss the methods used in conducting, transcribing and analyzing interviews with participants. Finally I talk about how these three types of data are used to create a situated account of how teachers in this study experience their teaching roles.

The hurriedness of schools, and their demands for spontaneous responses to the unexpected and tight scheduling described in my introductory vignette show how teachers must draw from experience and knowledge to find a safe path in their work. The immediacy of events in schools and the dissonance they create within the linear, second by second scheduling of teachers' work is another broad category that consistently emerges from the data collected. In chapter two I examine the many facets of context that entwine with teachers' time by including pieces of interviews to show how elements within and external to school environments shape teachers' roles.

In chapter three I explore the relationship between the personal and professional lives of teachers. Through participants' stories I discuss how career, marital status, socio-economic status, political activism, and family concerns permeate vocational boundaries in ways that affect, and are affected by teachers' work.

In chapter four I use fieldnotes from my own experiences along with pieces of participants' interviews to examine how parents and students shape what occurs in schools. Parents play a key role in animating many facets of school context including school policy of inclusion of special needs students in regular classrooms, conflicts between university versus non-university affiliated families, and stress concerning legal liability.

In chapter five I discuss various trends in cooperative relationships between schools and others outside of the school system, the implications for public schools, and how these collaborators enhance or inhibit teachers' ability to teach. One area of particular interest is how state and local politics shape these relationships.

In chapter six I show how teachers' work is influenced by policies determined by administrators and others who are not a part of the immediacy of school environments. Individual policies, such as inclusion, state standards for learning, communication with parents braid with other contexts to complicate teachers' roles.

The final chapter raises questions about educational settings that derive from this inquiry.

CHAPTER 1
METHODOLOGY
Mise en Place

Mise en place is a culinary term of French derivation which translates roughly as "Put in place".

The preparation and assembly of ingredients, pans, utensils, and   plates or serving pieces needed for a particular dish or service period.

(Conway, 1991, p. 849)

In this section I put my methods of inquiry "in place." I discuss the preparation and assembly of the pieces of my research including the collection of data and some of the problems I encountered. I begin by positioning myself. Next, I discuss how I approached participants and interviewed them. Finally, I talk about how I attempt to categorize, analyze and make sense of the data.

<u>Points of View</u>

<u>Location, Lenses and Discourse</u>

I obtained my undergraduate degree in education from a nearby university in 1979 and began practicing as a second grade teacher at a rural elementary school in this district. At that time I began graduate coursework, taking one evening class per semester. As a beginning second grade teacher in a far end of the county and a single parent of two sons aged eleven and eight, even this much course work was difficult. Two years later I remarried and expanded my parent role to three stepdaughters, two of whom were still at home and the eldest attending college locally. I had more demands on my time than I could handle. I stopped my graduate program and some time later received notification that my course work was reaching the time limit for use toward a degree. It was around this time that my advisor had a heart attack and took a leave of absence. I decided to abandon work on my master's degree.

Several years later I enrolled for a pass/fail grade in a graduate course. At that time teachers in our district without a Master's degree were required to take a graduate course within each five year period to be recertified to teach.

Shortly after I had registered, a secretary in the college of education called to ask why I had registered for "pass/fail" option when I had so much course work toward a degree. She told me how I could retrieve credit for the past coursework and continue my master's work. Within a year I had completed my degree.

During the spring I obtained my degree, I was approached by a professor of Work and Family Studies asking, "How would you like to be Dr. Ward in a couple of years?" She offered tuition and financial support with a graduate research assistantship funded through a special project. I knew her initially as the parent of one of my first grade students and later through attending two of her courses as a graduate student. I had never considered working toward a doctoral degree. The offer was flattering and came at the end of a particularly difficult year. I could use a break from teaching, a bit of time to think about new directions, a change would be

welcomed. Our youngest child was completing college and financial demands for me to work were lessened, so taking a leave of absence from public school teaching I accepted her offer.

I wasn't really serious about completing the degree, it was simply a kind of sabbatical, a respite where I would perform a service and in return acquire enough graduate hours to increase my salary base, (a Master's degree + twenty hours added $600 per year to each level of salary.) At the end of that year I considered returning to a classroom, but the only position offered was a fifth grade in a difficult situation.

This offer was a complication generated by the opening of a new elementary school in the district. Some of the principals of older schools felt their best teachers had been lost in staffing the new school. I was a "peace offering" to one such principal, or at least that is what I was told. I was "such a good teacher" that I could handle the difficulties in this placement, it was a way I could "contribute to the balance" in the school district. For years I had accepted this kind of rhetoric about being a "good teacher" who could "handle" difficult students or parents or colleagues without much complaint, but I felt this was beyond what I was willing to do. Having spent my last eight years teaching in a first grade classroom, I was uncomfortable with a change of grade level this extreme.

Another factor which may have led to my being offered a fifth grade assignment was that record numbers of experienced teachers were applying for leave around this time. Although county policy only stated personnel returning from leave would be given a comparable position if it was available, in most cases teachers returned to the classroom they had left. These previous placements were held by employing new teachers on one year contracts. If for some reason returning teachers could not be given their old placements, then at least an offer was made for the same grade level in a different school. However, other teachers returning from leave around the same time I did were similarly offered placements that differed from what they had expected. Some believed we were being used as example to prevent so many teachers from requesting leave. The problems leave requests generated were considered serious enough by central office to ask several of us taking leave if there were issues precipitating our decision to take time away from the classroom. I waited to see if other offers for placement in the district would be forthcoming and when it was apparent they would not be, I applied for an extension of my leave.

Transformation Toward an Academic Perspective

Although the previous year's graduate experience had been beneficial, I was sure I was in the wrong program. My interest was elementary education and my research assistantship had been in Vocational Technical Education focusing on secondary programs. I transferred to the department of Teaching and Learning and obtained an assistantship as a student teaching supervisor for students working toward a master's certification for grades kindergarten through middle school.

Supervising student teachers whose placements were in my old school district allowed me to feel that I was connecting the theoretical and practical superstructures of public education. Through my course work I was learning to think about schools differently, gaining new understanding into how they function in relation to society. My experience as a classroom

teacher was beginning to seem as though it could be useful in an academic environment. Positioning myself to influence future teachers seemed a logical next step in my career. Perhaps I could actually reinvent my role as an educator and teach at the college level. It was during this year that I began to seriously consider completing my doctorate. Still, I had serious reservations about doing so.

Moving from public school teacher to an academic environment was a bit like moving out of my "class." By obtaining an undergraduate degree I had already gone far beyond the expectations of my childhood guardians and my father, and within the local community I was regarded by colleagues and parents as a fair and competent teacher. I had been lucky. Did I really want to risk changing my academic "station"? Was I enough of an intellectual? I knew I was not well versed in academic literature, I had no confidence in my ability to converse intelligently about theory, and I lacked computer skills.

I also was aware of the opinion held by many teachers that academics are removed from the reality of public school teaching. This sense of distance positioned university affiliated people as "others": sometimes as superior, sometimes as impractical, sometimes as enemy. Growing up as a "military brat" I was aware of class differences that played out not only in terms of rank, but also in the perception of differences between personnel who engaged in "soldiers' work" (those who were ready for the action of war as line personnel) and those who were distanced from this action as support personnel. In the "real man's military" those who flew a plane were seen as having more worth than those who "flew a desk." Although the comparison is limited in application, the sense of difference felt by some teachers toward academic culture is quite similar.

The sense of class difference, my lack of confidence, a fear of losing community and identity and becoming "other," all acted as barriers to taking doctoral work seriously. I could not construct an image of myself as having access or entitlement to the degree. Still, the ideas explored at a graduate level were seductive, and I decided to just take a little bit at a time and see where things would lead.

Refocusing the Lens to Schoolteacher

During my two years in graduate school I felt my fingers slipping from the pulse of public schools. At the university I had the time, location, and community to think about my past practice in new ways and to see what had not been readily visible while I was teaching. However, in this new vision the immediacy of public school environments faded. I was thinking in terms of my past experiences and lacked access to the daily demands and classroom responsibilities that shape teachers' thoughts within an ongoing current of a school environment. As new personnel come and go, as state and federal politics shift on issues affecting public schools, and as administrative policies change, teachers develop different tactics to negotiate school environments. I had lost touch with these strategies, although I was aware that many things were changing in my district.

For one thing, the superintendent was in his last year. Because of complaints by parents and conflicts with teachers and other school personnel his contract had not been renewed.

Another set of issues were attached to the new state "standards of learning" looming on the horizon. The state department of education had developed a standard curriculum to be taught at each grade level for each subject area. The intention was to link these "standards" to tests which could be used to prevent students from passing to the next grade level if they fell below a "mastery score." Results from the tests would be used to compare districts, schools, and to grant or deny accreditation to schools. There was also discussion that they might be used in a merit pay system for teachers.

The county where I went to work was also in the process of creating a county-wide curriculum as an enhancement to the state curriculum, and there were intensified efforts to incorporate various technology projects in schools.

I had heard about these changes from former colleagues, but did not feel them as they did. As a student on campus such changes did not affect my day to day existence or influence my time, space, actions, interactions with others, thoughts, and dreams as they did for the colleagues with whom I continued to spend time both socially and as I substituted. Indeed, it was through substituting and volunteering in local schools that I became aware of how my perceptions were changing, how my teacher "self" was being pushed to the background as I nurtured a new academic layer of "self." Stepping back into practice as a substitute created a tension and dissonance between these two perspectives of public schools. Kondo (1990) discusses the tension between the "I" and the "eye" of the anthropologist that is similar to the splitting of self into observer and actor I was experiencing. Implicit in this binary location are power issues of subject/object, of voyeurism vis-a-vis those who are watched and analyzed. I believed that in order to understand the issues my participants would raise in interviews and to blur the location of subject and object, I needed to foreground my teacher "self" and once again experience the flow in public schools. To achieve this I felt I had to be actively engaged in practice as a teacher, not just to experience school environments directly but to soften the power issues of this binary positioning. By being a part of the process I was examining I intended to become both subject and object, and by inviting my participants to engage in an open discourse about teaching I hoped they would also become part of this blend of power.

In time I completed my coursework and became committed to pursuing the degree, mainly because I came to believe that I had an opportunity to raise questions about teachers' work that might add to a discourse about schools. I submitted a dissertation proposal which involved returning to teach in local public schools and doing ethnographic inquiry as a teacher-researcher.

Methodological Reasoning

There were practical reasons to return to teaching. It would increase my access to participants, and I hoped it would also increase my credibility and allow teachers to be more comfortable and candid in interviews.

I returned to the district, entering a school where I had not previously taught. I wanted to re-establish my insider identity, but through the eyes of a stranger, to "emphasize those domains most taken for granted as universal. . . make them seem as historically peculiar as possible" (Rabinow, 1986), and bring into focus a kind of "dual vision."

I believed that combining my own work as a teacher-researcher with interviews of teachers on topics relevant to them, would shift some of the authority and expertise to the teachers, rather than maintaining researchers' privileged access to "sacred knowledge" (Schratz, & Walker, 1995 p. 149).

This approach to ethnographic research is grounded in discourse going back to W.E.B. Dubois (1969) notion of "double consciousness," a moral awareness of the implications of actions from more than one perspective. According to Bateson (1982) such a dual perspective is necessary to execute a "double description" that combines the insight of a distant observer with those of an immediate participant. Le Compte (1993) extended these ideas in a discussion of a "double consciousness" which blurs the distinction between the researcher and the researched. This blurred vision allows us to hear voices not usually heard in academic discourse.

> The write up of a study reestablishes to some degree the boundaries between researcher/subject and local knowledge/external knowledge . . .the publication phase raises a critical ontological question: whose 'being' is being reflected? . . . Lost is how informants themselves can be consumed if sensitive materials about their lives fall into unfriendly hands, or if those same materials-hitherto unseen by participants constitute a devastating portrayal and a ghastly surprise. Writers of personal narrative must, as a consequence, maintain the stance of double consciousness which identifies with their informants' condition even after they leave the field, so that they do not publish works which might harm their informants. (Le Compte, 1993, p. 20)

When I tried to apply these ideas as a practicing teacher, I found it difficult and at times impossible to carry them out as they had been described in the literature.

Moving to a new grade level, in a new school and community helped me to see things with a fresh eye, but the move also carried with it an intensification of work in an already work intensive vocation (Hargreaves, 1994).

Fieldnotes: August teacher workdays.

> These work days are packed with meeting the staff, meetings, signing up for committees and all of the millions of little particular arrangements that need to be made and accommodated. We have a list of twenty committees [sleep overs for each grade level as a "read-in" on various Friday nights during the year, garden planning- curriculum and maintenance, Spring and Fall fairs, Safety, Hospitality, Principal's Advisory, Child Study, Odyssey of the Mind, Reading Month, Student Government, Safety Patrol, Chess Club, Peer Mediation, PTA , Business Partnership, Talent Show, Curriculum, Superintendent Advisory, Local teacher association representative], and more, PLUS- We are revisiting our Self-Study done 5 years ago which means we will be meeting at least once weekly to address

that, as well as the regularly scheduled faculty meetings. And then there are bulletin boards, show cases, etc. to sign up for, music programs for each grade level, uses for parent volunteer, community readers, and a multitude of collaborators. Then, special projects [Save the Whales],Technology training and a lot of inservice training about the upcoming SOLs, new county curriculum. And more than I can say. It seems more complicated, more to sign up for, than when I left. Have I forgotten? Is it this setting. Or is it just more for everyone in the classroom? If so, what is driving all this STUFF, things that are only tangential to actual instruction?

Fieldnotes: The first week of school.
The first week of school --I've been staying here until 6:30, 7:00 every night and going in early as well [7:00]. I had forgotten how exhausting it is to be "on" all day long Balancing, Juggling, framing rules, shaping students into what is expected in public schools. Even though I had hopes for having a student centered curriculum and classroom environment, I still find myself ruling the classroom like a mini-despot. Of course that may be because I have a number of children with behaviors that seem way outside the norm of acceptability in this school and even for my hopes for a democratic classroom.

Fieldnotes: September 15
Today was an early release day. I spent most of the time I was to be working in my classroom with specialists who are to serve the students in my class, and with my grade level teammate. I must admit that I am feeling overwhelmed right now, I don't know if it is because I've been away from public schools for two years and just forgot what it is like, if I can't see what public school teaching is REALLY like because I've been outside of it, or if I am just getting too old to do this any more. The pace and number of responsibilities are staggering, I have gifted and special resource people lying in wait for me to walk down the hall, taking over any free moment I have; Specials, lunch, even get this, waiting for me to come out of the teachers' bathroom to talk to me about my students, or their stuff. It is wonderful to have so many people willing to help, but there is no time to think much less to plan and there is a point beyond which help is helpful. AND my grade level teammate drives me crazy with wanting to chat about nothing, every time we get together to plan, like today, she digresses to conversation about trivia, what her cats like to eat for heaven's sake! I would probably enjoy these stories if they were not so intrusive on my thoughts and time during the instructional day when I can barely keep on schedule to get lessons together and pick up my students on time. And, like today-when I need us to be working together on curriculum, discipline, management, units and there is so little time. There are so

many people to "help" me do my job with no planning time to coordinate anything. The net effect is that they give me "great" suggestions without actually being in my class to help.

Because my placement was in a small, rural, low status school (I had previously been in fairly large schools), a large amount of work was distributed among the small staff without much support from parent volunteers (in most of the families both parents worked and were unable to volunteer as helpers in school) and consequently I found greater demands on my time. Many of the support staff (Music, Art, Resource people, e.g. Gifted Resource) traveled among the smaller schools in the district. They could only provide services on particular days of the week and needed to "catch" teachers for consultation while they had time in their school. This was also a time when our school was engaged in a self study in order to acquire recertification by the Southern Schools Association. Beyond this committee work, there were numerous school related committees and projects that required the planning and participation of each teacher. In addition I had been assigned the cluster class for children identified as having special needs. Differences between this location and my previous teaching placements caused me to wonder about the impact on my perception of time, a topic explored in chapter two.

Fieldnotes: Teacher work days.

I have all of the "identified" students for third grade "included" in my class and I am adding desks for new students daily---It had seemed like a dream when the principal told me that I would only have 15 students in my class and apparently it was, I am now up to 19. It seems that in order to serve these identified students they must be in one class. So all of those with labels or those who might qualify have to be grouped together. This means that I have to meet with all of the people that are attached to them the " student services industry" that has boomed in public school settings since the 1970s. All of these people- the speech specialist, L.D. resource-person, her aide, the counselor, the gifted resource person all want to chat about their program and what they are going to do to "help" me. I have to find time in a schedule crowded with music, art, P.E., library, to fit them all in. In addition to the Soc. Studies /Science switch with my teammate, and the time with the four [service learning project] students. And they all want to talk, chat, be sociable. [another teacher I work with] drives me bonkers with her tangents and tangents. Our conversations are beginning to look like a diagram of the social networks of nomadic tribes. As a matter of fact my life looks rather like that.

Fieldnotes: First week of school.

This student, I'll call him Michael, came into my class this week from the [nearby district] schools, before that he'd been in [regional district] and before that [Large Metropolis in a nearby state] inner city. Altogether he's been in 5 different

schools, most of his life has been in inner city [Name]. When he arrived in my class he came was wearing oversized [baggy] clothing, an adult sized Bulls T shirt. He was surly and told me " I like to fight, I can beat people up, I'm Bad, and I stay in the office all the time". I asked him why he was "bad"? and he replied, "Cause I fight." I asked why do you fight? He said, "cause people say things about my momma." I said No one is going to say anything about your momma here, so you won't need to fight and if they do, let me know and they'll be in big trouble. We want you to be in our class, and we're glad you are here. He said, "I don't like white people." I asked why, and he replied, "cause they don't like me." I said "I like you, and I think the kids in our class will too if you give them a chance, maybe they are afraid that you won't like them." He said, "I can beat them up." I said, "I hope you won't want to do that, I hope you will like being in this class so much and that you will have so many friends that you won't need to fight people, but you need some time to decide for yourself about things, so why don't you just see what things are like, and let me know if anything is wrong." I gave him a little hug, he had allowed me to pat his shoulder so I felt he was comfortable with physical contact. He softened and looked at me directly for the first time as I smiled at him and gave his shoulders a gentle squeeze with one arm. He doesn't know how to socialize with the other students, He is the only African American child in my class and doesn't know the rules here. By rules I mean the ways that our local children interact and understand each other from a common backdrop of language , rituals, and signs, and he doesn't know what is expected by the school power system, local school etiquette. His means of coping with this seems to include a repertoire of intimidation, displays of explosive behavior and posturing performances, or setting himself apart, not true withdrawal but a stepping aside almost outside of the flow of classroom interaction He came in with a referral in process, E.D./L.D. is the label the [nearby district] schools were shooting for.

Fieldnotes: Oct. 21/95.
We decided to move the two boys in my class that create problems for the other children in my class. I need to frame the backdrop for this, I have been given all of the identified students in third grade, this is happening all over the county. Since the county has gone to "including" students who have been identified with some quality that sets then "outside the range of what regular students need educationally" [that means students with something that "handicaps" their learning or those that are exceptional--those labeled as LAD, ED, EMH, TMH, HI,VI, Med. I., Physically H., Gifted and Talented etc.,] the personnel that previously served these students in contained or pullout programs are having to be stretched too thin. In order to meet IEPs. these students have to be "clustered" in

one class which can become a sort of special Ed class with a few "regular" students thrown in. We have to ask ourselves if this is truly congruent with the intent of inclusion, It seems to me that it combines the worst of both situations. But then I may be biased by my experiences this fall. Back to my class, I was to be the cluster class, Originally I had two identified students, both labeled, L.D. and several who were deemed potentially identifiable, [several of these students are "distractible, impulsive, below grade level in one or more subjects, and exhibit inappropriate behavior"] Then at the beginning of the year 6 new boys were assigned to my class 4 of whom either had had labels and were on monitor, or came with labels, of the other two, one was from a low income family and displayed some anger. All the current or previously "identified" students or potentially "identified" [handicapped] students are male, and in addition to this, I have been assigned all of the "gifted" or students needing an "enriched" program which happen to be all female. These gender and label differentiated groups make the classroom weird - especially since there are class/ socio-economic splits long the same groupings.

The clustering of children labeled as having exceptional needs meant I had to meet on a regular basis with many resource personnel, which took up a great deal of time. The wide range of needs in my class, both instructional and behavioral created tensions that often erupted in verbal and physical confrontations among students. These confrontations precipitated numerous evening and early morning phone calls from parents of the "gifted" girls in my class. Along with the other demands of the job, these circumstances decreased the time and distance I could sustain to reflect upon the larger system, and made it difficult for me to think beyond my own circumstances and responsibilities. As a result, my "blurred", or "dual" vision became mono-myopic, only able to observe school through the "near eye."

Another source of tension between the roles' of teacher and researcher centered on the implications of my research for my students. Wong (1995) uses anecdotal evidence to illustrate how as a researcher he chose one course of action in order to learn more about the effectiveness of a particular teaching strategy, but as a teacher this action seemed an inappropriate choice for his students.

During the year I collected fieldnotes as a teacher/researcher. I used various coping mechanisms to alleviate such tensions. Mostly I put my research "self" in the background and tried to put my students' interests first. But being a public school teacher is more than teaching and a relationship with students. In other facets of my teacher role (such as public relations work, inservice training, team-building, grant writing, etc.) I felt less conflict in foregrounding my research. Still, reading and research slowed to a trickle during this year and were limited to the fieldnotes I could jot down and a spotty bit of reading. It was not until I returned to a graduate teaching assistantship that I was able to reflect upon these experiences with the "passionate

detachment" (Kuhn 1982) required for this kind of inquiry. LeCompte (1993) describes passionate detachment as requiring,

> both the intensity of emersion and praxis and the recognition that both of the pictures one sees with two eyes are real and valid, as are their location within the constraining contexts as well as their synthesis. . . .simply put, one cannot "be" and simultaneously be critical of that being. A step outside, a disengagement, is necessary to prevent the researcher from so strongly identifying with participants or so completely rejecting analysis and theory that the story is related only from the researchers one eye. As I have indicated earlier, such presentation is not honest because it is not possible; moreover, it is not ethical because it trivializes the experiences recounted and subordinates all accounts to that of the researcher. (LeCompte, 1993 p. 23)

Changing the Original Plan

Initially I planned to center my inquiry in the school where I returned to teach third grade, approaching it as one might an alien culture. Over time, however, I realized I was too emotionally invested in the school, and I would not be able to obscure the identity of the participants. Finally, I wasn't sure anyone would agree to participate. I changed my focus to interviewing teachers.

Selecting Participants

Some of the elementary schools from which I solicited participation were town schools serving 600 or more students, others were rural schools with half that number of students. I began by obtaining a list of teachers at each grade level in the schools I wanted to include. I looked for diversity of age, longevity of employment in the district, gender, and race, to create a texture of difference from which issues could emanate. I tried to include representatives of each grade level from each school. Although I did not succeed totally, by starting with this frame I was able to enroll a very diverse group of participants. The approach also prevented me from simply asking people in a random fashion and obtaining people who were similar to me in age, philosophy, and other ways.

I telephoned many teachers, but most of the time I tried to talk to them in person to explain what I was trying to do. I gave them a copy of the consent form and asked them to look it over and think about whether they could help me, commenting that I would get back to them to see if they had questions. Some refused immediately saying that they would not want anything that they said taped. Others thought about it and later said that they were not comfortable, that it was too risky that they might say something that would be misunderstood. It may be that these people would have been reluctant to participate in any circumstance; however, the uncertainty created by the politics surrounding the superintendent in office at that time did not create a climate of safety. Most agreed to participate, but even so I still had to replace a few who for various reasons dropped out later. In the end I interviewed teachers with experience ranging from

novice to veteran, from five elementary schools in an equal distribution across grade levels from kindergarten through fifth grade.

The range of experience and variety of settings allowed me to see if issues were articulated in similar ways across the district, or if participants responded to elements of context in dramatically different ways. One example of a somewhat uniform response across the group was the response to the administrative policy of the "homework hotline", which I discuss in chapter six. On the other hand, differently situated participants had different ways of weaving collaborations with others, and of responding to the county policy of including special needs students in regular classrooms.

Non-teacher Participants

I also interviewed non-teacher participants who were associated with the participating teachers in some way. Some were individuals in administrative or supervisory roles, others were service learning students, university researchers, or individuals associated with intermediary programs (explained in a later section). Including non-teacher participants attached to teachers' work introduced a different vantage point for viewing an area of interest and helped extend my understanding of certain issues.

Ultimately my participants were individuals who were willing to take the time, risks, and energy to talk with me. Although I deliberately avoided interviews with my closest friends, because of my long association with local schools all of the teacher participants were people I knew.

The multiple networks connecting public schools, communities and universities created complications. Many professors, undergraduates, and graduate students have connections to local schools through collaborative projects, school-aged children, or spouses employed as teachers. Departments of education at nearby universities have close ties to the district through projects, student teaching programs, professional organizations, and former students now employed by the district. These networks created flows of information, power, and politics which made the maintenance of confidentiality difficult.

For example, during the interviews all but one member of my doctoral committee was mentioned at some time by participants, and a fifth member had attended local public schools. I mention this not because the comments were derogatory, but to illustrate the density of relationships within the region.

Filters for the Diversity of Participants.

I use pseudonyms for participants and schools to obscure identities. Although three African American teachers were approached to participate only one ultimately agreed. One of these teachers simply refused because she felt that it was too "risky", she was close to retirement and did not want any trouble. The other did not show up for the interview and could not find a convenient time to reschedule. The remainder of participants were of European American heritage. I approached five male elementary teachers, three agreed to participate, but I gave up on one after rescheduling his interview sixteen times. In the following table I exclude gender and race

because the limited numbers of individuals in these particular categories might compromise anonymity.

The following table shows the grade levels, relationships of participants to local elementary schools (e.g., teacher, collaborator, supervisor/administrator) and career factors, including longevity of public school experience and information about the variability of teachers careers. In terms of longevity, I divided teachers into groups of those with more or with less than ten years of teaching experience. In part, these categories come from my data. Teachers with longer teaching experience appeared to have a better understanding of the micropolitics of school settings and of tricks of trade that made teaching safer and easier. At the same time various contextual flows also differentiate teachers in terms of longevity. Administrative policies may vary toward teachers depending upon the number of years they have taught.

Some participants reported that beginning teachers were more apt to receive difficult teaching assignments as a sort of "trial by fire" test of their ability before they were placed on continuing contract. Some indicated that teachers with long careers were given tough assignments because they were near retirement and drew high salaries

The career category shows variation in the work experience of participants. Solo indicates that a particular teacher has taught in only one school in this district, Solo [M] indicates that a teacher's career is limited to school teaching but in a variety of school environments, and Multi indicates that a particular career includes work experience outside of schools. These categories become important when considering how knowledge effects the kinds of coping mechanisms teachers employ on the job.

Table 1: Demographics of Participants in Interviews

Participant	School	Affiliation	Longevity	Career
Allen	Perry El.	K	>10	Solo [M]
Pappas	"	1st	>10	Solo [M]
Doan	"	3rd	<10	Multi
Seay	"	4th	<10	Multi
Koffe	"	5th	>10	Solo
Lucas	Cove El.	1st	>10	Multi
Dry	"	2nd	>10	Solo [M]
Verde	"	3rd	<10	Multi
Farmer	"	3rd	<10	Solo [M]
Winter	"	Specialist	>10	Multi
Sammons	"	Collab	Serv. Learn	_
Alder	"	Collab	Serv. Learn	_
King	Orchard El.	K	>10	Solo [M]
Samuel	"	1st	>10	Solo [M]
Macay	"	4th	>10	Solo [M]
Bono	"	Specialist	>10	Solo [M]
Rey	Kanode El.	1st	>10	Solo
Ness	"	3rd	< 10	Solo [M]
Regis	"	4th	> 10	Solo [M]
Major	"	5th	< 10	Multi
Parker	"	5th	> 10	Multi
Millyard	Multiple	Collab	Professor	Pub Sch.
Wiffle	Multiple	Collab	Professor	No Pub Sch.
Moss	Multiple	Adm./Supr	<10	Multi
Maple	Multiple	Adm./Supr	<10	Solo [M]
Clark	Multiple	Adm./Supr	<10	Multi

Collection and Analysis of Data

The data collected fall into three categories. Interviews provided the main body of data. Artifacts and fieldnotes serve as supporting legs to check and strengthen my analysis.

<u>**Interviews**</u>

I wanted to create a time and space for teachers to safely reflect about how they experienced teaching. Taking my cue from the lack of privacy and time I had experienced on site in public schools, I decided to conduct all interviews away from school environments and during teachers' personal time. This was imperative for confidentiality, and particularly important because of the complex political pressure surrounding the then Superintendent's administration. This was my community, my school district, and my colleagues. I wanted to avoid putting teachers at risk or exploiting them in any way.

The interviews lasted one to two hours. I gave participants control to add or delete from the tapes or transcripts. Some interviews were conducted in my office at the university, some in participants' homes, and some in public places (pizza parlors, coffee shops, fast food restaurants). Although public places had the potential to compromise anonymity, and their noise level made it difficult to transcribe the interviews, these were more comfortable settings for the majority of participants. Many seemed to want a break from the routine and it gave me an opportunity to buy them some kind of refreshment. I recall when I was teaching in public school being tied to school lunches and teachers' lounge vending machines and how a simple cup of coffee after school seemed luxurious. I wanted to decrease the strangeness and discomfort that can be a part of the interview process and feeding people after a day at school seemed like a way to do that.

I had planned to do one interview at a time, transcribe it, and then return the transcript to the participant for corrections, additions and deletions. I intended to use each interview to inform the next, building on issues from teachers rather than using only my own agenda. This ideal was rapidly modified. To begin with, I could not transcribe the tapes quickly enough. In fact, with the demands of my teaching assistantship and family it wasn't long before I had a backlog of tapes waiting for transcription. The best I could do was listen to them before the next interview.

Many of the participants forgot meetings, or had to rearrange times. All but seven interviews had to be rescheduled at least once and many several times. I believe this is less of an indicator of disinterest than a reflection of the happenstance of public school environments. Parents may show up or call to meet on an impromptu basis. Changes in meetings and other chance events all conspire to shift schedules at a moments' notice. Because I was outside the political eddies in public schools and because there was little if anything to gain from participating in my enterprise, I could be put on hold when others could not. It seemed important to complete my interviews within a year to minimize the difference of issues teachers to which teachers responded. As a result my focus was on getting interviews rather than transcription.

This change in my idealized approach affected the process. I left interviews more open-ended and let participants go where they would, responding to comments as they came. Sometimes I would point the commentary in a particular direction, drawing on my memory of

previous interviews, but mostly I listened, asked for clarification, or made my own comments. In some ways this may have worked better than my initial plan. Avoiding a deliberately determined format allowed interaction to be more like a natural conversation. It also permitted participants to raise the issues they thought were relevent and to interpret the notion of "context" in their own way.

As I finally transcribed tapes I did recontact participants to review the transcriptions. However, the long delay between interview and transcription meant that many participants were no longer interested in the project. Demands on their time had shifted and their focus was on ending the year, family vacation, or beginning the next year. Many of the issues they had raised were no longer as important to them as they had been at the time of the interviews. Unfortunately, many said that they were sure the transcription was fine, and that they didn't want to meet again. I did meet with three participants for changes and subsequent interviews but others did not care to meet, or were unable to do so.

Participants' responses might have been the same if I had contacted them within a week. When I first began interviewing I thought I could get at a "truth" if I interviewed participants several times. I found that the "truth" was situated in the immediacy of events which changed daily. I was disturbed that while reviewing something in a transcript a participant might say, "Oh, I was just upset about my class being interrupted, (the issue they were venting on) is not really so important." It took me a while to figure out that these changing perceptions were normal and it did not change the importance of the first reaction. It was then that I decided repeated interviews of the same participant were not necessary unless the participants felt something needed changing.

Because so many interviews were rescheduled, sometimes repeatedly, many were delayed until summer vacation. This may have affected the intensity of teachers' response to some issues. Schools have their own predictable (e.g. school opening and closing, holidays, report periods, etc.) and unpredictable rhythms (e.g. snow days, projects and committee meetings.) Interviewing during summer break may have softened and distanced teachers' reactions to the immediacy of schools, or it may have encouraged more distanced, reflective analyses.

Analysis of Interviews

After I conducted an interview I wrote down observations about how it went, things that the participant may have included after the recorder was turned off, and notes about similarities or differences to other interviews. I listened to the tape recording at least once before I conducted the next interview, sometimes writing down issues I found important. This listening and notetaking roughed out categories and provided a skeleton for later analysis.

My written analysis followed my original plan with line by line margin notes. I did this for each transcription and used these notes to begin to identify categories of context. After I completed and reread all of the interview transcripts, I merged many of the more specific categories I had identified into broad categories of context. The following is the pared down list of categories that I used in the next step of analysis: Collaboration, Time/Space, Administrative

Policy, Intensification of Work, Economic Issues, Political Issues, Personal, Parents/Students, Career, Language, and Coping Strategies.

I needed these categories to begin to understand the scope of issues across differences of teaching environments and the participants' unique circumstances. At the same time such categorization fragmented "contexts" into singular, disconnected pieces. So, I countered this analysis by creating an indexed matrix of interconnections between categories for each interview. In other words I undid much of the analysis by rebraiding the contextual categories into a web of interconnections. This helped me to see the interrelatedness and interdependence of issues raised by teachers.

[see Figure 1]

I then took each category and made a similar web of connection. I used this same approach with my fieldnotes. Including my notes in this way helped me to see myself as an equal participant in this project and to examine the notes from an artificially constructed distance.

Fieldnotes

I collected fieldnotes, such as those quoted earlier in this chapter, in an erratic journal during the year I was teaching and continued writing them as I substituted while completing this document. Because of lack of time to write during school hours when I was teaching, I devised a system in which I kept a pad of adhesive notepapers with me at all times. I would jot down observations and bits of conversations as I could and then adhere them to the day in my plan book. Later I used these notes to reconstruct events. Although my notes of conversations are not verbatim, they are as close as I could get to the essence and intention of the speakers, and to the events as I perceived them.

I made my first fieldnote entry during an end-of-year faculty meeting at the school where I would teach the following fall. I was formally introduced to the staff and listened to the wrap-up of the old and plans for the coming year.

Column	1	2	3	4
Row 1	Collaboration	Time / Space	Administrative Policy	Career
Row 2	Intensification of Work	Language	Coping Strategies	Political
Row 3	Personal	Economics	Parents / Students	
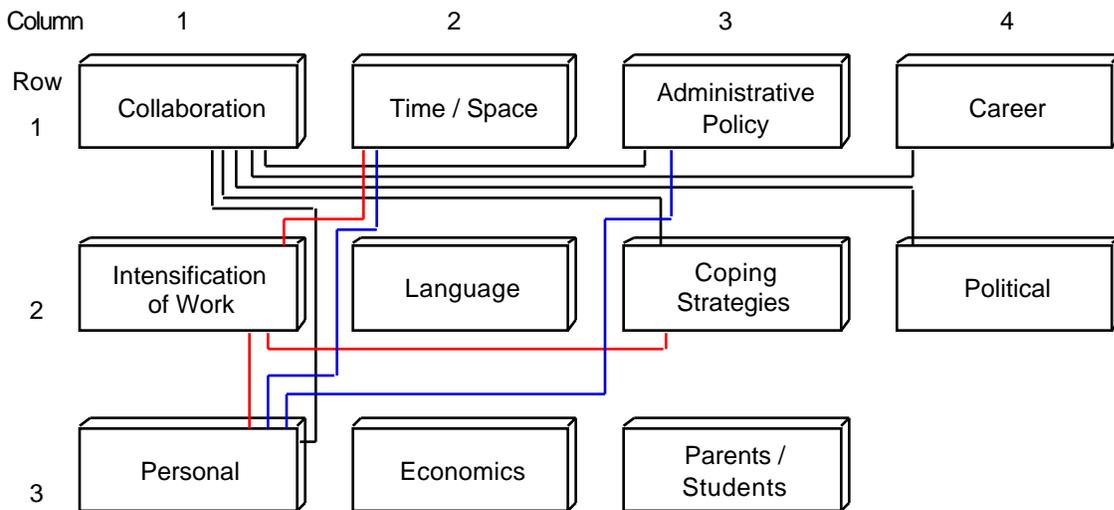
Webbed Index Level

Linkage, (Row, Column row, column)	Source, Transcript Line Numbers	Comments
1, 1 2, 4	17-19	Rare teacher who can collaborate
1, 1 1, 3	17-27	Teacher forced by principal to collaborate
1, 1 1, 4	17-27	Teacher to resource to collaborator
1, 1 2, 3	17-27	Money for resource people
2, 1 1, 2	32-40	Situation not conducive to collaboration
2, 1 2, 3	29-36	Resistance, caring, liaison for child
3, 1 1, 1	62-65	Too many adults (style, personality)
3, 1 1, 2	62-65	Number persons in classroom
3, 1 1, 3	62-65	Number persons in classroom
3, 1 2, 1	62-65	Administrative policy / personal time

Figure 1. Illustration of Partial Webbed Index of a Transcription. For clarity only the first row has been diagrammed.

After the faculty meeting entry there was a gap until late summer when I went to a small fair held adjacent to the school grounds. I had read about the fair in a local paper and saw an opportunity to learn something about the community. I include a few of my early entries to illustrate the selective vision and analysis inherent in my observations.

Fieldnotes two weeks before teacher work days [Aug. 18].
Before school began I spent several days bonding with my room. I was moving boxes in that had been stored in my husband's workshop. He was glad to see them go. I had the mixed feeling of past present and future as I unpacked children's books some of them dating back to our own children all grown now and some with children of their own. wondering how much of the stuff I had accumulated for eight years in first grade will translate to meet the needs of third graders. I also felt overwhelmed at the prospect of readying this room and thinking through a third grade curriculum by the time my new students would arrive on my doorstep in a few weeks. I was also in the process of still writing and rewriting the drafts of my prelim exam with my sense of self stretched between a soon to be past community and identity and moving into a new one. The classroom was empty of furniture and clean but worn with years of use. The former occupant, a male, had left a scramble of books on various shelves and bookcases around the room and jumbles of CSMP [a math program] manipulatives and workbooks. I spent a lot of time just looking at the space trying to think of how it should be, and what I intended to do to run my class. It was hot, a record breaking summer with temps in the mid to upper 90s. My classroom is on the sunny side of the building and with no AC and no widows open, the temps were in the triple digits. Within 15 minutes of this staring and thinking and unpacking a few boxes I felt a dewy film of sweat cover my body and I knew that I would have to tackle this job in small increments, the first order of the day was to figure out where to tell the custodians to put all of the stuff, desks, tables, file cabinets, a computer, all of the classroom furniture that had been removed in order to wax and polish the floors that lined the hall- way outside my room.

Fieldnotes week before teacher work days.
I can't believe I have been so long in recording my thoughts get back to this tonight. I went to the [community] fair, it had been advertised in the [local paper] to be held in the Grange building and on the surrounding grounds complete with 4H displays and a hollering contest. I felt that this would be a good opportunity to participate in a very localized social gathering- the Grange building and grounds are directly across the road from the school where I will be teaching. When I arrived early afternoon I was surprised by the number of cars parked along the road and filling the parking lot of my new school. A man who appeared to be in

his mid to late 20s dressed in camouflage fatigues and hat, combat boots and covered with brass and medals unlike any military insignia I know of, approached my car. He leaned toward my car window and inquired with an Appalachian twang, "Can I help you, little lady?" I told him that I was a new teacher at the school and that I was trying to work in my classroom a little early, I needed to get into the school and would probably visit the fair for a short time afterward. "Just go ahead and park where you want, I'll keep an eye on your vehicle for you." he smiled. The tag above his breast pocket flap read "Va. Defense." I later learned that this is the local militia group. Several of these individuals were directing traffic and parking procedures, others who appeared to be of different status in some kind of hierarchy of rank were milling around the fair concessions.

The fair consisted of a raised wooden platform centered in a square lined by concession stands crudely framed using two-by-fours which supported fabric or paper walls. In these cubicles there were vendors selling crafts and food, and two political booths with opponents for the local County Sheriff race. I wandered around the fair looking at the concessions and talked to the folks in the political booths, both volunteers said much the same thing about responding to the needs of the community and filled my hands with posters, bumper stickers, and buttons. I was having a difficult time disengaging from the political spiel of one of the candidates when I saw a couple of the teachers from my new school crossing the road to visit the fair. I mustered as pleasant a smile as I could and interrupted the talker mid-sentence pointing toward my colleagues and saying "Sorry, I have to go." And turned to meet them.

They said that they had just come by to do a few things in their room and that they had to get out of the heat for a while. We chatted about end of the summer and anticipation of beginning the year. Both indicated the onslaught of anxiety and anticipation they felt in trying to get ready for students and parents, the need to "change gears" from a normal life back to the hectic pace of school." One said, "I have to get into my classroom early, not just to get things done because there is no time during the work days to do all we have to do , but because if I don't begin adapting my mind set to a school pace I'd go into shock when school actually starts, I do anyway but it would be even worse if I didn't come in early." They drifted back across the road and I remained to sit next to a couple of elderly women resting on one of the benches facing the wooden platform. These women were talking about the displays in the grange building comparing them to the fair in [neighboring county]. I spoke to them about the displays and asked if they were from this area? No, they were from [name] County, but one had a brother that lived nearby. They had come for the crafts exhibit and to watch the clogging that would go on later on the platform. I sat for a few minutes observing the crowd. There were about 20-25 people ambling about the fair a few people in

their mid twenties to mid thirties, mostly mothers with small children, the remaining people, with the exception of the Militia, appeared to be older people 55-65, European American. Even though there is a fair sized community of African American people in this area, none were present at this event.

I wandered over to the Grange building to a lemonade concession just outside the entrance. Behind a table filled with paper cups and pitchers of lemonade sat an elderly man [sixties?] and two women of similar age. They were discussing the effect on [local community] of the road being widened. Widening the road required most of the beautiful old oaks [about 20 in the immediate area] that lined the road to be cut down. In their conversation these people talked of their childhood memories of these trees and of the local identity of this community as being defined by their existence. How they hadn't been consulted, it was "those developers in [University town] coming in buying up land and using it to make money, How things were changing and [this community] would soon be just like everywhere else" It was clear that these people felt dramatically disenfranchised by the loss of these trees. I agreed with them that it was a real shame to see them go and I moved into the cool of the building. The inside was dimly lit with overhead lights. The building was a large tin structure sort of like a warehouse or industrial building. Large display tables held exhibits of vegetables, canned goods, art work, photographs, and crafts. I was the only person inside except for the woman sitting at an information table by the front door. I walked around for about 10 minutes looking at the blue and red ribbons awarded for various categories and then left and headed for my car.

It is clear to me that I am entering a school that will serve some families like the people at this fair, judging from my encounters, politically conservative, feeling a loss of control over their community, economic environment and the future development of their immediate surroundings. There are a number of ways that this can permeate the school environment, I find this interesting and a little scary given my political leanings.

Many of my initial fieldnotes were like this. They show a narrow, subjective "travelogue" quality as I tried to make sense of a new environment.

My excursion to the fair was an attempt to extend my understanding of the families whose children would be in my class. As a kind of public ritual the fair allowed me to observe how people interacted, what issues were important in their conversations about local events, and to wonder about who might be missing from the scene and why.

Most of the notes from the fair were emotional jottings for my own use, quick takes recorded shortly after the event. Because of the freshness of these experiences and the luxury of time to write them up, these early entries are more descriptive and elaborate than the notes I took

while teaching. The conversations were reconstructed from memory. Much of what I included derived from "headnotes," as well as from fieldnotes.

> Writing fieldnotes is not always the first act of writing for which fieldnotes are read and used. Reports from the field, a form of "gray" or sub-ethnography , may draw upon fieldnotes. But many reports, like letters from the field, are no doubt primarily releases of headnotes. (Sanjek, 1990 p. 386).
> The term "headnotes" originated with Ottenberg as something immediately understandable to ethnographers. We come   back from the field with fieldnotes and headnotes. The fieldnotes stay the same, written down on paper, but the headnotes continue to evolve and change as they did during the time in the field. (Sanjeck, 1990, p. 93)

Ultimately my journal contained a lot of personal venting and reactions as well as reconstructed conversations. Still, it gave me a beginning point for structuring interviews and a way to juxtapose my experiences against those of other teachers. This record of my reflections, reactions and emotions also permitted me to reconstruct some of the immediacy of school environments after I had returned to my activity at the university. Although in the sequence of data collection fieldnotes were collected and informally reviewed before I began my interviews, my formal analysis of fieldnotes took place after interviews were concluded. For example, discussions in interviews concerning time, personal lives, parents and students, collaboration, and administrative policy, became a matrix for analyzing my own experiences. The mechanics of my analysis is the same process I used for interviews.

Artifacts

Throughout this project I collected newspaper articles about local, state, and national issues related to education and took notes on other forms of media coverage. During the year that I returned to teaching I tossed every piece of paper that I could into file boxes, including some parent notes, notes from colleagues, letters to parents from the schools, all of the paper trail that passes across teachers' desks, even stuff like the coloring sheets from Smokey Bear. I collected information in paper form from other settings as well (e.g., school board meetings, inservice training, information sheets from the teachers' lounge.) Finally, I attended public forums concerning educational issues, sometimes taking notes and on a few occasions tape recording conferences and talks. My analysis of these data has been less formal than of the interviews. I have examined them according to whether they reflected immediate or distanced influences. For example, I would look at a memo related to an inservice for implementation of standards of learning as an immediate influence that intensified teachers' work, while a news article concerning the statewide implementation of standards of learning would reflect a distanced influences intensifying teachers' work. I catalogued artifacts under the proximity headings and subcategories of work, time and space. This helped me to think about factors outside of classrooms that frame

teachers' actions. I also used articles for understanding the public view of schools and school policy, and as a reference for situating information from teacher interviews.

Because of confidentiality issues I use few direct quotes from artifacts. However, even though artifacts are not included in an overt way, they have been useful in reconstructing political and other events and in adding depth to my analysis of issues raised in the interviews.

I tried to connect these the forms of data. For example, as issues about parents surfaced repeatedly in interviews I examined teachers' comments along with memos from administrators concerning report cards, retention issues, or newspaper coverage of standards of learning, media portrayal of teachers, letters to the editor about teacher raises, and finally my own fieldnotes.

The analysis of data used in writing this dissertation thus follows a looping or spiral process. It is a reflexive view where I am constantly making sense of myself as well as the information I have collected. Even as I write, when visiting school environments or talking with teachers I continue to cross examine and connect interviews, artifacts, and fieldnotes, and to collect current observations. Each day as I encounter commentary through various media about education, I measure those words against my data. A recent example of this is newspaper and local television news coverage of parents complaining that teachers at all levels are assigning far too much homework. In casual conversations with former colleagues several stated that because the test scores of students were so low on the first test of the new state standards of learning many teachers use the extra homework to document that they have covered the material and to shift some of the responsibility for learning to parents and students.

My history of living and working in this community makes it difficult to discern an entry point for this inquiry. Therefore I limit most of my discussion to the time I was actually collecting data. But, it is important to note that in thinking about the fieldnotes, artifacts and interviews I use my history, drawing upon my knowledge of the community to interpret them. To simplify the analysis of any data into a set of mechanical procedures obscures the context knowledge all researchers employ.

CHAPTER 2
TIME

My history as a teacher should have prepared me for returning to teach in public schools. After all, my experience in this profession ranges from pre-school multi-handicapped to classes teaching adult male prisoners, to nearly every elementary level in various settings in this district. However, in the two years I was away from public school teaching I developed a sense of freedom and spontaneity. I remember that first fall at the university how delighted I was to eat a sandwich outside in the sunlight, or spend as long as I wished reading, and the joy of following an impulse to call a friend and walk to a nearby cafe for lunch. If I wished I could segregate my personal life from my school life, I could always find a place where I could think or study without interruption. I still had deadlines in classes, and work required by my assistantship but I had a lot of control over how I could fit these together.

When I returned to teaching I went into shock. There was not a minute I could call mine. The physical and psychological demands of being "on" all day were grueling. The stream of paper, memos and other things that needed immediate attention was endless. The responsibility for my students' learning was intimidating, and the complexity of learning about new policy and procedures was tedious. These all seemed important to explore in my research.

Beyond school walls my role as a teacher seemed to invade my personal life at every level. There were the contacts with parents, colleagues, and collaborators after school hours, and work that went home. But more than these was the constant awareness of my work; my thoughts were always referenced by the magnitude of my job. In this loss of control I felt my boundary of self shift. I felt owned by these demands.

Perhaps, since I had been a schoolteacher most of my adult life, I didn't know that there were other ways to live in time until my university sabbatical. I had summer vacations, of course, but then they were supposed to feel different. Maybe public school time seemed normal because I'd never experienced work differently. Or, maybe things had gotten worse during my two year leave. Could it be that time in schools before I left was really simpler? Surely I couldn't have forgotten so completely this kind of servitude.

Exploring time in schools became an essential part of this study. I asked about it in my interviews and recorded observations about it in fieldnotes as I moved in and out of schools. In later chapters I explore the boundaries between professional and personal lives, how students and parents affect teachers' experience of teaching, what happens when teachers collaborate with non-school actors, and how administrative policies shape school environments. I begin, however, with time because it shapes and is shaped by all of these other contextual flows and is a recurring theme throughout this dissertation.

Time is an abstraction that we talk about as if it were real, a tangible entity that can be divided, shared, stolen or bought. Many of our choices are made within a logic of "time." Historic time, for example, has a past, present and future and is seen as moving in one direction. We act upon the basis that it can be segmented into sequential periods of a determined length and quantified into measurable moments. But there are other constructs of time beyond the

quantifiable. For example, it can be experienced as discontinuous chunks, as in private time versus public time, or sacred versus profane (Mukerjee, 1947). And, individuals may experience the same period of time in very different ways. Mukerjee talks about how our perception of time can differ.

> The psycho-physical state or maturation of the body-mind and the content of
> time being crowded and interesting or simple and tame, underlie differences of
> time-estimate by individuals
> (Mukerjee, 1947, p. 257)

To a person in physical or psychological pain, time can seem elongated, and may appear to speed up or cease to exist in experiences of joy and pleasure. The extremes of pain and pleasure are often beyond memory. Memory also has a weird way of inverting our experience of time. When our time is densely packed with events it passes quickly but because of its density it is remembered as a longer time. Conversely, time that drags with empty hours is often remembered as brief because there is little to mark it. Differences in experience, socialization, and age can change perception of time. For example Mukerjee (1947) discusses the work of Lecomte du Nouy,

> for parents of 40 and a child of 10, one year for the child represents the same
> amount of physiological-time as three years for the parents.
> (p. 255, du Nouy 1936).

People can experience increases in the speed of time with age because the ratio of one year to one's total life-span changes with time. At age two, one year is one half of our life, at fifty, one year is one fiftieth. In schools this ratio's affect on differences in perception can be one of many factors influencing interactions between administrators, students, parents and teachers. Another influential factor is the distance an individual is from an event. These multiple meanings and perceptions of "time" can co-exist in the same circumstances (Gurvitch, 1964). I discuss time in terms of its sociological implications, that is, I look at time as a "socio-temporal order which regulates the lives of social entities such as families, professional groups. . . time as a socially constructed artifact." (Zerubavel, 1981).

One way of looking at time in schools is to examine how teachers perceive the rate and number of events within schedules and locations. This is a beginning point for my inquiry and from it I discuss how various types of time provide an overarching structure for teachers' work. Time becomes the twist in the braid of context. Sometimes the twist is tight, increasing the tension on many strands of context, and at others it may loosen or involve fewer strands. How teachers experience their role in schools and how they differentiate their "person" from this role is directly connected to the socio-temporal order of schools.

Participants piece together instruction within schedules that are, at times, determined by factors other than student learning. They negotiate the tensions that exist when influential others (e.g., administrators, collaborators and colleagues, or parents) experience time differently from the way they do, and they must deal with the dissonance that occurs when one element of time, action, or location is incompatible with the others.

Lack of time to do all that needs doing to teach effectively was a repeated theme throughout many interviews. Planning time was overrun by other immediate demands, and responsibilities are added at an ever increasing rate. This intensification complicates teaching so that it expands to cut across the boundaries between teaching and personal lives.

I begin with comments by Mrs. Doan, a third grade teacher at Perry Elementary School. Doan became a teacher after working in a variety of non- teaching professions. Throughout her interview, time was a recurring concern. She talked about how time, events, and the administrative policies that influenced both, interacted to create a kind of obstacle course which she had to navigate moment by moment throughout her day. In the following excerpt she discussed how tight scheduling and the density of multiple demands affected her management and organizational strategies.

Ward: Tell me a little about the reality of public schools, um, things that help or hinder what you are, you know, trying to do in your teaching, time, space, any of those things. Anything. Materials. And, what's good about teaching, schools, what works.

Doan: Um, well I think one of the biggest influences is the lack of time to do what we're supposed to do, and the assumption of, kind of underlying unspoken assumption that we'll do all of that on our own time, and, um, you know what I mean? Um, I've always been the kind of person that whatever I do, I like to do well, and it's important to me to be enjoying what I'm doing. And I do, largely except for that, that, um, I have to do virtually all my preparation, all my research, all my setup, all my grading, everything I do except stand in front of the class, and, and, and, be with my class, pretty much on my own my own time. And, um, I think it's just kind of ridiculous the way school is set up that way, although I know how it's, I understand how it has evolved, but it, it seems like it's time for a change for that, um. You know, we have right now, things will be better next year, but right now we have a half-an-hour planning period every day which has just been a joke, um, given that our jobs requires an awful lot of planning, you know like in the elementary school teachers are teaching four subjects, basically, or even a sort of melding mixture of those subjects and sometimes more, sometimes less, and um, to think that I could possibly prepare and assess my students and do all the things in a half-an-hour every day is absurd. So, um,

Ward: Do you actually get to do any of those things during that time?

Doan: Not very likely. No, most of the time what I'm doing during that time is very menial like making copies. Or calling a parent, to let them know a child has forgotten a permission slip, or talking with a colleague about committee business that has to be taken care of today, Um,

Ward: Uh huh.

Doan: Or, straightening my desk. I mean, during the course of the day things are coming in, going out and I don't have time to keep organized and I'm a person who likes to be organized, so a lot times what I'm doing during that, maybe not that whole half hour, but a lot of that time is, is getting my room back, getting it organized again, putting away the things I didn't have a chance to put away, and filing this and that paper that appeared in my box in the correct place so that I'll know where it is, you know, just that kind of thing. Um, sometimes I might look at students' work, but usually since I don't really have enough time to sit and look at a whole, the whole class, I won't even, it's unlikely I'll do that. Sometimes I'll set up an experiment or something like that. mostly though, it's menial stuff.

The complexity of teaching 25 students, the intermittent and unpredictable need to transmit information, (e.g., handouts, phone calls, conversations) and to produce an instant, or "real time" response to these demands, all conspired to completely consume Doan's 'planning time'. Ness, a fourth grade teacher from Kanode Elementary, similarly talked about her frustration with the manner in which teaching was cut into a patchwork by non-academic scheduling demands. Ness tried to find a way to address the lack of useful time in a schedule determined by the economics of using the same buses for double routes, and lunch schedules that were "squished" so that the county would not have to pay benefits to cafeteria workers.

Ward: And, so what we're going to do is just talk a little bit. Tell me, why don't you start with time in your schedule and how that sort of plays in what you're doing as a teacher.

Ness: Okay. It's a constant issue and, I, have been talking about it again recently with scheduling. Um, at our last faculty meeting we addressed the issue of scheduling and people were trying to throw out different ideas of, of how to do it more creatively. But I, I feel like in my 4 years of teaching, no one has really taught me how to look at it in a more creative way. I just feel like there's got to be a way to make more of the time that I have, in the awkward amounts of time that I have, but I just have no concept of how to begin to look at it in a different way. And, it's very frustrating to know that, that initially our schedules are set up, I mean nothing has to do with what's best for the kids. Usually it has to do with funding problems and

one of the first issues we have is that as an elementary school we think we should be starting as early as possible in the morning because that's when younger kids are better able to learn, and we start at 9:00 because there aren't enough buses in the high school. We're never getting the buses for the early morning, even though adolescents learn better, are more awake in the afternoon and would do better starting later. So, that's one issue. Our kids have to go early because the cafeteria ladies don't receive benefits, but they're required to be there for breakfast, so they squish them into whatever day is a 6 hour day or whatever. So, our learning time is interrupted to go lunch so that the cafeteria workers don't get paid benefits. Um, then, there's also that, all our specialty teachers, music, art and PE have to travel, so, usually theirs is the first thing that's put on the schedule and that messes everything up because then there's these odd chunks of time that fit in and then you have to try to work everything else around that. Um, then, there's other things that I feel like are ridiculous and should never be that way and, and need to change but there's nothing I can do to change them. And then there are other things that get in the way of scheduling, but I our school and very positive. I've had a very positive experience with that, but my scheduling in my class and my ability to do things the way I would want to do them is totally inhibited by the fact that this person needs to come for an hour or whatever, and [clears throat] given that we have 6 teachers across the grade [not clear] class because we have to be heterogeneously spread out. We have to have math at the same time. So that takes out another hour of the day so then the Title One teacher's time to she can give me, and, that's an, you know, another time when I have to, both with the math and with the Title One, plan to stop what I'm doing for the schedule [not clear what was said.] Everything's broken up into chunks based on the schedule and I, honestly, I've never even thought about how should I set up my day to provide the best learning for my students. Because I know that that's not, it'd be like hitting my head against the wall is what it feels like. I mean, I try to do that after the schedule is all established but it's more like, okay, where can I possibly fit in an hour and a half for this or half an hour here, what do I do with this 20 minutes, so, I would really appreciate help in creative scheduling. But I also feel like maybe it's, I mean it's just not going to get better unless something is done about those big issues. . . I don't have time to make the phone calls, I don't have time to meet with the Title One teacher, I don't have time to do any planning or, or anything. And, the, before school/after school thing is a real issue. And I still have mixed feelings about it because I feel like, I feel like I was much more willing

when I started out to give time in the morning and in the afternoon, and I looked at it as part of my job and I kind of looked at my day as more of an 8:00 - 5:00 job, 8:00 - 5:00 kind of length of day. But, after one or two years of working also from 7:00 - 10:00 at night, and [long pause] most of your weekend, um, you start thinking about that time differently. And when things are, when other meetings and other mandatory things are, you, when you have to participate in those kinds of things after school anyway, it really zaps your energy even more to use that time in a positive way, and so, you know, I hate that I am not enthusiastic about it, but I, at this point in my teaching I'm really struggling with getting past this bitterness, or negative feeling, or exhaustion, or frustration, or whatever it is that, that I feel is really out of my control.

Planning Time

Elementary schools in this district used specialist time, a twenty five to thirty minute period during the day (library, P.E. Music, guidance, etc.) as planning time for teachers. (Some schools provided a fifty minute period for Art weekly or bi-weekly.) Because this was an extended "unencumbered" time, often it would be scheduled by administrators, specialists, or parents to confer about things other than instructional planning. Farmer, a third grade teacher at Cove Elementary talked about planning time in the following way:

Farmer: Yeah, well by the time you walk the kids to Music or P.E. and check your mail and check the message board [many schools used a white board and dry markers to indicate information that teachers needed to address during the day] and walk back to your room, you have about ten or fifteen minutes to plan before you have to leave to pick them up. And yeah, you can look through a file, or read a manual or something, but to really plan, well you can't even think creatively in that time, much less plan. And I'm talking best case situation here, I mean, most of, of the time something else comes up during that time

Ward: Could you expand on that, what kinds of things come up?

Farmer: Uh, like phone calls you have to return, or something in your box [mailbox] that has to be done right away, like a form or something that has to go back to central office, or you know a kid got in trouble and you have to talk to the guidance person or the principal or whatever, just stuff--I mean, I don't even try to plan, I do stuff that has to be done right now, like run off papers or clean up the room or something.

Distanced Policy Making and Teacher Time

Why would administrators structure "planning time" in such a fashion? Doan suggested that the distance of administrators from the classroom obscured the unreasonable temporal implications of some of their policies.

Ward: So, you've got the homework hotline, you've got this possible syllabus. Do you do parent night?

Doan: Yeah, there's an open house at the beginning of the year.

Ward: Okay, about your policy, sort of?

Doan: Yeah, um, oh gosh. There's now, there are a few things, let's see. Something else that just came up in a meeting this morning where all year long [a central office administrator] has been developing with us, have been doing the work, a writing, a very detailed writing report card assessment of the awareness of various aspects of writing abilities, capabilities. So she brought today at a meeting this morning a huge sheet, you know, with whatever that biggest paper is that we have [laughter] is. It's like a poster size sheet with very detailed columns and things where you can assess what your student is doing and, and like on one page something like 26 different possible things that you might do, and, you know, somebody says well how does this relate to a report card, because words are much more meaningful than a report card, I mean, is much more educational. She said, well, you know, if you did this and sent it out the parents could begin to see, somebody says, well, do we need headway on, you know, changing the report cards which we all feel like report on nothing that is really important, that we are really teaching the kids. And nothing really that helps the parent see how their children are doing. Is there any progress being made on that? you do this, and the parents see it, then, then maybe the parents might start putting some [unclear] putting the pressure on. But I thought, how am I going to do this for every kid in addition to the report card?

Ward: So it would be in addition to a report card.

Doan: Yeah! And I thought, you know, maybe I would do that once a year, but I'm certainly not going to do that every six weeks. I mean, that's another time thing that happens. Every six weeks you have to spend hours doing report cards, which I think is silly. I think, you know, every nine weeks would be fine.

Central Office Administrators failed to situate the interim report to parents on student progress in teacher schedules and calendars already overcrowded with responsibilities. The differences between the appearance of time within schedules and calendars and the actual

availability and usability of that time has to do with differences in teachers' and administrators' distance from the activity. Hargreaves (1994) uses Hall's (1984) work on time to discuss how in schools it is perceived differently by administrators and teachers, with distanced administrators understanding classroom activity in "monochronic time frames" and teachers experiencing teaching through "polychronic time frames".

[see figure 1. 2]

Monochronic time-frames	Polychronic time-frames
One thing at a time	Several things at once
Completion of schedules	Completion of transactions
Low sensitivity to context	High sensitivity to context
Control over completion of schedules	Control over description and evaluation of tasks
Orientation to schedules and procedures	Orientation to people and relationships
"Western" cultures	Amerindian and Latin cultures
Official sphere of business and professions	"Unofficial" sphere of informality and domestic life
Large organizations	Small organizations
Male	Female

Hargreaves (1994) p. 102 quoting Hall, E.T. (1984)

Figure 1.2: Monochronic and polychronic time-frames

> The elementary school teacher's world is profoundly polychronic in character. This is increasingly so as one moves from the higher to the lower age ranges. It is a complex, densely packed world where the sophisticated skills of the teacher must be directed to dealing with many thing at the same time. The simultaneous operation of several learning centers runs on this principle, for instance. As Philip Jackson (1968) put it, the elementary school classroom has a paramount feeling of *immediacy* about it. It is a world deeply grounded in intense, sustained and subtly shifting interpersonal relationships among large groups of children, and between the children and their teacher. . . .The culture of the classroom - a predominantly female culture - is therefore a culture with high sensitivity to unpredictabilities and particularities of context, to the tasks-in hand. (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 104).

Hargreaves uses Hawking's (1988) description of the physical properties of time suggest an analogous relationship to the separation of administrators from teachers:

Another prediction of general relativity is that time should appear to run slower nearer a massive body like the earth. This is because there is a relation between the energy of light and its frequency (that is, the number of waves of light per second): the greater the energy, the higher the frequency. As light travels upwards in the earth's gravitational field, it loses energy, and so its frequency goes down. (This means that the length of time between one wave crest and the next goes up.) To someone high up, it would appear that everything down below was taking longer to happen. (Hargreaves, p. 107, quoting Hawking, 1988).

Hargreaves (1994) cautions about "transposing propositions from the physical world to the social world" but feels this analogy gives us insight into differing perceptions of schools held by teachers and administrators. He uses Hawking's ideas to predict,

That the further one is away from the classroom, from the densely packed centre of things, as it were, then the slower that time will seem to pass there. (p. 107)

Hargreaves was examining the immediacy of instructional time, but his comments apply to the other contextual elements that create immediate demands on time as well. Collaborative relationships that are internal and external to schools (those with other school personnel, other schools, universities, local business, etc.,) curriculum and professional development, technology, site-based management, grant writing, inclusion of special needs students in regular classrooms, state standards of learning, and technology are but a few factors which intensify teachers' work in this school system and create numerous immediate demands on teachers' time.

Models of Time and Teaching

Lash and Urry (1994) examine the relationships between clock-time and capitalism and show a connection between the exploitation of workers and the incremental regulation of time:

Clock-time is central to the organization of modern societies and of the constituative social activities. Such societies are centered around the emptying out of time (and space) and the development of an abstract, divisible and universally measurable calculation of time. It is clear that the first characteristic of modern machine civilization was temporal regularity organized via the clock. . . Thompson argues that an orientation to time becomes the crucial characteristic of industrial capitalist societies (1967). People shifted from having an orientation to task to having an orientation to time. . . Marx shows that the regulation and exploitation of labour time is the central characteristic of capitalism. . . Capitalism entails the attempts by the bourgeoisie either to extend the working day or to work labour more intensively. (Lash & Urry, 1994 p. 245.)

School structures and policies reflect the influence of this industrialized conception of time: activities are scheduled to the minute throughout the day, and day by day throughout the year. The various excerpts from Doan's interview show the tension created between "real time" responses to immediate demands and linear scheduling of "clock time." Quantified time combined with "real time" exchanges to produce a compression of activities beyond the linear logic of the assembly line, and created situations when teachers were asked to do their work both linearly and instantaneously.

Some teachers talked about an incompatibility between scheduled time and the purposes of teaching and learning. Teaching methods which involve student centered learning are task oriented and often require following the class's or an individual student's path of learning rather than imposing a specific sequence of teaching.

Moss, a supervisor acting as a team teacher in a fifth grade classroom involved in a collaborative project with a local university, talked about her frustration with her university "collaborator's" orientation to clock and calendar-scheduled teaching:

Moss: I tried to explain, and, and finally then the researcher said well listen. I just have to have your daily schedule. I have to know what's going on every minute of the day. And I said, if you recall, the grant is written so that this is a constructivist classroom with an integrated day. I cannot tell you when subjects begin and subjects end. It's not like that here. And, he said, but surely there's a time when math begins. I said, well, yes and no. We may have a forecast that math will be from 10:00 to 11:00, but just as there's an old saying for mothers of newborns, never wake a sleeping baby unless the house is on fire, we believe strongly as Fifth Grade teachers, you never stop the learning when it's going well. So to artificially stop something that's going well because the clock says 10:00, it's time for math, isn't the way it operates. And he said, well then I at least have to have your syllabus for the rest of the year. And, we, again the teacher tried to explain there is not syllabus and he said well, in great frustration, well how do you know where you're going? You have to know what you're doing. And again the teacher asked me to explain and I explained that, well, every teacher in Fifth Grade had to insure that students progressed in being able to read, write and speak effectively. The vehicles that are used to do that can vary. And the teacher spoke up and said, yes, as an example, I'm teaching such and such a novel. Uh, last year my students became very interested in Native Americans perspective of private ownership of lands, and so we went off in that direction for two weeks. This year's class upon reading this novel has become very interested in the Ididerod. I don't know how long they're going to stay interested in the Ididerod, but that's where we're going now. That could change tomorrow. Um, again, I tried to

explain that in this kind of environment it was the children who directed where things went. . . So, trying to explain this, it was very difficult for this man to understand and he finally threw his hands up in disgust and said well I just don't understand how you people can do this, how you can teach this way. And again I kept coming back to um, we are facilitators, we are not directors.

Moss used the term "forecast" to talk about how she created a superstructure for instruction that left space in her planning for spontaneity. In this kind of instruction time took on a fractile quality where tasks could branch into other areas of learning, creating a looping, three dimensional rather than linear learning sequence. Zerubavel (1981) talks about how schedules which routinize social organizations and daily lives are antithetical to spontaneity. Spontaneity implies ". . . being engaged in one's activities for as long as one desires, . . . [and] doing things in the order that one prefers to do them" (Zerubavel, 1981, pp. 44 45). The institution of public schools where schedules and policy dictate the time, place and sequence of activity, including basic physical needs such as eating or using the restroom, keeps spontaneity at a minimum.

<u>Conscription of Work Time</u>

In a later part of Doan's interview she used the metaphor of nuisance phone solicitors to describe how colleagues and others in school environments dunned her to "contribute" time for their purposes. Here time was portrayed as a kind of resource that could be used up by others until Doan was "broke," or had no time left for her own use.

Doan: It's sort of analogous to all calls that you get at home saying, could you contribute $15 to blah, blah, blah cause, and then you get another call the next day. Could you contribute $15 to this cause, and you know, if you're giving money to all of those things you would be broke, and I feel like at school what happens is um, somebody who isn't a teacher, [chuckle] comes up with an idea, how about if teachers did this. And, you know, all you'd have to do is da da da da da. And that's something that would take five minutes of your time every day. Like this homework hotline, you know?

Ward: Uh huh.

Doan: Two minutes every day to go make this call. Well, it's two minutes here and two minutes there and two minutes there and five minutes here and ten minutes there, and I really feel like our time is taken up by little piddly things that various people who have [chuckle] power over us expect us to do. And, um, it just gets to be, you know, and sometimes it's other teachers . . . and one thing that comes to my mind. Um, Title One sent around a thing that this, they were having some, there was some issue about funding and it would help them, um, make the argument to the Feds

if they had this information and the information of the scores of all your students on a math test. That you would, that we would be asked to make up a math test to give to them, and then, you know, score them all and then there is a certain thing that we were supposed to fill out, percentages, and points, and, and things covered, and it, you know, it was a lot of extra time to do that and a lot of teachers took a test they had already administered,

Ward: Yeah.

Doan: And used that. Um, that's just another example, just, it's always something. There are all these little drops coming in, you know, this, that, this or something, almost every day. And things appear in your box, you know, you know, you hate to even see anything in your box, but it's, what is this going to be. And, um,

    In this model time became something that could be depleted, used to conscript teachers into the service of others, and tied to the political agendas that connected schools and teachers' work to distant powerful others. If context is a braid of fibers, these agendas were often "slubs" of power that followed strands from school site administrators, such as principals, to central offices, state legislative bodies and the federal government. Participants seldom felt these kinds of "drop by drop," "piddley" demands were an aid to classroom instruction.

Administrative Policy and Time
Professional Development and Inservice Training

    Participants consistently complained about useless inservice training and things they were required to do for professional development.

Ward: Well, what about in service training and collab--I mean, I know that there's been some work on curriculum, those kinds of things.

Doan: I feel like it is such a waste of time. Um, almost everything like that I've done, I mean, one exception might be some things like that that I took with [name] a year or two ago, about gifted instruction. But, um, like how many times have I taken Intro to the Internet, when I'm not hooked to the internet!

    Often teachers saw inservice activities as creating the impression that schools were doing things they were not (as in Doan's Intro to the Internet), or simply as misguided ideas or policies (like the new addendum to report cards) dreamed up by administrators distant from classroom reality. But some also criticized their colleagues for a "time-clock" mentality that defined teachers' work in the narrow definition of "instructional time." In the following excerpt a kindergarten teacher at Orchard Elementary talked about different categories of teacher time and the importance of inservice training and professional development. One element that contributed

to Ms. King's different perspective was her political activism in a professional teaching association and her belief that teachers needed to be involved beyond the teaching day.

King: I think that, well, there are, there are several different kinds of teacher time in my mind. There's professional development, and there's time with students and there's time for, um, other professional activities that influences the school,

Ward: Uh huh.

King: and, they're, they're all connected but they're very very different and we need all of them. It's impossible to cram all of them into a day that is entirely focused upon student time in school.

Ward: Uh huh.

King: Um, the public perceive and teachers perceive that the only time we are on the job is when there are students in the building. And that's a problem when you want to talk about staff development, uh, because staff development is a, a, it is an elusive concept to most people. Some, some of them [chuckle] who are teachers, and part of that is because, we've wasted a lot of time in staff development that wasn't necessary. It wasn't determined by the learners' needs.

Ward: Uh huh.

King: Um, I would say the bulk of teacher time is spent with students and that's what it should be. Um, as teachers tend to focus more of their efforts on that quality time with students. When they're finished with that, in their mind, their job is over. And so, anything they're asked to do beyond that, involving staff development or administrative activity, is extra. It's not even perceived by most people, teachers, to be part of their job.

Hargreaves (1994) tells us that "time structures the work of teaching and is in turn structured through it" (p.95). He examines Campbell's (1985) work on British primary schools which identified four kinds of time used to support teachers' duties and school based curriculum development.

> These were group time, for collaborative planning, conducted after school and perceived as a voluntary, moral commitment; snatched time of rushed consultation with other teachers during the school day; personal time out of school for individual reading , planning, and attendance of courses; and other contact time (or preparation time) where teachers are scheduled away from their class.
> (Hargreaves, 1994 p. 95)

As I analyzed interviews it seemed that these kinds of "support times" were apt categories to describe how many teachers perceived the way time was allotted in schools. What was missing was unencumbered time that teachers could choose how to use. A number of teachers complained they needed time under their personal control during the work day to actually plan, or sit and think.

Colonization of Personal Time

Macay, a fourth grade teacher at Orchard Elementary, Pappas at Perry Elementary, and several others, including most of the kindergarten teachers, indicated that they often planned with teammates while they were eating lunch in a classroom, but that most instructional planning was done by staying at school late, coming in early in the morning and by working at home.

When the immediacy of teaching pushes planning into personal time, schools "colonize" (Hargreaves, 1990) teachers' lives in and out of school. Teachers experience a kind of "Cinderella syndrome": after they have completed all of the required tasks of teaching then they can have a life of their own. But all of the tasks cannot be completed. Hargreaves discusses this colonization in relation to the intensification of work taking place in post-modern organizations. In the intensification of teachers' work additional responsibilities are squeezed into already complex teaching roles requiring more duties within a set number of work hours. What cannot be compressed into those hours overflows into personal time. Many teachers talked about how teaching consumed their time, thoughts, and even dreams.   Intensification may also affect the perception of the rate at which time passes. As more and more is compressed into the same number of hours the density of events may cause time to pass at a faster speed. Seay, a fourth grade teacher described the speed of events in schools as a:

Seay: . . . long distance marathon with many climbs and an occasional flat time, maybe a "water stop" at winter break, you know, but you're always behind, trying to catch up, comparing your performance, and pouring it on at the end. At the end of the year it just gets faster and faster, and you don't stop til you get there, to summer that is. And then it takes at least three weeks to re-caliberate into some kind of a normal existence. I run around, cleaning house, doing all this stuff cause I've been on high speed for ten months. So by the time I really let down and I can just play, or read a book, it's time to start up again, You start thinking about what you will do this year, start shopping for materials, and then as soon as the custodian will let you, you're fixing up your room and looking over your files and student records, cause when you walk in that door on the first teacher work day, its all over, you're back in the race again and there's not time til next summer.

Boundaries Between Professional & Personal, Public & Private Time

Individuals participate in various groups, some of which are discrete and some of which overlap (Zerubavel, 1981). For example, in this study a participant might socialize at church, travel to swing dance events, or participate actively with a young Republican group, assuming in each activity a specialized role quite unlike the others. However, those roles, even in combination, would not be representative of the total person. The space remaining between these roles is privacy. Zerubavel (1981) continues, saying,

> The competing claims on individuals by the various social circles with which they
> are affiliated and the often-conflicting demands entailed by the variety of social
> roles they play make the institutionalization of periodic withdrawal from
> publicity into privacy absolutely essential to modern social life. In other words
> the partiality of each of the individual's various involvements in social life
> necessarily entails some degree of inaccessibility. (Zerubavel, 1981, p. 140)

When the intensification of work during school hours pushes work into personal time we see a softening of boundaries not only between professional and personal but often public and private time as well. These are not absolute categories, there are degrees of privacy and publicity, and there are islands of personal time during professional work hours and vice versa. However, the abundance of participants' complaints about time concerned the invasion of professional obligations into the personal arena of their lives and the encroachment of the public persona of "schoolteacher" into time they considered private.

Hargreaves (1991) discusses the need for "down time" and "back regions" (Goffman, 1959, p. 126), times and places for teachers to step out of their public persona. In this district the influx of others (collaborators involved in various projects, or parent volunteers for example) had shrunken the times and places where teachers could step out of public display.

As I show in chapter three, teachers talked about how parents often called at home or stopped them in public places to discuss their child or inquire about events at school. This permeability of professional and personal time and public and private time raises questions of whether teachers can claim any territory as their own, whether they have access to a:

> preserve bounded by some temporally defined by 'involvement shields'
> (Goffman, 1963) which, though certainly not as visibly conspicuous as spatial
> boundaries, are nevertheless socially regarded as no less binding. . . The
> individual's right to be inaccessible at certain times is also evident from the way
> society punishes offenders by taking control over their social accessibility out of
> their hands. A typical case in point is the prison, a social milieu wherein people
> have almost no time during which they may be legitimately inaccessible
> (Schwartz, 1972) . . . Inmates, soldiers, and hospital patients, for example are

always socially accessible, and have no time whatsoever within which they can screen out nonintimates. (Zerubavel, 1981, pp. 142-143)

The colonization of teachers' time puts them in the position of subordinates who must be accessible and have a professional duty to respond to demands for attention.

CHAPTER 3
PERSONAL LIVES

A Personal Reflection

I was born shortly after World War II into a military family. I spent my early years in the canal zone of Panama and my first words were a mix of Spanish and English. My family returned to the United States when I was three and shortly afterwards my father was seriously injured in a parachuting practice exercise at Ft. Benning, Georgia. Within two years my mother died of cancer and my father's injuries were worsened in an automobile accident which left him paralyzed. My older brother and I went to live with an aunt and uncle in Fairfax, Virginia. Because my uncle was posted at the Pentagon his proximity to Walter Reed Hospital meant that we could visit our dad on a regular basis. My father's hospital stay lasted a year during the time soldiers injured in the Korean War were being sent to Walter Reed for rehabilitation. Many of these took an interest in my brother and me and soon we were like "adopted" younger siblings. Saturday hospital visits meant being treated like a little princess, riding around the long corridors on laps of wheel chair patients or as mascots for chair races and basketball games. Bob and I came to know doctors and nurses almost like family, and we had adventures and secret places all over the hospital grounds.

My dad was released after my first grade year and Bob and I lived with him until he had to return to a military hospital when I was about to enter third grade. At this time we moved to live with a great aunt in Memphis, since this was close to Millington Naval Station Hospital. And so it went, I moved every year living with my dad and different family members who were near military hospitals, sometimes with my brother, sometimes not, depending on circumstances. Some of my extended family had cooks and servants, some lived close to the poverty level. I attended a different school each year until eighth grade after which I remained in the same area through high school. I was fortunate to have relationships with extended family and a range of experiences often not available to children in stable nuclear families.

However, changing schools presented many problems. I was not a good student, quiet and shy, often day-dreaming rather than working. My brother didn't achieve in school either, and was continually in trouble for fighting in and out of school. Constant moving made both of us keenly aware of the random quality of life and the inconsistent logic of societal rules. It was more important to figure out the rules of new environments than to remember facts or information so that studying or planning made little sense. Yet, along the way there were a couple of teachers who looked beyond the surface, to figured out what I could do and found something of worth to reflect back to me. I remember those with a clarity that time has only deepened.

Connection to Teaching

These childhood experiences sparked some of my activism with the peace movement and civil rights during the 1960s and have continued to shape my values and actions as a teacher. I will always have a special attachment to the kids who move a lot, are shy, or catagorized as "different," and this propinquity has influenced my career. It didn't take long to become identified as a teacher who was good with "those kind" of kids.

And, my history of moving every year created a desire to change my environment on a regular basis. Though most of my teaching has been in one school district, changes of grade levels and schools throughout the county mirror my "gypsy" childhood.

This career path allowed me to see how differently school environments function in this district, insight that probably would have remained obscure had I taught in just one school or one grade level. It also created a network of individuals that I could talk to about how things happen in schools. These varied experiences and contacts, my longevity as a teacher, and my travel between university and public schools, all create funds of knowledge that have helped me to negotiate the act of teaching.

Experiences as a single parent of two sons in upper elementary and middle school also had an impact on my teaching role, for example dating as a third grade teacher in a small town was a more public experience than I enjoyed. Then remarriage and step-parenting changed my personal life and my school teaching with new constraints on time.

Family history and values, and childhood school experiences are part of the narrative we bring into the act of teaching. Financial circumstances, family crisis and loss, and the networks of support and information within what we call "community with others" all of the many things that shape our current lives also shape our teaching. Personal life is always part of teachers' context whether or not it is visible.

In this chapter I explore how participants talk about values, career, personal knowledge, networks, time, political activism, family, and other personal factors affecting teachers' work. I examine the way knowledge, events, histories from what I will call "personal" lives, affect how teachers experience teaching, and conversely how the "role" affects the "person". Recalling the discussion in the chapter on time, the distinction between "person" and "role," in this case "teacher," is simply a way to talk about how teachers experience and interact with teaching environments.

Many of the teachers in this study talked about how childhood experiences and family values influenced their decision to teach. Some talked about their success as students in elementary school, about inspirational teachers, or family members affiliated with public schools. A few older teachers talked about the lack of professional choices for women and societal pressures that pushed them to choose between what were seen as "gender appropriate occupations": nursing, teaching, and homemaking. Some saw it as a compromise between the role of parenting and the pursuit of a career. Weekends, holidays, and summers off made it possible for them to work and still spend time with children. Others found it by happenstance after pursuing other occupations. Most said that teaching was congruent with what they valued. Those values varied, however, and as a result the teaching methods they used and their understanding of their role as a "teacher" fell along a wide continuum, from "being tough as nails, so they (students) can learn to respect themselves" (Parker) to "nurturing the uniqueness of each child," (Rey).

Career, A Personal Path

<u>**Moving Between University and Public Schools**</u>

Several participants had careers in which they moved between the university and the school district. Although it allowed teachers to gain insight into how schools function, this movement was often disorienting. Major, for example, explained that she:

Major: I left the classroom because I [had] this desire and need to finish my degree at [local university], and I had to accomplish that. It was like a, it's like been a drive of mine forever, because of the way I grew up to sort of achieve in life, and I left the classroom because of a research project [a professor] and I did together and she, she came into my classroom and asked me if I would like to come back and work on a Ph.D. at [university] and said I really don't want to. I'm happy here where I'm at, and she sort of insisted and so eventually I applied to [local research university] and was accepted and after I got to [university] I found it was just really rewarding, all the challenge, all the people, all the educated, bright individuals who are there. . .

Ward: Uh huh.

Major: . . . and then I took that year off and came back into the classroom and I was disillusioned with the classroom, with the teaching and with everything, but I had kids to raise and a house payment to make and car payments to make, and so I just felt like that I had to continue working and so I came back as a Fifth Grade teacher then, and it was a very hard year, because I had a full inclusion child in my classroom. And I have been unhappy. I've worked at my first job for eleven years as a teacher and during that period of time I grew and developed and so, my philosophy sort of grew out of that eleven years teaching experience. And one of the things that I discovered in talking to student teachers is we always want student teachers and people that are going into education to give their philosophies of education, and I don't know that they can do that. I think they might start out with an idea about what teaching is or, and, it's based on, you know, their family or what they did in school. But your philosophy doesn't really start developing until you have experience, until you grow, until you, you know, in, both in school and out.

Ms. Major talked about values and philosophy as evolutionary aspects of teaching. It was through personal knowledge synthesized from family values, and from public school and academic career experiences, that she came to know how to think about what should happen in classrooms. She believed that without the cross-fertilization of school teaching and academic flows of knowledge, novice educators could only parrot ideas from coursework, or views of

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"school" derived from childhood memories, or from family members who had been educators. It was through juxtaposing personal knowledge against practical classroom application that teachers learned how to "be" teachers.

At the same time, however, these personal conceptions of teaching were often in tension with the administrative structures of schools.

Major: I had children and moved two times and my mother gave up the farm that I'd grown up on for all those years and so on and so forth, and so, from all those experiences my philosophy developed over a period of time. And, when I came back into the classroom this year I had these preconceived notions of what I wanted to take place in my classroom. What I envisioned happening, because I had started out with, I had, you know I'd done a research project on literature, and I had sort of dabbled in writing and, and, uh, as a [supervisor] I encouraged my faculty and all the people that I worked with to continue those same kinds of things. But when I came back into the classroom [from a stint in administration and graduate school], what I found was is that my classroom time and my ideas were sort of shunted aside over a lot of other people who entered my classroom.

Returning to the classroom Major felt the sting of losing control over classroom space and time.

Major: I don't have a full inclusion classroom this year, which was a good thing, but I do have Chapter One kids in my classroom and we set up a writers workshop and I was told from the beginning that, . . . That an individual would be coming into my classroom to help with a writers' workshop, that we'd be doing that every morning because I had a certain percentage of Chapter One kids in my classroom and they needed the help.
Ward: Uh huh.
Major: And that we'd be doing it through a writers' workshop concept, which sort of surprised me but which also, you know, uh, because what happened was the whole, the whole writers workshop that I've learned a lot from, but I never anticipated that this extra person would be working my classroom. I thought that I would just be teaching regular kids like everybody else.
Ward: Well especially coming back into a classroom setting and wanting to get your feet on the ground.
Major: See, I've been a [supervisor/administrator] and I've been a teacher for eleven years and I had, I mean I had all this knowledge of, of things that I wanted to take place, how I wanted my classroom to be set up and the

things I would teach and, and even had started rethinking many of the same, the old things that I used to do. You know, thinking that I would look even change some more. So that was one of the things I didn't have any control over. And I, you know, I've learned a lot from the experience, but it, it was an intrusion from the outside because what I had to do dealt not only, but the interesting thing was, not only did I have to deal with, with one person coming in, but there were two Chapter One people that ended up coming into my classroom to help with writers workshop in the morning. People that I have no control over, [laughter.]

Major's personal context of family values, the contextual elements of administrative policy which increased collaborative projects between public schools and local universities, and her professional context of career braided together shape her practice. If any of these strands had not been in place, Major's actions might have been different.

Michel de Certeau (1984) describes the actor's "tactics" for weaving contextual elements together by using the metaphor of a tightrope dancer:

Dancing on a tightrope requires that one maintain an equilibrium from one moment to the next by recreating it at every step by means of new adjustments; it requires one to maintain a balance that is never permanently acquired; constant readjustment renews the balance while giving the impression of "keeping" it. The art of operating is thus admirably defined, all the more so because in fact the practitioner himself is part of the equilibrium that he modifies without compromising it. In this ability to create a new set on the basis of a preexisting harmony and to maintain a formal relationship in spite of the variation of the elements, it very closely resembles artistic production. It could be considered the ceaseless creativity of a kind of taste in practical experience. (de Certeau, 1984, p. 73)

Part of what Major was balancing were the flows of knowledge, information, and power networks deriving from her university and central office connections. These permitted her to reflect on how schools worked in ways that remain opaque to teachers whose experiences were limited to the classroom. Viewing schools from a more powerful supervisory perspective and situating that knowledge within the larger system afforded Major a critical understanding of administrative policy and the micropolitical workings of the district in relation to teachers' roles.

Her graduate work had provided Major with a theoretical and philosophical framework which appeared to strengthen her feelings of self worth and helped her resist practices that seemed inappropriate to her. The same educational experiences may have also increased her frustration when others in her teaching environment usurped her control of classroom activities. Ironically the "funds of knowledge" (Moll, 1990) which can be empowering, become instead

reminders of the loss of power experienced by stepping back into the complexities of classroom teaching. The combined effect of new knowledge and stepping from a superordinate role into a subordinate one put her in a position of "wanting to try new things" but without the power to resist classroom interlopers. Although public discourse about schools positions teachers as the locus of control and responsibility in teaching, many participants described what occurred in their classrooms as "being out of their hands."

Like Major, Ms. Samual had also spent time on academic leave doing graduate work. She talked about how this had affected her return to teaching.

Samual: Well, I had this time, my academic leave, at [name] university and when I went back to teaching, and well, I was just exhausted. You forget what it's like, you know. I forget just over a summer, and this was longer. And I was lucky because my principal is pretty hands off, I mean he lets us try out ideas and all, so that was pretty good.
Ward: How was that good?
Samual: Well, I could try out ideas that I thought might work and he was supportive of that. Some things worked and some didn't. I found I was less patient with tomfoolery. Like people who waste time and well, student teachers. Sometimes I think student teachers come to teach lacking important understanding about what being a teacher really means. You know, they come to us with all these touchy feely ideas but they don't understand about holding students accountable for learning, for doing their work, and they don't see the responsibilities for working with parents, making the calls, sending home the work and making sure it gets there. They think it is all just loving the kids and doing fun things and that doesn't work without accountability. And that is easy to forget when you are away from the reality of teaching and just talking about the ideal, about theory as such. Um, but I was talking about coming, returning to teaching, Well, I was still working on my research and my writing and, that was hard. I mean when you are a school teacher there is just no time for much else. But I am a good organizer and I structured my writing at certain times during the week or weekend and just stuck at it til summer when I finished it. But there was another thing about coming back. Um, well, you know, You probably felt some of this yourself, you just can't talk a lot about your research. If you want to be just one of the girls, you don't talk about the ideas that you are exploring, or make suggestions or even talk about what you are doing in your class too much. You have to be really low key about your research cause other teachers might take it the wrong way, and I missed that. I missed being able to talk with other graduate students

about ideas or my writing. It made it really hard, when I was writing and all.

Ms. Samuel, in contrast to Major, felt empowered to try new ideas by the principal's "hands off" policy. At the same time, she felt her university experience positioned her as "other" in the social circles of colleagues. At her university she entered a world of ideas and those worlds were explored with fellow graduate students. Now she was trying to write her research limited by time demands and lacking access to a social network that could interrogate her thinking.

Moving from a distanced, academic perspective into the action of classroom practice, Samual stepped into a socially and intellectually ambiguous territory. De Certeau (1984) uses the metaphor of a train moving though a countryside to illustrate differences in location and perception of the "world." His idea of the train is "traveling incarceration" where one is in the "state of reason" observing the outside world seemingly passing by.

The windowpane is what allows us to <u>see</u> and the rail, what allows us to <u>move through.</u> . . .The windowglass and the iron (rail) line divide, on the one hand, the traveller's interiority and on the other, the power of being, constituted as an object without discourse. . . Glass and iron produce speculative thinkers or gnostics. This cutting-off is necessary for the birth, outside of these things but not without them, of unknown landscapes and the strange fables of our private stories. (de Certeau, 1984, pp. 111-112)

As one departs from the train:

There is another threshold, composed of momentary bewilderments in the airlock constituted by the train station. (de Certeau, 1984 p. 114)

Samual's university time was similarly a reflective "excursion" with time protected to think about public school practice. When teachers move between the train-like location of theory (academe) and the "countryside" of practice (public schools), they often expressed experiencing the jar of the "air-lock," a disorienting sense of "dis-location."

Career and Marital Status

Unlike career and educational trajectories which contextualize teaching by setting it off against experiences that take place before one begins teaching, or during a leave from teaching, many personal contextual elements are part of teachers' experience while they are in the classroom.

Single Mothers

Seay, a fourth grade teacher at Perry Elementary, explained how her marital status interacted with her teaching.

Seay: And, sometimes, well it's hard having to take care of everything as a single
            parent. I mean, I get some support from their dad but it, it isn't always on
            time or, as much as, as it's supposed to be. I mean, I have to work. I don't
            have a choice. I have bills to pay and kids to support. So if they say 'Do
            it, I do it' , 'cause I'm in a good situation. I like my school and my
            principal. I like teaching near where I live and I don't want that to change.
            But sometimes it gets to be too much. It's way beyond school time.
Ward: You don't feel like you can refuse?
Seay: No, not really. I mean, I could but it's kind of expected, everyone comes in
            early and stays late, everyone is involved in committees and um meetings
            and grants and so I try to do my fair share, even more. I know, I heard
            about someone who got moved to another school because some of the
            teachers complained and, and the principal was big on team work and,
Ward: Really?
Seay: so she got traded, Yeah!, for a teacher who wanted to transfer. People ask
            me to do a lot 'cause they know I'll say yes, Just being a teacher takes a
            lot. You know, without all the other things. It takes time I want to spend
            with my kids, on weekends, you know. At night we all do our homework
            together, and that works O.K. I do my grading and planning. But after
            school there are so many meetings and stuff, and other teachers, team
            mates, want to plan after school or come in on Saturday, and they don't
            have my situation, and so I worry that I have to make up in other ways so
            people won't think I'm not doing my part. My principal is very
            supportive, but I can't afford to test that support, and so I try to do it all.

With no spouse or partner to lend financial support, single teachers would be less likely
to openly resist additional demands on their roles as teachers. The image of schools as democratic
institutions has been questioned in a variety of ways by researchers (Kozol, 1991; Apple ,1979;
Shore, 1992; Giroux, 1988). Single female teachers may be particularly susceptible to exploitation
by administrators.

For example, I participated in a panel discussion hosted by a professional association for
education students at a nearby university along with principals and supervisors from the local
school district to discuss the interview process for employment as a teacher. One principal's
comments were something to the effect that if you wanted to get through the tenure (his term for
continuing contract) process you had to come in "at six o'clock and stay until six o'clock." He
went on to say, school hours are not work hours, you do work on your own time and you don't
complain, "that is what it takes to do the job." He said he "looked for a cheerful face and a
positive attitude" and that teaching is a "hard job don't expect it to be easy." Later he said, "I
don't care about your grades, or how smart you are, or what you learned in college, I can teach
you all you need to know. What I want is someone who will listen, and learn, do the work, and

get along with others" (fieldnotes Mar. 7, 1996.) Although they are not necessarily typical of administrative attitudes in the district, in an elementary school with a predominantly female faculty this male principal's comments articulated a rhetoric of domination and control.

For Seay, single parent status and fragile financial circumstances were only part of the mix that put her in a place where, "they say do it, and I do it." Her work history, which was teaching less than ten years in one school, limited her knowledge of ways to resist the system. She was caught between the demands of her role and the needs of her family, and responded with acquiescence, self-blame, and guilt.

Doan, who was also a single parent with less than ten years teaching in the same school responded quite differently. The difference seemed partly due to Doan's broader range of professional and semi professional non-teaching experiences. Doan's reaction was similar to Major in that she identified inequities within the system and used her knowledge to circumvent the problems she encountered. Even so, she seemed aware that her marital status and responsibilities made her more vulnerable than other teachers. She didn't have "the options to pick up and move." In comparison to Seay, Major and Doan shared a more refined understanding of the "tactics" (de Certeau, 1984) of work.

Euphemism as part of a public conversation about schools.

Although Doan was candid in her criticism of public schools, she used a euphemism that obscured some of the micropolitics of domination. In talking about strategies to diminish her work load of extra-instructional activities, she discussed how she chose what she would sign up for: "I mean, we have to volunteer for some things." Having to "volunteer" is a contradiction of terms. Activities are not voluntary if you must choose one from a list. Euphemisms "beautify aspects of power that cannot be denied. . . . In particular they are used to obscure the use of coercion." (Scott, 1990, pp. 52-53). A simulation of volunteerism can give the appearance of allowing teachers to make professional choices. Teachers "volunteered" for committees, activities at school fairs, technology training, a particular month to decorate bulletin boards in school hallways, etc.

Married Teachers Without Dependants

Older married or widowed teachers whose children had left home, and married, or single teachers without dependents, had more time, and sometimes motivation and resources to devote their lives to teaching. Regis, for example, had both time and family support.

Regis: I happen to be at a point in my life where I think a lot of teachers are, considering that nationwide the average age teachers is something like 40, 43 years old, and where your children are getting older and they're, and I'm at that point in time, when my children have, are young adults.

Ward: Uh huh.

Regis: So I do have the luxury of time. I also have a husband who, who, who is very good at what he does and spends a lot of time at it, but is also extremely supportive of what I'm doing.

Ward:	Yeah.
Regis:	And very supportive. I mean, I didn't, I can't tell you how critical that is. So, it, it has worked very well for us and our family situation because that's one thing the priorities were the children when they were younger.
Ward:	Uh huh.
Regis:	Now that the children are gone, now the priority is us, the two of us, and also, you know, doing, doing what makes us happy.

Coping Mechanisms

Using Collegial Information Networks

Groups of single teachers spent time together outside of school, going to movies, dining out, meeting for coffee or recreation. These groups formed across the district and sometimes included middle and high school teachers as well as elementary teachers. One group included young single teachers in their twenties, another single and divorced teachers in their thirties, and a third group included divorced and widowed teachers in their forties and fifties.

Teachers obtained information through these personal networks concerning students and parents, about changes in policies, legal actions, and picked up the gossip and rumors about various colleagues and administrators. These networks could provide support--for example beginning teachers often solicited ideas for lesson plans or strategies for classroom management--but they could also inhibit teachers. Seay, for example, was intimidated by rumors about a teacher who had been moved against her wishes and, as a result, acquiesced to administrative demands in fear of similar treatment.

Principals tended to socialize among themselves. Some principals took family vacations together. Several principals were married to other school employees, one to a cafeteria manager, several to secretaries or teachers. They also socialized at times with central office personnel.

Within schools, groups organized around issues of class (e.g. affiliation with university as opposed to local ties), age, grade level, teaching philosophy, neighborhood and church affiliation, and community activities. These networks were trunklines for school gossip about what was happening in various settings. Access to such information helped members expand the repertoire of "make shifts" or "tactics" (de Certeau, 1984) they used to be successful teachers.

Politics and Activism

King, a kindergarten teacher at Orchard Elementary, described the stress created by conflicts between her professional and family values. Her political activism was based on a belief that teachers' and students' welfare must be protected through the political process and that teachers are morally obliged to engage in that process. Her activity through a teachers' professional organization took place during personal time and placed her caring as a professional in conflict with the caring she felt for her family.

King:	Teachers are by nature concerned about young children and families and time spent with children is valuable. Not only in their professional lives

but in their personal lives. And I, I would say the majority of teachers who are currently in the classroom have families of their own, whether they have children or not, it's still family, and they know how important it is to spend time with that family. And so, there's this double edged sword of guilt. And I feel it, I think, very strongly. Um, if I'm at, at school working, or if I'm at this meeting or if I'm this rally or if I'm at, in Richmond lobbying, who's with my son at home? Well, his dad is, and that's wonderful, but it's not the same as two parents. It's not the same as, you know, a whole family together, just being together and planning things and doing them together. So, teachers want to practice what they preach. And it's hard to do it all. It's hard to, to get involved, to help with decision making and then to be a part of a family outside of the school setting. Um, and it, you can't reconcile that. You can never reconcile that. I used to believe that you could, but you can't. I'm sitting here talking to you today, my son is at home watching cartoons. I, you know, and I'm pulled, all of the time.

Intensification of work and King's involvement with the political process in schools were two elements of King's contextual weave, but she also seemed to measure her worth as a "good" parent against the idealized family model of "two parents at home." As Coontz (1992) pointed out, such views of traditional family values are based upon media representations, such as "Leave It To Beaver," "Father Knows Best," and "Ozzie and Harriet." These images have been unified into a mythology of the "traditional family".

Like King, many teachers reported conflicts between this mythology and the multiple roles teachers were asked to assume. Contextual elements of personal values and societal myths, politics, caring, guilt, time and family all braided together to create uniquely difficult choices.

King: I don't have a personal family life [laughter]. I don't! I a, I'm very, I'm suffering from that now. My child is going to start going to a counselor next week and I think one of the biggest issues he has is time spent with his mother. Um, and, while I'm willing to work on that, I'm not willing to give up what I do because I feel like what I do is so important for him in the long run. It's important for public education, it's important for me as a professional. If, if things are ever going to change, I have to be involved. Because I look around me and I don't see very many people who are willing to do what I'm doing. It's like, Sisyphus and the rock, you know. I'm rolling it up the hill, looking around to see if anybody else is going to pick it up, and nobody is. You know, as long as you're doing it, nobody's going to do it.

The Intersecting of the "Person" and the "Role"

The fabric of school culture is tightly woven. Values, trauma, personalities, and the status of individual teachers affect others in their schools and communities. Teachers and administrators sometimes talk as though personal factors can be put aside when individuals enter a school environment. Yet because of the interdependence of personnel in public schools, personal factors in teachers' lives can have a magnified effect on others in these settings. For example, if a teacher or administrator experiences a serious accident, illness, or family discord, these events can ripple outward to complicate the circumstances of students, colleagues, and other staff members. Not only is there concern within the school community for the teacher in distress, but there is anxiety or fear on the part of students about what has happened and how it will effect them and disrupt their education. Although personnel can be replaced temporarily, long term, or permanently, such changes have a multidimensional affect. Bringing a replacement into the interwoven environment affects administrators and staff with whom the individual experiencing personal difficulties was engaged. As a part of a grade-level team, collaborations with resource personnel or committee members, and others the teacher's relationship must be recalibrated.

Trauma/Illness

When I substituted for, or listened to conversations about teachers who took extended periods of leave for personal reasons, I heard again and again how school environments were profoundly affected by the trauma of colleagues in their working community.

Farmer: Yeah, well, its been hard, really hard with, um all that's happened the past few years, um Mary lost her mother and then her dad's illness and death, and her husband's heart attack and surgery. And then so, so many of us have lost people to cancer. Natalie's mother, and little Jaime [a student] that was so hard for the whole school, and Mr. Burger's [principal] wife's long illness and death. There's been a lot of death in our families. I lost my grandmother, and that was hard but, you know she was elderly and it was kind of expected, I don't know how I'd handle what some people have been through. We pull together and it works out but, last year when Mrs. Burger was so ill it was like a sadness just hung over the school, and then Ronnie Dowdy [a high school student] died, a lot of us taught him, I know his family, its, its been hard. And, you know, some people have turned on each other, they talk behind backs, I mean things aren't going very good, and you feel guilty complaining but you can just, just you know, pick up so much, and we all have things in our lives. It's just bad all around when these things happen,

A teacher's own illness can also unravel school contexts:

Allen: Well, we all come to school sick. [Laughter] I mean it takes so much time to write lesson plans that, you, you just don't, its easier to just come to school unless you're dying. But it affects how you act at school, I mean I try not to let it, but it does. When I have P.M.S. Can I talk about this?

Ward: Sure, if its a problem.

Allen: When I have, uh, P.M.S. I get these terrible headaches, and well you know, my evil twin comes out. My husband and kids don't want to be around me and um, at school I have to be really careful. I don't want to say anything I shouldn't. But when you feel bad you snap at people. Sometimes I say to the kids "Mrs. Allen feels really bad today. I feel grouchy, I'll try to be your nice teacher but if I'm not it's cause I feel bad, my head hurts and I have a tummy ache, I hope you'll help me today." Sometimes they are really good, and that helps. But I worry, after what happened to Moira Webb when she lost her job and all because of what she said, I could do that. I mean it could just happen. Last year I had a series of bladder infections, teachers could probably file workman's comp for those - its a job hazard cause you can't pee during the day, and it was the same only worse. I felt terrible, but I came to work anyway. When you're sick like that you have to hold it in, keep yourself under control til you get home. I guess I should stay home, but you worry about the kids, and its all that trouble for lesson plans and uh, they really don't want teachers to take sick leave, that's why you can earn extra personal leave days if you don't miss school, and uh, right now its really hard to get substitutes so most people I know just come to work sick.

My first day of academic leave I was almost hit by a car as I crossed the street in a crosswalk on campus. I pulled back just as the driver slammed on breaks and screeched to a halt in front of me. We were eye to eye, his window was open and he looked angry. My school teacher persona kicked in and I responded immediately in a quiet voice, "Dear, we are supposed to stop for people in the crosswalk." He dropped his head and responded in a sheepish voice, "I, know. I know," and drove off. Suddenly I was angry, not with him, but with myself. He had almost injured me and I had repressed a justified outrage. It hit me how much we repress as schoolteachers because we are always in the public eye and feel the threat of judgement (moral or legal), and because we feel the call to be completely in control less we do harm to our students. Containment and repression can become automatic responses.

Family

Participants talked about their children who were identified as having special needs (on medication, severe allergies, in counseling), legal problems (divorce, financial, criminal courts), substance abuse problems and family heath problems. These stressors made teachers

professionally vulnerable in a variety of ways. Mrs. Pappas, a first grade teacher at Perry Elementary, was the mother of a young infant.

Ward: Why don't you tell me a little bit about what your day is like? Just a typical day.

Pappas: This year,

Ward: Will she let me hold her?

Pappas: This year is not typical because of Meg, [pseudonym] because of the baby. Um,

Ward: Can you talk about that?

Pappas: That, that, that [baby is crying] has had, that has had a big impact, you know, in this year and all, because it, it's um, [long pause] Always before, I think I had reached some sort of a balance between school and home. Um, of course, I'm sure that Ricky [a pseudonym for her son] and, and Matt [pseudonym for her husband] helped, if it was weighted any way at all school would tend to overwhelm home, but, as, as Rick got older and of course Matt has always been so helpful in, in doing things, and all with, with Rick, that, that he's helped pick up any slack. But, there's only so much I can pick up with a little one, a brand new one. But, this, this, this is having a, a much bigger impact than I had anticipated. Um,

Ward: And you would like to have stayed home?

Pappas: Oh yeah! Yeah. That would've been nice, that would've been nice. Um, I, there was just no way to do it. I mean I got to stay with Ricky, but there was no way to stay home with little Meg, not without selling this house, . . . But um, going back to the original thing, a typical school day. This year finds me getting in just moments before, you know, I, I have to be, or before the bell rings or, or things like that. And, I'm out of there as quickly as I can get out in the afternoon. Um, [long pause] all of the necessar-- necessary things, learning, and the flow of the classroom, all of the necessary things are being accomplished

Ward: Uh huh.

Pappas: However, it, it's hard only because I'm not doing the things that I'd always typically done. I mean, you know, other years, again because Rick is older and, I mean I didn't even start back til Matt, he was in school then and he would pick him up and, and baby-sit him after school if I needed to stay late or whatever. But I was always a, the last few years I was always getting in the school early and, and there was no problem staying late.

Ward: Uh huh.

Pappas: So, that has had its toll this year. Um, there's never any time during the day when I can just sit down at my desk and clean my desk or re-file my

files. I mean, I've got a stack that's a good, well actually it's now two stacks because it got so high that it was falling, so now it's two stacks, um, [baby crying]

Pappas: So, the extra things. The things that I love doing with my school is not, you know, it's not getting accomplished this year, unfortunately. The necessary stuff is there, but not the little extra things like, there's not as much communication between in the journals, their, their journals, as I typically have always done. Um, I'm not able to make as much contact with parents at night, 'cause, I'm going to spend my time with the baby.

Just as King expressed guilt over the way her professional role shaped her personal time, so Pappas felt guilty that her personal life affected her teaching. She knew that in the "olden days" teachers were not permitted to marry because someone knew what an all consuming job it was. But even older teachers without children at home are not outside the family sphere.

Rey: Well, with my mother's illness, she had a stroke two years ago and she can't really take care of herself, and she has, uh, congestive heart failure, I've used up a lot of my sick leave days. I have a neighbor who I pay to check in on her during the day, and sometimes I get calls to come home because her condition has worsened. I've had to put her in the hospital twice now. So, some people say I should put her in a nursing home, but I just can't do that. It means that I spend all my time at home with her when I'm not working. I've been divorced for fifteen years now. I finished raising my children by myself. Now I take care of my mother by myself. I have to work to have health insurance for me and my mother, and , and I have to look ahead to how I will take care of myself when I retire. I do the best I can, but I can't do all the extra things that other teachers do. I did all that when I was younger, but I just can't right now. I guess some parents and even teachers think I'm not as good as some of the others, but there is so much to keep up with and so much that we're expected to do outside of teaching. I just can't do it all. I do the best I can.

Both Pappas and Rey expressed regret over the conflict they felt between professional duties and family needs. Both Pappas and Rey seemed to feel the level of performance they could achieve as teachers fell short of what they would like to do, and both expressed concern over using up sick leave.

Doan described how the personal lives of other teachers and principals affected the time teachers could devote to their work and how that affected administrators' expectations for teachers in different circumstances.

Doan: I think that there are a lot of teachers whose lives are teaching. It's, it's their job and it's their hobby and it's their everything, really. There are a lot of teachers that don't have a family, and, and they just spend their life doing their job, which is, you know, that's their choice, but, and, well, our principal is single, well divorced, living on her own and this job is her life too, I think people like that just, just don't understand.

Ward: Yeah.

Doan: It sort of makes things difficult on others of us who, you know, do want to do a good job, but don't want to invest our life in it.

Administrative Policy

Personal Resources

The ability to buy classroom materials stratifies teachers into haves and have nots. Teachers with more longevity in the system, whose spouses are employed in well paying positions, and who have no children at home, have more discretionary income. Over time many acquire things to make their classrooms attractive, exciting places for students. This places beginning teachers and teachers without the same kinds of economic privilege at a severe disadvantage.

Doan   It was a horrendous amount of time the first year I was a teacher, because I came into a classroom where there were virtually no materials to teach with. Because there's this whole, you know, holistic thing where we're not going to teach with workbooks or textbooks anymore, and I was a brand new teacher and I had no materials. In fact, I was teaching First Grade and I'm supposed kids to teach these kids to read, and there were no books! Um, you know, now it's a little better because I've accumulated things that year too. Luckily, I mean luckily I'm in a school where teachers do share things fairly freely, and where we are allowed to spend fairly freely also, I think more than other schools. . . You know, almost all teachers I know do that, Buy things with their own money, and I just feel like it just perpetuates the system, teachers doing that just perpetuates the system and we ought not be doing that. It's an unfair expectation. But I still, you know, I spend a lot of time, you know, like at the end of last year we ordered materials and then I, if I'm getting ready to teach a unit that involves those materials I'll carry them all home, I'll comb through them all, plus this set of this and that out of that and change this and adapt that and, you know, put things together. I do spend a lot of time using what resources I have.

Some teachers believe that parents base judgements about the quality of their child's learning on the appearance of the classroom. A room full of picture books, bright posters, art prints, educational games, bean bags, and colorful learning materials looks more exciting than one without. In this sense, money enhances the ease with which one can teach. If you have no money to buy materials you must use your time to scavenge materials, write grants for them, or simply do without.

This examination of the braid that entwines personal elements of context with other contextual elements shows a significant impact on teachers' work. Teaching is unlike many other vocations in that it is founded upon an intimacy with students that is profoundly personal and on-going. The intricacies of this human connection are what makes it different from a postal worker, chef, mechanic, doctor, or psychiatrist. It has a direct intensity, sustained over time that prevents the kind of compartmentalization that other vocations may achieve. The personage of teachers and all of what that implies is part of the teaching process. It is because teaching and learning occurs within a basic human level of human interaction that the catalyst of person and role is such an important part of teachers contexts.

CHAPTER 4
PARENTS AND STUDENTS

Parents & Students as a Superstructure for Teaching

Ms. King, the kindergarten teacher who in an earlier chapter described the conflict between her values of community service and political activism, and her family's needs, saw teaching as not being bounded by school walls. For her, an important part of the job involved raising community issues that related to students.

King: I don't think teachers are to blame for society's ills, but, teachers are reluctant to get involved in solving these types of problems. Teachers are, and I say teachers, there are people who are different, I think I'm very different than what I'm about to describe, but they're very reticent. They do not want to put forth an opinion. They do not want to criticize the job that someone else is doing, they just want to do their narrowly focused thing. Um, teachers do care about children but they feel powerless, and so in feeling powerless, I think they shut down that part of them that would get out in, into the community and do something about these social problems that are coming into our schools. And, that's one reason for reluctance to get involved politically. I think that they, they do feel powerless. We feel like, you know, it's not my job. I'm doing my job, I'm doing the best I can. I show up to work every day, I'm there for them. But, what people, and I forget this too, I believe that, you know, when a child walks through my door that I can take that child and make a difference in his or her life. But then I forget, you know, that child doesn't leave their bags at home, they bring them with them, and if they're not learning, it's because they haven't gotten over something that has happened to them before they even came to school or before they, you know, maybe that morning, maybe a week ago, maybe a lifetime ago, and, I, I sometimes feel like I, I have more of an influence than I really really do. But I also, I, I look at my colleagues sometimes and I'm very frustrated, because they're not involved. Because they complain about issues and they complain about what they're sent, and then they do nothing to try to work it out. I think it's high time that teachers got involved in the community, whether it's political action or, um, um, community service, and, and a lot of times teachers are guilty,

Dry, a second grade teacher in a small rural school, argued that learning was diminished when teachers "shut them (parents) out" and did not draw upon their knowledge.

Dry: I guess, we give ourselves a lot of credit as teachers, but really parents are a big part of the process. Kids come to school knowing a lot, and that comes from home not us. We have to give them credit. They start the learning process and they continue it, without them we wouldn't make much of a dent. And, even the parents we call bad parents, um I, I think we are too quick to judge. Most parents I know love their kids. I think we have to start there, with that assumption, they might be ignorant, they may not do the right things or know what the right thing is, but they love their kids. And, you build on that, you give them credit for what they know and, you know teachers might learn something if they did that. We have to open our schools to parents so they can be a part of their kids' learning. We have to welcome them however they can be a part, you know, like maybe they work, and they can't come to school like our volunteer mothers, but still, there's a lot of ways they can contribute. If we shut them out, we lose a lot, they lose, the kids lose. And I think a lot of teacher do that, shut them out, cause it takes time, or they don't see the possibilities, or they just need someone to blame. If we blame parents then we really don't have to do anything, do we?

Both Dry and King believed that teachers should accept the idea that students come with "problems" and "baggage" and should not abdicate responsibility for teaching by blaming parents. Dry suggested that the best learning environments included parents as partners and gave them credit for what they knew, and had taught their children.

This way of thinking about teaching resembles in some way Moll's "funds of knowledge" approach (Moll, 1990). Moll describes funds of knowledge as "specific knowledge of strategic importance to households" (Moll, 1990 p. 323), a knowledge that children learn from their home culture. Using Vygosky's (1978) concept of "zones of proximal development," Moll explains that to make school knowledge accessible to students, teachers need to build upon these funds of home-culture knowledge.

Students as a Group

Doan discussed a different way that students influenced her teaching, not as individuals but through group dynamics.

Ward: How about students, in particular, students with special needs, whether they are gifted or whether they're kids with other kinds of special needs.
Doan: You mean, how does, how does it, how does it affect my teaching?
Ward: Yeah.
Doan: My experience at teaching? Well, I'd say, this is really the first year that I would say I had a good year teaching. And, um, I would, I think that that is by and large due to the fact that I just happened to get a good classroom

of students. I don't have any students this year who are psychotic, [laughter] kids who have, you know, bad behavior problems, or, you know, they just are pretty much all regular kids that, that, you know, yeah, we'll and discipline, but it's not a horrendous thing weighing me down all the time and I think that's made all the difference in my experience this year and I would say that in comparison, the previous three years, particularly the previous two years were, were awful, were just miserable, because of particular students. And just being sort of, you know, you feel like you're just in a lion's cage [laughter] with these kids, because, you know, there isn't any, I mean, you're supposed to deal with them.

Ward: Uh huh.

Doan: And then there were students like last year I had a student who was not a horrible discipline problem or anything, but he had such learning problems and was getting zero help from outside my classroom. Even though was identified, had an IEP, pages and pages and pages and pages of an IEP, I mean this was a very special child who had come from an abusive background and everything, was getting no help at all. I mean, it was just a charade.

Students provided the organizing framework in terms of which Doan categorized each of her four years' experience in teaching. Students with "bad behavior problems" or "learning problems" took up more time from the "regular kids," particularly when they were included in regular classroom settings and were "getting no help at all." She saw these characteristics of children as stable essences determining their behavior and as outside of her control.

Doan: Most of all it affects, you know, what the other students can learn, I think. Because so much of your time is spent disciplining these students or, or if that's not the case, like if they're not a discipline problem, but they have learning problems, so often, you know, they kind of go by the wayside, because you don't have the time to independently address their needs.

Doan acknowledged that over the years she may have "developed ([her) craft" in a way that allowed her to "focus more on being a better teacher, instead of being weighed down." Still, students, especially students who stood out for some reason, were seen as largely unmalleable constraints and pressures on teaching.

If in one sense students were elements of context outside the teacher's control, in another sense teachers could exert some control on the distribution of these contextual elements by grouping students in classrooms in particular ways. Each spring when students were promoted to the next grade level tentative class rolls were constructed. In some schools grade level teachers

tried to distribute students by gender, ethnicity, ability level, and other characteristics in order to create well-balanced classes. In other schools teachers filled out forms ranking ability levels of students and included a list of "students who should not be placed together," giving them to principals who then determined the class rolls. In either case, as students transferred in and away from the school, parents came in over the summer with special requests for their children, and as scheduling problems developed around providing services for students identified as having "special needs" (gifted or other), classroom profiles changed dramatically by fall.

Many teachers felt so strongly about the impact of class make-up that it was not unusual for teachers to negotiate their class lists when they returned during teacher work days. Sometimes this was an attempt to even-out classes so they would function well for teachers and students. Sometimes it was a matter of tailoring class compositions to the talents of particular teachers, those who preferred "gifted" or "special needs" students, or were certified to do special programs (Reading Recovery or math enrichment programs for "advanced" students, etc.). Finally, in some cases high status teachers maneuvered for the most "desirable" class profiles, leaving novice teachers to inherit the remainders. And it was not only particular students who were negotiated, at times students were moved because of their connection to a particular family or parent that teachers saw as desirable or difficult. In the end, changes had to be approved by the principal and many were renegotiated according to parental considerations.

Parents and Encroachment

Moss, a supervisor affiliated with a project connecting university researchers to schools discussed two ways that powerful others encroached on the schools. One was geographic encroachment, the suburbanization and gentrification that occurred as non-local families moved into the area. The other was a cultural encroachment that occurred as new families with academic credentials displaced and rearranged the status hierarchy of the school and the families of the children who attended it.

Moss	This project was, is, uh, placed a [particular kind of technology] in homes that was networked back into the classroom, this, this community is a rural community that has been very static for hundreds or more years. There are certain family names that you can trace back, um until I guess some kind of state was established. It's a community in a state of flux, though, that it's becoming a bedroom community, um, professionals are now moving out there and what was once a very simple life is subtly and very quickly changing. I believe that there's a golf resort going to build there soon.
Ward	How did the local people feel about that, about this, um sort of colonization from other people?
Moss	You mean, outsiders coming in?
Ward	Yes.

Moss	I think it's kind of grudgingly accepted, and, and it happened somewhat slowly and it's a snowball going down the side of the hill. It's going much faster. I, there's so much pride in this community, and, the issue that I started to talk about was the training of these parents. Uh, there's a large difference between lack of knowledge and lack of intelligence.
Ward	Right.
Moss	And, I know that from my years working in this community that, uh, rural, and I know from having a wife from a very rural family, that there can be suspicion uh, of folks from [local research university].
Ward	Right.
Moss	Because, it's often perceived that those from [research university] just dismiss rural people as being ignorant hicks with no, uh, abilities, intelligence whatever. Um, The rural people often view folks from [research university] as, they come to [university] for a while to build their career, they get on the town council, they get on a board of supervisors, they make great changes to a, to uh, this area when they don't have a real long-term vested interest, and then they go their merry way and leave behind whatever they've created. Um [pause] This has been a very painful lesson all around. I mean, you can't come in and use families this way, pull them into a project make them feel stupid and inadequate, and when they finally begin to learn how to use [technology] just take it away. This is a commitment we made to the [rural school] community. Take away their sense of pride. . . I'm, I'm probably overstating this, may I'm not, uh, but the feeling is that [university] people come in, they "know better that we do", they don't live our day to day live, they don't understand the day to day functioning, the state regs and all that we have to deal with. They don't know our community, the unique and special qualities of our parents, and they make inappropriate judgements. And I feel as though I was used in all of this, and I feel that I put other people in a position to be used, exploited, and I don't feel very good about that.

The influx of "outsiders" created tensions that played out in the schools. The resistance and resentment of parents toward "outsiders" was a recurring theme in many interviews. Exploitation and marginalization appeared to create a backlash toward those seen as encroaching on geographic, intellectual, and status positions "held" by local people.

Parents' Status and Teacher Competency

Parents' demands entwined with the use of teachers' time and space, administrative policies, technology, and the values of the larger community to shape teachers' work:

Koffe: Well, teaching in a [university town] school, you know, we have a , a lot of professor's children, and well, that presents some problems.

Ward: Like? Could you give an example?

Koffe: Um, well, some of these parents are very supportive, but [pause] many look down on teachers as being on the bottom rung of education, well, not the bottom, but you know, in the field [of education] as not as accomplished, or smart [pause] Kind of like we are the peasants and they are the aristocracy. And, some teachers can use that to their advantage. I mean if their husband is a professor, but still, even then, for some parents, they see us as not as good. I mean, if we were any good or smart, then we wouldn't be doing what we do. Um [pause] they judge elementary education by university standards. They see themselves as experts and um, in relation to them, we're, not very accomplished.

Ward: Do you, [pause] mean professors in education, as the top? or professors, in general?

Koffe: In general [long pause]. I know I have worried when I had students assigned whose, one of their parents were. . . was a, was an education professor but, [pause] really I feel that , it is sort of weird but they were very supportive [pause] they seemed to really appreciate what I did [pause]. No, I think they know more about what, what we do. Mostly it is professors in other areas, like one guy in [area] Engineering, a mother in Computer Science, I think she is a graduate student, but sometimes they are just as bad. She thinks that I am totally inadequate because we don't do more stuff on the computer, and she doesn't under, She can't see the limitations, we have so much to cover, and Specials [other classes like Art, Music] and [pause] um, half the time the computer is messed up and so you don't plan on it. We do go to computer lab, but she, she thinks there should be more in class, like a web page, and I should post stuff to parents like a newsletter weekly on what the kids are doing, and I should have e-mail communication with parents, well, I'm sorry, but I'm not connected at home, and all of that takes time that I think could be, be better spent, um, getting materials, and doing interesting stuff in class, and, um homework assignments. And, I mean, I have some students who don't have a computer at home, but, well, she said. She requested a conference about this, she said, well, those kids can use the library. They need to learn to use computers too. She doesn't understand, those parents [of students without computers] aren't going to take their kids to the library to use the computer to do homework. They don't even do paper and pencil homework at home. She went to the principal about this, and even though my principal is supportive, still, it, computers, are really being pushed

right now, and so, I worry [pause] I mean I've done some of the
workshops and I'm trying to learn, to be more um, proficient on
computers, but it takes time and right now, I don't see the benefits to my
teaching compared to the time it takes, But, I need this job. And, so its a
worry when anyone, especially university people are looking over your
shoulder and finding you, incompetent, in, inadequate. In an academic
community, where people give status by how intellectual you are, that
becomes a way of judging people, especially teachers. We have more and
more principals getting their doctorate, I don't really think they need one
to be a principal, but I think , that , well, maybe [pause] in this
community, it is a way for them to have some, um, status, Maybe the
parents will respect them more [pause] and maybe, it could, it could cause
them to see things more from the parents' [university affiliated parents]
point of view than from ours [teachers].

Koffe saw university affiliated parents as judging teachers, using university knowledge
and technological expertise as a measure of teaching effectiveness. Koffe's use of language--
"aristocrats" versus "peasants"--shows her sense of marginalization within a community
dominated by academia. Koffe's comments resonated with the conflict I experienced in
reconstructing my own identity and had lacked the words to express. To deal with this conflict
Koffe used coping mechanisms which involved both resistance and compliance. On the one hand
she indicated that she had to learn new skills and apply them in her classroom because of shifts in
administrative policy toward the use of technology. Yet, she was constrained by the reality of
her schedules, the invasion of her personal time, and by her belief that the changes would not
benefit her students. She was also resistant to require technology for homework because it could
generate or exacerbate inequalities and further marginalize students from lower-income
backgrounds.

Community Networks and Moral Interpretation of Teachers' Private Lives

Parental perspectives were a major factor shaping the public meanings of teachers'
personal lives. One lesbian teacher in a rural school where some of her parents were associated
with a mountain militia led a "schizophrenic" (her term) life style. She feared making a slip at
school (some of her colleagues were native to the community) or being seen in public with friends
who were open about their lesbian relationships. While she was employed by this school system,
there had been a community reaction to a book in the children's sections of the county library
about a divorced father who lived with a male friend. The book was attacked by a small but vocal
group of parents who claimed that it presented an unnatural relationship as normal. This climate
of homophobia only contributed to the teacher's fear of legal action, job loss, public humiliation,
and even retaliation, and caused her to isolate herself at school and eventually to take a job in a
different district.

Other teachers complained of judgements by parents and school personnel about the dating behavior of single teachers (e.g. dancing, public display of affection, choice of partners) and about their alcohol consumption, attire, and general behavior.

Allen: And I don't think that you ever really get a chance to really kick back in public. And I know that's old school, but I think it's really true. I mean, when, my husband is in education also, and I think if we go out and have, would have like 6 beers in public, and the person waiting on me happens to be a high school student, one of my former students, a big brother or sister or a parent of one of my students, or whatever, then how can you face that person in a conference and talk about the right thing to do. How can you say to your students "We're doing DARE [Drug Awareness Resistance Education] today, and you shouldn't be doing it [engaging in substance abuse].

Stuart explained that information about teachers, including information about their out-of-school activities, circulated through community networks.

Stuart   and they [parents], they do a lot of, they share a lot of information and opinions about teachers, about who is good, or not a good teacher. And parents, some parents ask for, ask to have their child placed in certain teachers' classes, because in the community they are thought to be good.

Ward   What , in what, how are they determined to, to, What do parents think makes a good teacher?

Stuart   Well, um, of course they want people who know subject matter and are kind, caring people, but , well, how you act in the community is important too. Many of the better families go to [name] Church and don't believe in drinking alcohol, even if they do, they may think that teachers shouldn't. I like to make Rum Cake at Christmas, it's a family tradition, but I don't take a chance by being seen in the ABC [Alcoholic Beverage Control] store. I have a friend in [nearby town] get it for, buy it there. It is just that, that if a teacher is seen in an ABC store, well, people will talk. They will talk at church or at bridge club. A lot of the ideas about what you do at school or in the community is talked, is discussed at bridge club, and well, that's kind of how you are seen, judged as a teacher and what makes you one they want their child to have. And a lot of these young teachers just don't know that, I mean they are good people, but they don't think about, about what people in the community see or what they think and they [young teachers] do things, well they aren't careful about what they do, or

even how they dress. Some of the men teachers have earrings now and even tattoos."

Both Allen and Stuart were native to the community in which they taught and had taught locally for ten or more years. Their career contexts thus intersected with local definitions of appropriate behavior. Teachers' believed that parents monitored and interpreted their embodied behaviors, exchanged information about them, and made judgements about their moral turpitude for fitness to teach. Stuart's longevity in teaching and her connection to the local community positioned her differently from "young" (novice) teachers who, in her opinion, either did not care or did not understand the importance of controlling their public behavior. Requests by parents for their children to be placed in particular teachers' classes gave feedback to principals about teacher desirability, like a vote in a kind of "popularity contest".

Doan, too, talked about parental scrutiny (mediated through students), but perhaps like one of the young teachers Stuart referred to, did not try to completely mask her behavior.

Doan: some of us, and I include myself, don't [chuckle] exactly fit in the mold of the elementary school teacher who is sort of prim and proper and, you know, not that I'm a bad person or anything, but, I think in some ways I don't fit the mold and I, you know, might feel I'm doing something or wearing something or something like that out in public and want to not have to worry about is someone going to see me. One of my students one time saw me kissing my boyfriend out in public and came to school and told,

Ward: Oh no!

Doan: Came and told all my students, you know, and I just said, "So? I kiss my boyfriend. What do you think boyfriends are for?" You know, [laughter] But, you know, some teachers I'm sure would be very careful about that sort of thing, and you know, in a way I am too. And I go out to clubs a lot on a regular basis because I love to dance. I mean, that is my, you know, that is the love of my life, is that I love to go dancing, and uh, where do you dance? You, you hit the nightclubs.

Ward: Yeah.

Doan: So I'm out at nightclubs a couple of times a week and that is definitely not a teacher thing to be doing, and yet I'm not doing anything wrong. I'm not drunk, I'm not, you know, I'm not getting picked up, I'm out there dancing. But, one time I thought I saw a man there who, who is a father in my class and my first reaction was oh no! [laughter] And, it wasn't, and I thought, why should I care about that? He might be running out the other door [laughter].

Foucault (1979) discusses how mechanisms of control have shifted from larger more organized entities, such as the legal system to the "'miniscule'. . . redistributing a discursive space in order to make it the means of a generalized 'discipline' [surveillance]." (de Certeau, 1980, p.xiv) De Certeau's (1984) work examines how society resists or,

> manipulate(s) the mechanisms of discipline and conform to them only in order to evade them, and finally, what 'ways of operating' form the counterpart on the consumer's side. . . These 'ways of operating' constitute the innumerable practices by means of which users reappropriate the space organized by techniques of sociocultural reproduction. . . [he examines] the clandestine forms taken by the dispersed, tactical, and make-shift creativity of groups or individuals already caught in the nets of 'discipline'. . . these procedures and ruses of consumers compose the network of an antidiscipline (de Certeau 1984, p. xiv-xv).

At all levels of everyday practice, that is being in the world, teachers use tactics to try to protect their space, private time, safety, and power. Although parental "surveillance" is an important part of protecting children it also is a part of the "grid of discipline" (Foucault 1979) that maintains the dominant values of society by influencing teachers' professional and private lives. This control is maintained by sanctioning teacher behavior in various ways and by using parental power as consumers of school "product" to influence what happens in schools. Teachers too are agents of surveillance. Through their conformity to dominant culture values they become instruments of the "grid" to discipline and scrutinize students and their families.

Many teachers described parents as important shapers of what happens in schools. Teachers referred to parents as "clients," "buyers," and "taxpayers" and depicted education as a service or commodity delivered by teachers. Lucas, a first grade teacher at Cove Elementary commented, "you got to keep them (parents) happy. That's the secret. A good teacher is one that nobody complains about. Uh, it, sure its great if they (parents) say nice stuff, but I'll do without the compliments if I can keep complaints to a minimum."

Doan: a parent in our school wrote a letter to a Fourth Grade teacher suggesting that there be a syllabus to be handed out to the parents at the beginning of the year telling what and when everything would be covered, much like a college course, only this is a 10 month course here. And, our school is now actually seriously discussing whether we need to do this and whether we will be asked to do this. And it's just, you know, the most absurd thing to ask an elementary school teacher to do. I mean it just, you know, it just goes against things like going with the flow, teaching the kids what they need to learn, you know, letting them be part, part directors of their learning, you know, totally doesn't take into account other things that

	might compromise your time like field trips and assemblies and illness and snow days that some up that change things and,
Ward:	Not well thought through,
Doan:	No. And teaching is so fluid, like I said before, I think that's one of the real talents that most teachers have is being really fluid like that and then to ask them to set out not, and you're not just, you're not like a college professor teaching one course. You're teaching, you know, 4 or 5 subjects.

Parent complaints to principals about teachers were the first level of threat. Complaints to central office administration a second level which also implicated principals The next level was public complaint to the school board, and the final and most severe level was complaint to legal authorities or social services. Some teachers saw their principals as intermediaries who protected them from unfair criticism by parents. Some felt sacrificed by principals to satisfy unreasonable parental demands. The source of difference may have been longevity in principalships and the security they felt in their positions. One teacher who was enmeshed in a lawsuit commented that a first year principal who had been a former colleague wanted to support her effort to transfer to her school, but recanted her offer after talking with other administrators.

Parental power could also work for teachers. Teachers had community reputations which could confer a power outside of the hierarchy of schools. In one case highly publicized in a local paper, a teacher in conflict with the current superintendent had her teaching assignment changed against her will. The parents of that community signed a petition and wrote letters to the newspaper and succeeded in getting her transferred back to their school.

CHAPTER 5
COLLABORATION

One year during my graduate work I supervised student teachers in a nearby school district. Student teachers were testing methods and philosophies new to them in environments where the relationships among supervisor, student, and cooperating teacher were often vaguely defined. For teachers, whose time was already compressed by other demands, the vagueness could create problems. Some teachers welcomed an opportunity to have teaching assistance in their classroom. Others limited student teachers to acting as classroom helpers. Some teachers were coerced into accepting a student teacher because the placement was needed, thus causing tension in the practicum relationship. Others welcomed the chance to influence new members of their profession. The circumstances, philosophies, and motives of teachers were as varied as the protégés they accepted.

In the first part of this chapter I examine trends in the commodification of teachers' time and space through what are called "collaborative" relationships with actors who are external to schools. In this school district those with the biggest impact are with local universities.

Commodification

Many school systems are now opening their doors to a broad array of institutions seeking a piece of classroom space and time. The volume of projects and non-teaching participants that schools absorb as they become a nexus for "collaboration" and cooperative efforts has increased. Hargreaves (1994) points out that, "as teachers' roles continue to expand we see a paradox between a sense of the increased power and responsibility of the profession and the resulting intensification of work and demands on teachers' time" (p. 53). Many of the teachers I interviewed who were involved in projects with university collaborators talked about how those collaborations increased demands on their time during and after school hours. They also expressed concern over changes in their roles, as adults with varied agendas began to claim time and space in their classrooms. There is a connection between the distance from practice of those negotiating the use school space and how the allocation of power and resources within school environments affect teachers' abilities to do their job. Some teachers are able to circumvent or disrupt the traditional distribution of power and resources in public schools by using various grants and alliances with powerful others. Through these they entered a liminal space (Turner, 1982, pp. 20-60) , an ambiguous zone in which they have access to power not usually available to classroom teachers, mainly in the forms of status with parents and economic support partially independent of the school district. Many of these collaborations, however, were not the "win/win" situations they seemed. Interviews raised questions about power and what made the relationships beneficial or detrimental to teachers.

The colleges of education in the area I studied have long standing relationships with local schools through practicum and student teaching placements. Political pressures from the state legislature, however, have encouraged faculty in other parts of the university to seek "collaborations" with teachers.

Millyard, a university staffer involved in a program designed to connect university researchers to local schools, described the program's role as an intermediary or "matchmaker" linking the interests of the university and schools through collaborative enterprises. The mission and language of this program illustrated a growing commercialization of research as an asset to be traded for access to public school connections.

Millyard: Yeah, Well, I work in three ways with public schools, I broker the programs here [at the university], which simply means that I, I try to bring them into the awareness of teachers. So I try to get a menu of courses that would relate to specific subject areas, within those areas I try to look at every college that might have some research that would impact, well particularly science, math and technology, those areas [schools] that I'm working with. I try to go through a series of awareness sessions, showcase those events [through a conference or meeting] allowing public schools to know what's available, then, help them [public schools] get access to those folks [university researchers]. Uh, so that may be a one stop shopping. The second part would be to help translate some of the programs, shape some of those programs and make them consumable for, um, K-12. A third aspect of my role is, professional development, offer some training in how to use those programs so that other people [people other than the collaborators and researchers], would know how to use them. We disseminate the programs that have been made through collaborative efforts.

Later in the interview I asked how the individuals connected through this program benefited from these projects.

Millyard: For public schools it seems what they look for, Uh, number one, generally they want to try something new. . . . .and they don't want to do it at, uh, personal cost . . . and so, we seek corporate funding to help defray the expenses of the school teacher, so that his/her time is paid for. Uh, we can offer them a stipend for developing the modules. And, we can also underwrite the materials that they would need. . . and then they've had some exposure here on campus. . .

When asked what was driving these kinds of connections Millyard replied:

Millyard: I think it's technology driven. The whole idea of connectivity is possible at so many different levels, um, that you find more movement toward a community of learners. Whether they're K-12 or university, [those] who

don't recognize that interconnection, are on a dead-end street. They have
to reinvent themselves and be responsive to this kind of environment,
using schools and universities [to develop] a host of opportunities and to
foresee the ways in which, uh, those, the new, um, connections might be
most profitable, both intellectually and otherwise.

Recently, while returning to this region on a major interstate, I noticed new signs reading "Entering the (state) Technology Corridor." Shortly after that our state governor was quoted on a local television news program as naming our region "the new Silicon Valley East." This promotion of technological innovation extended through all levels of public education, kindergarten through university. One effect has been an increased number of grants connecting thirteen school districts to the two state universities in the area. The existence of projects like Millyard's spoke to the "profitability" of such connections and raised questions about who profits and how from them.

Wiffle, a university collaborator, described the benefits of his project in this way,

Wiffle: When I entered into an agreement to work with the [name] county school
               system, I saw it as an opportunity for everyone to benefit. The schools
               would get materials, hardware and software. And they would get training
               for students and parents and teachers and a chance to be a part of
               important research. . . We would have a chance to see how children learn
               and to share that at [national conferences]. . . And it brought recognition to
               the [name] school district. I, I didn't count on the, um politics, the politics
               in the schools. I don't think some of the people could appreciate what we
               were doing. It was a real opportunity to be a part of something worthwhile
               and, um some of the school people were focused, had a limited focus on
               local issues. But despite that it was a huge success.

In addition, graduate students profit through support as research assistants, professors profit in status and economic support through additional money for research, published papers, and activities listed on faculty activity reports, and departments profit from grant money brought into the university coffers.

Language

In Millyard's program the university became a bazaar selling connections to university research and funding through grants and corporate sponsors. Public schools were prospective buyers using access to public school settings as a kind of currency. Rather than making decisions based on student well-being and learning, choices in schools become defined by profitability. The power, money and status associated with highly visible funding raised the potential for exploitation, and the corruption of collaborative relationships.

Although Millyard's program formalized connections between public schools and universities and built in protections for collaborators, many relationships negotiated by other programs and individual researchers did not consider protection of participants a relevant issue. In this marketplace of connections we may wonder, who pays and how? What kind of bartering might be taking place? Are collaborative relationships a "good deal" for all parties, or might there be problems? What actually happens when research comes into classrooms? How does it affect teachers' roles?

In this district answers to those questions depended upon who was negotiating and what factors were part of the deal. At times everyone seemed to benefit and in other cases there were many problems.

Service Learning

One major braid of collaborative liaison between the local universities and public schools takes place through service learning. Service learning has become established nationally at all levels of higher education as a way to connect academic institutions to community service. Dyson, a university administrator, described the organization and purpose of a service learning program operating through the College of Arts and Sciences at a local university and funded through an array of federal, state and industrial grants.

Dyson: The mission of the Service-Learning Center is to promote the integration of community service with academic study in all units of the university.

Ward: How are contacts made with collaborators in the community?

Dyson: Generally through word of mouth or direct contact, we call a site and ask if they need students. Our Placement Coordinator has many years of experience in the field of volunteerism. She was able to bridge many contacts for us. Occasionally, sites will contact the Center. Some faculty make their own contacts either through professional associations or, in the case of schools, because their children attend the school.

Ward: How many service learning projects did you have last year?

Dyson: Well, that's a hard one! Do you want to know program areas, number of placements, number of projects? Last year we estimated a student involvement level of 1,065 students. However, some of these students participated in class projects where the students, as a team, produced a product for the site.

Ward: How many with local public schools?

Dyson: I believe we worked with 13 public schools last year, all but two elementary schools in [name] County. Some of the students were simply placed at the schools as mentor. Not all represent collaborations or partnerships in the true sense of the terms. . . Sites are determined based on their ability to and interest in working with college students, the availability of meaningful project opportunities, and the presence of a site

supervisor. Evaluations completed by students and sites at the end of every semester determine whether or not we continue to work with a site. Some sites, not schools, have determined that it is too time consuming to work with service-learners, or that the opportunities for meaningful work within a limited time frame are simply not available. Likewise, a pattern of negative student feedback warrants reconsideration of a site on our part, although we never drop a site without first attempting to inquire about the problem first.

Some service learning projects follow the guidelines for "effective" service learning experiences established by the National Society for Internships and Experiential Education. But not all projects follow these guidelines. In Dyson's program the NSIEE principles were filtered by various administrative arrangements: the site supervisor might have been a principal, the classroom teacher, or a resource teacher. Service learning students were not supervised by someone associated with the university, so the mediation and resolution of problems required intervention on the part of school personnel already pressed for time. The complexity of maintaining funds through multiple grants and the interconnection with different groups at the university created an intricate political agenda for the program.

Alder, an undergraduate student, became involved with the administration and promotion of service learning on Dyson's campus after participating in a class project in a rural public school.

Ward: Do you know how many service learning projects are on campus now?
Alder: Uh, in Service Learning we had around 600, with over 20 different schools locally . . . schools are one of our biggest sites, but it's not specifically [in public schools] I think we're around 90 different sites.

Each project could have many students associated with it. One teacher I interviewed reported having as many as 12 service learning students working with her students during the year, and they represented only one of many university collaborations that brought additional people to her classroom. Moreover, Alder's estimate took into account only the service learning connections from one university. Another nearby university also had service learning projects in the school district, as well as student teacher placements.

The collaborative associations between universities and public schools were often negotiated by professors, principals, or central office personnel, rather than by service learning students and teachers. The distance of the initiators from the sites of actual engagement often caused problems.

Ward: The professor, um, presented this as an option?

Alder: Yeah, it was an option. . . It had already been set up [with local public schools] and the director from Service Learning met with us. Uh, it was laid out in the syllabus in the beginning so we knew, you know, right off the bat really, what the possibilities were as far as our course work. . . I had just met him [classmate involved in project] in class . . . we both had different schedules . So it was tough for us to, you know, plan on a class activity together since we. . . I lived back home in [local county] and he lived on campus. . . we didn't really work together outside of class. . . when we saw each other in class we would quickly discuss what our lesson plans were for the uh, next class.

Responsibility, Control and Coercion

Clark, a former classroom teacher who had moved into a supervisory role at the time of our interview, described teachers' reactions to losing control of access to their classrooms.

Clark: I found it was the rare teacher who actually felt that they can actually collaborate. . . they felt powerless, um, "You're going to do what you want to do." or "Um, my principal has directed, you know, I am to do this. I am to let you in my classroom." It wasn't resistance out of not wanting to do what was best for the child, it was, um, you're not set up in a situation that's conducive to collaboration. . . They've [teachers] been given an impossible task. And then to throw one more individual in that they had to orchestrate, uh, it just didn't work. I found there was a problem with this model of "resources". When I was a classroom teacher I can remember days of the week, I might have 4 other adult bodies in my classroom. And you think, wonderful! All this help! No. For the most part, they were little help, they were one more demand on my time, because they weren't familiar with the routine of the classroom, of the school, because they were coming from another environment. They did not understand the school environment. So I resented having to take the time away from the kids to explain, "This is your job today." . . . Time is a very big issue, and space. I'm accountable to parents, . . . for instruction. . . meeting SOLs [Standards of Learning] . . . discipline, . . . I'm responsible for their grades, . . . That's the reality. . . . and whereas they spend an awful a lot of time and money in the central office, uh, cooking up all these new ideas and new models and, wonderful utopia, nobody's done anything to change the basic model of the classroom, you are accountable and your job is on the line every minute of every day.

Clark's comments referred to a variety of collaborators including service learning students. The "collaboration" she described was really coercion, where the teacher put on a "a happy face" to appease superiors. In interviews and casual conversation teachers indicated that they often felt compelled to comply with requests of administrators to open their classrooms to outsiders. Scott (1990) talks about this kind of "knuckling under" in the following way.

> to clarify the relationship between compliance and beliefs. . . they indicate that forced compliance not only fails to produce attitudes that would sustain that compliance in the absence of domination, but produces a reaction against such attitudes. Second, they show that individual beliefs and attitudes are likely to reinforce compliance with powerholders' wishes if, and only if, that compliance is perceived as freely chosen---as voluntary: Coercion, it would seem, can produce compliance but it virtually inoculates the complier against willing compliance. (Scott, 1990, p.109)

In the service learning collaboration where Alder was a participant, the principal was actively seeking to improve the status of a small rural school by connecting it to collaborative projects. These projects were advertised through press releases, and newspapers and television coverage, P.T.A. programs, county wide meetings, and university sponsored forums.

Confidentiality

Teachers expressed concern in interviews about keeping information about children confidential when volunteers or other collaborators were involved in classroom activities. Rey, a first grade teacher complained that,

Rey: There are times when we [teachers] should not talk at all, but, you have to exchange information. [pause] I love having volunteers, yet, I would like to see more safeguards, actually, sort of a county-wide policy, especially so with little children, I think it's also, [pause] people aren't aware they need some confidentiality. You know, the "cute kid story" we're all so familiar with, well, [pause] they're cute, and they're easy to repeat, [pause] but sometimes, particularly with some children they should not be repeated. Because there are implications that maybe a volunteer is not privy to. And it should be absolutely spelled out, not assumed. And, um there's information they'll be overhearing and should never be repeated, and I don't think we, I don't think we spell that out.

Most teachers interviewed indicated that they did discuss the need for confidentiality with collaborators but were not in a position to prevent these "outsiders" from passing on observations and information.

Planning Time

When I asked Alder, the university undergraduate, about planning time with the teachers this was the reply:

Alder: I kind of had a free hand, with time constraints [no planning time for teachers and service learning students] . . . personally I like to be turned loose, I wouldn't have done service learning if, [pause] I like to be able to, you know, kind of work independently .

By contrast, the lack of planning time with collaborators came up repeatedly as a concern during interviews with teachers. Without time to work with collaborators, joint efforts became little more than a dumping of additional people into classrooms. Untrained help presented problems for a number of teachers, especially when collaborators had conflicting visions of what was "appropriate" in the classroom. In the case of service learning students there was no site supervision of the project except what the teacher could provide during their time in the classroom. There was no way to monitor or modify lesson plans except through hurried exchanges prior to having the service learners step into their teaching role, as they were departing, or through interruptions during their presentations.

Commodities

Alder, a communications major and a classmate, a biology major neither with background or coursework in early childhood or education, presented science lessons based on an Appalachian environment in two third grade classes. They spent thirty minutes on Thursdays and forty minutes on Fridays "teaching" these concepts throughout their fall semester. In their final project Alder and his partner had the third graders draw a representation of their learning on squares of material. A group of quilters from the service learning student's community sewed and quilted these squares over Christmas break. During a subsequent Youth Service Fair the quilt took on an additional role.

Alder: Uh, and I think for Service Learning being a fairly young organization with the campus community, there's a need to have something visual there. Um, you know, an ornament. So when we had our Youth Service Week again, um, this was kind of our show and tell on campus. It was on display and I spoke about it, I was kind of a salesman, if you will, um, I told about the project, um, it's been incorporated into a lot of our brochures, newsletters that we've done, pictures of the quilt, it's been used for some of our fund-raisers, again showing what the students within this area [particular course, area of study] have done.
Ward: Who attended that presentation [Youth Service Week]?
Alder: We had a lot of faculty, students, Um, we had the Mayor of [university town.] As a young organization to try to establish ourselves, take an

opportunity. That's very valuable. You know, we like to make those
contacts.

The quilt as a product of service learning advertised the program, and was used to market it on campus to public school personnel and to the community.

Simulation

The transformation of service learning projects into commodities took place in more subtle ways than the quilt example might suggest. In an entirely different service project spaces of the public school were themselves commodified into a simulacrum (Baudrillard, 1988, pp. 33-34) of collaboration. Sammons, a graduate student involved in a garden project described differences between the appearance and the reality of what transpired.

Sammons: the project had two parts, one was to form a volunteer plan. . . to give them sustainability. . . the second part . . . was to do some work in the classroom. . . to get experience working with the children. . . The school has a garden. . . most of the grades have a plot. . . and it is tied to their curriculum in some way. . . .I guess it is tied to their standards of learning. . . . I was really there to establish some sort of volunteer plan. . . .the classroom was a kind of. . . secondary thing.

Ward: When this garden was established, how did it come about?

Sammons: There was an outside volunteer. . . she was a major driving force behind the gardens and she was able, with her contacts [at the university] to get things for the school. . . plants . . . greenhouses. . . there was that, uh, national gardening grant , I believe one of the teachers got. . . .it was difficult to get input from some of the teachers, maybe a bit of resistance. . . I can't say that there was overwhelming teacher response to that garden. . . .Um, not a . . . whole lot of interest there, you know, expressed in the, in the garden or in wanting a volunteer program to help work with the garden or bring the garden into the classroom. . . .I know that some of them fought it. Some of them just didn't have any interest and refused to have any interest in it at all. Um, and, others were just at a loss [laughter] at what to do with this, garden, Um, so I think that the fact that an outside person pushed the idea of the garden. . . maybe the teachers weren't involved in the planning stages, um they didn't have an ownership in the garden . . . what, how, why it would be used. Instead it was somebody else that was always coming in and telling them what to do with it and how to use it, you know, bringing those kids into the garden, so, I think the teachers were, you know, on the outside edge of this garden and the relationship between the children and the garden.

Ward: What kind of a position did that put you in as a person that was supposed
           to be working with these teachers and , helping them to have volunteers?
Sammons: Well, to tell you the truth, [laughter] I don't want to go back to that
           school. Because I've done the same thing. Um, you know, when you have
           an outside person that comes in and foists this upon the school and it's
           not going to succeed. Even the little garden that I put together [for a
           particular class] didn't succeed. And I'm sure the teacher that I worked
           with, I didn't give her enough, um, uh. . . .I didn't provide her with the
           ability to keep it going. . . I feel like I've just come in and dropped this
           problem in somebody's lap and I've walked away, and I think that that's
           how a lot of the teachers feel. And, so I'm, I'm a bit embarrassed that I've
           done the same thing. And I think it's an unfortunate situation. . . it's
           extremely uncomfortable, you know, between, between the department in
           which I'm a student and in which I'm an employee, which has obvious
           interests in integrating students into this garden for hands on experience,
           leadership development, whatever. And this poor school that. . . is not
           really going to refuse the hand that feeds it, because it does receive a lot of
           benefits from the university, um and a lot of the faculty and things like
           that. Um, it , it makes for a really strange situation. You feel like kind of
           you're impose-- you're an imposition or you just, you don't, you go in
           there without all of the information, without understanding all of the things
           that surround it. You don't understand the teacher's role, uh, and response
           to the garden, and so . . . things just don't ever click because you don't
           understand . . . It's very frustrating. . . it has to be something that's shared
           by everybody. Everybody has to want that garden. . . Um, it has to have a
           purpose. I mean, use it. . . or otherwise they're going to . . . continue on
           this disastrous path where. . . they have these last ditch efforts to make it
           look pretty for the guests that are coming to look at the garden.
Ward: Was this garden really open to teachers and children to go in and out of
           there when they felt the need to use it for lessons and what not, or was it a
           showpiece? I mean was it arranged in a way that was teacher-kid friendly?
Sammons: Hm, Yes and no. Logistically, every time I went to work in the garden it
           was a pain. There was a mess, there wasn't water, there weren't tools, um,
           you know, everything was just such a struggle and if I were a teacher I
           wouldn't want to mess with that struggle. I'd feel like I had enough on my
           plate already. . . . Um, [long pause] half of the time I'd go out there the
           garden would be locked. . . and I don't understand why that couldn't be
           part of the routine of the day. . . that was extremely frustrating to me.
           Even, when I'd ask, um, you know, and it was supposed to be unlocked it
           wouldn't be, and that would delay the activities that I had planned for it. It

draws a lot of attention for that school. You know, the university is constantly wanting to come out and show people, show them this example. Um, a good thing that 's come out of it is that you see also the problems and so people thinking about doing these collaborations maybe how to avoid those situations.

Ward: Do you think its main purpose might have been public relations? High visibility stuff rather than really for teaching?

Sammons: Yeah, It gets into that [public relations for the school] . . . it was originally intended to be a teaching tool, um and. . . but it's become a very, um it's drawn a lot of attention to that school. . . the university pushes it a lot. The university is always coming out there. Always, whether it's the horticulture undergraduate students, or. . . students that are trying to fulfill some sort of volunteer commitment for a course that they are taking, whether it 's international visitors or, um, horticulture volunteers, you know, for extension across the state, uh, garden clubs. . . lots and lots of traffic and you know that [laughter] puts undue pressure on the school, um in this particular case, when they're not really able to handle that garden. . . Very little involvement. I don't know of any parents that were involved in the garden. . . I mean, that's what they lack. They lack involvement, and nobody wants to be involved out there.

Aesthetic Goods

The particular school Sammons worked with was a small, low status school in a rural part of the district. The connection to the university got the school media coverage and brought it some status within the school division. In turn, the participating university department had a placement for students, a site for teaching, and a way to showcase the community project to interested others (garden clubs, politicians, visiting professors and students, etc.). Following Lash and Urry (1994) we can look at such projects as the garden as examples of the aesthetic commodification of education.

> they have an aesthetic content and are what can be termed postmodern goods. [and] . . . can be seen not only in the proliferation of objects which possess a substantial aesthetic component [such as pop music, cinema, leisure, magazines, video and so on], but also in the increasing component of the sign-value or image embodied *in* material objects. This aestheticization of material objects take place in the production, the circulation or the consumption of such goods. (Lash & Urry, 1994, p. 4)

Sammons was thus caught between the demands of the initiators and the needs of the teachers and parents. The lack of easy access to the garden except for visitors raised questions

about its actual purpose. That the garden was not initiated by parents or teachers was also problematic. Teachers resisted involvement because they lacked the time and gardening expertise. Many parents in this rural community, where many families lived on farms or had home gardens, complained about use of school time for "weeding and carrying mulch when they (their children) ought to be learning something important" [interview with Farmer, a third grade teacher in the school]. In urban or suburban school settings gardening may be more exotic and interesting to parents, teachers and students, but at this school it seemed ordinary and inappropriate.

The garden project simulated a connection to the school's curriculum but its real worth was in the image it created, rather than its function as an instrument of learning. It became a simulacrum "bearing no relation to any reality whatsoever" (Baudrillard, 1988, p.11). Hargreaves (1994) connects this idea to public schools saying:

> Where people are surrounded by a plethora of images, this can create dramatic spectacles but also moral and political superficiality; aesthetic attractiveness, but also ethical emptiness. In many ways contemporary images disguise and deflect more unseemly realities." (p. 77)

Although the teachers resisted the project to protect their time and space, still, they had to participate in curriculum meetings about gardening and garden events (e.g. planting strawberries), and had to deal with the visitors in the school for garden related activities.

Direct Connections Between University Research and Public Schools

A curriculum supervisor who had spent much of her career moving between classroom teaching, resource teaching, curriculum development, and supervision described one example of direct negotiations between university researchers and public school personnel.

Moss: I was contacted by a researcher at [local research university]to participate in a grant . . . While we were sitting at the table I said wouldn't an interesting project be such and such. And this fellow's eyes lit up and he said, Oh, that sounds wonderful, let's do it! The logistics of doing something of this magnitude were very clear to me. . . We worked on the proposal off and on for about a year . . . we sent our proposal in [to the National Department of Education] and we did get listed as one of three principal investigators, the principal of the elementary school was the second one and the [university] researcher was the third.

It was commonplace in this school district for schoolteachers to align themselves with powerful others at the university to engage in special projects. In such scenarios there can be questions of control over ideas, how those ideas are implemented or changed, and who is acknowledged for the work (research) that comes from such projects. Large projects because of

their status and economic worth have political implications that various participants may manipulate for their own benefit.

Moss: Um, one of the reasons why we wrote the principal in as a principal investigator, on the grant, was to help insure that when the new school principal was named [this principal was a temporary replacement] and that if we had this project already started that this person could say on . . . this principal was not named to be the principal of the school . . . So, here we have a lame duck principal involved in a project, his ego has been pretty much destroyed . . . So, having this funding was somewhat bittersweet because we knew that, at the end of the year he would not be at the school site anymore . . . There was discussion [by the university researcher] about uh, maybe beginning the project somewhere else, maybe not in [name of this] County, maybe move it to [nearby] County. . . [They] have been very interested in the project.

Using the leverage of the economic and public relations value of the grant, the researcher and the principal tried to force the personnel department into giving the principal a permanent job. The threat to move the project to a nearby county illustrates how grants may be used as a kind of currency to buy concessions from school districts. We also see how collaborations can become meshed in the micropolitics of school districts.

Moss: Um, we went ahead . . . Things have turned out to be so successful on one end. The school just won [an award]. Um, the effect on me personally has been fairly devastating and in January I pretty much had to drop out of any kind of a , um a, not active role. I'm still principal investigator on the project, but uh, it became very clear early on that while I was to be the educational consultant because I was the only one of the three PIs that had any background in elementary education, classroom background, that is, the principal has a long background as elementary principal,. But, um the classroom teacher and I together have over 50 years of experience working with 4th and 5th graders. So, she and I assumed that with my assistance, we would be deciding, making decisions, that involved her students and her teaching. When I first presented this idea to the teacher. . . she was very open to participating, although she was very honest that this is not an area of expertise for her. It involves a lot of technology. . . she would need a lot of help. And she spoke to me privately and said, "The one thing that I need for you to guarantee to me is that this will be MY classroom." And I gave that assurance. Um, as the project was getting underway, there were many players involved, not just the researcher and the principal and I, but,

and the teacher , but also um, a technology agent was hired and a graduate
student was hired. Another group of people involved were people from
the division that deal with technology. . . that keep it up and running. Um,
there were times when it seemed like the grant meeting had more people in
the room [classroom] than could possibly be kept busy.

The supervisor tried to insure that the classroom teacher would have control over her
classroom, but as the project took shape more and more people began to fill the classroom and
she lost the power to make good on her assurances.

Moss: I began to notice that, uh, at these meetings um, [long pause] my
                assumption that I was an equal partner as a principal investigator was
                probably, um. I was probably mistaken in thinking I was an equal partner .
                . . I can't help but wonder if there's a gender issue here. Uh, the three
                P.I.'s, Uh, a full professor at [local research university], mid-50s, male
                elementary principal, a male, early 40s, and then I'm a uh, white female in
                my late 40s. Uh, I'm not a large woman, I'm not a loud woman, I'm not
                pushy and domineering, but I assumed from some previous collaboration
                that my voice was going to be considered . . . I began to notice early on at
                these meetings that issues I would bring up would get a cursory nod but
                then would be pretty much dismissed.

Gender and Guilt

Moss felt that gender differences undermined her authority and her ability to protect the
classroom teacher. At one point in the interview she talked about the emotional and ethical stress
she felt as the intercessor for the schoolteacher and aide working on the grant. She talked of being
the "ham in the sandwich," caught between conflicting forces.

Moss: The first issue that became a concern to me was the issue of training
                parents . . . Uh, there's a large difference between lack of knowledge and
                lack of intelligence. [The local population] can be suspicious of, uh, folks
                from [local research university] . . . because [they] just dismiss rural
                people as being ignorant hicks with no abilities, intelligence, whatever. . . .
                Um, I was concerned that when training sessions were held for parents, if
                parents were talked down to, they would stop coming. If the parents were
                made to feel stupid they wouldn't want to participate. . . I kept urging that
                the training meet the needs of the parents. There' s a fear of being stupid
                [about technology] . . . I strongly suggested that great care be used in
                structuring these training sessions for parents. And I can remember being
                looked at like I was [laughter] from another planet. And so, I said let me

give you a concrete example, We need to remember that the language that we use when we talk about technology is not common to all people. If we use the word application, people who have not knowledge of computers are going to think it's a piece of paper that you're using to apply for a job, or, for membership to an organization . . . [it] doesn't mean that we're stupid if we don't catch on right away. It means that, um, the training hasn't met our needs. Soon after that, um there got to be some real personality problems between the graduate student and the technology aide in the classroom . . . She's [the aide] eager to go, excited to work with the teacher, the parents, the students, and had all kinds of wonderful ideas about how to work with training parents, the students and had all kinds of wonderful ideas about how to work with training the parents without making them feel dumb. The graduate student on the other hand felt that if you're going to teach people to use [technology] you must at all times use the correct terminology . . . When we had a meeting, uh, the main researcher from [university] made the comment that uh, well, the parents weren't interested in this project. They weren't coming to the training anymore . . . I had spoken to a couple of parents. . . the parent would bring it up and would say, "well I quit going, [aide] was doing a wonderful job and I could really understand her . . . when the graduate student would talk to us, he just talked over our heads and he made us feel stupid." . . . I shared the information with the other two P. I. s uh, I was treated as if I was off base, that I just didn't get it. The same thing happened in the classroom. The teacher was calling me, e-mailing me, almost on a daily basis. "They're trying to force me to do this and that. They're coming into my room and they're deciding where they want to mount [equipment] without asking me. How dare they come in my room and do this?!" And said, "You know, I feel like I'm standing on the shore of the ocean and the waves are crashing over me, but I'll be damned if I'm going to fall over." So I had a woman who didn't, wasn't able for whatever reasons to speak up for herself,. . . and she was ready to quit. I [said to the other two P.I.s] You cannot push these children. You can't expect toddlers to run a four minute mile. And the response was, " Well we can't stand at national conferences and claim that all we've done is teach 5th graders [minimum skill]." . . . This has been a very painful lesson all around. I mean, you can't come in and use families this way, pull them into a project, make them feel stupid and inadequate, and when they finally begin to learn how to use [technology] just take it away. This is a commitment we made to the [rural school] community. You can not do this to a community. Take away their sense of pride. . . I'm, I'm probably overstating this, maybe

I'm not, uh, but the feeling is that [university] people come in, they know better than we do, they don't live our day to day lives, they don't understand the day to day functioning, the state regs and all that we have to deal with, they don't know our community, the unique and special qualities of our parents, and they make inappropriate judgements. . . . And I feel as though I was used in all of this, and I feel that I put other people in a position to be used, exploited, and I don't feel very good about that.

Differences in how the benefits of the project were interpreted caused conflicts between the distanced participants and those involved with the immediacy of the classroom and the community. On the one hand the supervisor, representing the interests of the classroom personnel, saw the benefits in terms of what the project could do for the students and parents. On the other the researcher viewed the benefits in terms of what the project could contribute to the academic discourse. This conflict of purpose is similar to the tension between being a teacher and being a researcher I discussed earlier. In this case the tension played out not within an individual but in a group. Moss had a view extending from an internal position outward, while the university researcher's view came from the opposite direction. Such differences in perspective create tension and conflict when there is limited time for negotiation or channels for communication. Moreover structures of power can short-circuit any opportunities for dialogue that do exist.

Ward: Why were they [P.I.s] not including [in meetings] those people [aide & classroom teacher] so that they could speak directly? Is there a reason that they didn't speak for themselves?
Moss: Well, in the case of the teacher and the aide, neither one wanted to speak up because one of the P.I.s was their boss

"Hidden Transcripts" and Subordination

Every subordinate group creates, out of its ordeal, a "hidden transcript" that represents a critique of power spoken behind the back of the dominant. The powerful, for their part, also develop a hidden transcript representing the practices and claims of their rule that cannot be openly avowed. A comparison of the hidden transcript of the weak with that of the powerful and both hidden transcripts to the public transcript of power relations offers a substantially new way of understanding resistance to domination. (Scott, 1990, p. xii)

Through out the commentary of Doan, Moss, Clark, Sammons and Alder there are clues to the "hidden transcripts" of the subordinate in public school-university collaborations. The negotiation of power and assets in these projects was one of the ways that coercion and resistance played out in local schools. When teachers' time and space are negotiated by distanced

and powerful others (in this case a principal who evaluated their performances) there are increased possibilities that teachers may hide feelings of dissent and exploitation. Beginning teachers not yet on continuing contract and aides who must be rehired each year are particularly vulnerable to pleasing their superiors.

Bartering

Moss: This person [principal] is now without a job. . . and is involved in a national grant. . . I'm getting the inkling that his idea is that the grant should be moved with him wherever he goes, once he gets a job. . . I think the principal was trying to keep the researcher happy so that he could at least come out, the principal could come out a winner in some way, so that if he didn't get the job at least he could keep the grant and take it with him.

According to Moss, the principal viewed the grant as a resource or commodity which could be transported for bartering power in another location. It was "purchased" through his ability to create access for the university researchers to the fifth grade teacher's classroom and to influence how things were done there. Zukin's (1991) analysis of the spatial consequences of social and economic power seems relevant to the way this principal attempted to transport this project to another district. His maneuvers were not only attempts to shift "production" and "product" but to "sell" himself as an attachment.

> A search for individual autonomy is, therefore, a search for landscape's structural rules. On one level, these are the general rules of order of the capitalist economy. On another level, they are the market of decisions that shift production from one place to another. On a third level, however, they are the tangible compromises made in specific places between workers and employers, developers and consumers, entrepreneurs and creative personnel. (Zukin 1991, p. 22, quoting Scott & Storper, 1986, p. 310)

Entrepreneurialism of Teachers Through Grant Writing

Regis was a teacher with experience in classrooms from kindergarten through eighth grade. She had worked in special education and taught several different elementary grade levels in a variety of schools in this county and another state. She had a master's degree and was comfortable moving between university and public school settings. This range of action within varied contexts with many colleagues allowed her to create an intricate network of social linkages that provided access to information, skills, and knowledge, and ultimately empowered her in ways not open to most teachers.

Regis' career developed around a succession of grants that she wrote independently and with others culminating in a major award which she used to pay half of her salary over several years while she worked on developing and publishing her own curriculum.

Ward: Tell me about your book.

Regis: I had the luxury of the [name of award]. . . I had the time. I had the idea, I
             proposed the idea and the state accepted that I would be able to have a
             half-time position, working with 22 teachers, and 420 students. . . all of
             the teachers would be present during all of the training at the same time the
             children were doing hands-on activities and field testing activities, the
             teachers would be there and doing them with the kids.

Ward: Would you say that your history of being involved in grant writing and its
             evolution gave you the power to do this?

Regis: Right. I think so. And I think. . . having a clear vision of exactly with it is
             that you want to do and having a plan of how you're going to do it, and
             you know in your heart of hearts that this is, the best way.

In Economies of Signs and Space Lash and Urry (1994) discuss how in a new "disorganized capitalism" (p. 2) individuals can find spaces

> where they are set free from heteronomous control or monitoring of social
> structures to be self-monitoring or self-reflexive. This accelerating
> individualization process is a process in which agency is set free from structure, a
> process in which, further, it is structural change itself in modernization that so to
> speak forces agency to take on powers that heretofore lay in social structures
> themselves. . . . . that the labour force becomes increasingly self-monitoring as well
> as develops an even grater reflexivity with respect to rules and resources of the
> workplace." (Lash & Urry, 1994, pp. 4-5)

Regis used "informational goods" as commodities which she could barter to disrupt the historic distribution of power in public schools. But even as her entrepreneurial use of grants scaffolded her empowerment, it also conscripted other teachers, colonized their time, and encroached on their control of classroom space. I asked her about collaboration and Regis responded:

Regis: There are certain things that make it possible to collaborate. First is
             openness, like [name] has wonderful collaborative teams in the school she
             is principal at. [another principal] hand picks the teachers. . . You have an
             option to pick people who want to collaborate and who want to be part of
             the team. . . we don't have that luxury in our school. . . we have teachers
             who have been there..ten, twenty years, some younger. . . All things are
             possible. It really depends on your principal. . . I am there because I know
             this principal wants collaboration, she wants teachers to work together and
             she is extremely supportive.

Ward: I just wonder if there has been any resistance because of having to change what they do or their materials, or whatever

Regis: Well, I think there's always resistance to change. But I think also, you know, with having that luxury of having people want to change. . . . that's a whole lot different than saying you will change. . . . I mean, I'm still concerned about some of the teachers who, in our building who say, "I want to go into my class and shut my door and I do not want to change and I do not want to do any of this, and I will not do any of this." I do not know what's going to happen when we , in the Fall, when we do this. Our school will pretty much, we will pilot it at our school.

Regis began her project in a high status elementary school where many of the teachers were involved in university collaborations and independent grant writing of their own. They resisted the involvement that Regis wanted and the principal supported their resistance. Regis then shopped for a school that would be more welcoming and found a principal of a low status school who supported her project. But even within this environment there was resistance illustrated in the comments by a teacher assigned to this school after a leave of absence.

Major: The other thing that I was assigned to, just got a letter in the mail when I was told I would be placed with this particular school, that I would be part of the [Regis Program], and, which I thought was interesting, but which I hadn't even opted to join or anything else because when I anticipated coming back into the classroom as a teacher, I anticipated that I would just start teaching the way I always have, you know, and uh but when I came back I had all these books from Project [name] and Project [name] and this and that, and I had to go to workshops that whole week and I had to work with all these service learning people for [Local research university] and I had all of these people that were in my classroom.

Ward: What people?

Major: a graduate student, assigned to my classroom through this project and service learning students who do special lessons.

Ward: But you didn't volunteer for this?

Major: Uh, Uh, I was just assigned to this project. And again, its been interesting, but I had no control over the whole thing.

Ward: Do you have planning time with these people?

Major: I go to workshops. ..It's not a particular planning time..uh the person who wrote the grant for the program, apart of the grant says that she has to train people. So we actually have training sessions.

Ward: You get training but as far as coordinating the efforts and,

Major: We've had one or two meetings at the school, but basically it's nothing to
            talk about.

Highly advertised projects negotiated by individuals in positions of authority distant from classrooms increased the likelihood of the coercion and exploitation of teachers. In this case, Regis used personal knowledge of school administration, her expertise, and access to resources outside of the school hierarchy to create her own agency. An administrator/supervisor in the central offices commented on this project as one of the reasons the grantwriting office had been established. According to her, the school division felt Regis had used school time and resources to advance her own agenda with little benefit to the school system. The grantwriting office was an attempt to centralize control over funding and seeking to prevent "loose cannons" from writing grants without approval.

De Certeau (1984) talks about a French term "la perruque, the wig" which fits the kind of "tactic" used by Regis to make "school time" work to her personal benefit.

La perruque is the worker's own work disguised as work for his employer. . . . La perruque may be as simple a matter as a secretary's writing a letter on 'company time' . . . turning material to his own ends and using the machines for his own profit, the worker who indulges in la perruque actually diverts time (not goods, since he uses only scraps) from the factory for work that is free, creative, and precisely not directed toward profit [of the company.] (de Certeau, 1984, p. 25)

Student Teachers, Traditional Connections To Universities

Although cooperating teachers often talked about the multiple benefits of having student teachers work in their classroom, some talked about problems that could occur. Some mentioned the extra work, others the strain of having a "shadow" all day and the responsibility for keeping student teachers occupied. As discussed in the chapter on time, teachers need the few minutes that students are out of the room to take care of tasks that cannot otherwise be done. A protégé could easily consume those minutes with a question or two. Student teachers and teachers also experienced discomfort with being observed and judged by the other. While it is assumed that student teachers are assessed by cooperating teachers, the possibility of negative assessments of teachers by protégés is more problematic because teacher "reputations" can be transported into the community. These relationships are complicated further in that large numbers of teachers in this district who attend(ed) the two local universities that place student teachers in these schools. It is possible, then, that a teacher could have a student teacher criticizing her performance to present or past university mentors.

Ness: and I went to, attended [name] University and so I know that it is
            important to have a place for student teachers to learn, but um, it takes so
            much time. You don't have a minute to call your own. I mean it's like that

anyway but more, even more with a student teacher. They are always there, kinda like a Siamese twin attached to you. You even have to explain that you need to go to the bathroom. Some aren't so dependent, but those that are, are there all the time and need you to explain everything, and well, I don't like having to grade them and all unless, you know, I have explained things. I've had better experiences with the ones from [University] compared to [University], but maybe that's because [the former] was where I went. And, um sometimes they are really sensitive, and its hard to critique what they are doing, they take it all personally when you are just trying to help, or hold them responsible for what they are supposed to do, and then it makes it stressful, really hard to be in the same room. And you have to get along, I mean I teach third graders and they pick up on those kinds of stresses. So when they are angry they will probably talk about you. I remember when I was a student teacher we would all talk about what was wrong with the teachers, how bad some of them were and so it is kind of well, intimidating when you are the teacher and you don't know what they might be saying, in their classes and all. Even the good ones are a lot of extra work, but they, there are lots of good things too that, balance it out. But the bad ones really, are really not worth it. And the supervisors don't do much to correct those ones, the bad ones. I had a really bad experience with one and the supervisor talked to her but it didn't amount to much. I mean, I don't know why she ever got to that level, why she wasn't screened out. And, um even though I tried to work with her, she just didn't belong in teaching, and I graded her down on the check sheet, but she'll probably be a teacher somewhere. And, um that kind of makes you skittish about taking the next one. It's, um, it's a big responsibility all around.

Doan was willing to have people in her classroom who could contribute without taking additional time or adding to her workload. She was hesitant to have student teachers who spent more time in the classroom and required more work than student aides. Doan was aware of the improvisational nature, or what de Certeau (1984) would call a "make-shift" or "bricolage," of teaching and how that could be misconstrued as lack of preparation. It may be that because Doan was a relatively new teacher, she was worried about an observer measuring her competence and critiquing her performance. In any event, she avoided this kind of scrutiny by not requesting to be a cooperating teacher.

Doan: Um, I had some aides from [university] for a few years, and you know, they were, they were pretty good I guess, I, but, but I just sort of decided

	I didn't want them anymore and right now I've taught long enough that I can have a student teacher.
Ward:	Uh huh.
Doan:	But I've also decided that I don't want a student teacher. I wouldn't be terribly opposed to having, oh, if my principal came and said there's a student teacher that needs a placement, I would do it. But, um, I feel kind of disorganized still, and I, I think that one of my real, real strengths as a teacher is that I'm very good at improvising,
Ward:	Uh huh.
Doan:	And um, and I know that and, it's, so I never find myself really In a tight spot teaching, um, 'cause I will just immediately be able to think of something to do or say, or whatever, change, you know I change things so I'm pretty fluid in my teaching and I feel like if a student teacher standing there teaching under me, here, she might see me as being really disorganized.
Ward:	Uh huh.
Doan:	Because that isn't something I would really, I think it would be really hard to convey to them what I'm doing, or,

Throughout these interviews the distribution of power colors how collaboration plays out in public school settings. The attachment of money, materials, status, and influence to grants accelerates the commodification of teachers' time, spaces, and expertise. Even people in these settings can be used as commodities. Teachers, elementary students, university students, and professors take on certain values in their access or through their services that can be negotiated for other benefits. Trends toward "buying and selling" in public schools create a market where individuals or institutions compete in a manner that can be exploitive.

Benefits of Collaboration

There were also collaborations with the university where teachers felt empowered. In these associations teachers often initiated contact in order to enhance the instruction and learning in their classroom, or were invited to join at the outset of planning to shape the project. Many of these collaborations had low visibility. They were not intended to increase the status of schools or teachers and were unlikely to be covered by local media. Instead, their primary goals were framed at the level of the classroom.

| Ward: | How, how many, um people, volunteers did you have in your class this year? |
| Dry: | Altogether I had six, one student teacher and, uh three were service learning students, two were with [name] class and were a big help with my science and the other was with Dr. [name] and helped with computer stuff, and I had a parent from the PTA help too. |

Ward: How did that work having so many people helping in your room?

Dry: It was wonderful. You know, our school doesn't have all the resources that some of the [town's name] schools do, and the families, well some of the families don' t have a lot. My kids, most of them don't have computers at home, and they, they just don't have the kinds of experiences that [university] kids do. My volunteers made a big difference in being able to give the kids experiences they don't usually have. They did projects for their classes, the science projects were things I'm not very good at, so that was a help to me. I always worry that I just do stuff, teach what I like, I think we all, um do that to an extent, and so they kinda filled in my gaps. I, I learned a lot, and so in the future maybe I can feel a little better about science stuff. But, but they did more than just do the science projects. They worked with individual kids in ways that really helped. I'm just one person and there were so many needs with my kids. To, to just sit and read with them or help them with spelling , or to read their writing, and the same with my student teacher, she was great. I have had some weak student teachers before, but this one was really independent. She was a little older and knew what she was doing. It was more like team teaching. I mean, she could handle the class as well as me.

Ward: How did you do your planning time? Was there time to work with these people outside of class?

Dry: [Laughter] No, are you kidding? No, I never have enough time. We talked on the phone and, well, the science students did their own thing. They left plans ahead of time and I got some of the materials together they needed, they brought some of them. The computer student, well, I told her what we were working on and she found sites where we could get more information, she also worked individually with a couple of students at a time to show them how to use the computer. And, the student teacher, well, they are always a lot of extra work if you do it right, I mean some people expect to dump a lot of responsibility on them and take their own personal recess from teaching. And like I said, I have had times when it takes a lot of effort, when, well a student teacher isn't very responsible, or is afraid of the kids or just has the wrong idea about teaching, but then really, that is what student teaching is all about. It's our opportunity to help make them better. But even in the best of situations it takes a lot of time, you are with them all day, and at the beginning of the school year it can get in the way when you are just trying to organize your class and figure out what you are doing, Um, each class is different and so you need time to establish a relationship, uh get to know them, let them get to know

	you and, well another person looking over your shoulder can get in the way of that, 'cause, well you are teaching them too.
Ward:	Did, how did you set up these volunteers? How did you decide how things would be done?
Dry:	You mean organize things?
Ward:	Yeah, and who contacted whom? How did you make arrangements to have these people in your class?
Dry:	Well, we always have a lot of people, professors at [university] who want to place students. I just decide what I need doing, how they could help make my class better for the kids and I talk to people. I mean I really wanted help with computers for my kids and so that is something I looked for. Then I talk with the professor and if I feel I can use students in a way that will work in my class, I set it up.
Ward:	So, you see these collaborative relationships as beneficial?
Dry:	Yeah, Oh yeah! I couldn't have done half what I did this year without them.

This was typical of the positive comments made in many of the interviews about collaborative relationships. Teachers felt good about opening their classrooms to others when they initiated the contacts, had their own purposes for volunteers, and maintained some control over the organization and management of their time in school.

In addition to providing help in the classroom, involvement in a university collaboration could also give teachers access to new knowledge, and a sense of status and excitement about new ideas.

Pappas:	Well, I was included in setting up this project using computers for my students in conjunction with a class in [name] department at [university]. The professor was doing research on literacy networks and I was interested in being a part of it.
Ward:	Why was that, I mean what did you feel were the benefits?
Pappas:	I, um, well of course it was great for the kids. They learned a lot about writing, and I learned a lot about ways to think about technology in my classroom. I have always been involved with computers, but this was different. It was a community where I could explore new ideas with people who were interested and had expertise that I don't have. I felt like I was a part of something exciting and important. People at [university] helped me to connect with a more academic group. I am thinking seriously about doing graduate work in this area. I have loved being a teacher but, it can be boring just being with kids all day. Maybe I'll do something like you, and

go on, maybe teach on the college level. Now that [daughter's name] is in school and we don't have to pay day care I could do something like that.

Pappas had come to think of herself differently and to consider new possibilities for her career. Connection to what they perceived to be powerful others not only gave teachers a sense of status but also created a network of support and access to knowledge outside the school district networks.

CHAPTER 6
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

In this chapter I examine how administrative policy weaves contextual elements into teachers' work. Policy articulates connections between political factors within the local community (e.g. the agendas of community interest groups and local political and business groups) and more distant, state and national political interests. Policy mediates the effects on public schools of these external influences.

Micro and Macro Political Influence on School Policy

In previous chapters I discussed a number of ways teachers' work is affected by the pourousness of schools. It may be helpful to think of issues that penetrate school environments from external origins, or that percolate from schools into communities, as having a branching or dendritic quality radiating into the weave of public schools in multiple directions. For example, in many school districts in Virginia the newly adopted state Standards of Learning exert their influence on teachers, students, principals, and school divisions by affecting curricula, calendars, teachers' time, district or school accreditation, and in some cases pay. Issues also branch from schools outward to society. For example, the policy of fully including students identified as having special educational needs caused some local parents to withdraw their "regular" children and enroll them in private schools. It also attracted families to the school district from other regions where their children would have received instruction in segregated, contained classrooms. Finally, there are issues of administrative policy which weave textures within the internal bureaucracy of the school system. I begin by discussing issues focused within the district and then examine influences originating in more distant political venues. I explore some of the agendas of individuals initiating or upholding policies and look at how teachers interpret, negotiate, or resist them. My main focus will be the official policies endorsed by school district or building administrators. Before I examine school policies, I explore some local community infrastructures that provide a framework for them.

Economic and Other Community Factors Affecting School Policy

Taxes

School financing in Virginia is provided primarily through state revenues, local land or corporate taxes, and government subsidies for educating children from government affiliated families. As in most states, the funds available for public education vary widely from district to district.

In the county where I conducted my research much of the land was not taxable because it was owned by a large research university, by churches, and by a government affiliated munitions plant. Industrial growth had been slow and limited until a recent technological showcasing of the region. There were a few mid-sized industries that had been in the area over twenty years, and some newer, smaller, more specialized business moving into a corporate business park adjacent to the university. Many of the supervisors on the county governing board were land developers,

large land owners, or affiliated with local business, and thus were not inclined to increase taxes unless it seemed economically advantageous to their interests.

School board members must each year request funding from this sometimes less than sympathetic board of supervisors Although school board members were elected, they could only vote on policy. Funding still lay in the hands of local Board of Supervisors that held the purse strings for all services within the county.

Factors Influencing Teachers Economic Alternatives

The few professional job opportunities for women outside of the university tended to be for medical or technical positions, and even those vocations were dominated by males. The university brought to the area professors and graduate students with spouses who had attained undergraduate or advanced degrees and, with the limited professional opportunities available to them, many applied to teach in local public schools.

By drawing upon the pool of graduate student and professors' spouses, as well as new graduates from the two teacher education programs in the area, the local school district had access to a ready population of qualified teachers which had few alternative professional options.

The Office of the Superintendent

During the past twelve years the school district had been through eight superintendents. Some had left voluntarily, some had failed to have their contracts renewed, and many had their contracts bought out by the school board. In a state where it is not uncommon for superintendents to have a tenure of twenty years, the district has gained a certain notoriety for this turnover rate.

The superintendent in office just prior to my study initiated policies of site-based management that included teachers in decision making, advanced the inclusion policy discussed in a later section, and undertook other measures that brought parents, teachers, staff, and principals into the decision-making process. The superintendent in office during my inquiry intimidated teachers and principals with threats of demotion, relocation, or dismissal in an effort to undo the policies of his predecessor. During his tenure several teachers were dismissed, or were not given continuing contracts, some were moved against their wishes, and employees who supported these people were threatened with similar treatment. There was a climate of fear and resignation in many settings that undermined the morale of school employees. Numerous articles documenting his controversial decisions appeared in local newspapers. His actions precipitated a backlash by parents, some school board members, and a few school faculty members which resulted in his replacement. Many of the participants in my study alluded to a climate of intimidation during this superintendent's tenure. Some talked of tactics to circumvent these policies. Others talked about "hunkering down" until this wave of administration passed, or, of undertaking political activism to effect change. Though they talked in detail about his actions and policies off the record, teachers were uncomfortable discussing the superintendent in recorded interviews because they feared reprisal. The references in interviews to his actions remained general or obscured in oblique comments.

Issues of Power

The Budget Dance

Each year, beginning in January, there was a political "dance" in which teachers and parents attended school board meetings, hearings, and open forums about the next year's budget. They signed petitions, spoke on behalf of school funding, and raised the hopes of many teachers. The school board drafted a budget and presented it to the Board of Supervisors. It was usually promptly returned unapproved and the board was asked to cut the total by a certain amount. The school board then went line by line to cut items, personnel, programs, etc. until they had a new budget to present. It was again returned. The supervisors and school board went back and forth in this way until spring. Historically, the dance continued until the budget became skeletal, enough to keep schools going but only the bones of what had been originally proposed. As policy has changed concerning technology in the district, inclusion of special needs students, reducing the student-to-teacher ratio, the need for new facilities and many other things, the need for additional funding escalated.

Teachers and, principals, school board members, central office personnel, and the superintendent were often at odds during the spring budget process because everyone wanted a piece of the pie and there was not much to go around. Those at the bottom of the hierarchy, aides, bus drivers, custodians, cafeteria workers, often got the least.

Teachers Contracts and Salaries

In 1976, when I was first hired to teach in this district, my contract stated that I would work in a particular school for a certain number of hours per day. During the mid-1980s during an economic decline and cutbacks in educational funding, teachers' salaries were frozen for several years. Many teachers in the district retaliated by limiting the extra hours they spent on school-work. They worked to contract and cut back or ceased to spend their own money for teaching materials. The school board revised the contracts to limit the pressure teachers could apply when negotiating benefits, policy and salary. Now teachers signed an initial contract that stated they worked for the district, rather than a specific school, and had to agree to do what was required to do the job. Teachers who had previously been "tenured" were placed on "continuing" contract after working in the county for three years. And, the yearly contract was replaced with an "intent to return" form, which negated the original contract if not signed and returned by a determined date.

Teachers salaries were sequenced in step raises that varied proportionately from step to step. At one time there was a uniform percentage raise across steps, in the late 1980s the school board changed policy and began reconfiguring the salary scale each year. A final agreed increase might be three percent for teachers in the county. However that percentage might mean 4% for teachers at a lower step (step 2) and nothing for teachers at a higher step (step 12). Such redistributions were intended to increase beginning teacher salaries so the district would be competitive in attracting new hires, and to reduce the number of teachers at the top of the scale. Putting the largest percent increases at the lower step levels (the steps with fewest number of teachers) and the smallest increases at the upper levels encouraged higher paid teachers to retire.

After the contracts changed the board began to increase the number of step levels each year, effectively creating more distance between lower salaries and the top of the scale. These extra steps were inserted at step levels where large numbers of teachers were in position for a raise, so the effect was to freeze the step increase and perhaps grant only a 1% raise at that step. Each year teachers new to the system became excited about the initial proposal for 5% raises, while more experienced teachers understood that raise would probably be much less by the final adoption of the budget.

Local Teachers' Association

In the mid-and late 1990s, there was a concerted effort by a local teachers' association to get the number of steps reduced. However, this professional organization had difficulty getting some teachers to join because it was perceived to be too weak to protect teachers' interests. King who was a politically active member of the association, was dismayed by teacher apathy.

King:　　　　I think you, teachers have a commitment to work for the profession, I mean I have a family and I spend time to go to Richmond, and make calls to [school] board members and to inform myself about issues [that affect teachers.] If I can do it why can't they? It is always the same people who are involved. We are the workhorses and they [other teachers] sit back and reap the benefits.

Seay, a fourth grade teacher, talked about why she had not been a member of the profession for several years and what had caused her to eventually join.

Seay:　　　　and the dues cost a lot of money, somewhere around $300. I think. They, the people [the officers in the organization] work hard, a lot harder than I have time for, and I don't see that they have a lot of power to influence what happens. I didn't join for a long time. I just didn't think it was worth the money, but after what happened to [teacher who let her membership lapse and was involved in a law suit] I figured I needed the legal coverage.

Although it is affiliated with the state teachers' organization and National Education Association, it cannot function as a union. The uniserve director (attorney) for the local teachers association explained that state law is determined by commonwealth law or "in the common weal (good)" where the state is seen as the citizens themselves and, based on English law, a citizen cannot sue or act against themselves. Because of this the state must grant the right to be sued or acted against and does not recognize a legal right for any organization to strike or bargain against it. Public schools are seen as part of the state system.

Even so, the association does put indirect pressure upon the system. It is affiliated with a powerful lobby in the state legislature. Most teachers are voters and the organization provides a structure to influence those votes to benefit schools and educators.

Moreover, during the first school board election in the county (the school board had previously been appointed by the local Board of Supervisors) the teachers' association contributed funds and helped mobilize enough voters to elect members sympathetic to their concerns. The result was the dismissal of the superintendent.

In addition to its political activities the teacher association also furnished teachers with legal council, helped cover their court costs, personal counseling, and provided other benefits. It also gave teachers access to detailed information concerning educational issues of importance to them.

Teacher representatives from each school in the county met monthly to bring concerns to the central body of the association. The association's president then met with the superintendent and presented those concerns, and the superintendent's response was reported back down the chain of representation to the classroom teachers.

The association also used newspapers and local television stations to comment publicly on local school policy. In sum, however, membership in this association had little impact on the organization of bureaucratic and administrative power in the district, on how knowledge was filtered or altered as it descended from the top of the hierarchy, or on the increasing administrative demands placed on teachers' time.

District Policies and Procedures

Clark, a former classroom teacher working as a supervisor/ administrator, at the time I interviewed her had moved between central office positions and individual public schools. This gave her insight into some of the peculiarities of both. She and Moss were the only participants I interviewed who had backgrounds in both classroom teaching and central office administration. When Clark spoke sympathetically of classroom teachers and critically about administrative policy, she sounded more like a teacher than an administrator. At other times, she was critical of teachers' willingness to accept the status quo. Although her voice was just one "insider" perspective about these procedures and was biased by her own agendas, she was the only person who would discuss these topics in detail. Teacher participants did not want to be quoted in their comments about central office or principals' administration. During interviews many talked about policy in general, and even about actions of particular administrators but made it clear that the latter were not to be used as specific examples in this document.

<u>Teacher Responsibility Without Control</u>

Political decisions about education at the state and federal level, parent volunteers, external collaborators, specialists and aides, team teachers, even the notion of "student centered learning," all change the traditional locus of control from teacher to others. Yet within this current of innovation teachers are still held responsible for controlling all that happens in their classrooms. Clark called this "the same old model in place, but yet we're demanding a brave new world".

Clark: Bottom line, and you know this as a classroom teacher [chuckle], you are responsible for everything that goes on in your classroom. Just being in a

classroom where you turn your back to write something on the board and one child punches another. It doesn't matter if Johnny is labeled ED and his aide was out of the classroom and shouldn't have been. You will be the one in the [chuckle] principal's office with the parents. " How could you let this happen?" Um, whether you're given the power or not, [chuckle] you've been called in to the principal's office and read the riot act because, um, you were teaching fractions to Amanda and you made her cry, because, well, you were teaching fractions and she doesn't like fractions. . . Um, and whereas they spend an awful lot of time and money in the central office, uh, cooking up all these new ideas and new models and, wonderful Utopia, nobody's done anything to change the basic model of the classroom, so it's very unfair to tell the teacher that we're striving for student centered learning and empowerment, when the method is, you are accountable and your job is on the line every minute of every day. These kids are your responsibility, their progress is on your head, your charge is our school. And if they don't show progress, it is your fault, not their parents or the principal, it is yours.

At some point each teacher interviewed talked about their frustrations with policies that required more than they could do, or held them responsible for things outside their control. The intensification of teacher work was determined by administrative policy that compressed more and more programs and procedures into each day, introduced innovations that required training, and accommodated political interests that framed how and what teachers did.

Incompatible Policies

At times administrators asked teachers to do things that were in conflict. Compliance with policies may require teachers to reconcile incompatible behaviors and philosophies. For example, many schools in the district advocated "student centered learning," multi-culturalism, writers' workshop, and problem solving approaches to learning. However the district also required the use of procedures, curricula, and positivist measures of learning based on a Eurocentric body of knowledge in the state Standards of Learning, and behaviorist approaches to discipline that used operant conditioning through external rewards and punishments to shape behavior. Although the methods mentioned may vary in their interpretation, and may not be "pure" or necessarily exclusive of other approaches to teaching, many participants expressed feelings that they were incompatible in philosophy and intent.

Clark: [chuckle] Here again, um, you've got central office personnel, probably in collaboration with uh, an ed school somewhere, with a major research university. All the same they have this wonderful model of inclusion. Let's do it, and, they act like it's, you just take it and you put it here. But yet, the classroom is still a 100 year old model. It's still based on delivering

services to, educational services, to like ability groups. . . that has not changed. They only thing that's changed is, um, the types of kids they're putting in the classroom. Nothing's meshing. No, the teachers generally adjust to survive for themselves and the children by, uh, delivering less instruction, I find is the main adaptation teachers make. They instruct less, and when I say instruct, the business of school which is education. And we, we've determined in the State of Virginia, what that body of knowledge should be and it's been set up based on scope and sequence. . . So when you have children who are developmentally delayed, which in a lot of cases it's not a delay, it's they're where they're going to be and educationally they're not going to go anywhere else, and they're put in a classroom where the teacher is still responsible for scope and sequence 4th grade. It, it, it doesn't fit. . . . Teachers are still held accountable for scope and sequence and standards of learning yet they're given, uh, a classroom makeup that it is impossible to address that. So what you have here are incompatible systems and you have, um, you have two different philosophies that clash, that don't fit together, that are totally in, incongruent.

Tension between these incompatible policies caused frustration, anxiety, and feelings of inadequacy for many participants.

Clark: Yeah, it creates, um, a type of stress that it's the worst kind of stress. Um, a lot of physical stress because your work is so hard, but there's a tremendous amount of emotional stress because you're going nowhere every day. You're spinning your wheels, you're staying in the same place. And you're wondering, why do people who are dictating this, and that's what it is. The, the bottom up model is a farce. This isn't bottom up, this is top down,

Ward: Uh huh.

Clark: And this was put in place. Um, and these individuals have not been in the classroom for a long, long time. They don't see how their particular model works and you're generally, I feel, dealing with central office personnel who are dogmatic. Uh, there's no compromise, there's no let's tweak this model a little. Um, it's philosophically this is the way it should be. This is the way it will be, with, without addressing practicalities. Okay, we'd like it like this but in this situation, it's not working, so let's, let's compromise. Because it falls out of what they see as their philosophy. And it's, it's um, it's crippling. It's crippling to education. We've schools and classrooms and you've got people making policy. I'm not sure where

these people are, if it's central education in higher education, but it's a real bad situation. I've seen it, um, paralyze [Local] County. Let's say, 6 or 7 years it's been nothing but turmoil. It's not improving. It's not getting better. It might be getting worse because nobody will sit down pragmatically and say here is what we have to deal with. Here's our money, here's our staffing, here are our wishes, here are our problems and has anybody said how can we make it work?

Although some teachers talked of self-blame and anger, others talked of strategies that gave the appearance of compliance but in fact allowed them to do something quite different.

Ward: So, you mentioned classroom management, um you said, that it is hard to do all of the things you are supposed to, that some time you change things around,

Verde: Yeah, Well you, sometimes, I'll give you an example, you know how we have to list our behavior plan in the classroom? Remember we had that workshop on listing five consequences that we are supposed to apply absolutely, without exception. Well, nobody does that. We all put it up so that if the principal brings in someone from the central office it will be there, but really we do what makes sense, you can't teach like that. And, Um, we all have these time that we are supposed to meet with our grade-level teammates, but we really only meet when there is a good reason, same with resource people, they put on their schedule that they meet with us once a week, but nobody has the time to do that. All that stuff is written down so we won't get in trouble, but we really do what makes sense.

Major: I'm old school, we have "writers workshop" and journals and portfolios and "whole language" teaching. Well, I don't know what all of that means, it just seems like a bunch of nonsense, but I set it up anyway and still teach in the way that has always worked for me.

Dry: Our kids come from rural backgrounds and some of them don't have a lot, um, some are real transient and move around a lot. And you can't just teach the S.O. L.s [state Standards of Learning]. You have to start where they are and make it relate to what they know and so I put in my lesson plans that I'm teaching them [the S.O.L.s], so I can document, you know, cover my butt, but I teach them in a way they can learn. I mean really! You think my kids can relate to learning about democracy from studying ancient Greece? Get serious! That's just a joke. Some of their parents would think we were teaching them about old pan drippings. [Laughter]

Teachers' Responses to Administrative Policies

        Dry, Verde and Major described how they resisted the conflict of incompatible policies by simulating compliance and then doing what made sense to them. Clark described a kind of educational "triage" teachers used to sort out the strongest and weakest students so they could focus their teaching on the middle level students.

Clark: in the tradition of resource, and they [resource teachers] kill themselves
Ward: Uh huh.
Clark: Quite often they adopt the, uh, you know, these kids will drop out and these kids will drop out. I hope the gifted resource teacher will get these and I hope the special ed resource teacher will get these, because to survive I'm going to address my instruction right down the middle. I think that's a common adaptation. Um, a lot of teachers are quitting. More teachers are quitting and retiring early. That's a survival technique, or leaving the classroom and going into another area of academia, or leaving the classroom because they really hope they can make it better out of the classroom.

This description of teaching fits with a kind of social reproduction that maintains the status quo of social power, (Apple, 1982,1983; Giroux and Aronowitz, 1993). The call for a critical consciousness in teachers as intellectuals to transform society through democratic classrooms was portrayed as frivolous if not impossible to achieve in Clark's continued commentary.

Clark: You have the rare teacher who just has her heart in it and just works her fingers to the bone every day. . . Every day, 180 days of the year, and then probably take classes and do workshops all summer to get better, and then the next year, and these people, it's heart breaking to see these people go, go into the school and they're trying to make up for everybody else, and unfortunately I don't find that they, they have the influence or the impact that they want to have and I don't think they get the respect of, of their colleagues, the faculty, the support of the principal, or the recognition from central office that, I mean that might be all it would take for this person to have more influence. Quite often they are, um, they are disenfranchised.
Ward: Uh huh.
Clark: They're, they're a joke. They're not to be taken serious because they are so impassioned.
Ward: Uh huh.
Clark: They're not seen as professionals.
Ward: Uh huh.
Clark: And, and that's sad. So where does that leave you?

Clark was talking about how the impassioned dedication of resource teachers (in particular, gifted resource teachers) positioned them as an absurdity. Part of her interpretation might have been related to the philosophical stance of the gifted office which was oppositional to the inclusion policy. The gifted office at the time of this interview said students who were "gifted" should be educated in a segregated environment because they needed the challenge of same ability peers and special enrichment to reach their potential as learners. Inclusion not only meant that all students identified as having special educational needs (including gifted) would have adaptations and services delivered in a "regular" heterogeneous classroom, but that many "gifted" students would be used as peer tutors to help other students who were having difficulty learning. Teaching would be customized instruction to the individual learning needs and style of all children and that "gifted" students would benefit socially by being a part of a diverse community of learners. These differences in philosophy and the ascendant policy of full inclusion caused all four of the gifted supervisors at the central offices to move to a neighboring school district.

But to attribute Clark's comments entirely to philosophical differences would be to oversimplify. They may have also reflected the tense environment fostered by the controversial superintendent discussed previously. Recall that Clark was a school division administrator/supervisor. It is unlikely that "impassioned teachers," as Clark calls them, would have known that their efforts were interpreted this way. Had they stated these attitudes publicly school administrators would have risked offending and alienating teachers as well as parents. In the chapter on collaboration I discussed the "hidden transcripts" that teachers used to resist domination by administrators and parents. Scott (1990) also discusses the "hidden transcripts" of the powerful:

> If the weak have obvious and compelling reasons to seek refuge behind a mask when in the presence of power, the powerful have their own compelling reasons for adopting a mask in the presence of subordinates. Thus, for the powerful there is typically a disparity between the public transcript deployed in the open exercise of power and the hidden transcript expressed safely only offstage. . . the necessary posing of the dominant derives not from weaknesses but from the ideas behind their rule, the kinds of claims they make to legitimacy. . . an elected head of a republic must appear to respect the citizenry and their opinions; a judge must venerate the law. (Scott, 1990 pp. 10-11)

Clark revealed what she believed were the views held by powerful central office administrators about what made a "good" or "bad" teacher.

Ward: How did you know, Talking about central office, I'm curious about how
        their, what their perception of a good teacher is. What makes a good

	teacher? Is it someone who doesn't make waves? Is it someone who doesn't have parents calling the central office? Is it someone who is a grant writer? Um,
Clark:	It's, it's interesting because none of these individuals will be recognized publicly. I don't even think [name of local] County does teacher of the year anymore. That would be implying that one teacher is better than the other, you can't do that! Um, I think, uh, I know teachers that just write proposals, successful proposals and bring in money to their schools right and left, and they are not recognized by the school system. Um, and they certainly don't get to spend their time writing proposals in lieu of potty duty! They still have potty duty. Uh, I don't see where good teachers are supported any more than bad teachers.
Ward:	So you think teachers are sort of used by central office administrators?
Clark:	Yeah, I do. They're interchangeable parts that, I mean that maybe the quality, probably within the school at, at that administrative level, the principal, whatever, values certain teachers and skills and whatnot, but for central office, they're just interchangeable. Um, dime a dozen, oh it's great, you know, she's going beyond her job description, but if she's not here next year, who cares? We'll get another one.

Clark's comments suggest that the distance of administrators not only changes their view of time and understanding of teachers work as Hargreaves (1994) found, but seemingly desensitizes administrators to teachers, making teachers appear as objects that are "interchangeable parts." Machinery parts are not rewarded for functioning well, but repaired or replaced when they fail.

Teachers who did not understand local sensitivities, or chose to act in ways counter to local values risked the safety of their job. The "grid of discipline" or surveillance that made teachers accountable for "proper" behavior (Foucault 1979) varied from school to school so that what might be overlooked in one location would not in another.

Ward:	What about a bad teacher? What would, what would be viewed as a bad teacher from, or would it not matter?
Clark:	Oh, a bad teacher would bring uh, poor PR [public relations] to the school system. It's interesting, because you can have a teacher at one school who will show a video with nudity, and nothing happens, and you can have a teacher in another school show it and the campaign is to get her fired. Now, was she a bad teacher and the other one not a bad teacher? No, she made the mistake of um, of, what am I trying to say. I'm not sure what her mistake was, but a bad teacher has nothing to do with your ability to instruct and relate to children. It has to do with, you did something to

irritate or make central office uncomfortable. You somehow brought attention to yourself, or even worse, perhaps you brought attention to some weaknesses to central office, then you're a bad teacher. But in terms of the teacher who retired on the job and comes in every morning and sits at her desk and hands out ditto sheets, um, I don't think they see them as bad teachers. To me that's a bad teacher. Central office: anyone who is controversial.

Ward: So, it becomes a matter of what's visible and what's not visible. Something that maybe parents react to in one setting and, and it's not noticed in another setting?

Clark: Right. They expect you to know community climate, and I don't know that it's wrong to expect that. I think it's a type of intelligence though that can be difficult to come by, particularly if you weren't raised in the community. The interesting thing about [Local] County is for the most part it's a very inbred school system. It's husbands and wives and children and everybody works for [Local] County and they were born here, and raised here, and they know, uh, the community needs.

Principals

        Principals play a powerful role in weaving contextual frames at the school level. Doan described some of the problems that emerged when principals abdicated their role.

Doan: At our school we have very little, um, direction from our principal. She's more than uninvolved. She's absent. She provides almost no leadership. In some ways that's good and we like it, and in some ways it's not, and um, you know. Obviously the way that it's good is you can kind of do your own thing, and I, I don't think that anybody takes advantage of that, because I think we're all very professional and I really respect the teachers that I work with, um, but, I think that we have to do a lot on our own and we, we don't get messages we should've gotten, we find out things late, um, materials are ordered too late, um, just a lot of kind of material support is not there because of poor leadership at our school. And, um, if, if, we expect to be getting a new leader soon and I think that if our school had more normal leadership there would be a lot less stress. Um, you know, expectations would be a little more, communicated more clearly, and things would be done on time and correctly, and, and that sort of thing.

        Principals were the middle management in the school system. They mediated between conflicting needs of faculty and staff as well as those of parents, students and central office administrators. Principals were also responsible for shaping the micro-political (Ball, 1987)

climate of the school: determining schedules, grade-level assignments for teachers, the distribution and use of materials and equipment, and the overall supervision and implementation of what occurred in their school.

Some participants described principals using authoritarian control, while others discussed how their principals invited them into decision-making. I heard stories of principals who acted as buffers for teachers against parents and central office administrators, as well as stories of those who sacrificed teachers if it was in their own self-interest.

Bono, a resource teacher who traveled between two schools, described the role of principals in managing a school's public image.

Bono: It is hard moving from school to school, they do things differently, and sometimes you get the procedures and schedules mixed up. . . the teachers are different too and you have to interact with them and so that is a big difference, but the main difference is in the principals and their way of doing things. I mean they set the tone. They are the ones that make the rules. One is kind of laid back and the other is real organized and so that effects what they expect and how you interact with them and how you go to them if there is a problem. And then there is the new school, old school thing that kind of puts them in competition. Its like the principal in the old school has to prove that it is as good, that it is doing exciting new things because it is, it doesn't look as fancy and glitzey. But then the new school principal is the same because I guess it [the school] is expected to be right there with the new trends because its so new. And, um, so they're aware of being judged and that really influences what goes on in the schools.

Ward: Uh, huh, um, who, who are they proving this for?

Bono: Well, to parents and to people in the community, and I guess to the school board and those people at the school board office. Principals are really aware of what people think about their school. They are, you know, in charge and if things don't go right, or don't look good then it reflects on them. And, um so, they are kind of spin doctors, they always put a positive spin on things cause they have to keep a lot of people happy.

Not being controlled by an "absent" principal has its advantages until the infrastructure of communication and management begins to fall apart. The hierarchy of power in public schools may not be what many teachers would choose if they could plan schools, but as the system is so designed, then they depend upon it functioning that way.

In many ways principals are more vulnerable than teachers, having to renegotiate their contracts each year. Putting "spin'' on a school's public image was one way of strengthening their hand. All elementary schools in the district were to some degree involved in these kinds of image building projects.

Most teachers I interviewed or observed while collecting data were supportive of their principals and defended them in public settings but privately (off the record) they also held them accountable for things that didn't work in schools, even things that might have been out of the principal's control. In a school where I substituted I interviewed several teachers and the principal. During the interviews both the teachers and the principal talked very positively about projects in which the school was engaged. However, informally teachers complained about these projects and were highly critical of new policies the principal had initiated.

Some participants indicated that principals seemed in touch with classroom reality, although they indicated they still didn't fully appreciate what teachers experience. Many saw principals as more inclined to respond to complaints and to actively seek teachers' suggestions than central office personnel. They said central office administrators often used questionnaires and forms for input from teachers which was never acted upon or was used to support decisions that had already been made.

In the next section I move from these general influences on policy to specific policies implemented by the district. Clark discussed the incompatibility of state policy with the allotment of resource personnel to meet the demands of "full inclusion."

Specific Policies Within the District
Full Inclusion

The district where I conducted my research was in the vanguard in implementing a special education "inclusion" policy, originally called "integration." Using this civil rights language and model for initiating change allowed its initiators to draw moral borders between those supporting this policy and those in opposition. According to some, "Integration" required closing all contained classrooms for children identified as having special educational needs and seeing that all students were educated in schools within their home attendance area rather than transporting them to a school with a particular specialist or class.

Many classroom teachers and special educators were dismayed by these changes. Veteran teachers who had learned to believe in the moral imperative of a prescriptive approach implemented by specialists for teaching labeled students now were positioned on morally murky ground. Advocates of inclusion implied that teachers opposing it were "morally" wrong, "discriminating" against identified students because they didn't want them in their classroom or didn't want to do the extra work that might be required of them. Rey's comments illustrate some of the frustration teachers felt.

Rey: Yeah, well the um, inclusion thing was, from the beginning was built on deception. [superintendent at that time] was doing it as a career builder. I mean he wasn't going to stay, he was using it to platform his career. And, they said it was a choice thing, we could participate or not, but then they said all schools would be doing it in two years and those [teachers] that didn't want to participate might be moved to another school.

Ward: Who, um who was deciding. . .

Rey: The special ed. people. You know [name] and [name], They came to our
            school for meetings to discuss, to answer our questions, but they didn't
            have any answers, Basically they said, "You are going to decide how to do
            it in your school. We can't tell you how to do it because each site is
            different." And they said that we would have all the support we needed
            and more, but it didn't work out that way. And so a lot of us felt
            manipulated and deceived. And they put it in terms of a moral imperative,
            the civil rights thing, like if you didn't want to do it, you didn't care about
            these kids. A lot of us didn't want to do it because we didn't feel like
            those kids would get what they needed. We weren't trained in special ed.
            and, um, we were right. They rewrote the I.E.Ps [Individualized
            Educational Plans mandated by the federal government] to reduce the time
            those kids got with specialists because there weren't enough people to
            provide what they got before. And, so, so its been dumped in the lap of
            the classroom teacher. And, um we do the best we can but we can't do for
            them what they got in a contained class, and the specialist is only around
            for thirty minutes or an hour during the day. And so they don't get much
            of the extra help they need. I, I'm not saying it's all bad, but it's not all
            good either.

        The state regulations still allotted personnel on the basis of a contained classroom model.
However, inclusion required more personnel to deliver services because schools could no longer
pull students from different grade levels and classes into one classroom for instruction. Because
hiring additional personnel to meet I.E.P.s was prohibitively expensive, I.E.P.s were adjusted so
that services provided met the staffing available in the schools. In smaller schools, as I mentioned
in the first chapter, the school division "clustered" identified students. All students identified as
having special educational needs were placed in one class at a grade level so resource personnel
could serve them at one scheduled period instead of dividing their time among several classes.
        This created the appearance of "inclusion," but supporters of full inclusion said that it
perverted the intention of the policy. Some felt classrooms with high numbers of identified
students became a sort of mainstreaming or inclusion of "normal" students into the containment
of identified students.

Lucas: And, we, we have a small staff, and so the specialists just , there just
            aren't enough to go around and so we cluster the kids [identified as needing
            special services] in one class at each grade, and we usually switch who will
            have them each year, Um fifth grade, and I think third, don't do it that
            way, but most of us switch around, you know you kind of burn out if you
            don't. So you get high numbers of kids with, you know, problems, and
            well it just isn't fair to the regular kids. Its like they are, you know, in a

special education class. We, we aren't trained to teach these kids, the, the range of ability is so great, and we just don't have the resource people to be there enough to help, because we are a small school and they do it by , you know, by the numbers. We just don't have the numbers, so we don't have the specialists, and, you know, a lot of parents are not happy, but it, it's the only way to do it.

Inclusion and Collaboration

As suggested in the previous chapter, within the past decade classrooms in the district had been opened to a number of teachers, aides, and non-teaching persons: parents, community volunteers, or university professors and students involved in studies and projects. Samual, a first grade teacher at Orchard Elementary School explained how inclusion policies had increased flows of people and events through her classroom and disrupted her ability to reflect on instruction and classroom management during school hours.

Samual: With inclusion and, and the [particular] service learning project, and the aid from [university], I don't have a moment to myself. I, I just wish I had time! Time to go through my files, to straighten up my room, change a bulletin board, just to sit and think about my kids, or what I want to do in math. You know, I. Some people don't need a lot of quiet, of privacy, but, well, I just can't think in a crowd, and with all these, people coming and going I go bonkers! If I could only just sit in my room and look around it and think how it all works when the kids are gone, you know, out of the room like to music or art, but if, if I want to do that I have to come in on the weekend, and, I've got my family and that gets old after a while to, to, you know always be tied to what has to be done before the kids walk through the door. It ought not to work like that, but it's just the way it is. It's what teaching is.

Ward: What about teacher work days?

Samual: You've got to be joking me! That time is always scheduled to the max, you know what it's like, faculty meetings, child study meetings, conferences, and um, inservice, committees, and, and even if you have time, someone comes in, a parent, the custodian, a resource person, some committee member, to talk about things they can't talk about during school days-cause there's no time. Sometimes that even happens on weekends when I come in, I mean, sometimes it, looks like a teacher work day on weekends there are so many cars out there, and people will need to discuss stuff.

The increasing numbers of adults absorbed in classroom space had a dramatic impact on some teachers' time and space, affecting planning, instruction and the interpersonal relationships of teachers with their students.

For example, when I returned to teaching from graduate school, I taught the "cluster" for third grade. By the end of September, my class looked like this:

Fieldnotes [Sat., Sept. 30]
I now have 20 students, 7 girls and 13 boys. All of the girls come from middle-class families, most of the boys come from working-class families. Six of the boys are new to the school this year. Ten of the boys have special education labels [LD, ED, etc.]. . . Two of them are on Ritalin. Five of these boys have difficulty with reading and writing, one can only read and write his name and about three or four other words; he does not know all of he letters. All of the girls are identified as "gifted" for either reading or math or both, all of them attended this school last year. The principal has said that in order to serve these student in an included setting I will receive half and hour of help from an aide during language arts time each day, and a "gifted" resource teacher will remove all of the girls identified as gifted in Language Arts for an entire morning one day a week. She also includes students [girls] with high reading ability so the net effect is that she is removing all but one girl in my class. I have complained about this and she [resource teacher] has agreed to take the other girl and an additional boy, [I asked for this to avoid complete gender separation I figured that making this split toward gifted was better than the one girl left with the boys labeled as having various special needs] but [resource teacher] says they will have to be "dropped" if they cannot keep up. When the class assignments were made the intent was to cluster all of the students receiving services in my class and to have these "independent gifted" girls be on autopilot [my term] with assignments made by the gifted resource teacher and to have them act as helpers for my identified students.

Verde also talked about how full inclusion influenced her teaching and parents and guardians acted as protagonists and antagonists in relation to this policy.

Verde: Yeah, a couple of years ago I had a doozy of a class. I had a kid with Down's [Down's Syndrome], I had a kid from the trailer park who, well, he had a load of problems. His family has , I think everyone in his family has been diagnosed with some kind of problem, everything from EMH and TMH [labeled as educable and trainable mentally handicapped] to remedial reading and speech and L.D. [Learning Disabled]. I mean they had it all. And, bless his heart, he tried but he needed a lot of help and, of course, it

wasn't coming from home. So, I mean, he took a lot of my time. He couldn't do what everyone else was doing.

Part of Verde's weaving of context is the use of special education categories to position students and to construct identities for parents by situating their children thusly. The reification of these labels eliminated other explanations for kids' performance, locating problems with learning in families and students rather than the school system.

Ward: Did you, did you have assistance? Didn't you have an aide?
Verde: Yeah, but she wasn't much help. I think she thought, um, I should do it all and that she was just my helper. What I, what they needed was someone that could just come in and do it without me having to tell them what to do. And she was only here part of the day. Sometimes I used the sm, the regular kids as helpers, but some of their parents didn't like that, And then I had this foster kid who was a real trouble maker. He was mean, like, he would punch the other kids and take their stuff, he was always doing something to the other kids. He had been moved from [distant urban area] and lived with a black family who were his guardians. He really was probably ADHD [attention deficit hyperactivity disorder] but they refused to even try Ritalin. Well, I mean, I couldn't, there was no way I could teach he was so disruptive. I hated coming to school that year. I would try to have conferences with some of these parents and either they didn't come, like that little EMH kid, or like with the foster kid, they just thought I was picking on him because he was black. And I'm not prejudiced, it made me mad that they would say that, but you have to be careful so I just tried to explain how he was acting, then I just let it go. They thought it was all psychological, but there is a <u>big</u> difference between being upset, and being out of control, and he was out, of, con-trol! I know you have had a lot of these kinds of kids , when you were teaching here, <u>you</u> know what I mean. And, the parents of the normal kids didn't like it at all.
Ward: Yeah, I have had students with difficulties in school , I remember one year I got a lot of phone calls,
Verde: Yeah! Well, they called me a lot, my husband used to take the phone off the hook just so we could watch T.V. And they talked to the principal, and even to [administrator] at the central offices. I mean, their kids were being, uh I mean I did all I could, but you can only do so much with those kinds of needs, and they [parents of "regular students"] thought their kids' education was, um being neglected. And, well, some of these people [parents] are prominent in the [town] community and they care about their

kids being treated right. Most of them backed what I was trying to do, they understood my uh, position in all of this. One of, one mother was my room mother and she, she came in and volunteered to read with my, with the kid from the trailerpark, and she took him out to read in the hallway so he could concentrate and it was a big help to me cause, he, he was one less kid to demand, to take me aw-, to to, take my attention, and she would say, "I don't know how you do it with those kids in here all day." Really, it worked a lot better when we had mainstreaming. I just felt caught in the middle in all of this.

This interview shows how through an administrative policy of full inclusion the classroom can become a borderland between dominant culture and those students who are seen as different. Verde had to negotiate between the parents or guardians of students she saw as "contaminants" (Sibley, 1995) of the classroom, "these kinds of kids," and the parents of "normal" students.
Sibley (1995) observes that:

Within European capitalistic societies it is evident that the boundary of 'society' has shifted, embracing more of the population, with the class divide becoming more elusive as a boundary marker. The immagery of defilement which locates people on the margins or in residual spaces and social categories, is now more likely to be applied to 'imperfect people', to use Constance Perin's term- a list of 'others' including the mentally disabled, the homeless, prostitutes, and some racialized minorities. (p. 69).

Using Sibley's interpretation of social spaces, inclusion classrooms then become at the very least, arenas of "bordercrossing" or zones of ambiguity in spatial (classrooms) and social categorizations, marginal states where danger, or at least uncertainty lie (Sibley, 1995, p. 33).

Homework Hotline

Each teacher in the county was required to record a daily or weekly homework message on a central office number so that parents could call to check their child's assignments. The intent was to circumvent the problem of students forgetting to do their homework and parents complaining that they had no way to hold their child accountable until after receiving a six week progress report. According to Doan, administrative policy requiring the use of a homework hotline for communicating students' assignments undermined the effort of upper-grade teachers to instill responsibility through the use of homework assignment pages which were signed by parents daily.

Ward: Are there ways that you are required to communicate with parents? I
            mean, are there, I know, I know they used to have, there used to be a
            homework hotline. I don't know if that's still in place or not.

Doan: It is, and, um, you know, the year that it was put in place, we were all
            doing a little card and we were given a talk about how to do this and what
            the expectations were, uh, parents were sent a letter home all about it and
            given the number of their teacher, da-da, da-da, da-da, da-da, da. This year
            there was not bureaucracy about that and nothing was said about it for
            quite some time. Like maybe til November or December, it seems like. And
            then, something came down from, from top administration, not from the
            principal, but from higher than that, saying that you know, uh, we were to
            be using that on a regular basis, and I think elementary school teachers are
            expected to do it or anyway in my grade once a week, and sort of, this is
            what we're doing this week in science, we'll be doing blah blah blah, and
            you know, that, and I've done it one time this year. And I have, it's not in
            defiance, although, um, the one major way that I've changed since I started
            teaching is that I kind of have a, you know, if something seems unfair and
            kind of absurd to me, I don't do it.

Ward: Uh huh.

Doan: And now my attitude is fire me, [laughter], you know, I mean, if you're
            going to ask me to do something that unreal and meaningless, you know,
            I'm here, I'm doing my job, I'm doing a very good job, I think I'm a good
            teacher, you know. I'm not going to waste my time doing meaningless
            wasteful things, and, uh, but you know, I mean I kind of thought, well I'll,
            you know, I'll try, but the thing about that is I have no evidence
            whatsoever that any parent in my classroom ever calls that number.
            Nothing was ever even sent home this year telling what my number was.
            And when I kind of decided, okay, I'll try to do this, I actually told my
            students, I said write this number down this way, you know, your parents
            can call, but even after I did that I only did it that one time and um, you
            know, when your just, you, I have no real connection. No one ever, if
            parents were telling me, oh, this is so wonderful, I use it all the time, and
            it's so helpful, and, but that doesn't, but no one has said anything about it
            to me. But I understand that the administration does check and count.
            They did this at the end of last year, how many times we used the hotline,
            so I, you know, maybe at the end of the year when they see that I did it
            one time, although I know there are other teachers who haven't done it all,
            so, [laughter]. . . And some, you know [teacher's name] she writes out
            everything she's going to say. Well I'll be darned if I'm going to do that!
            And um, the thing is too, I mean I think a lot of parents feel about a lot of

teachers feel about that, you know, we're trying to teach the student to be responsible for their work. And almost all teachers have at the end of the day a time, you know, if you teach above Second Grade, a time when the students sit down and we all write our assignments together and say what they are, the special book that goes home, and, you know, that's what we're trying to instill in them, no that you know, oh, well, if you forget your homework it's okay, your parents can call the homework hotline. You know, and, and did anyone ask the teachers about that at all? No. Not one single teacher was asked, "Do you think this is a good idea?".

While interviewing and moving through various school environments I heard several complaints about this system. First, most schools were limited in the number of phone lines teachers could use. This meant teachers were often required to call from home. Second, the messages became verbal performances of the teachers' competence signaled through grammatical proficiency, vocabulary, speech patterns, dialect as well as organization of thoughts and ability to communicate. Many teachers spent a great deal of time writing out their words, rehearsing, recording, and re-recording until they were comfortable with their message. Because of the extra work it required and the vulnerability it created, many participants admitted that they simply stopped using the service. One person commented during an interview "at least when you send a parent letter you can have another teacher proofread what you've written. That's not so easy to do with a recorded message."

Those who did continue to use the hotline did so because they were supposed to, not because it was helpful. Its use did not seem to protect teachers' private time, but colonized it without benefit. Regardless of whether parents did or did not use this service they still called to talk directly.

Staff Development and Inservice Training

Staff development was another activity shaped by administrators. Sometimes principals had particular areas of interest, often related to classroom or school organization and management, in which they required teachers to be trained. One school reorganized the entire school around family teams that included four strands connecting students and teachers longitudinally through the grade levels, kindergarten through fifth grade. Elementary schools were also involved in a continuing self-study and assessment in order to maintain accreditation by the Southern Schools Association. Sometimes principals would arrange retreats to build collegial relationships among staff members.

During the year I conducted interviews the central office set up professional development workshops called "The Sister Schools Project," which partnered elementary schools to work on curriculum development. No one I interviewed could tell me exactly what these sessions were supposed to accomplish, except some vague connection to the looming standards of learning. One participant ventured that perhaps it was "another of those activities that made it look like teachers have a say in things that are already decided" (Bono). Another thought it was to build

community or collaborative relationships between schools. No one knew the logic used to match particular schools. The open-endedness of this enterprise may have been intended to make room for teacher ownership of the process, but teachers were unclear about how it was to work, or to what end.

Doan's comments about this project were typical of the responses from other participants.

Ward:		What about the, um, sister school thing?
Doan:		[pause] I thought that was a complete waste of time too, and I thought it was a neat idea and I don't exactly know why it didn't work. But I think basically it's because it was something done outside, it's one more thing, you've got an outside, it's just like the teaching profession to be really, really good, would be a 24 hour profession. And we just don't have wherewithal to do that, you know, and so it would be after school and we'd all be dragging in with other things on our mind. We gotta go to the grocery store, pick up the dry cleaning and stuff and we're supposed to talk about curriculum or something and we're supposed bring materials, you know. Well, I didn't have time to get my materials, you know. So I came with nothing, you know, whatever. And there was also, I mean he'd say, there's also at least at our grade level at our particular school, there was this competitive, you know, well we do this and we do that and it seemed sort of competitive, like, people were defective if they do what other people did and I stopped going because I just didn't like the vibes in our group.
Ward:		You mean from within your school or across, between schools?
Doan:		Between the two schools.

According to participants, the "sister schools" took turns "hostessing" these sessions after school hours, supposedly 4:30-6:00 but lasting longer at some sites. Many teachers I interviewed and talked to informally complained extensively about the lack of direction and waste of time they experienced in this exercise. Most schools stopped participating because of poor attendance when demands on teachers tightened toward the end of the school year. Being required to travel to another school at the end of a teaching day to be "collegial" with teachers they did not know, without direction about how the outcome could be used, caused conflict and resentment among teachers rather than inspiration.

Hargreaves (1994) discusses how increased preparation time can "help create or reinforce either collaborative cultures *or* contrived collegiality."

<u>Collaborative cultures</u> comprise relatively spontaneous, informal and pervasive collaborative working relationships among teacher which are both social and task-centered in nature. These entail forms of leadership that support and facilitate these collaborations on an on-going basis, rather than controlling and constraining them. <u>Contrived</u> <u>collegiality</u> is more controlled, regulated and predictable in its outcomes, and is frequently used to implement system initiatives or the principal's preferred programs. (p. 135)

Technology

In service training/professional development sessions were also held to train teachers in using computer technology. These also took place after school hours. This particular district was positioned politically within a technological cadre of thirteen local school district. The cadre was connected through computer networks and engaged in cooperative and competitive relationships in obtaining funds and political power at the state and local levels. Because the district contained a large research university and was located in a county where all schools and agencies were networked through computers it was particularly involved in technological innovation. As a result collaborative technological projects were an important part of local politics.

Many schools, however, lacked the infrastructure to support computer use in an effective way. Doan taught in a school represented as being totally connected, but in reality only certain grade levels had computer connections in classrooms. Other outlying schools had only one modem for the entire school.

Doan: There's this charade at our school that we're all hooked to the internet and using it and wired and everything. Well there's only two grades at our school that are. That, that's another little bee in my bonnet too, So all these second grade parents have their kids come into our classroom, after experience on being on these wonderful computer things and they're-- we're back in the dark ages! And that doesn't make us look good.

Ward: Why?

Doan: There is no administrative explanation to the parents of that.

Ward: Why, why is it that some grade levels have it and some don't?

Doan: I, I don't know. I think maybe because of grants. Because certain grade levels have received grants, or maybe because the principal has decided that's a good grade level for it, or, there's only a few, only one grade level can get it so let's give it to Fifth Grade, just kind of an arbitrary thing.

Ward: So it's Fifth and Second that have it?

Doan: Uh huh. And, I, and the principal even said to me the other day, you don't, you don't have a modem in your class? I said no, I'm not even hooked to the internet. She didn't even know that. [pause] And other teachers don't know that either. Other teachers will start talking to you

	about doing a wonderful project and you say, excuse me, [laughter] I don't have access to the world wide web in my classroom.
Ward:	So, if you want to use that, you have to go elsewhere?
Doan:	I'd have to go to the library.

Socio-economic difference and teachers' personal resources were important facets of personal context that entwined with administrative policy in ways that could disadvantage certain teachers. In this case the ease with which the participant could use time to work at home was complicated by lack of personal access to technology. If Doan was to comply with the expectations for technology use that framed her work, she had to use computers. Yet to do so required giving additional personal time at a school site on weekends or before and after work hours.

Many other participants discussed the problems that lack of access to technology created for their teaching. Often printers were not working. Systems or servers went down. In one elementary school where I substituted the teacher I teamed with came in late apologizing that she had come in early but had returned home to use her printer: for some reason none of the computers in the school were printing and they had to wait for technology assistance from the central office to figure out the problem. Teachers like Doan who lacked these resources or like Koffe who lacked expertise, were placed at a disadvantaged by administrative policies compared to colleagues who had technological skill and home computers.

CHAPTER 7
CLOSING THOUGHTS

Our first audience is our "self", all writing begins at the personal level, both developmentally in becoming a writer, and as a process developing each piece of writing (Britton, 1966; Elbow, 1981). This work, grounded in my personal perspectives not only reflects the individual journey of transformation all graduate students embark upon when they seek an advanced degree, but is also an exploration of my life's work and relationship to others. I have tried, therefore, to make my voice, my experiences, my relationships and biases as visible as possible throughout this dissertation. I organized my beginning chapter as a highly personal and immediate view of school contexts and how I made sense of them. Subsequent chapters moved outward to a broader and more distant vision, but always began with a return my own experiences.

As in any qualitative study, much of the data collected and analyzed is missing from the final document. For example, I deleted an entire section on the state standards for evaluating students' progress because they were only just beginning to emerge as an issue for teachers during the year I conducted my interviews. Even though the following year they became a major concern. I also restricted commentary about gender and race, which emerged as a salient issue for some teachers, preferring to focus upon official administrative policies. Although this is a highly personal piece, my hope is that I have explored questions of relevance to a broad audience of teachers and researchers and challenged some of the accepted views of elementary school environments.

What to make of all of this, beyond a personal sense-making of my life as a teacher? A summary or set of conclusions seemed inappropriate for this kind of investigation, therefore, I'll try instead to situate some of what I have explored within a larger framework. There are issues that seem particularly important to consider in light of current trends in education and educational research.

The local relationship of university research and teacher education to practice appeared to mirror a broad-based incongruency throughout our system of public schooling. And, nostalgic views of teachers' roles and how elementary schools function may maintain an archaic organization of schools that does not fit with the layering of new responsibilities into teachers' work. Finally, although teachers actively responded to the changes in education and to the distribution of power by using various coping mechanisms and tactics, their ability to do so effectively appeared to be determined by their experience, the intensification of their work and their proximity to events in schools. It is through an examination of these elements that I have tried to reveal some of what teachers believed actually occurred in schools rather than the accepted interpretations of those outside of practice.

Much of the research on American public schools occurs from academic or administrative perspectives and examines selected pieces of teaching environments. When teachers are

researchers, they mostly explore their practice, rather than the larger systems of district-wide or national policy. There are many practical reasons why this happens; teachers immersed in practice have neither the time, nor distance and may not have access to the information necessary to interpret the larger structure, and it is not possible for distanced administrators or researchers to interpret schools in a proximal perspective.

Drawing from my own experiences and the interviews I conducted, I have been struck by how difficult it is to separate context into the selected pieces present in most of the research on education. Although in my inquiry particular categories of context did emerge repeatedly as important to teachers in this district, and at times there were similar responses to particular categories, still they were not discrete nor were they interpreted the same way from one school environment to another. For example, in this district the word "inclusion" varied in meaning from school to school and the factors influencing its interpretation varied as well. Categories of context blended or braided together with many other factors in singular ways which created unique circumstances for each teacher to figure out. And though I did use categories to analyze what teachers were saying, I tried to weave them into the contextual braid. Even so, the categorization of data was awkward and often could have been attached to a variety of categories and interpreted differently.

When distanced interpreters pick apart the threads of context to make sense of school environments it becomes even more problematic. This approach can obscure the complexity of what teachers do, and how schools function. Moreover, when information is presented to education students in a like manner it fails to communicate the interactiveness of self determination as a teacher. By that I mean, students cannot perceive the "bricolage or 'make shifts' (de Certeau 1984) teachers employ within their unique circumstances. To succeed as a teacher one needs some understanding of how these facets blend and influence one another, as well as a tool kit of strategies and an ideal grounded in a congruent philosophy of teaching.

Colleges of education do a good job teaching methods, philosophies, social and historical contexts, but tend to do so in a somewhat separate, disconnected manner, leaving students to intuit the interwoven complexity of schools during student practicum or as beginning teachers. This increases their vulnerability to being assimilated into the local "way of doing things" thus, no matter how diligently student teachers learn "best practice" in college coursework those ideas are likely to atrophy unless supported in teaching settings.

Do we change public schools, or do we change teacher education and research? It seems to me that one way to transform both and increase the compatibility of these institutions would be to decrease the distance between them, perhaps a hybridization that brings administrators, researchers, professors and university students into classrooms as co-teachers and classroom teachers and other school personnel into administration of schools and into universities as instructors and researchers.

Rothschild & Whitt (1986) examined cooperative businesses based on democratic participation which emerged during the 1960's as a counter- culture alternative to the hierarchical distribution of power in traditional workplace organization. These organizations were largely

collectives which distributed power among participants and interchanged responsibility, so that the hierarchy of authority, status and power were dismantled. Now, I realize the anarchist qualities of this structure is an improbable solution. However, a blurring of status and power by intermingling the roles traditionally ordered hierarchically might provide an opportunity for creative solutions to the new demands for educational settings. Hybrids of theory, administration and practice by their very nature would make their boundaries indistinct reducing the distance between them. It seems to me that exploring new paradigms of education may be one way to address the needs of our changing society. Within existing, archaic ways of "doing education" teachers are likely to be effective despite the system, not because of it.

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VITA
RANDALL A. WARD

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND
    PH.D. – Curriculum and Instruction
    Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
    Blacksburg, VA 24061
    December, 1999

    Masters of Arts – Curriculum and Instruction
    Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
    Blacksburg, VA 24061
    June, 1993

    Bachelor of Arts – Elementary Education
    Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
    Blacksburg, VA 24061
    June, 1976

WORK EXPERIENCE
    1993-1995 – Graduate Assistantships, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.
    Responsibilities – Development of a manual delineating policy for apprenticeships and mentoring programs for the Virginia Department of Education, Oversight of regional conferences for Virginia Work and Family Study Programs, Supervision and Instruction of Masters level student teachers during a year-long practicum.

    1995-1996 - School Teacher, Montgomery County, Virginia.
    Responsibilities – Taught 3rd grade at Prices Fork Elementary School

    1996-1998 – Graduate Assistantships and Adjunct Instructor, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.
    Responsibilities – Taught two sections of Social Foundations for four semesters to undergraduate students in Educational Studies and taught Schooling in American Society as an adjunct instructor to a cohort of Masters level students at the Graduate Center for Virginia Tech in Fairfax, Virginia.

    Prior to 1993 – Elementary School Teacher, Montgomery County, Virginia.

BIOGRAPHICAL
    I was born 1944 to a military family and lived in South America, and in various locations in the United States of America as a child. During my adult years I have been a public school teacher in Blacksburg Virginia. My teaching experiences include: Preschool Multi handicapped, 1st. 2nd, 3rd, and 5th grades; university teaching and tutoring prisoners for a high school equivalency examination, I have participated in numerous civic activities and professional organizations including: Pi Delta Kappa, Kappa Delta Pi, and Phi Kappa Phi.