UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Stories of Teacher Practice:
Exploring the Professional Knowledge Landscape

by


Charles P. Rose

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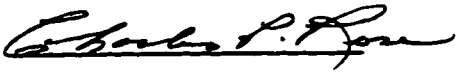

4952 Viceroy Drive, N. W.
Calgary, Alberta, T3A 0V4
Canada

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Date

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled STORIES OF TEACHER PRACTICE: EXPLORING THE PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE LANDSCAPE submitted by CHARLES P. ROSE in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY.

Dr. D. Jean Clandinin
(Supervisor)

Dr. Myer Horowitz, O. C.

Dr. T. R. Carson

Dr. D. A. (Al) MacKay

Dr. L. LaRocque

for Dr. C. M. Clark
(External Examiner)

November 25, 1996
Date

DEDICATION

To Betty, Ken and Carolyn

That your stories may always be heard

Abstract

This is a case study of two teachers attempting to live out a story of school reform and the ways in which their personal practical knowledge shapes and is shaped by the professional contexts in which they work. The professional knowledge landscape metaphor of Clandinin and Connelly (1995) frames this narrative inquiry and provides a common language for exploring the stories the participants tell of their experiences and the ways they live their stories. Because it is a study of teacher knowledge, it is also an inquiry into teacher education.

It is a case study of relationship. It is about two teachers and their need for relationship. It is also about their relationship with a principal. It is a story about possibilities, possibilities new teachers bring to the context of their first assignments and possibilities some principals dream about. It is a study of stories; stories within stories, stories about the past, stories of the present and intentions for the future. It demonstrates the need teachers have to tell their stories, their need to reflect upon them, to reconstruct them, to relive them and to tell them again. It is about the ways teacher knowledge is embodied within the stories of their practice, and is carried autobiographically. It is about how they are guided by that embodied, narrative and relational knowledge. It is also about the power of the story that is dominant in schools, a story in which theory drives practice. It is a story of the tensions, conflicts and dilemmas experienced by two teachers as they attempted to live out an alternative story and, in the process, shaped and were shaped by the contexts in which they worked.

This research challenges notions about the in-classroom place as the secure domain of the teacher, impervious to influence and shaping from outside. It reveals some of the

problems and dilemmas inherent in the way teachers are positioned on the landscape in relation to other teachers, to principals and superintendents. It raises questions about the need to for principals to live different stories if teachers are to be facilitated in exploring their teacher stories, reflecting upon them and reconstructing and living out new stories.

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When I began my doctoral program, I gave little thought to the network that might be required to sustain the undertaking. Nor did I anticipate the encouragement and care that would be extended to me as I lived out my researcher story. I am deeply grateful for that support, for relationships that developed over the course of my study and research and for what I experienced as a unique story of community.

The study would not have been possible but for the willingness of my research participants, Clark and Sara. I thank them for their trust and confidence, for their friendship and for their courage in openly sharing their stories of experience, their hopes and aspirations.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I returned to my practice as a principal after completing my M. A. Degree and for the next five years I worked in a leadership role with students, staff and parents in a large and complex junior high school. In reaction to persistent problems which included low student achievement, a growing loss of interest and motivation on the part of many students, irregular attendance, an increase in violent behavior in and around the school and, for many, a lack of success generally, our school leadership team placed before the staff a bold plan for change. The plan invited teachers to form their own team groupings and to assume greater responsibility and control over curriculum and methods.

We received total consensus and the school was organized into five smaller and unique schools or learning communities, each consisting of approximately 150 students and six teachers. Students who had been labeled English as a second language or special education were integrated. The authority and responsibility for grouping students and developing curriculum were turned over to the teacher-coordinator and the community of teachers and students. In general, teachers were in charge of the educational operation of the unit. Fine and practical arts teachers, counselors, resource teacher, librarian, principal and two assistant principals provided support.

The school began to improve as each of the five groups of teachers made their own decisions about the ways in which they would teach. Learning communities ranged from the traditional, with desks in straight rows and a schedule of specialist teachers characterizing the school day, to an integrated, interdisciplinary approach in which team teaching and cooperative learning were featured and in which furniture and rooms were

used flexibly. In these parts of the school thematic approaches, centers, group work, field trips and projects were the methods used.

With the students of each learning community spending the majority of the school day within their own wing of the school and with their own teachers, there seemed to be fewer conflicts between students. In most learning communities student attendance showed a marked improvement and there were also fewer discipline referrals. However, when students were out of their normal learning community relationships, that is, during noon hour, pre-school and after-school settings, the atmosphere of the school often seemed to revert to the unpredictable and conflict ridden norms of the past. The lunchroom, school entrances, playground areas and hallways were common to all students and were of major concern.

One learning community also precipitated controversy in that students were allowed to come early, stay for lunch, bring their personal belongings and make themselves at home. There were always teachers available, some of whom risked censure from colleagues for their sporadic, if any, commitment to the staffroom culture of the school. In this wing of the school and on their travel to their area, students were in violation of previous practice and school rules in that they brought lunches and foodstuff into the hallways and classrooms. Here the teachers also allowed their students to wear baseball caps, which seemed to be in fashion for young people. In order to get to their wing of the school, some of these students had to travel three corridors from the parking lot entrance, past the lunchroom, down the office corridor, along the library hallway to the counselling offices and to their learning community. For some it was a gauntlet of conflicting stories as they learned which teachers on supervision, on differing days, smiled or did not, greeted or did not, asked or demanded about the foodstuff, said nothing or demanded the

removal of the hats.

The story of one student's hat experience became the focal point of a major dilemma for me. It inspired considerable thought and question about the nature of teacher knowledge and what happens to that knowledge in the contexts in which teachers work. I will share the story as I recall it and I will note, that with the exception of my Grade 1 teacher, Miss Wilson, pseudonyms are used throughout my stories.

> Hats
>
> I was meeting with one of my administrative colleagues when my 'open door' invitation was accepted. A quick knock on the door and before I could respond, it opened. Standing before us, somewhat flushed and agitated, was Clark, one of my teacher-coordinators. I could tell it was important and so could my assistant principal, who made a hasty exit to allow me room for the problem. "You need to handle this....now!", Clark said. Never having seen him so agitated, I knew he wanted immediate attention.
>
> "Take a look out here!" He nodded his head towards the outer office. There, very upset, sat a tiny, tearful, eighth grade Viet-Namese boy named Ngyen. Stepping back into the office and closing the door, Clark unwound the story. The boy came to him for help. He alleged a teacher kicked him, grabbed his hat, ran down the hallway and put the hat in an office. According to the boy, the teacher said he would not get his hat back. To Clark, this was the last straw in a long line of teacher centred actions that our staff needed to address.

I reflected on my experience with hats prior to our reform. At the beginning of my tenure in the school, one teacher who physically removed hats from students was embroiled in such conflict that parents and administration became involved. On two other occasions teachers removed hats from students and took the hats to their rooms, intending to return them at the end of the day. In both cases the hats were lost. In the first case, the teacher apologized to the student and made an attempt to replace the lost hat by obtaining another from the lost and found. The student did not appreciate that and the relationship between that student and teacher was never the same. The other incident resulted in even

greater conflict and again involved parents, counselors, an assistant principal and, eventually, me. Refusing to accept any responsibility for the lost hat, that teacher insisted the problem would not have occurred if the hat had not been brought to the school in the first place. In order to resolve the matter, we bought the boy another hat and paid for it with school funds.

I continued to reflect upon the situation as, in turn, I met with Clark, Ngyen and the other teacher. As I attempted a resolution through dialogue and discussion, I began to realize that Clark and his team of teachers were encountering strong resistance from others whose story of teaching (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995a) was in conflict with theirs.

The situation resonated with some of my own stories of experience. As a student I learned about teachers and teaching as a character in different and conflicting stories. For example, I have come to understand my knowledge of teachers as embodied in my image of teaching as relationship. This may be seen in my story of Grade 1.

> Living as a Character in a Plot Line of Relationship
>
> For some unknown reason, the first day of school was an event which I would come to relive many times over in memory and experience, with the sun shining as brightly each September as it had before. A warm, sunny and beautiful day, kept from laziness only by the crispness of the fall morning, September 1 carried with it excitement, anticipation and uncertainty as I made my way (with mother in tow) the two to three blocks from our three-room suite to the neighborhood school. Cliff Bungalow Elementary was a typical, four-room, brick building situated at the foot of a hillside which, affectionately for adults but somewhat more realistically for children, was termed 'the cliff'.
>
> Miss Wilson greeted us and, without ceremony or turmoil, my schooling began. Her manner to me personally was as it was to all of her students. She was caring, friendly, firm, somewhat demanding but encouraging and fair. She was enthusiastic yet stable, predictable, organized and well-planned. Although we did at times present a challenge, there were few discipline problems. She liked me, knew my brother and sisters (whom she later taught) and she seemed to share responsibility for our success.

In Grade 4 Miss Wilson was again my teacher and I recall her help with reading as well as her patience with my frustration at handwriting. This patience and encouragement characterized her teaching and was most evident in our delightful music classes and presentations for festivals and Christmas. She drew out of each of us the talent she seemed to see there. We were alive with the experiences which included the smells and the sounds of our treks through the millions of golden poplar leaves to the nearby high school gym for our rehearsals.

While her investment in students was evident through her dedication and hard work, it was later, through letter writing, cards and discussions on special occasions, that I came to sense her happiness and satisfaction with our achievements. I encountered her teaching again when I was preparing to teach elementary school. She was my music supervisor and taught a music methods course. It is also worth noting that in work on projects and with curriculum committees, she accepted me as a colleague. Her teaching has given special meaning to my understanding of teaching and development.

From those experiences, I came to know the importance of teaching and how relationship, investment, commitment and loyalty are part of teaching. Miss Wilson initiated learning and related with her students individually.

In sharp contrast, I learned about teaching as a character in stories where the plot lines were different. In these stories relationships were not aesthetically pleasing, nor emotionally supportive. The moral dimensions of these experiences inform my practice through a strong image of what I should avoid as a teacher.

Living as a Character in a Plot Line of Control

In Grade 2, I could be found on the playground before school and each noon hour. I looked forward to the start of each afternoon even though it was hot in the room. As my sweaty little body cooled before reading and seatwork, Miss Tudor would read to us. Sony Elephant was the human-like elephant featured in the story to which we were treated as a regular serial reading, as long as behavior was appropriate, noise level was subdued and our morning work was finished.

The reading seemed to have a calming effect on everyone. I could vividly imagine the taste of sugar cane and could empathize with the baby elephant's fear of man. It was the best part of Grade 2, until Bryan grabbed my new eraser.

By this time I had learned to take care of personal belongings. That included bicycle, mittens, comic books and even erasers! So, when Bryan reached over and took it, I stood up for myself, grabbed him and my eraser. We interrupted the reading.

Without so much as a question to see what had precipitated the outburst, our teacher drew from beneath the cover of our beloved Sony Elephant, the seldom seen but dreaded strap. Without the privacy of a trip upstairs to the nurse's office and staff room, my dignity was removed before all as she gave me two hits on each hand. To this day, I speak of the embarrassment and not the pain, although I am sure no one was more surprised than I at the way in which each stroke and pop seemed to cause big tears to squirt forth.

I lost interest in Sony Elephant after that and my regard for Miss Tudor waned as well. There was a remarkable difference in my learning and I remember my parents' concerns for my progress. Needless to say, I was greatly relieved in year four when reacquainted with Miss Wilson. My marks improved and I liked school again. To this day I enjoy a strong friendship with Miss Wilson. In our visits, when she speaks about Miss Tudor, her friend and colleague, I do my best to respect that friendship.

Living in a Plot Line of Discipline and Punishment

Miss Greggson was the principal. She appeared much older and sterner than our other teachers. She seldom smiled. She taught a mixed grade of fives and sixes. At first I was excited about being in her class for it was from that group that a team of six was selected to serve as school safety patrollers. My initial enthusiasm was soon lost in fear.

I was well aware of my inadequacies in school and particularly the problems I experienced in language. I had difficulty with neatness and handwriting and I was fearful of being embarrassed in front of the class. I didn't volunteer answers and I avoided eye contact with Miss Greggson. It seemed that for hours at a time we would be forced to practice our handwriting. I had great difficulty making each letter sit on and between the lines, especially when I was required to keep my wrist off the paper. After a while my fingers would cramp and I became very frustrated. The remedy was even more upsetting. It seemed to consist of a scolding and a prescription of several lines of freehand ovals, drawn once and repeatedly traced, over and over and over. There were seldom any behavior problems in this class. And that seemed to be connected to what we observed when our resident artist, Ronald, was discovered drawing spaceships in social studies. In addition to a very loud scolding for "drawing things that would never exist", he was repeatedly hit with the yardstick. Totally embarrassed and quite fearful, Ronald scrambled under a table and up the cold air register. The entire class seemed frozen in terror.

My knowledge of teachers and teaching seems to have been shaped, in part, by these stories. Through the emotional, aesthetic and moral dimensions of living as a character in these different and conflicting stories of teaching, I not only learned about the importance of relationship in teaching, but I learned what was helpful to me in my learning and what was not. This knowledge seems to be a part of me, somehow embodied in my

experience and expressed in my stories of those experiences. Tacitly, these stories continue to guide my practice. My image of teaching as relationship, for example, is embedded in my expectations for teachers as a parent and as a principal.

Those experiences seem to have taken place in radically different landscapes (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995). As my schooling continued I again experienced those different landscapes. Consider my story of transition to junior high school and how the landscape of my junior high experience contrasts with that in my high school experience.

A Character in Another Plot Line of Control

At the end of Grade 6, we moved across the city to our first family home, where I adjusted to a new community, to new friends and to a new school. School life involved a transition from the small, four-room bungalow to a very large, three-story sandstone building, complete with an annex that housed the elementary school. My brother and sisters attended the annex. I attended the old sandstone building. There were hundreds of students.

School was not at all inspiring and my memories of the next three years are not positive. Some of the more striking features of my six hundred days of junior high school seemed to be captured in Bel Kaufman's Up The Down Staircase. She voiced for me what I knew as a student but suffered silently. Students were treated differently in school. It didn't make sense that we were required to use one stairway going up and one going down. They didn't make such rules in the Bay or Eaton's stores.

Entering and exiting the building and between classes, we were required to march in single file, military style. It was referred to as 'lines' and we were marked on it. The popular form of discipline was the class detention which, in most cases, involved more marching. For me, the three years were highlighted by conflict and exclusion. I was initially enthused at the prospects of participation on sports teams, in houseleagues and other activities. As I experienced team sports, however, the majority of students were cut within a practice or two. The teams were dominated by the larger and older students.

I was also led to believe that junior high was distinguished from elementary by the greater autonomy and sense of responsibility. Somehow that never seemed to materialize. Teachers were constantly fighting for control over students and class time was dominated by a few who continually challenged the teachers. While music, shop and French provided some respite, physical education class was cancelled more often than not. School seemed like a waste of time. There were some exceptions. I couldn't help but note the way in which I responded differently to certain teachers. One example was Miss Tessie, my eighth grade homeroom teacher, who spent some time with me individually. She was different in that she not only maintained a firm hold on the class, but she knew everyone by name, seemed to care about each person and would speak

personally to students in and out of the building. She encouraged me and recognized my improvements. I couldn't help but connect with her and I didn't want to disappoint her.

Mr. Zack was our science teacher. While we did little of what would be called hands-on science, his classes ran in an orderly manner and I learned. I seemed to sense a connection between the mindful behavior of the more difficult boys and Mr. Zack's work as their coach.

I expected more of the same in high school. My high school served more than 1200 students and the 10th grade students, grouped according to program and ability, comprised 18 different classes. I was in 10-H, not at all near the top of the academic stream but not in the vocational or business streams. From the start I found myself a character in another story of teaching but the plot line was dramatically different from junior high. Three brief stories illustrate the contrast and how my knowledge of teaching continued to be shaped.

A Character in a Plot Line of Relationship and Encouragement

Our homeroom teacher, Miss Lawley, was our French teacher. She was overpowering in a positive and enthusiastic way. We were all going to be successful. She knew it and told us so. We were all going to learn French. I did. She began the first class with a little phrase she said we would never forget. I didn't. "A few apples, quelques pommes, a hundred erasers, cent gommes."

Within a day or two she knew every student's name and a little about each of us. She greeted us on entry, involved everyone, and in some magical way, we learned. She followed our outside activities. Some 14 years later, as I wrestled with new responsibilities as president of our teacher local, during a strike, she called to offer encouragement and to tell me she was proud of my efforts.

I am not sure when I realized she possessed outstanding teaching qualities. I needed a great deal of coaching and encouragement to elicit my participation. Even then I was not willing to admit that I liked the work, the class, the new school or the teacher. The three years of junior high, combined with my experiences in Grades 5 and 6, had taken their toll. I really wasn't interested in school and I carried with me, tacitly, the pronouncements of teachers who saw me as a drop out.

One of the most dramatic changes in my life began shortly after Christmas in that first year of high school. It was a small event but it led to a transformation that gave rise to

my life commitment to teaching.

A Character in a Plot Line of Invitation and Choice

In the face of seemingly endless activity in my new high school and in spite of the student advertising via posters and the public address system, I participated in very little extra-curricular activity. However, I enjoyed physical education classes. Everyone took part and everyone, including the teacher, got changed, did warm ups and seemed to enjoy it. Mr. Tayfer's reputation made him out to be a giant but in size he was no bigger than many students. He began classes with a total group activity, after which we worked in small groups, at different stations, on the activities we chose.

It was late winter and we were working on track and field. All students were encouraged to try out for the team. The message was on hallway posters and an invitation was given personally by Mr. Tayfer at the beginning of each class. One morning he worked with a group of us who were learning to run hurdles using cardboard boxes. After we practiced he took me aside for a talk. He looked me in the eye and said that he believed I had talent. He wanted me involved in more school activities. Athletics might be a way to become involved. He felt I might even represent the school in the annual track meet. He asked me to think about it.

For years I aspired to be an athlete. Many times, in elementary school, lunch had been a quick swallow, compliant wash of face, brush of teeth, and a dash back to school to play 'scrub' or to run hard in hope of a kick at the lone soccerball that seemed to busy a majority of children prior to the bell. In junior high, my experience with school teams was demoralizing. Everyone would be invited to sign up and, each time, the majority of us would be cut, sometimes before we had an opportunity to touch the ball. Houseleagues never materialized and coaches seemed interested in having teams that could win. Reluctantly complying with the advice of the junior high soccer coach, who proclaimed that I was not meant to be an athlete, I stopped going to school in the noon hours and I took a job delivering papers after school.

While I was flattered at Mr. Tayfer's offer, I had my papers to do. I agreed to think about it. A week later he called me to his office where he outlined a schedule that would enable me to continue with papers, homework and participate. He was convinced it would help me.

I came to see this invitation as a part of Mr. Tayfer's practice. It was sincere and it was offered more than once. The decision was mine and it would be respected. I reflected on the situation many times since. I knew I might not make the team. But this was different. The teacher taught everyone and set situations in which all could practice and play; those who would venture to 'try out' actually got to try. I accepted the invitation.

That decision marked the beginning of a major transformation for me. By the time

my high school program was complete, I had enjoyed considerable success and achievement in athletic and scholastic endeavors. My growth in confidence and ability was recognized by my teachers, by my parents and by me. Inspired by Mr. Tayfer and encouraged by other teachers, I worked hard memorizing, rehearsing and practicing in order not to disappoint them. I began to realize that my efforts in school had been directly tied to the relationships I had with my teachers. Through positive relationships, some assistance and the reassurance that relationships with caring teachers provided, I began to discover I was capable. My success gave rise to confidence and that inspired me to participate in such a manner as to engender additional success. Even so, I found myself in my 12th year, lacking in what might be termed the basics.

A Character in a Plot Line of Commitment and Perseverance

I was one of two students to accept Mr. Wright's offer to spend each lunch hour (from February to June) working on, relearning and updating basic language skills in preparation for the English final. Mr. Wright was true to his word. He came every day and walked Rob and me through every part of the English program. From the use of has, have and had, to alliteration and Shakespeare, he reviewed what he felt we should know. His methods were those in which we spoke, tried it on and used it, even if we didn't fully understand why. I sense we were taught to feel our way along, by intuition and through speaking. We learned and we enjoyed it. But the exam was something unexpected. I shall never forget my quick shift from confidence to despair when I realized the full implication of my unfortunate use of 'auspicious' as a concluding descriptor of the day on which Lincoln was shot. Why were we writing about Lincoln anyway? "Write simply", Mr. Wright responded. "Write as you speak and people will understand." Rob and I both passed the supplemental exam.

As I reflect upon what I learned about teachers and teaching while a student, I am taken with the contrasts between the stories of teaching in which I was a character. One seemed to tell a story of teaching and learning in which relationships among students and teachers were of conflict with a plot line of control and management. Students had little voice, were not seen to possess knowledge and were to meet the requirements of adults,

with little concern for the feelings or problems they encountered in trying to do so. The message from teachers seemed to be "Listen to me. I have the knowledge you need. I have been there. I know. When you are my age, you may make your own choices." In contrast, another story featured positive relationships among teachers and students. The plot line involved student voice and the opportunity to make choices. Here the teachers drew forth what I had to offer. My own knowledge was valued and I was deemed to have talent. I learned.

My decision to become a teacher was based upon an appreciation for relationships that I sensed to be ongoing, and the dramatic changes and growth I experienced in high school. I was determined to return to others some of what I received and which was helpful. There were also things I felt should be corrected. I began to story myself as a teacher with my own plot line.

Beginning to Live a Teacher Story

In my first two years of teaching I lived out my story of teaching within two landscapes shaped by different plot lines.

> Living a Story as Teacher Within a Landscape of Support for My Story
>
> My first year of teaching was as a member of a staff with a student population nearing five hundred. I was assigned nearly all of the physical education for boys, along with health, two classes of science and one class of literature. I worked at the school from seven-thirty in the morning until six in the evening, Monday through Thursday, and, as with many new teachers, I devoted evenings and weekends to preparation, planning and special activities.
>
> In addition to our teaching assignments, my counterpart in physical education for girls and I provided an intramural houseleague program before school and during noon hours, with the early mornings and after school times reserved for coaching teams and operating clubs like badminton, gymnastics and cross country. I was junior and senior coach for soccer, volleyball and basketball.

As well, fun events, student governed activities and dances were supported by most of the teachers and often occurred under our supervision. Leadership activities, clubs for referees, and for equipment managers rounded out our specialty. All of this came on top of our principal's expectation that we meet our professional obligations for parent-teacher interviews, staff meetings and total school functions.

In support of our first student social, about half of the staff turned out and were delighted to find students well-behaved and involved. Close to one hundred percent of staff and students attended the second activity. After the wrestling season concluded, our sports activities wound down with a track season and participation in the city meet.

The year was full and exhausting, yet rewarding. Our students seemed to respond; our colleagues on staff seemed to appreciate our efforts; and almost everyone grew to support the program and to feel ownership for it. Misconceptions and animosities about our workload gave way to good-natured ribbing and acceptance. Status was based upon what was done for students and supportive and collegial relationships formed and endured for years.

Reflecting back on the experience, I am aware of the ways in which my story was facilitated. For example, the expectations and demands of our administration contributed to our success. Quality was expected in organization, supervision, clean up of equipment and locker rooms and in the decorum of our students in after school activities. Yet the administration was also supportive, regularly dropping by the gym, to observe, to evaluate and to participate. The plot line of their story was that of doing things for, and with, our students. For the most part, the other teachers seemed to be living the same story and there was an aesthetically pleasant sense of fit in the positive relationships between students and teachers, among students, among teachers and among both groups and the administration.

Living a Story as Teacher Within a Landscape Which Supported the Control Plot Line

In school 'X', I set forth to lead by example in order to have a positive influence upon staff and students in a very large junior high school. I expected the organization of extra-curricular activities to fall primarily on the shoulders of the physical education staff. As newcomers with shared high school experiences as team mates in football, basketball and track, Al and I taught full loads of physical education-social studies and physical education-science respectively. We offered intramurals from 7:30 to 8:30 each morning, two sections of intramurals each noon hour and handled our coaching duties after school.

> In school 'X', however, with the exception of band, yearbook and student council, extra-curricular activities were left entirely to us. The principal warned that we were not to request staff to help. The noon hour was "teacher time". The majority of staff believed that noon hours, pre-school and after school were personal times during which it was unreasonable to expect staff to handle or support student activities. Our efforts to establish clubs, special activities and involvement in intramurals were thwarted. By the end of the term and as a result of my efforts to change things, I was somewhat of an isolate, accepted only by a small group who spoke in low tones about what was good for students and what was happening in other schools. I was tolerated by others, who wanted no part of our program. With some, I did not associate. In spite of excellent activities and rapport with students, Al and I won over only a few of the staff. It was obvious I could have more impact elsewhere.

In this setting, my efforts to live out my story of teaching drew critique and disapproval. The principal and the majority of the staff were clearly not supportive. What I had earlier lived out as a student, a character in a story where the plot line featured control and management, I was reliving as a teacher. There was a different aesthetic quality to the experience. School seemed to be for the staff rather than for the students. It did not feel good. It seemed morally inappropriate and it drew strong emotional reactions from me. Yet the more I attempted to effect change in others, the more powerfully those on the landscape seemed to respond by negating my story. I left that landscape in search of one in which my story could be lived out.

Part of the Landscape in the Stories of Students and Other Teachers

My story guided my practice as a teacher and principal. It was, no doubt, significant in the form that I took on the landscape of teaching for students and other teachers as they lived out their stories. I was also a part of the landscape for the participants in the hat story.

As I listened to Ngyen and to the teacher who took his hat, I felt the need to act. I lived as a character in such conflicting stories when I was a student and I was, therefore,

sensitive to what I felt Ngyen might be experiencing. He needed my support. In the light of my own stories as a teacher, however, I found myself suppressing the tendency to act and also the tendency to address the issue with the staff. Having lived out what I storied as an alternative way to look at the organization of a school, I was attuned to what Clark, his team and others were attempting to live out as their story of school (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995a). Our entire school reform seemed rooted in that story. It required my support at the outset and required it now. In a sense I was reliving what I knew as the principal's part in a story which supported an alternative. On the other hand, I knew what happened in a landscape which was not supportive and in which the plot line featured control. I knew how strongly and negatively the landscape could respond. I was aware of the dominance of the control story in our school. I could sense the delicacy of the matter.

My efforts to resolve the problem with the other teacher through dialogue and discussion were to no avail. The dominant story remained firm. But I could not change what I saw as the alternative hope for our students and for our school. I was truly in a dilemma. In the end, I apologized to Ngyen as I gave back his hat. For the remainder of the year I endured one angry teacher and I knew Clark remained upset.

The hat dilemma continued to haunt me and I found myself returning to it again and again. For me it was, at once, the living out of several stories. Each was connected with the others and all were a part of the landscape of teaching in everyday practice. It was, first, a reliving of my conflicting stories as a student where, on the one hand, I was a character in a story of teaching where the plot line featured positive relationships, student voice and choice and, on the other, where the plot line featured the power and control of the teacher. At the same time it was a reliving of my alternative teacher story (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995a) within a landscape of conflict, of support and acceptance and also of

rejection and critique.

The dominance of the plot line in which teaching is viewed as the control and management of students remains strong and the landscape in which it is embedded resists change. This I lived as a student, storied and relived as a teacher and again restoried and lived as a principal. Clearly, it bears the marks of a sacred story (Connelly and Clandinin, 1995; Craig, 1992; Crites, 1971), a story so strongly embodied within the actors as to go unquestioned and so powerful as to resist change. I sensed that it could not be changed and, unwilling to silence the alternative story, I took no action to address the issue with the entire staff, nor to proclaim one story over the other.

In the wake of the hat story, I was left with questions about the nature of the knowledge teachers bring to their teaching and how that knowledge is shaped by the contexts in which they work. I also wondered how that knowledge shapes those contexts. I asked about the nature of the knowledge Clark and his team of teachers brought to their work in that school setting and I wondered about the ways in which their knowledge was shaped as they worked in their professional contexts. I asked, as well, about the ways in which their knowledge shaped the contexts in which they worked. Finally, and in light of what seemed a sacred story, I asked about the places that are safe for the growth and development of alternative stories. Therein was the impetus for my inquiry.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The way Clark and his team of teachers lived out their story of school raised questions for me about the nature of the knowledge teachers bring to the situations in which they work and about the ways that knowledge changes in their professional contexts. What is teacher knowledge? How is it acquired? How is it expressed and how does it change? How is it shaped by the contexts in which the teacher works and how does it shape those contexts? In exploring these questions I began with a consideration of teacher education and the research upon which teacher education is based.

The General Nature of Teacher Education Programs

In spite of continued criticism and attempts at reform, teacher education programs have changed little. Portman (1993) argues that what change has been made over the last fifty years has been superficial, dealing with elements of the existing program, a tinkering with form as opposed to critically assessing the ways in which learning to teach occurs and at significant efforts to change the process.

In a paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting in New York, Geraldine Channon (1971) spoke to the development of teacher education in Canada, noting that the transition from normal schools to universities paralleled that in the United States. Her study revealed a predominance of the university-based Bachelor of Education program although the Bachelor of Education as a minimal requirement was not universal in Canada at the time. Universities also offered a one-year professional program for graduates of other faculties.

Ten years later, she again reviewed the field (Gilliss, 1981) and recorded the four-year Bachelor of Education program as the most common. Ontario featured one year of professional studies following a university degree as an alternative. Most programs contained up to two years of professional content. She noted that minimal change had occurred in the basic curriculum outline for teacher education over the preceding century (Gilliss, 1981, p. 7).

More than another decade has now elapsed. Teacher preparation remains in the university with a four year undergraduate program, where teachers are expected to obtain subject matter knowledge and methodological knowledge for application to practice. Pre-service teachers still undertake a practicum supervised by practicing teachers. While that practicum varies in length, it generally occurs near the end of training and is considered a major element and highlight of the program.

Recent reform initiatives have fared no more favorably than earlier ones. The University of Alberta provides a case in point. In 1986, a four-part strategic planning project was designed and initiated to examine faculty practices, to examine other institutions and developments in the field and to identify issues, propose alternatives and to arrive at a plan for action. The third phase concluded with a report entitled Exploring and Mapping the Future: A Focus on Priority Issues (Ingram, 1989). As the Faculty awaited the initiation of the action plan, they began to alter their practices. By 1993 the final phase was not complete and another committee was established to review the situation and to study the undergraduate program. At the same time, the University released its own restructuring plan with a proposal that the four-year Bachelor of Education program be reduced to two years in Education, with a one-year alternative for graduates from other faculties. What was initially envisioned as an extensive and in-depth consideration of the

program, as it related to faculty aims, purposes, philosophy and practices in the context of the university and the public, was set aside for another realignment of the undergraduate program. The resulting form and structure were remarkably similar to those of past decades. It became another tinkering with the pre-service program.

As the twentieth century closes, teachers and teacher education programs continue to be subjected to criticism as governments seek to address societal problems through changes in education. There is criticism from government, bureaucrats, teacher educators, teachers and others who claim stakeholder rights. In brief, the view is that teachers are conservative, resistant to change and that teacher education programs are ineffective.

Research in Teacher Education

Housego and Grimmett (1985) documented contemporary criticisms of teacher education including the perception that education students, and by extension, teachers, are less capable than other professionals; a view that the academic content of teacher education is less rigorous than other academic content; and a view the content is irrelevant with too much time devoted to theory instead of practical aspects of teaching. The essence of the Housego-Grimmett critique, however, was that programs are not based upon the body of research and the knowledge that serves as a foundation for the field.

Yet research in teacher education is, itself, the subject of considerable criticism and controversy. From the standpoint of those in the field, there is little commitment by schools, universities or governments to using research as a basis for developing policy. While governments draw negative response from teachers for basing reform efforts on matters of control and finance, teacher educators are viewed no more favorably and are interpreted as pursuing the production of knowledge as some form of 'holy grail',

removed from the field of practice it purports to inform. Furthermore, on some topics and issues there is ample research and writing while on others there is little. There is little agreement on what is and is not known. In general, research in teacher education is diverse and is described as individual, one shot in nature and idiosyncratic (Houston, 1990; Wideen, 1984).

State of the Art of Teacher Education

The Handbook on Research on Teacher Education (Houston, 1990) was undertaken as an attempt to improve schools by focusing on the quality of teachers and teaching through a synthesis and interpretation of research on teacher education. Houston concluded that although the research base has never been stronger, it remains thin. Among the conditions contributing to the problem, he noted the lack of attention given to existing research. In addition, he observed that few in teacher education institutions engage in research after their doctoral work. Of those who do, few direct their efforts at teacher education.

In an earlier work, Wideen (1984) offered another perspective. His findings were similar.

> ...little of a firm and generalizable nature can be said about any aspect of teacher education...a basis of research findings upon which to develop programs is simply not there. (1984, p. 246)

According to Wideen, the educational research community in Canada is small and only a few in teacher education actually do research. Of those, not many focus their efforts on teacher education. No research tradition exists and the end result is research that is diverse and limited. From either Houston's or Wideen's perspective, the amount, nature and quality of research in teacher education is unsatisfactory and wanting. Existing research

does not measure up and is, therefore, discounted.

What kind of research do Houston and Wideen count as research in teacher education? Houston calls for replicable research, decrying as individual or independent, research in which definitions or instrumentation do not build upon the findings of others.

> Until we begin to build on the conceptual constructs and research findings of other scholars and to pursue a line of inquiry in depth, teacher education will continue as a cult practice with wide differences among schools of education and professors, unable to evaluate or replicate specific practice. (Houston, 1990, p. x)

For him, what counts is incremental and cumulative, that which grows out of and extends existing research.

Wideen's perspective is somewhat confusing. After finding the field wanting in terms of generalizable, replicative and sustained inquiry, he aligns himself with Popkewitz, Tabachnick and Zeichner (1979) who outline the inadequacies of quantitative methods for research in teacher education. The "reductionistic nature...and the focus on variables taken out of context" (Wideen, 1984, p. 248) are two of the flaws which lead him to call for more liberal methods. He calls for a broader approach to what we consider as research.

> My own review of science teacher education found that over ninety percent of the studies focussed on the methods class using a process product paradigm. In the review of research in Canada I just summarized, selected areas such as the practicum draws most of the attention...While these pursuits are important...a type of narrowness attends them...what is viewed as research into teacher education must be broadened..." (p. 249)

And yet, in his review of research in teacher education in Canada (Wideen and Holborn, 1986) the scope of examination was limited by focusing only on studies of pre-service programs.

Both Houston and Wideen call for empirical research, the kind from which

generalizations can be made, from which behavior can be predicted. They each stress the importance of replicating studies in order to develop a research base. Wideen expresses it as "a base from which new perspectives may emerge" (1984, p. 247). What counts as research seems to be an accumulation of individual discoveries, incrementally evolving and extending knowledge upward from an already established platform of proven and immutable laws, principles and theories. They appear to be advocating the very notions of science challenged by Kuhn (1970) and critiqued by others as flawed and unsuitable (Greenfield, 1973, 1975; Schon, 1983).

Sheehan (1992) assessed the state of research in teacher education from yet another perspective. She acknowledged the criticism of faculties of teacher education and the apparent consensus on the need for reform in schools, colleges and universities in the United States. She noted that U. S. teacher education institutions are distanced from practitioners, unsuccessful in terms of providing useful knowledge through research and unable to develop durable models of teacher training. She noted the picture was similar in Canada, with respect to the lack of qualifications, lack of involvement and lack of interest in research on the part of Canadian university faculty.

Sheehan suggested that we have been unable to shake the vestiges of the theory versus practice dichotomy inherent in the transfer of teacher education to the university. The adjustment from the practical field setting of normal school to the theoretical environment of the university gave rise to a gap between practice and theory. Over time, that problem has been compounded as many teachers have disassociated themselves from research perceived as irrelevant to their practice. For Sheehan, it is the university that must alter its practices to meet professional needs.

She also proffered the notion that the development of teacher education programs

has been hindered by the idea that teachers do not require special knowledge,

> ...the notion that teaching requires no special skill or knowledge...has dogged us for years...that anyone can teach. (Sheehan, 1992, p. 4)

I identified a number of ways in which this assumption is revealed in teacher education. To begin with, it is often verbalized by those from other faculties whose disciplines form the subject matter or disciplinary knowledge of teacher education programs. Secondly, the organization for learning and teaching tends to mirror the content disciplines and thus maintains the fragmented, subject discipline approach. Finally, the message is carried by the failure of the university to establish teaching certification as a basic requirement for teaching in the university.

I question the view of research implicit in these three perspectives. The efforts of Houston and Wideen are directed at the establishment of a research base similar to the kind used in the natural sciences. Tom and Valli (1990) interpret preoccupation with the research base as an attempt to justify the intellectual and professional status of the field. They note that such a focus further restricts a field already encumbered and fragmented by the structures and assumptions of related disciplines.

Sheehan invites a different kind of thinking as she addresses the way in which theory and practice are fragmented and she provokes questions about the nature of knowledge required in teaching. However, she stops short of suggesting a different focus for research in teacher education. Instead, she offers eight general characteristics of professional schools that might be applied to faculties of education. While these characteristics speak to improvements in the relationships between researchers and practitioners and, while they may imply a change in focus, I interpret her offering as another tinkering with form.

An Alternative View of Research on Teacher Education

Just as teaching and teacher education programs are fragmented into compartmentalized subject disciplines, research in teacher education is also fragmented. These disciplines often represent entire faculties which exist in tension and competition with the others and with the faculty of education. Each is framed within the traditions of a unique history and set of norms concerned with its own epistemology and research methods.

Within the education faculty, there are other forms of fragmentation. For example, the organization of professional knowledge parallels the subject disciplines and is structured into specialized fields viewed as independent and distinct from one another. Fields such as curriculum, foundations, administration, supervision and instruction characterize other divisions in research in teacher education. Research is also fragmented by level. Early childhood or pre-school, elementary and secondary each has its own structure, philosophical perspectives and norms for practice. Since the early 1970s, teacher education has been conceptualized as having three distinct phases (Grimmett, 1984, p. 7): pre-service, induction and in-service. The pre-service phase has dominated the research scene, resulting in another fragmentation as pre-service is disconnected from the whole. Within the pre-service phase, research on the practicum accounts for an overwhelming amount of the inquiry. In this we see further fragmentation.

The separation of theory and practice does not seem so apparent in other fields of professional education (Horowitz, 1974). Reflecting on medical education, Horowitz conceptualized an alternative program of teacher education using a metaphor embodied in a story of experience. As a part-time restaurant worker and would-be gourmet, he set out to create a souffle de fromage after observing the chef do so. Much to his chagrin, he

discovered that even with the right utensils, ingredients and recipe, he managed only a plain and rather dull cheese omelet. He concluded that there was something more to the task than the mere mixing of ingredients. The "subtle process and style of blending and preparing its elements" (1974, p. 81) was what he saw as the difference.

Using a blending metaphor to explain the interplay of two different kinds of knowledge, he described the development of an innovative program in teacher education as a subtle blend of research-based knowledge and personal experience. His use of personal experience speaks to a particular kind of knowledge found neither in recipe nor technical process. To appreciate it requires a rethinking of what we consider as knowledge and how we are guided by that knowledge.

Each teacher, for example, brings to his or her practice, a history of life experience and prior knowledge about learning, teaching and education. Much of that knowledge is personal practical knowledge (Clandinin, 1983, 1985, 1986). Neither exclusively theoretical nor practical, this knowledge is derived from the emotional, aesthetic and moral dimensions of personal experience.

> ...knowledge which is imbued with all the experiences that make up a person's being...derived from and understood in terms of a person's experiential history, both professional and personal. (Clandinin, 1985, p. 362)

It is often tacit (Polanyi, 1958) and embodied (Johnson, 1987, 1989; Schon, 1983), a form of knowing-in-action (Schon, 1983).

As may be understood from the Horowitz example, there is more to teacher education than the mere mixing of fragmented elements of subject matter. The knowledge derived from personal experience is significant. Perhaps teacher education should reflect this by focusing upon what teachers know. In the same sense, perhaps research on teacher

education should focus its inquiry on what teachers know and how they come to know it. Researchers in curriculum have taken such a focus. An understanding of teacher knowledge may be facilitated by considering their work.

Research on Teacher Knowledge

The failure of the curriculum reforms of the 60s precipitated a major rethinking in the field of curriculum as theorists assessed the assumptions underlying the reform effort. Schwab (1969) inspired the rethinking by proclaiming the field of curriculum moribund and by questioning the prominence of theory in a field that was really one of practice. He refocussed discourse on the relationship between theory and practice and on the need to maintain a balance of the four curriculum commonplaces: student, teacher, curriculum and milieu. Schwab noted that, to a large extent, reform had been directed at teacher-proofing curriculum and curriculum materials. Teachers were left out.

Goodlad and Klein (1974) concluded that the reforms failed to acquire teacher support and, as a result, were "blunted on the school and classroom door" (p. 97). Connelly and Elbaz (1980) argued that such reforms portrayed teachers as mere conductors of curriculum and teaching as nothing more than the application of theory to practice. In by-passing teachers, the advocates of the science-based reforms implied that teachers do not possess knowledge of their own but merely transmit specialized and technical knowledge to others. Invariably, such knowledge took the form of laws, principles and theories developed through the rigorous application of the scientific method. Such knowledge was produced by the scientific community at universities.

One of the effects of teacher-proofing was evident in the sheer impossibility of the task teachers were asked to perform (Connelly and Elbaz, 1980). The position of the

teacher in curriculum reform was compared to that of the bottom turtle in Dr. Seuss's Yertle the Turtle.

> Yertle...in his attempt to reach the moon by standing on a pole comprised of turtles standing on each other's back, fell back into the pond...the teacher's plight...not unlike that...prescriptions derived from theories, theories of theories, and corresponding curriculum developments, all weigh on the teacher and add complexity to the naturally complex world of the teacher. (p 95)

The notion that teachers were to apply theory to practice also created a conflict between reformers and teachers. Teachers know that, in spite of the curriculum, they are decision makers, called upon to make decisions using their own judgements. Their judgement is used to determine right ways and best ways. In that sense, teachers know their practice as a moral one (Tom, 1985). Appreciating that, it is clear that teachers will act in ways that seem best, to them, in their contexts. They do so based upon their own knowledge. In this view, the significance of teacher knowledge seems obvious.

Research in the area of teacher thinking had grown to such an extent that Clark and Peterson (1986) developed a model which juxtapositioned traditional process-product research with other kinds of research. Where process-product research focused on teacher actions and assumed a relationship of cause and effect between teacher action and student learning, alternative approaches were grounded in the thinking and practice of the teacher. Where the former sought generalizable laws and principles through the control and manipulation of various teacher and student actions, as though they were dependent and independent variables, the latter recognized the complexity of teaching and learning and aimed to better understand the connections between teacher thought and behavior.

They described this emergent research as comprised of teachers' planning, teachers' interactive decision making and teachers' implicit theories. In the latter and

smallest area, research on teacher knowledge was included. Elbaz's (1981) work on practical knowledge was situated here. She defined practical knowledge using five areas of content, five differing orientations and three levels of structure.

> ...the rule of practice guides the methodical implementation of the teacher's purposes, which may or may not be articulated...practical principle is a broader, more inclusive statement...deliberate and reflective...images...the least explicit and most inclusive...the teacher's feelings...brief metaphoric statements of how teaching should be...marshals experience, theoretical knowledge, and school folklore to give substance to these images...serve to guide the teacher's thinking and to organize knowledge. (1981, p. 61)

Clandinin (1985), with collaborator Connelly, argued for the recognition of personal practical knowledge as a form of knowledge which was neither totally theoretical nor practical. They described it as knowledge which exists in the contexts of experience and in the emotional, aesthetic and moral aspects of that experience.

> ...knowledge which is imbued with all the experiences that make up a person's being...derived from and understood in terms of a person's experiential history, both professional and personal. (Clandinin, 1985, p. 362)
>
> ...tentative, subject to change and transient, rather than something fixed, objective and unchanging. (Clandinin, 1986, p. 20)

They were convinced that teachers not only possessed this kind of knowledge, but held and expressed it in ways traditional inquiry tended to overlook.

Clark and Peterson (1986) credited Jackson (1968) with awakening the research community to the hidden complexities in teaching and with conceptualizing the notions of teacher planning and teacher thinking. They linked this growing area of teacher thinking with psychology, via the notion of getting into the heads of teachers to better understand what they described as the mental lives of teachers and the ways in which teacher thinking

affects teacher behaviors. Implicit in this interpretation was an orientation that did not fit with Connelly and Clandinin's conception in which personal practical knowledge was a kind of knowledge that neither separated mind and body, thinking and doing nor theory and practice. Their research laid claim to the existence of an embodied, often tacit, way of knowing and their work provided warrant for recognizing teachers as possessing this knowledge.

In shifting the focus from teacher thinking to teacher knowledge, the research community legitimized this form of research and recognized teacher knowledge as a field of inquiry. In less than a decade, much has been researched and written under the label of teacher knowledge and, to this point, the field seems to have developed in accord with Kuhn's (1970) description of emergent paradigms. The awareness and questioning of anomalies, for example, appear to have loosened the control of dominant thought and practice. New conceptualizations have garnered support (Carson, 1990; Clandinin, 1983, 1985, 1986; Connelly and Clandinin, 1988, 1990; Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1990; Elbaz, 1981; Grimmett and MacKinnon, 1992; Hollingsworth, 1993; Lyons, 1990; Schon, 1983, 1987, 1991, 1992; Shulman, 1987).

Kuhn also noted that emerging paradigms compete with and draw response from the existing and dominant powers. In some cases, there are attempts to subsume the new thinking and theory through cooption. In other cases, resistance and rejection are outright. Many proponents of mainstream thought and practice, in spite of their efforts, fail to make the necessary Gestalt-switch (Kuhn,1970). Such responses may account for some of the reactions by those reviewing the field and may also be reflected in other reviews, as notable scholars and researchers attempt to come to grips with, make sense of, and build upon recent developments in the research on teacher knowledge.

Research on Teacher Knowledge in Teacher Education

The research on teacher knowledge that began in the field of curriculum has also become important in teacher education. As teacher educators and researchers respond to continuing critique and demands for change, and as they assess the nature and quality of their research, calls for broadening the scope of inquiry and the quest for alternatives find some scholars exploring the research on teacher knowledge.

For example, Carter (1990) reviewed three different conceptions of teacher knowledge. She limited her examination to these emergent conceptions of teacher knowledge in order to avoid what she termed "another compilation of discouraging findings" (1990, p. 291). By examining approaches grounded in classroom practice, she hoped to find a framework for a more comprehensive understanding of the learning to teach issue from within the teacher perspective.

The first approach, 'information processing', included the teacher thinking research on teachers' planning and teachers' decision making (Clark and Peterson, 1986). More recent novice-expert studies were also included. While noting that this research has been critiqued for its strong psychological orientation, for approximating process-product research, and for focusing on cognitive processes, Carter cited it as an important forerunner of research on teachers' practical knowledge. She traced this research back to the early interpretive and qualitative research of Jackson (1968) who distinguished teachers' preactive thinking' (planning) from teachers' interactive thinking (decision making). Jackson's notion of teachers' naive knowledge was also recognized as having inspired research on the implicit theories of teaching.

In a second approach, 'pedagogical content studies' "employ information processing and qualitative methods...but focus on subject matter" (1990, p. 296). Carter

found significance in this approach because what teachers know in the content areas appears to bear upon the ways in which they organize and teach.

Her review of 'practical knowledge' was divided into two parts, research on personal practical knowledge and research on classroom knowledge. Classroom knowledge research has an ecological method and arises from Kounin's (1970) work on group management techniques. In it, and based on the notion that teacher knowledge can be codified, teacher thinking and behavior are defined in terms of the establishment and maintenance of classroom order and progression through prescribed curricula. Inquiry focuses on these two tasks of teaching, on the ways in which teachers use their knowledge to handle these tasks and on the ways in which teachers learn to teach. The proponents of the classroom knowledge approach view teacher knowledge as "situated" (1990, p. 302).

Her review of personal practical knowledge began with the work of Schon (1983, 1987, 1991) who argued that the realities of practice involve more than the application of scientific knowledge as conceived in mainstream notions of professional knowledge. Schon believes that practitioners possess the capacity to reflect on and in action. He contends that practitioners possess a form of knowledge embodied in their practical actions.

Carter provided a brief historical account by which the development of personal practical knowledge research emerged from the teacher thinking research. Marland (1977) used the notion of principles of practice to describe the ways in which six elementary teachers were guided in their practices. The notion of principles of practice was furthered by Elbaz who used it as one level of structure by which the teacher she studied seemed to organize her knowledge.

Carter went on to cite Lampert's (1985) exploration of the dilemmas teachers

encounter and the notion of nonpropositional knowledge used by Munby (1986, 1987a). Munby understood the metaphors teachers use in their speech as ways teachers construct and make sense of their practices.

The work of Clandinin (1985), Clandinin and Connelly (1986) and Connelly and Clandinin (1985, 1986) concluded Carter's examination of personal practical knowledge. She referred to it as the most "personalistic" and explained it as focusing on particular events in teacher classrooms and the ways in which teachers understand those events. She reviewed this research in terms of her own work in classroom knowledge and particularly as it pertained to her focus on learning to teach. I discuss each of Carter's perspectives below.

Information-processing Studies

Many early information-processing studies embraced a psychological orientation and were little different than process-product research. Their contribution was significant in changing the focus from teacher actions to teacher thinking. The expert-novice studies were acknowledged as specific, specialized, organized contextually, as tacit and not easily articulated.

Pedagogical Content Studies

The pedagogical content knowledge approach arose from concerns about the quality of content knowledge that beginning teachers possess. To that end, it appears to be directed at what teachers ought to know rather than what they already know. And the train of such thought, in my view, leads back to the very discouragement Carter sought to avoid. It offers prescriptions that, in turn, imply teachers neither have nor require

knowledge of their own but need to apply the knowledge developed by others to their practices. In my opinion, this does not fit with teachers' experience. Such a focus on subject matter content has done little more for teachers than add to the complexities already described by Connelly and Elbaz (1980) as overwhelming. I sense that further attempts to add to these expectations are destined to the same ends as the reform efforts of the past. While I do not wish to discount the importance of subject matter or content, per se, I wonder if preoccupation with subject matter and content has contributed to the current state of affairs in which concern about teacher education can be described as a crisis in confidence (Schon, 1983, 1992).

Practical Knowledge

Under this category, classroom knowledge and personal practical knowledge were examined. Classroom knowledge is knowledge situated in common classroom experience and implies that what knowledge teachers acquire or use is, to a large extent, determined by the classroom environments in which they exist and, as such, does not lend itself to generalization. But to codify knowledge and to base that codification on common experience is to speak not only of generalizing but of offering another form of propositional knowledge. There seems to be a contradiction. Was Carter attempting to force a fit of what she labeled classroom knowledge with the practical? If so, in the offering of such a framework, some of her assumptions may require further thinking. Classroom knowledge, in this context, appears to be another form of application that denies personal practical knowledge.

Her review of personal practical knowledge raises additional questions. To begin with, she appeared to include under this category, the work of Schon, Elbaz, Lampert, and

Munby. Other than Elbaz, the work of these researchers has not played a part in that which is considered personal practical knowledge. To my understanding, the others do not view their research under this label.

Secondly, she seemed to dwell on the personal aspect of personal practical knowledge. Seeing the personal as some form of addition to practical knowledge, she concluded that personal practical knowledge is merely practical knowledge with an emphasis on the personal and idiosyncratic aspects. Here I again wonder about the way in which she understands the concept. Clandinin's conceptualization is much more than a descriptor or qualifying adjective describing practical knowledge. It is more than an emphasis on the personal and idiosyncratic ways in which teachers express and act out what they know.

Carter did not appear to pick up on the embodied, often tacit, knowing-in-action encompassed in the concept. Nor did she seem to understand the dialectical relationship between theory and practice that accounts for Clandinin and Connelly's rejection of Schon's problematic view. It is, for the most part, this view of the relationship between theory and practice that does not permit acceptance of teacher knowledge as a codifiable body of knowledge. By its very nature, codification separates knower from the known.

Carter would appear to favor the codification of knowledge. This seemed evident in her statement that research on personal knowledge falls short and

> ...tells more about the characteristics of teachers' knowledge than about what teachers know. The results of this inquiry do not add up to a codified body of teaching knowledge. (1990, p. 302)

On the other hand, she appeared clear in her understanding that the personal practical knowledge perspective rejects such a view and she articulated an appreciation for the

personal practical knowledge perspective by acknowledging the contributions of the approach.

> It furnishes...a theory of how teachers learn by teaching and how teachers use their knowledge, rather than a generalized conception of what teachers know. (1990, p. 302)

In conclusion, she wrote, that because this approach views teaching as basically personal and idiosyncratic, learning to teach becomes a matter of "how settings affect the development of personal perspectives rather than how teachers learn a defined body of knowledge about practice" (1990, p. 302). She appeared to force the fit of personal practical knowledge and learning to teach. She called for a focus on content knowledge and what appeared to be an overarching, single theory by which to reduce the temporal nature of teacher knowledge to that which is predictable and controllable.

> There is still a tendency in studies of teachers' knowledge to focus on characteristics of what teachers know...Less attention is given to the substance of that knowledge, to what teachers actually know or need to know about classrooms, content, pedagogy and how that knowledge is organized...greater thought needs to be given to a theory of learning in teaching. (p. 307)

> ...it is now evident that teachers' knowledge is not highly abstract and propositional...it is experiential, procedural, situational, and particularistic...will be necessary, therefore, to develop forms of representation that capture these essential features of what teachers know with a high degree of situation and task validity. (p. 307)

These statements would appear to be grounded in a reality apart from teachers and would tend to suggest that, as yet, Carter has not made the switch in thinking (Kuhn, 1970) required to accept personal practical knowledge as teacher knowledge.

She described what she saw as the major difference between the pedagogical content knowledge and the practical knowledge approaches.

> ...pedagogical content knowledge is to a greater extent grounded in disciplines and in formulations related to school curriculum and the collective wisdom of the profession than practical knowledge. It is, in other words, more formal than personal and situational knowledge. (1990, p. 306)

From this, she drew a conclusion that is quite perplexing.

> The learning-to-teach problem, therefore, is more one of translating knowledge from one form to another...than of unraveling the meaning of complex experiences. (1990, p. 306)

This does not seem to resonate with the essence of research which is conceptualized as practical and it is not clear to me how she comes to this conclusion. Like Carter, I understand pedagogical content knowledge to be grounded in the disciplines, curriculum theory and traditional beliefs of the profession. I am also prepared to accept that pedagogical content knowledge is more formal than what Carter refers to as practical or situational. However, to equate learning to teach with translation from one form of knowledge to another is tantamount to expecting one to learn French through literal translation. Such thinking negates the existence of idiomatic expression, the embodiments of years of culture and the past experiences and social mores of a changing society.

Fenstermacher (1994) also worked to make sense of the diverse and growing body of research on teacher knowledge in a review which focused on the epistemological warrants underlying the various research programs and studies in the field. His prime motivation for the review was a concern that the bases for accepting many of the current knowledge claims were ideological and cosmetic rather than scientific and reasoned. Research claiming status as knowledge needed to be justified and defended. Practical knowledge, if it is to be accepted as a type of knowledge, needs to acquire more acceptable means by which its claims may be warranted.

Fenstermacher is interpreted as working through his own paradigmatic uncertainty with respect to this emerging field. As an analytic philosopher, he has strong reservations about the proliferating array of alternative theories and research programs, the variation and quality of methods and the variance in meaning attached to differing conceptions of

knowledge. He is fearful that the growing number of theories making claims to knowledge will lead not only to a lessening of standards, but to a devaluation of research.

He began with an overview of research programs and studies considered to be foundational, recent, extensive and exemplary. Four questions structured the work into two general types of knowledge, Formal Knowledge and Practical Knowledge. He systematically explored the nature of the contrasting types, applying a form of analytical argument to pave the way for offering practical reasoning as an alternate orientation to the research on teacher knowledge that will neither offend nor compromise traditional standards. For the purposes of this literature review, there are significant understandings to be gained by considering Fenstermacher's treatment of the field in more detail and by examining the way in which he made sense of the research on teacher knowledge. I first consider the two questions by which he grouped the teacher knowledge research: What makes teachers effective? What do teachers know?

Formal Knowledge

Research directed at determining what makes teachers effective constituted the type formal knowledge. It appeared to account for a significant portion of the research in teacher education.

> ...all of the research that deals with the relationships between or among variables, including nearly all of the process-product research, as well as a portion of the research pertaining to teacher thinking, cognitive processing, teacher expectancy, as well as a number of studies dealing with the topics of learning to teach and staff development. (1994, p. 7)

It was described as a science-oriented, social and behavioral sciences approach,

> ...where said methods and accompanying designs are intended to yield a commonly accepted degree of significance, validity, generalizability and intersubjectivity. (1994, p. 8)

> ...a standard or conventional conception of science...knowledge is nomothetic (law-like)...holds for the more or less general case under specified conditions with all, or all but a few, other variables held constant...becomes more trustworthy as it is confirmed through replications...repetitions of more or less similar investigations. Such confirmations add more to the persuasiveness of the evidence...no matter how strong...a single result. (1994, p. 7)

Researchers see themselves as producing knowledge about teaching rather than studying teacher knowledge and they tend to accept their results as reliable. This may be the kind of research Houston (1990) and Wideen (1984) have in mind when they speak of a research base for teacher education.

Practical Knowledge (Revisited)

This type of knowledge featured two strands of research. The first originates in the work of curriculum theorist Joseph Schwab (1969) who focused on the practical. Two of Schwab's students, Michael Connelly and Lee Shulman, carried their views of the practical in very different directions and have inspired and led very different programs of inquiry.

One of Connelly's students, Freema Elbaz, is among the earliest contributors to the field of teacher knowledge. Her work was extended by Jean Clandinin, another of Connelly's students. Clandinin conceptualized the notion of image as one component of teachers' personal practical knowledge. The systematic exploration of these notions, as part of an extended inquiry into the ways in which teachers know their practices, found Connelly and Clandinin collaborating for more than a decade.

In his review of the Connelly and Clandinin program, Fenstermacher began with a recent definition.

> We see personal practical knowledge as in the person's past experience, in the person's present mind and body and in the person's future plans and actions. It is knowledge that reflects the individual's prior knowledge and acknowledges the contextual nature of that teacher's knowledge.

> It is a kind of knowledge carved out of, and shaped by, situations; knowledge that is constructed and reconstructed as we live out our stories and retell and relive them through processes of reflection. (Clandinin, 1992, p. 125)

He seemed to appreciate that such knowledge is situational, contextual, often tacit, and embodied. But he had trouble accepting the notion of embodied knowledge as became clear later in his analysis when he drew upon the work of Johnson (1987, 1989) from whom the notion was taken. He objected to Johnson's view of the theory/practice dichotomy and argued that 'knowing that' and 'knowing how' are distinct but interdependent.

> My own sense is that only a philosopher, and then only a few of them, could feel cognitively fragmented by the distinction between knowing how and knowing that...while Johnson appears to opt for collapsing the two forms into some new category, most of the philosophical discussion of the knowing-how/knowing-that distinction has been around whether knowing how is dependent on knowing that for its justification...while the two are distinct they are inter-independent. (Fenstermacher, 1994, p. 26)

Fenstermacher found the concept of personal practical knowledge elusive, referring to it as a "complex and elaborate conception" (1994, p. 10). He described the research focus as what the teacher knows and the method as grounded in what the teacher does rather than in the application of an external theory or construct to the teacher's work. But he either missed or rejected the view of the relationship between theory and practice upon which the work rests. He concluded that the notions of image, narrative and story were adopted to avoid "the excessive imposition of external theories and constructs upon the personal practical knowledge of teachers" (1994, p. 11).

Some foundational elements were highlighted. For example, it was noted that "story, image, narrative, narrative unity and embodied knowledge are all central" (1994, p. 11). However, he merely noted that they "remain puzzling concepts" (1994, p. 11) and

expressed concerns over the degree of complexity in the constructs and theory that explain personal practical knowledge.

> ...narrative unity...remains a difficult concept to unpack with the kind of precision that makes its application to teaching straightforward. (1994, p. 11)

> It is possible...for a research program to be so heavily enmeshed in theory and conceptualization that it risks being blurred by its abstractions. (1994, p. 12)

Here I find myself wondering about the view of research underlying such critique. Perhaps the complexities of this kind of research mirror the messiness of real life. Perhaps an advantage lies in its ability to 'tell it' the way teachers experience it. The lives students and teachers live neither lend themselves to prediction nor simplicity. Why should we be surprised to find research that stays so close (grounded) to the practice of teachers any different? If the real life world of teachers is complicated and messy, is it the province of researchers and theorists to simplify it?

His criticism was tempered by an acknowledgment of the contribution of this program in affording conceptualization and methodology that enables the exploration of "an important and frequently ignored type of human knowledge" (1994, p. 12).

Fenstermacher 's second strand of research on practical knowledge featured the work of Schon (1983, 1987,1991), Munby (1987a, 1987b,) and others using reflection-in-action as a form of knowing. Schon cited some of the failures of science and technical rational thinking and he argued that the knowledge of practitioners is not only derived from different sources but is of a different type than the theoretical knowledge of science. Fenstermacher appeared receptive to this conceptualization.

> Though I have been critical of the concept of an epistemology of practice (Fenstermacher, 1988), it now seems to me to quite consistent with the larger notion of practical knowledge. Thus if one accepts practical knowledge as a legitimate epistemological type...the notion of an "epistemology of practice" is not nearly so troubling. (1994, p. 12)

Although it was obvious that a detailed exploration of the two research programs was not on Fenstermacher's agenda, there was no discussion of the theory/practice relationship underlying each view. That issue is central to an understanding of personal practical knowledge. It may be significant in Fenstermacher's rejection of the notion of embodied knowledge and it is certainly pivotal in understanding the differences between the Schon perspective and that of Connelly and Clandinin.

In reviewing Schon's work, Clandinin and Connelly (1986) made use of McKeon's (1952) four ways of viewing the relationship between theory and practice to show that, in rejecting technical rationality, Schon rejected the 'logistical' perspective in which practice is deemed to be applied theory. Instead, Schon's emphasis upon the way in which practitioners reflect-in-action, upon the backtalk of a given situation, was shown to embody the 'problematic' view. Clandinin and Connelly (1986, p. 190) found this area of Schon's work restrictive as they knew education more appropriately in situations not deemed to be problematic. In the relationship between researcher and practitioner, Clandinin and Connelly perceived a second major difference. For Schon, the relationship was that of observer while Clandinin and Connelly, through the 'dialectical' relationship, became participants who operate from within.

Fenstermacher noted the lack of dialogue across the strands. One reason may be that each group is so engaged in the puzzle-solving of its own area, that outside challenge is not deemed important. On the other hand, it may also be that these researchers are content amid multiple realities and are therefore accepting of the differing research perspectives and programs that characterize the field. Still, this may signal another trend. It may be that researchers have removed themselves from what, in the past, has been a thrust and parry kind of academic challenge by which the discourse has been characterized

and from which growth and progression is deemed to have occurred. While there may be value in pursuing this notion further, I address Fenstermacher's third and fourth questions.

Teaching Competently

Fenstermacher's third question addressed the issue of what it is that teachers need to know. It highlighted the research program of Schwab's second protege, Lee Shulman, and the notion of pedagogical content knowledge. Shulman acknowledges three forms of knowledge: propositional, case and strategic. Because strategic knowledge is deemed to involve teacher judgement, Fenstermacher considered it to be of the practical knowledge type. Case knowledge and propositional knowledge, on the other hand, were considered to be a blend of his formal and practical categories, "with a heavy dose of the formal" (1994, p. 18). Pedagogical content knowledge did not fit clearly into either Fenstermacher category.

Teachers as Researchers

The fourth research program highlighted the research of Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Susan Lytle (1990), work which responds to the question of who produces knowledge about teaching. This research focuses on the sources of knowledge rather than on knowledge types. Although he picked up on the overlap with Schon, Fenstermacher did not clearly place this new thrust in his two category schema.

They name their program 'teacher research' and consider their efforts to be a movement geared at providing teachers with their rightful place in the research community. Teachers are viewed both as generators and consumers of knowledge.

> ...the teacher-researcher movement is based on the notion that a professional plays a participatory role in the creation and use of knowledge...involves ways of knowing about teaching in which the teacher develops theories to interpret, understand and eventually transform the social life of schools. (Fenstermacher, 1994, p. 17)

Cochran-Smith and Lytle separate themselves and their work from process-product research and more interpretive and recent studies on teacher thinking and much of the work on teacher knowledge. "It is more useful to consider teacher research as its own genre" (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1990, p. 4), they assert. As they understand the knowledge base in education, inquiry has been determined solely by the academic community, without concern for the knowledge of teachers.

> Missing...are the voices of the teachers themselves, the questions teachers ask, and the interpretive frames that teachers use to understand and improve their own classroom practices. (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1990, p. 4)

Although Fenstermacher connected the emancipatory flavor of teacher research to early conceptions of action research there are other significant elements. The thinking is rooted more deeply in Dewey's encouragement for teachers to use their own knowledge.

> Dewey emphasized the importance of teachers' reflecting on their practices and integrating their observations into their emerging theories of teaching and learning. He urged educators to be both consumers and producers of knowledge about teaching...Dewey's notion of teachers as students of learning prefigures the concept of teachers as reflective practitioners. (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1990, p. 4)

While their work (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1990, 1991, 1994) is flavored with strong emancipatory tones and notions in which teachers are encouraged to "RE-search" their own experiences, the point being made by these researchers is that the debate about rigor embraces a limiting concept of research. Some time is required to enable the full development of alternatives.

> Just as academics have evolved a complex set of criteria and standards for judging the quality and contribution of research in the academic community, teachers over time will develop a similarly complex set of standards for evaluating the research generated in and for their community. (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1990, p. 8)

Paradigmatic Turmoil

In an attempt to simplify and bring order to what he perceived to be a divergent field of research with a varying array of conceptualizations, Fenstermacher presented an elaborate argument aimed at exposing the epistemological frailties of the field's knowledge claims. In so doing, he may well have become a victim of his own science, for the structure and form of his undertaking embodied the trappings of the technical rationality rejected by Schon and eschewed by Connelly and Clandinin and others committed to alternative inquiries. The four question framework that divided the field into easily managed categories typified the reductionism and simplification of mainstream science. It reduced the complexity and detail of its subject and, in so doing, diminished much of that which was significant. Through highlighting and assimilation, particular notions and conceptualizations of knowledge were grouped together and categorized to the point that significant characteristics or differences became insignificant. Once accepted for the purposes of establishing that framework, the resulting classification could be taken for granted and used in support of otherwise less plausible argument.

The application of epistemological standards for justification, however modified, may be seen as another application of generalized theory. And, however intended, it may be interpreted as the use of nomothetic, overarching principles, the mainstays of a single theory by which claims to knowledge in the field must be gauged.

Kuhn (1970) described paradigmatic change in terms of the Gestalt-switch. Like a

light bulb switching on, the conceptualization fits or it doesn't. It is readily accepted or it is not. There is no gradual adaptation. Burrell and Morgan (1980) suggest that such adjustment is quite rare and not often achieved in practice. They view it in terms of conversion.

> the change of allegiance from one paradigm to another is often a 'conversion experience' akin to Gestalt-switches or changes of religious faith. (Burrell and Morgan, 1980, p. 25)

I conclude my review of Fenstermacher's story of the research on teacher knowledge with an understanding of him as caught amid paradigmatic turmoil. Unable to make the essential switch, he expanded the limits of his own epistemological theory to offer teacher reasoning as an alternative to teacher knowledge. In paradigmatic terms, that may be taken as an attempt to coopt or assimilate.

There are other epistemological perspectives which support my contention that the issue of justification, as argued by Fenstermacher, is paradigmatic in nature. Tom and Valli (1990) explored four ways in which knowledge can be generated, each related to, and grounded in, a tradition which rests on differing assumptions about the world, about the nature of science, about reality and knowledge. As these authors view things, each tradition calls for differing warrants and differing relationships between knowledge and practice.

As I reflect upon the ways in which teacher educators and researchers in teacher education make sense of the teacher knowledge research, it occurs to me that what Fenstermacher (1994) attempted to deal with in terms of types of knowledge and variations on types of knowledge is not so much a matter of discovery or assertion, claim and proof in the sense of the pristine absolute truth he attributes to the natural sciences or even in a modified or softened version that he seems to seek for research in social science and

teacher education. It is more a discovery and exploration of different conceptualizations; about what we might learn and better understand by thinking about knowledge in new ways and what we might we learn by maintaining a focus on teacher knowledge.

Exploring New Concepts in Teacher Knowledge

Through the work of Polanyi (1958); Schon (1983, 1987, 1991); Clandinin (1983, 1985, 1986); Connelly and Clandinin (1988) and others, the tacit nature of teacher knowledge has been explored and is recognized, although not entirely accepted. As I examined the reviews of Carter and Fenstermacher on research in teacher knowledge, I noted that other conceptualizations of knowledge continue to be explored. Research conceptualizing 'local knowledge' and 'situated knowledge' offer some food for thought with respect to the complaints over the lack of attention given to research knowledge by teachers, policy makers and teacher educators. Craft knowledge (Grimmett and MacKinnon, 1992; Leinhardt, 1990) will, no doubt, receive continued examination.

Hollingsworth (Hollingsworth, Dybdahl and Minarik, 1993) explored teacher knowledge as relationship. With two teachers, over a period of six years, she investigated the notion that "knowing through relationship to self and others is central to teaching the child" (p 8). That research illustrated the significance of relationships not only for the students, but for the teachers. Lyons (1990) conceptualized teacher knowledge as 'nested', that is, the ways in which students know influence the ways in which the teacher knows and vice versa. Offering the notion as tentative, requiring further exploration and verification, she viewed it as a means of appreciating the interactive nature of student and teacher knowledge.

In their most recent research, Connelly and Clandinin (1995) broaden the scope of

their inquiry into teacher knowledge to examine ways in which the personal practical knowledge of teachers shapes and is shaped by their professional knowledge contexts. It is in the context of this new research that my proposed research is situated. Significant in this exploration is a conceptualization of the interface between theory and practice where teachers work and wherein dilemmas are created for teachers. In order to capture the essence of this place and the dilemmas teachers experience in it, Connelly and Clandinin make use of a landscape metaphor.

> A landscape metaphor...allows us to talk about space, place and time...has a sense of expansiveness and the possibility of being filled with diverse people, things and events in different relationships...calls for a notion of professional knowledge as composed of a wide variety of components and influenced by a wide variety of people places and things...both an intellectual and moral landscape. (1995, p. 4)

Using this metaphor, teachers can be understood to move between two places on the landscape, between the in-classroom place and the out-of-classroom place. The in-classroom place features the concreteness and practicality of teaching. It is a place "of action where teachers teach and where curriculum is made, at least the curriculum that matters as far as students are concerned" (1995, p.12). It is there they are safe to live their storied lives.

> They live stories, tell stories of those lives, re-tell stories with changed possibilities and re-live the changed stories. In this narrative view...their way of being in the classroom is storied: as teachers they are characters in their own stories of teaching which they author. (1995, p. 16)

In contrast, the out-of-classroom place finds teachers encountering what Clandinin and Connelly call the rhetoric of conclusions. It is a place of prescription and expectation, where teachers 'must' and 'ought' and where they are subject to the power and authority of those to whom they are accountable.

A second metaphor, 'the conduit', is used to explain the way in which policies and

theoretical knowledge, stripped of historical and personal contexts for purposes of simplicity, are piped into the out-of-classroom place on the professional knowledge landscape.

> ...policies and prescriptions are fed into the landscape via a conduit which connects the world of theory with the world of practice. (1995, p. 67)

Within the out-of-classroom place on the professional knowledge landscape, practice is governed by theory and the power of theory over practice is so strong that it not only goes unchallenged, but unnoticed and accepted. Drawing upon the work of Crites (1971), Clandinin and Connelly interpret this unquestioned acceptance of theory-driven practice as having the quality of a sacred story. Teachers' professional knowledge landscape is embedded in that sacred story.

As teachers move between the in-classroom and out-of-classroom places on the landscape, they experience dilemmas. The power of theory over practice in the out of classroom place is so strong that teachers appear to comply. However, in their classrooms, things are much different. Teachers manage these dilemmas by living and telling 'cover stories' in the out-of-classroom places while they live and tell 'secret stories' in the security and privacy of their own classrooms.

Craig (1992) conceived of 'knowledge communities' as safe places in which teachers share what they know and, with other teachers, question and explore the dilemmas and uncertainties of their practices. In her work with two beginning teachers, Tim and Benita, Craig described knowledge communities as

> ...groups of two or more people who meaningfully associate...with whom we story and restory our narratives of experiences...people with whom we carry on sustained conversations...with whom we have sustained encounters. (1992, p. 168)

For Craig, the meanings of shared experiences are shaped by knowledge communities

located within the contexts of the professional knowledge landscape.

Connelly and Clandinin, along with Craig and other collaborating teacher researchers, continue to explore professional knowledge landscapes in stories of beginning teachers, experienced teachers and in teacher education. They seek to understand the ways in which teacher knowledge shapes and is shaped by their professional knowledge contexts.

My examination of the literature in teacher education arose out of the story being lived by Clark and his team of teachers and from the dilemmas they, as teachers, and I, as their principal, encountered on the professional knowledge landscape. Two different stories of teaching and learning were evident in the hat story. Clark and his team lived out one story in competition with the other, more dominant story. What began as two competing stories became conflicting ones as the teachers worked in their contexts. For me, the principal, the conflict presented a dilemma. On one hand, I felt the power of the dominant story and I sensed I would be unable to change it. On the other hand, I could not bring myself to silence the story of Clark's team viewed as conflicting. For me, their story embodied the story of my own practice. I knew it as morally correct and yet I felt powerless and unable to defend it.

In the wake of the experience, I began to question the nature of teacher knowledge. I wondered about the nature of the knowledge Clark and the teachers on his team brought to their practices and I wondered about the ways in which their knowledge shaped and was shaped by their professional knowledge contexts. I turned to research by which I hoped to learn about and from the experience.

Like mushrooms canned for consumers, teacher education and the research on teacher education appeared fragmented; a collection of stems and pieces, removed from the

context of their natural landscapes and offering little by which my questions might be addressed. In the research on teacher knowledge, however, I am afforded a conceptualization which seems to fit and a language of practice that is relevant. The research program which centers upon the personal practical knowledge of teachers invites my story as well as the stories of Clark and his colleagues. Specifically, the research into the ways in which teacher knowledge shapes and is shaped by the teachers' professional contexts provides a starting point for my inquiry.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This is a case study of a group of teachers attempting to live out a story of school reform. I want to understand the ways in which the personal practical knowledge of my participants shapes and is shaped by the professional contexts in which they work. My inquiry focuses on teacher knowledge and, thus, is also an inquiry into teacher education.

The purpose of the research is twofold. First, I want to understand the ways these teachers tell stories of their experiences and live their stories. To do so, I require methods of inquiry which will allow me to enter their life experiences, methods that will engender acceptance, trust and openness, and which will afford an understanding of their stories of experience, from their perspectives, from the inside. Second, I am also concerned with telling my story of the experience as a researcher. Should it be allowed to dominate the stories of the research participants, it will achieve little more than to perpetuate the kind of work many teachers already know as commando raid research in which they have no voice and in which their thoughts and ideas are subject to hijacking by academics (Elliott, 1991, pp. 12-13). It is important, therefore, that their stories and my story are heard.

The relationships I seek are not possible if I assume the role of a neutral observer. Instead, I work collaboratively with my research participants, taking part in their activities and sharing in their experiences. I use narrative inquiry in which collaboration and participant observation are featured. I invite research participants with whom close relationships are possible and the collection, analysis and interpretation of data occurs with them. Before describing the selection of my participants, the negotiation of entry and the details of data collection, analysis and interpretation, some discussion of narrative inquiry,

collaboration and participant observation is in order.

Narrative Inquiry

In the first chapter I explain the intent of my research and the history giving rise to it. I do so through story because I believe I am best understood in the context of my experiences and because, like others, my life experiences are storied. I recount my experiences, make sense of them and explain my actions and practices through story. My stories are not only told, but I relive them with intent for the future. In that sense, they serve to guide me.

I understand Clark and his teachers in the contexts of their storied lives and my questions arise from their part as characters in a joint story of reform. As a method for researching the stories of their life experiences and their knowledge as teachers, narrative inquiry serves my research purposes. I draw upon the research and methods of Connelly and Clandinin. They define narrative inquiry as:

> ...the study of how humans make meaning of experience by endlessly telling and retelling stories about themselves that both refigure the past and create purpose in the future. (Connelly and Clandinin, 1988, p. 21)

This definition is rooted in the work of MacIntyre (1984) who notes that, by nature, we place ourselves in the context of our lives by telling stories of our experiences. In this view, narrative is considered basic to life and the deliberate storying and restorying of one's life constitutes personal and social growth (Clandinin and Connelly, 1991).

Following Dewey's notion as to the way in which life, experience and education are holistically interwoven, school is understood as a form of social life.

> In school, as in life generally, one's personal history, the traditions of which one has been a part, and the social and community relations in which one engages form the plot outlines of day-to-day life. (1991, p. 259)

And education may be understood as:

> ...the construction and reconstruction of personal and social stories; teachers and learners are storytellers and characters in their own and other's stories. (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990, p. 2)

To the extent that personal and social stories embody what teachers know of their experiences, they constitute teacher knowledge and thus they become significant as part of teacher education. In the study of teacher education, school life and the lives of teachers figure prominently.

> ...narrative researchers describe such lives, collect and tell stories of them, and write narratives of experience... (1990, p. 2)

In my inquiry I explore the professional lives of my research participants by collecting and recording their stories and by writing narratives of their experiences. In understanding an individual, however, as a narrative researcher, I must take into account that person's life story and the unifying threads found within that life story. Therefore my work also includes an examination of my participants' life histories, that is, their past experiences, present situations and the intended futures arising from their stories of past and present.

As a method and process, narrative is more than the observation of practice, the collection and assembly of stories and the discovery of the unities which link them. It is complex and multi-leveled, entangled, temporally continuous and socially interactive (Clandinin and Connelly, 1991, p. 265; Connelly and Clandinin, 1990, p. 4). An individual lives a story, explains it by telling it in words while simultaneously reflecting

upon it in terms of a broader life. The story is relived and may be retold and again relived in an ever changing set of contexts.

> A person is at once, then, engaged in living, telling, retelling and reliving stories. (Clandinin and Connelly, 1991, p. 265)

The complexities in narrative inquiry and the potential for entanglement are better understood once it is realized that the researcher is not only attempting to see and describe the story of the participant in the contexts of time, space, differing interactions, reflections and cultures, but is personally engaged in living, telling, reflecting and retelling and reliving as well. And both participant and researcher are addressing intended futures which, for the most part, are different. The method achieves its potential as researcher and participant not only tell their stories within the context of the research, but come to share both experiences and stories in practice.

> Our narratives are lived, told and retold in the research process. Thus, the two narratives of participant and researcher become, in part, a shared narrative construction and reconstruction throughout the inquiry. (Clandinin and Connelly, 1991, p. 265)

Seeing and Describing Stories

A slight shift in thinking is required in order to pick up on and describe the stories in the practices of teachers in everyday life (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990, p. 4). As a part of the process of shared living and constructing narratives, the researcher is called upon to eschew the doubt of null hypothesis thinking in favor of a cooperative kind of endeavor termed the believing game (Elbow, 1973). Such a way of working draws upon a form of knowing that is subjective. The knower is deemed to be connected to that which

is known. It involves becoming a part of another's story in order to understand it. In this light, the actions of narrative method are comprised of collaboration, participant observation and a laborious and detailed recording, analysis and interpretation of the biographies and shared experiences of all participants. My inquiry, therefore, is situated in the contexts of my participants' work where we share in a joint story of school and from which we work to understand and conceptualize some of the ways their personal practical knowledge shapes and is shaped by those contexts.

Collaboration and Participant Observation

> It is not the mere fact that two or more persons are present or that they are working on the same task that makes the relationship collaborative. Unless there is the development of shared language or shared working knowledge, a focus on understanding, an atmosphere of trust and respect and receptivity...a common purpose, there is not collaboration. (LaRocque and Downie, 1993, p. 2)

In collaborating, the researcher becomes a participant whose observations and experiences are shared and discussed with other participants.

> Narrative method involves participant observation, shared work in a practical setting...a joint living out of two person's narratives...continuing to tell their own stories but... lived out in a collaborative setting. (Clandinin and Connelly, 1991, p. 265)

Such a view of collaboration "characterizes sharing and mutuality not in terms of doing the same work but, rather, in terms of understanding the work of one another" (Clark, Moss, Goering et al, 1996, p. 196). Dialogue is significant.

> If instead of work, dialogue becomes the central shared feature of collaborative research, then what is gained is a level of understanding about the constraints of one another's practices and an opportunity that allows teachers and researchers to bring their varying expertise to an endeavor. (1996, p. 197)

Researchers are reminded that the voices of teachers have, by tradition, taken a back seat to those of researchers. It is for that reason, in my work, that teachers are listened to first.

This is a significant departure from mainstream research in which data are collected on site by an observer who maintains a posture of objectivity and neutrality and where interpretation and analysis take place in writing and theorizing removed from practice. In a collaborative context the researcher's presence is recognized as altering the setting. It calls for a different relationship, one in which participation is accepted and from which the observations, ideas, connections and learnings that result, belong to the participants and researcher jointly. Yet, if embraced through fad or fashion, if mandated, used merely as a technique for decision-making or as an administrative device for manipulating others, the potential in collaboration may be compromised (LaRocque and Downie, 1993).

The participant and researcher often find the collaborative relationship to be powerful and enabling. It is likened to friendship in which two lives mingle in an atmosphere of trust and care. Collaboration requires such a relationship (Clandinin and Connelly, 1988) and that kind of relationship is established over time, with attention and care (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990; Hogan, 1988).

The negotiation of entry may be understood as an attempt to begin this kind of relationship. It involves voice and matters of ethics, as well as the details of daily operations by researcher and participants. My entry was facilitated by the selection of participants with whom close relationships already existed.

Selection of Participants

The hat story that gave rise to my inquiry also influenced my selection of research participants. For almost two years I worked with my staff to improve our large, complex,

junior high school. I applied leadership techniques and administrative theories touted in the literature, in administrative courses, system in-service programs and by school system leaders. Results were minimal. The school continued to be unpredictable and difficult to manage and the situation seemed to defy mainstream methods. I knew that major reform was needed.

I found myself talking to teachers, at staff meetings, individually and in small groups. I invited them to think differently about the ways they taught and I encouraged them to consider making major changes in their practices. Near the end of the year, three teachers accepted my invitation. They requested that they be assigned a group of students for whom they would provide core programs of instruction, support services and extra curricular activities. They worked throughout the summer, planning and organizing.

Although school opened smoothly in the fall, little changed. We found ourselves amid one more set of unpredictable experiences as the school became engulfed in a crisis of violence. In coping with the problem, a course of action developed which not only addressed the issue, but our practices in teaching and learning.

The three teachers and their students adjusted their studies to focus on the violence problem. They shared the results of their deliberations first with me and then in a public meeting in which the issue was being discussed. Their efforts made apparent the need to make radical changes in the ways in which we conceptualized our practices, organized for learning, and operated the school.

I invited each of the three teachers to lead one of five new learning communities of students and teachers and to organize for learning in such a way that best suited their ways of learning and teaching. My experience with them inspired questions as to the nature of the knowledge teachers bring to their school settings and as to the ways in which the

personal practical knowledge of teachers shapes and is shaped by the contexts of their work. The hat story was one experience. It became my starting point. One of the learning community leaders, Clark, was part of that story.

There were six teachers in Clark's team. If I worked with all six, I would have an overwhelming and formidable task in terms of the thickness and detail of the data. For that reason I limited my research participants to a manageable two. Because Clark and Sara were viewed by the team as having led their initiative, it seemed natural that they be invited to participate.

Clark and I joined the staff the same year. I interviewed him and recommended his hiring and placement at Briardon. As a first-year teacher, he accepted my invitation to maintain a journal relationship in which he would reflect on his practice and write and to which I would respond. We did so for over a year. Following that, as a project for his postgraduate study, he requested that I work with him in an administrative practicum. That project took a year. When the hat incident occurred he was in his fifth year of teaching. As a result of the leadership he demonstrated in changing and improving our school, he was considered to be on an administrative career path and needed another experience as a teacher-leader. To acquire that experience he transferred to a new school setting. At the commencement of the inquiry he is beginning his second term at Sunnybrook School.

At the end of her third year of teaching, when Clark transferred, Sara was invited to assume Clark's leadership responsibilities at Briardon. Throughout her fourth year she continued to live the story of reform. I had interviewed Sara and recommended she be hired. In her interview and throughout her initial assignment, she displayed unusual care for students and exceptional relationship qualities. She quickly became an authority on cooperative learning and her part in the success of Clark's learning community was

integral. While Sara and I were not involved in a journal writing experience like the one shared with Clark, we enjoyed then, and continued to share, a strong, positive, professional relationship.

Negotiation of Entry

It is not uncommon for the negotiation of entry to be viewed as a simple matter of protocol, that is, as a minor set of hurdles or steps to be followed in acquiring approval for research. The requirements of a university ethics committee are met, permission to work within a school system is obtained, teachers or students agree to participate and dates are established for the collection of data. School system concerns and requirements with respect to ethics are satisfied by producing a letter of clearance from a university ethics committee.

In spite of the research community's efforts to educate researchers and in spite of the rigors of university ethics committees, however, students and teachers are often treated as mere subjects for study and many come away from their involvement with less than positive feelings. This has resulted in skepticism on the part of teachers and closer scrutiny of proposed research by school systems, principals and teachers.

Even though I enjoyed strong professional relationships with my proposed participants, I did not wish to minimize the importance of this aspect of the research. It required forethought, planning, time and it carried its own complexity. In the large metropolitan school district in which my inquiry is situated, permission is obtained through formal application. The proposed research is reviewed by that system's department of research which requires proof of university ethical clearance and knowledge of the purpose of the inquiry, research methods and means of analysis. They want to be certain that there

will be significance and benefit accruing from the participation of their teachers. They require confidentiality in so far as data is concerned and they also require that the identity of participants be protected. Human rights are to be guarded and participation is not to be harmful.

The risks of participating were made known to my participants in order that their choice to participate was an informed one. Permission was obtained from the principals of the schools in which I would be working, from Clark, Sara and the teachers with whom they work. Because my inquiry takes me into such contexts as team meetings, staff meetings, meetings with parents and other school events, I expected the principals to consider the ways in which other staff might feel and how their actions and practices might be interpreted. I was required to address the intent of the inquiry with other teachers who would be involved and I was prepared for some teachers to request that their practices not be reflected in the research in any form. I knew that each restriction that was placed upon me would serve to limit the scope of the inquiry. In turn, every acceptance carried further responsibility for ensuring that participants, directly or indirectly, were portrayed not only accurately, but in a manner that did not take advantage of their openness. Thus, the negotiation of entry involved more than obtaining permission. Because I intended that my inquiry be a shared story, I viewed it, not so much as obtaining entry, but rather, as negotiating the ways in which we would work and establishing a collaborative atmosphere and collaborative relationships.

It was then that we worked out the details of how and when I would participate in the endeavors of my research participants. Clark, Sara and I met jointly. It took two meetings to set the stage for our undertaking. At our first meeting I provided a brief overview of my intent and invited discussion. I also invited them to participate. I

explained that I could not predict, in advance, the actual time required nor the direction that our discussions would take. That gave them no concern. At the conclusion of that first session I left them copies of the formal proposal and we set a date for another meeting.

In our second meeting we addressed a number of issues that did not arise in our initial conversation. Those included discussion of the way our collaboration might look and feel, how the participant observation would work and the differences in our purposes as participants and researcher. The potential for multiple interpretations of the writing and judgements about the nature of our work led to a consideration of the need for anonymity.

While I was prepared to follow the wishes of my research participants with respect to anonymity and the use of pseudonyms, I strongly believed that such protection was required for the school and others who became involved, but more so for Sara and Clark. I was also prepared for the possibility that opinions and preferences might change as our work progressed and therefore we revisited these matters a number of times throughout the project. While I was not questioned about the research in detail, in either school, in the early stages, at both locations, my access to staff meetings was restricted. I accepted those decisions without question.

Data Collection, Analysis and Interpretation

Data were gathered in several ways and from a variety of sources. Field notes were made of observations in classroom activities, team meetings and in other contexts in which the inquiry found us. Throughout the study I maintained a reflective journal and I invited each of my participants to do so as well. The sharing and responding to journals among the three of us was encouraged and generated further data.

A significant part of our interactions were recorded on audio-tape and later

transcribed for study and analysis. Tape recorded interviews were used to gather personal biographies and to record individual stories. Our group meetings and reflections were taped in order that we remained free to participate in discussion and reflection while ensuring that our stories and thoughts were recorded. Other data included the collection and analysis of planning materials, school and team handbooks and a variety of records that were used by my participants and their teams. All data were coded for reference. For example, my first tape on which I recorded my second interview with Clark was made on September 12, 1994. It was identified as follows: T 1 C2 September 12, 1994. Other data was also coded by type (Notes to file, Personal journal, Letter, etc.), by person (C,S, or CPR) and by date.

Data collection and interpretation in this inquiry did not occur as a set of separate, distinct and linear procedures. Instead, I attempted to determine the meaning of data as the study unfolded. In making sense of specific observations, participant stories and other data, tentative interpretations were written and shared with my participants. For the most part, that process was by letter and discussion. Their feedback, also by letter and discussion, necessitated rethinking and revision. Once revised, the tentative interpretations were again submitted and discussed. Through several cycles of such interactions, meanings were clarified and the inquiry continued. That process led to the construction of the three shared narratives written in letter format. They comprise Chapters IV, V and VI and serve as the basis for my interpretation in Chapter VII.

Other Considerations

Throughout the fall months I divided my time between my two participants, at first spending two days per week with each of them in the contexts of their schools and later

reducing that time to one day per week. I worked with them, participating in their daily routines and making observations. In preparation times, noon hours and after school, as time permitted, we found time for our interviews and discussions. In addition, the three of us met together regularly in evening sessions and I joined them for social activities.

Communication was facilitated by use of the professional knowledge landscape metaphor (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995) and the language of narrative. Chapters IV, V and VI feature this language as do my researcher interpretation and reflections in Chapters VII and VIII respectively. I use such terms as 'narrative unity', 'character', 'plot line' and 'story'. Story is, at times, used as a noun and, at other times, as a verb. The professional knowledge landscape metaphor is explicated in Chapters IV and V.

While all of our work was done with a view to the project end, my exit from the contexts of my participants' work was determined jointly and occurred early in December. Throughout the winter, spring and summer, the process of constructing and negotiating the narratives continued. They were written, presented to Clark and Sara for response and revised accordingly.

Over the course of my interpretation and writing, I found it helpful to check my perspectives with other researchers, to obtain feedback and response and to consider other viewpoints. Therefore, in addition to verifying my interpretations with my research participants, three such measures were utilized. A colleague researcher, Annie Davies, read and responded to my interpretations. "Works In Progress" presentations were made at the Centre for Research For Teacher Education and Development in Edmonton and at the International Conference on Teacher Research. Researchers participating in a collaborative research project, including Dr. D. Jean Clandinin, Dr. F. Michael Connelly, Dr. Annie Davies, Janice Huber and Karen Whelan, also responded.

CHAPTER IV

NARRATIVE I

January 25, 1995

Dear Clark,

It has been more than three months since I began to work with you and Sara to examine and explore the ways in which your personal practical knowledge shapes and is shaped by the contexts in which you work. On a weekly basis I have been a participant observer with you at your school and in a similar manner I have worked with Sara at her school. I am grateful for the opportunity to participate with you in your practice and to be able to undertake my research with you. While reflective thinking and analysis are already very much a part of your everyday practice, the extras involved with 'the researcher' are added on to an already heavy workload. Of this I am aware. I appreciate your willingness to share in this inquiry. I am also thankful for the collegiality and friendship that have resulted from this and past ventures.

Conversations between you and me, between Sara and me and conversations among the three of us have been recorded and transcribed. I have made field notes with respect to my visits to your classes, the lunch hours, supervision, extras such as soccer and some of the meetings and discussions you have had with students, other teachers, parents and school system personnel. I am maintaining a reflective journal, as are you and Sara. Other items that contribute to my collection of data include excerpts from and copies of school and system memos, copies of other materials you share with me and copies of

letters and responses between us. As our work continues, I have begun to analyse and reflect upon this data. By way of this initial letter, I should like to offer a tentative interpretation of some of your practices. I will look forward to your response and, based upon that, I anticipate further interpretations and responses.

Let me begin by acknowledging the significance to the research, of our past experience together. When you officially began your teaching career, some seven years ago, you were assigned to the staff of the school in which I was principal. For five years I was privileged to work with you as you grew and developed in the initial stages of your career. During that time, there were a number of significant events and activities which contributed to my understanding of your teaching and which continue to inform me. For example, you responded positively to my invitation to share in journal writing. That undertaking continued for a full year. Through that experience I feel I learned a lot about you and I reflected upon my own practice as a teacher and principal.

Later on and, as part of your postgraduate program, we developed and worked through an administrative practicum which involved readings, conversations and shared activities centering upon leadership at the school level. Near the end of that practicum and serving, in part, to summarize your leadership talents and abilities, we participated in a structured interview of approximately one hour's duration. Based upon the questions asked and your responses, I wrote an administrative profile. We used that profile as a basis for our review and discussion of your work at the school and also to document your growth and development as a school leader. That project informed me further about your practice and it was helpful to me. It not only inspired a great deal of reflection upon my practice, but it also served to focus me upon significant aspects of teaching and leadership that might otherwise have remained implicit in my actions and the practices of our staff.

Also of major significance, were some of your responses to the challenges of working in that very unpredictable and difficult school setting. With a large number of students experiencing a lack of success in school, with mainstream methods of leadership, organization and management failing and with other matters of concern emerging, I encouraged teachers to reflect upon their practices and to consider alternatives. You and a colleague approached me with some notions about such an alternative. To explore these ideas, you required not only my support but a third person with whom to work.

After examining some of the possibilities arising out of that discussion, the two of you and a third colleague returned to discuss some ways in which your ideas might be developed. Within a year things had progressed to the point where, as a school, we needed to address the ways in which we organized for learning, the ways in which we taught and in which our students learned. We displayed many of the problems of a large school, including a large, diverse staff and student body and attendant relationship difficulties. To address these things, we organized into several smaller schools within the building. The intent was that a sense of community and team might be developed by different groups of teachers operating with different groups of students, each group pursuing and living out their own story of school.

Over the next two years I was afforded opportunities to learn even more about you as we worked to change and improve our school and our practices. We made joint presentations to share our story of the experience. Some of these were within our school system, others were within the city community and still other presentations were to teachers and administrators in outlying school districts. I was also privileged to observe you and Sara make other presentations about your work and your learning community. You presented your story to teachers at professional development seminars and at

conferences and you shared your views with the principals' group. I received positive feed back from within our school system, from other jurisdictions throughout the province and as a result of your presentations at international conferences. In that this history contributes to my knowledge of your practice, it is also consided as part of the data.

In analyzing the data gathered to date, I am able to identify a number of elements which appear as unifying threads and which seem to guide your practice. Together these unities seem to embody and express your personal practical knowledge. Your story of your learning community experience at Briardon, the ways in which you are attempting to shape the context in your assignment here at Sunnybrook, and your aspirations and efforts with respect to your career plans seem to feature and convey these unities. Let me begin by sharing three of them and by asking you to respond.

Talk, Discussion, Conversation

The first element I would like to draw forth is talk. In your practice and in our interviews regarding your practice it is strongly featured. It seems to be expressed as talk, discussion or conversation. It seems to be central to your notions of what school is about, how teachers ought to teach and how students learn.

On the first day of classes, as you carried out your responsibility for orientation of the Grade 7 classes, you seemed to be more in conversation with the students than simply telling them about the school. I noted:

> As I had come to observe in years past, his manner was even, low key, pleasant, controlled and friendly. Occasionally a little humor was added and he talked at them little, instead, drawing from them their responses and opinions. (Notes To File Thursday, September 1, 1994, p. 2)

In another context I made a note regarding this practice of conversation.

> Attendance was taken by the teacher while C circulated and engaged in informal discussion with the students, calling them by name and then drawing attention to the day's announcements written on the board. (Notes To File Friday, September 9, 1994, p. 1)

Some weeks later I noted, while on noon hour supervision with you:

> Armed with an apple each, we circulated through halls and lunchroom. C was quite busy talking to various students and occasionally he disappeared down one hallway or another to check different situations or to speak with teachers. (Notes To File Monday, September 26, 1994, p. 2)

As the leader of the Student Assistance Group, you worked to improve the special education program. In doing so you worked with Lorraine and you had her development in mind. In that regard the two of you attended a conference in Dempster. Talk, conversation and discussion seemed to play a significant part in that. We talked about this in a taped interview:

> C: The sessions were relaxing...it was an opportunity to share some philosophy and things with Lorraine...get to know her a little bit more and try and talk about what we are thinking in terms of this program for the kids and, believe it or not, philosophically, we seem to be on line when we talk. So now we need to take the next step in terms of the congruency between our beliefs and our actions.
>
> CR: How did you arrive at that conclusion?
>
> C: Well we spent a lot of time talking about how we're working with kids...we spent coffee break time, and there was breakfast hour...the two of us sat and talked.
>
> (T13 C10 November 7, 1994, p. 15)

Your work as a teacher and learning community leader at your last school also featured this element of talk, conversation and discussion. As you storied it in our first interview, the notions of teaming and community that gave rise to the learning community approach seemed to have begun with talk.

So, talking to this fellow, John, and talking about...if we could ask the principal if we can have a group of kids and we can develop the program. We needed a third teacher. Yes we could do it...and the three of us were able to set up this learning community....just kind of feeling out the situation and spending a lot of time talking. I spent more time in the first month talking with John and Kay than I had talking with any teachers over the past two years of the school and that was the beginning of the story. (T1 C1 September 1, 1994 p. 7)

Your relationship with John seemed to develop through conversation. We spoke of this.

CR: So what prompted this kind of discussion among the three of you?

C: For me it was dissatisfaction with what was going on and kind of voicing that a little bit with John and knowing that he was different than any of the other teachers on staff.

CR: Why was he different?

C: Well, he was open to conversations.

CR: How could you tell?

C: He's kind of an outgoing guy who likes to be around people and talk. You can engage him in a conversation easily...and some people, you know, they don't want to talk about school. They're not interested in school. "This is my lunch hour! I don't want to talk about school! Let's talk about the hockey team or this or that!"...or after school, when you are going for a drink, "I don't want to talk about school! Leave it at school! It's over!" John wasn't like that. You could bring up a topic and you'd talk to him about it and actually get to a reasonable level and think...about possibilities.
(T1 C1 September 1, 1994 p. 12)

Even when the three of you agreed to split up in order to provide leadership for others, you continued to talk.

C: The next year, after we split up into the different learning communities, we'd still have conversations and [we] talked about what happened in our first year.

CR: Oh, so you revisited past experiences?

C: Oh, definitely!

CR: Told stories to one another did you?

C: Told stories to one another, related it to how our new learning communities were up and running and wanted to share with one another. (T1 C1 September 1, 1994, p. 22)

You appear to need such talk in order to relate. In changing schools you seem to have reflected upon your need for relationship:

> I did find it frustrating because I missed the teaming. I missed the collegiality and collaboration. I grew a lot from being able to talk to the teachers constantly about how they felt about how things were going in some of the bigger issues in education. I lost that altogether in coming here. (T1 C2 and T2 C2 Cont. p. 11)

We talked about your interest in becoming one of the teacher-leaders at the new school that is being built. Your need for relationship with those who lead you seemed to surface.

> I haven't developed any sort of rapport or relationship with this new principal. So that doesn't sit well with me. I need that kind of thing. I need to get a sense of what he's about...and I'm not getting any of that. I just need to know a little bit about where people are coming from and where I fit in that and...ah...you know, am I going to be comfortable talking to the person, being able to just sit down and talk about education and kids and where things are happening and what kind of role is he going to play. (T4 C4 September 19, 1994, p. 9)

It would appear that this element of your personal practical knowledge continues to guide you. Consider, for example, your efforts to promote talk as a means of stimulating change. First, within the professional development group you currently lead.

> Through the responsibility groups I'm talking about some possibilities with timetable changes, some grouping stuff or relationships with kids...the number of people receptive to that...we'll have to see how it goes. (T17 C12 November 21, 1994, p. 19)

Consider the professional development day session.

> C: So it was just beginning conversation. We were broken into small groups, our responsibility groups, and had most of the day just to talk and jot down notes and the next PD day in December we are going to be sharing the different ideas that came from each responsibility group
>
> CR: So in your group, what did it look like?
>
> C: It was good conversation...possibilities...I enjoyed the conversations.
> (T12 C9 October 24, 1994, p. 1)

And consider what happened after parent teacher interviews, in grade groupings.

> We get together and talk about our parent teacher interviews...and I opened it up to, "Do you have any specific things you'd like to share from any of your parent teacher interviews?". (T17 C12 November 21, 1994, p. 3)

Your work with consultant, Pierre, also seemed to feature talk and conversation as a part of your practice. And I am coming to sense that our relationship seems to be connected to the talk, conversation and discussion that were a part of our efforts to transform the school. Talk and conversation seem to have preceded our journaling experience. The journaling itself was a form of talk. Talk was significant in the work we did with respect to your Master's practicum and it certainly seems to figure in this research. I would like your feedback on this and your opinions as to the sense I am making with respect to this element of your practice.

Questioning

Another element that figures prominently in your practice, and in the stories of your experience, is questioning. This I observed as you met with one of the students and his mother. It is noted in my field notes as a situation in which you questioned. I wrote:

> Bill and his mother arrive. Bill has been suspended for refusing to work, for a tantrum he threw and for throwing his books. Clark and the resource teacher welcome them to her office. Introductions are made and I am introduced and explained as the researcher. I seem to be forgotten quickly as C reviews with Bill why the meeting has been scheduled.
>
> Clark's manner is friendly, caring and focussed on Bill. Bill gets to respond and Clark helps him review the circumstances leading to his suspension. This is done through a series of questions. They seem to want to hear from Bill, to find out how he feels, to understand why he has behaved so, and what he might do next time. (Notes To File Monday September 19, 1994, p. 2)

On hallway supervision you used this approach as well. I noted:

> Each time Clark found a student engaged inappropriately, the routine would involve speaking to the student by name and questioning him. More often than not the problem involved a boy. However, several girls were quite rambunctious (chasing boys etc.) and he would call them over and question them in such a way as to have them rethink what they had done and as to whether it was worth risking the freedoms they enjoyed. He asked if they could think of an alternative to their actions. (Notes To File September 26, 1994, p. 2)

Early in September, after a flurry of discipline referrals, I asked about the way you handle discipline problems.

> CR: I'd like you to talk to me a little bit about your handling of the discipline problems that arose Friday when we were in taping...a boy broke the window with the golf ball and then the teacher sent the youngster for...an incident report. He was supposed to wait for the teacher. He got into a fight.
>
> C: Well, I think my initial response to any discipline situation is just to sit down with the kid and ask a few questions about what happened and how they are feeling. The kid with the golf ball...I was called out of this office when you were here...down to the assistant principal's office. I took him from there into here. He was obviously upset. We talked about it. (T1 C2 September 12, 1994, pp. 15-16)

On another occasion a teacher sent a student to see you. She believed the boy had been smoking in the washroom. You met with him and asked some questions. I recorded that meeting in my field notes.

> A number of little things...phone calls, seeing students for teachers. Clark invites a Grade 7 student to his office...the boy has been seen in the washroom. The teacher suspects the boy was smoking. Clark speaks to him...the inquiring mode...inquires as to whether the lad understands what he appreciates when talking with a person. The boy's response is right on the money! "Honesty!" "And", he adds, "respectfulness". Clark affirms him and explains the problem. (Notes To File Monday, October 3, 1994. p. 3)

We also discussed this element of your practice in our interviews.

> CR: And when you work with kids you have a tendency, if I'm reading this correctly, to sit down and ask them a question. You seem to start with a question and then you are quiet and you listen to them.
>
> C: And that's the way I operate in the admin team scenarios as well. I ask questions. I'm a question person. I don't necessarily throw out opinions and that kind of thing. (T6 C7 September 5, 1994, p. 5)

In wondering why you saw yourself this way, I reviewed the transcripts of our interviews. I came across your account of the Lake Louise retreat in which you addressed your sense of how you participate in group discussions.

C: And you know, the big thing I'm trying to get across in the brainstorming is I have the firm belief that everybody is valuable. Their needs are valuable. We don't want one person dominating conversations and taking over....when I'm in that situation I just shut right down because I don't need to be the guy who's out there yelling and getting my opinion across. It doesn't mean that much to me to have that kind of attention. I don't need to be in the limelight there. That often happens a lot when we're working in different situations in schools at the teacher level.

CR: Tell me about some of that.

C: Well, one of the latest experiences is the retreat up to Lake Louise where we had to do different activities. There were four schools there, one high school and three feeder junior highs, so it was very apparent in the different activities who took charge. People who took charge were the administration of the school. It was an Admin retreat but I mean the big A administration, principals primarily. When there was down time or lulls in conversations they felt they always had to throw out their opinion. To me that stifles the rest of the people's ideas because people are often intimidated and they wait to look to see where is their principal...before they open their mouths. I prefer to sit back in those situations and ask questions and I think the degree to which somebody is a leader is a degree to which they can draw forth from other people...the degree to which they can ask questions. The good leader is somebody who asks questions. (T2 C2 Cont. September 12, 1994, p. 46)

The practice of questioning may also be seen in the manner in which you have interpreted your university graduate experience.

C: There was a little more personal contact, a little more interest but the particular advisor that I got wasn't a good experience.

CR: When you say personal contact what do you mean?

C: Just to be able to sit down and talk about questions you have. Enter into some sort of dialogue with somebody about your topic and have them ask you some questions to see what you're thinking. (T2 C2 Cont. p. 41)

Here you seem to be explaining that personal contact is what allows the talk and

discussion. It allows for the questioning. Again I invite your response to my interpretation, Clark. Be it a metaphor or an image of teaching, questioning seems to be a significant part of your practice. Along with talk, conversation and discussion, it seems to guide you.

Voice and Choice: A Particular Kind of Care and Listening

A third element I draw forth for consideration is what I will call voice and choice. I have chosen the terms from your language, not so much as you have used them in our interviews, but as they appear to symbolize what your learning community stood for at your last school and as they seem to be embodied in your practice here in your present situation. Voice and choice seem to embody a particular kind of care and listening, a relationship in which students or teachers with whom you work are provided the opportunity to speak, to explain and be heard. You value the other and allow for self determination on that person's part. Further, I sense that it embodies your knowledge of learning, of teaching and the relationship between teacher and student. It also seems to embody the way you know the relationship between principal and teacher.

As I interpret voice and choice as an aspect of your practice I realize that it is not easy to isolate and distinguish this element from the previous elements of talk and questioning. For example, talk may be an overarching metaphor. On the other hand, these elements may express one or more images embodying the actions of your practice. In making sense of these elements and the ways they work to guide your practice, I will need your help. Once again I invite you to respond.

I find the element of voice and choice to be strongly featured in your teaching, in your work with students and in the manner in which you carry out your administrative

responsibilities. This element seemed evident in your orientation visits to the six classes of Grade 7 students who were new to the school:

> In the classes where students were not already seated in groups, he had them quickly form groups of four. A leader and recorder were chosen by each group and a simple turn-taking form of brainstorming was outlined. Each group was then given time to generate a list of expectations for behavior. After each group reported, he asked them to consider who made up the expectations. The process itself seemed to affirm the propriety of the expectations and that they had ownership. (Notes To File Thursday, September 1, 1994, p. 2)

When you got to the part in the orientation where you explained the expectations for homework and the consequences for missing school or the homework, you introduced your Homework Hotel innovation. Somehow this seemed to carry a slight twist in that there was choice built into it. I wonder if I have interpreted that correctly. I noted:

> The difference between homework and home study was discussed, with students being asked to express opinions regarding the differences. Suggestions were made about study time and where to study at home. A Homework Hotel is to be established. All students are invited to come when they would like help or just to do their homework. Students who do not get it done may become REGISTERED GUESTS at the hotel. Those who are sent home must, as a condition of reinstatement, attend Saturday School [Weekend classes designed to have students make up the class time that was missed as a result of poor behavior, tardiness or absence]. The resource teacher service was mentioned and, again, Clark invited them to seek him out as he is their administrative contact. (Notes To File Thursday, September 1, 1994, p. 2)

In my field notes of that day I also made several observations.

> Students respond...to his low key and accepting manner. He does not react to the...verbal stuff of those who challenge...yet nothing of significance seems to get by and things are handled on an even keel. (Notes to File Thursday September 1, 1994, p. 2)

I find myself interpreting this as an acceptance of the voice of teenage students who, at times, can be and will be gregarious, aggressive, challenging and testing.

On the same day I observed your first business class of the year and found myself quite excited by what I observed. Students were provided with choice as to how they learned. This is what I noted.

> Clark's Business class was diverse. Students of different sizes, shapes and abilities, from different countries somehow ended up in this option. After attempting to follow the curriculum last year, he ventured forth on his own. And now students are given a choice. They might study the book and follow the prescribed program or they might learn about business by doing business.
>
> To do the latter required initiative...obtaining the appropriate contract form from Clark, filling it out with the teacher who wanted the service, and then fulfilling the expectations and providing services such that profit (in the form of play money) was acquired. The scheme was ingenious and in my brief time with the class I have acquired insight that five years with the program at my last school did not provide. (Notes To File Thursday, September 1, 1994, p. 3)

Your notion of voice and choice seems to be reflected in your approach to the course. In addition, students are offered choice within the program, for example, working in the lunchroom, serving as a tutor for younger students, assisting a teacher, pop machine monitor and so on. I note, as well, how the reflections sheets serve to focus the students on their own explanations of what they are doing, how they learn and, thus, how their voices and choices become significant. Once more, I invite you to respond to my understanding. Have I understood this part?

While working with you in the Integrated Occupational Program class for Grade 8 and Grade 9, I made an observation regarding the way in which you worked with a problem student who seemed very angry and who did not appear inclined either to take direction from you or to work with you. I wrote:

> Carla was full of anger and did not seem shy about directing it at Clark. He seemed to avoid it. He neither provoked her nor ignored her. He let her work with and relate to 'L', the special education teacher. I'll talk to him about this. (Notes To File Friday, September 9, 1994, p. 2)

Some days later, when we did speak about this matter, I asked you if you had backed away from Carla. Your response seemed to carry an acceptance.

> Well, I think a little bit...yeah...just had a few comments, said good morning to her in the hallway as we were walking into the classroom and just had a few casual comments. She doesn't need somebody to be confronting her head on there. She's just going to be very volatile and you'd never be able to work with her. Any chance of a relationship there is gone, I think, if you take

that kind of approach....a lot of people that think they can make kids do things. You can't make kids do things and besides I don't believe that kids should have to do something just because the teacher says they should do it. (T1 C2 September 12, 1994, p. 22)

I find this statement very strong, Clark. It seems to embody the force and strength of your convictions about voice and choice for students.

The importance of the voice of students and their right to make choices seems to carry over into your activities out of the classroom and away from your duties as an administrator dealing with discipline problems. This I noted on the soccer field, recorded in my field notes and discussed with you to some extent in an interview. Let me draw forth a couple of situations where I noticed this. The first is the situation in which Frank was given voice and choice.

In response to a very large turnout for soccer, you and two of your colleagues decided that instead of tryouts and cutting, you would have three teams. Two seventh grade teams and an eighth grade team would share playing time in order that all who wanted to play would get the opportunity. Each team would have a coach and all three groups would cooperate.

To ensure that there would be no objection by other schools, you invited one Grade 7 student to play with the Grade 8 team. That student was a new boy to the school, Frank.

C: That worked fairly well and the one seven in particular, Frank, wasn't sure if he wanted to come out with the eights and as we were warming up...I introduced the fact. "Frank is here with us". He was feeling uncomfortable and I just said, "Frank, you're going to tell me. You're going to decide".

CR: I heard you say that. And midway through the practice he wanted to go with the sevens and you said, "Okay go ahead. You can go".

C: Yeah. I said, "Go ahead...after we get through these drills, Frank, go ahead. You can go over to the sevens...thanks a lot, good luck", and off he went.

> And then at the end he came back to me and said I want to be back over here. So I talked to him. I didn't want him just bouncing around back and forth. I let him know it is time to make a commitment. I said, "It's your decision, Frank". "Make a decision. I want you on this team." So he came back and played well and had a good time. (T4 C3 September 16, 1994 p. 5)

It seems clear to me that Frank had both voice and choice. You told him to decide. You told him that you wanted him on this team. He chose.

The first game was played at another school. Here I made a note of two incidents in which choice and voice seemed to occur.

> A team meeting is held in order to organize transportation and to distribute jerseys. I am a driver, Clark, another coach and one parent are also drivers. This is the first 'away' game. All who show get to go and all will play.
>
> Upon arrival Clark speaks to the official. He returns, asks the team to form a circle and then requests two players to lead stretching and warm-ups while he reviews, with them, matters of deportment, sportsmanship, attitude and his desire to hear only positive comments, cheering and encouragement. He requests some improvement in a couple of areas and he promises that all will play. He invites each person to monitor their feelings and to speak to him after the game if fairness and equity are deemed to be lacking. (Notes To File Friday, September 19, 1994, p. 4)

I was intrigued by this gesture. I perceived it to be a giving of voice. From what I could tell by observation, the boys accepted it. They seemed to accept it as something that should occur. To my knowledge, it was not necessary for anyone to accept your invitation to speak up. No one seemed unhappy about fairness or equity. Have I understood this correctly?

My field notes continue.

> A captain is appointed for the game by Clark. All are asked to centre their hands in the circle and to join in the cheer. I am included. We cheer. The game begins. Throughout the first half good plays are acknowledged and several calls of encouragement come from the coach. Three extras are substituted and the game is tied at one. The final car full of players arrives and as they eagerly await their turn, they cheer and encourage their teammates.
>
> At the half, someone notes that no one brought water. Clark thanks him for noting that and asks for two people who will correct that problem in the future. Two boys volunteer. "Kick it up the

> outside" and "pass more, rather than dribble" were the only pointers given. Everyone was praised for their efforts and no one was criticized by coach, nor by other players. Noticeable by absence were anger towards opposition or animosity towards officials or other coaches.
>
> At the end of the game Clark and his team were short one goal but had scored two of their own and had passed well and played well. After a final cheer, handshakes with the opposition and words to the effect that we should be able to win the next match with this team, Clark thanked each of the boys. He had one person collect the sweaters and encouraged everyone to be at practice Wednesday. We drove back to school amid satisfaction and high spirit. (Notes To File Friday, September 19, 1994, p. 5)

From my analysis of this experience, Clark, there are many positive things that can be said about your practice. For purposes of this interpretation, however, I would like to focus upon your acceptance of the player's observation that we brought no water. To begin with, his concern was accepted. It was then addressed. And in addressing it, the ownership and responsibility were shared with the players. As I understood your response, it was more voice and choice.

As the month went on I began to recognize this element of your practice as something very familiar from our past experience. In the five years that we worked together you rarely, if at all, seemed to be ruffled by the behavior of your junior high students. They would joke with you and when you did require serious response from them, they were attentive. At the end of the month I reflected on this when you got a haircut and the students responded. You accepted their voices.

> He had gotten a haircut over the weekend. Throughout the day students also noticed and commented...not sarcastic, but a little 'razzing'. He responded to them with a smile. They seemed to appreciate that. (Notes To File Sunnybrook, September 26, 1994, p. 1)

You are consistent in monitoring afternoon lates. You inquire of each student and you listen. It seems to give them voice. Again consider my field notes.

> It was his turn to monitor the entrance hallway for lates. He spoke to each student about the reason for their tardiness and had them obtain a late slip from the secretary. They remained with him for the reading time, choosing a National Geographic from the telephone stand in front of the

> office. With students who might be developing a pattern, he would spend some time reviewing their particular situation. Again he would ask questions and they would think and respond. (Notes To File Monday, September 26, 1994, p. 2)

I complete my comments on voice and choice by again noting that this element is not easily isolated from the talk and questioning that is also a part of your practice. In that regard I welcome your response so that we may, together, reconstruct the workings of these elements of your personal practical knowledge.

Going to School: A Context on the Professional Knowledge Landscape

From our interviews and from my analysis of the transcripts of those interviews, Clark, I have learned about your experiences as a student going to school, about your experiences in family and home life and about your experiences as a beginning teacher. It would appear that your personal practical knowledge has been shaped significantly in these three different contexts. You acknowledged your school and family experiences as origins of your practices. You explained:

> A lot of it is from my own experience...going to school...a lot...the way in which things operated in my family. (T2 C2 September 12, 1994, p. 29)

I also developed a strong feeling that your entry into teaching has served to shape your practice. You noted that your practicum experience was significant. And in your first two years, as you worked to make sense of teaching and as you worked to contribute to the resolution of the problems of students, school and community, that first career experience has also influenced you. Let me close this part of my initial interpretation by sharing my understanding of some of the ways in which these three contexts, going to school, home and family life and beginning teaching, have come to shape the elements of

your practice. I will begin with your experience as a student going to school.

You noted that you didn't enjoy your experience as a student. And yet dimensions of your school experience appear to have shaped your practice significantly. For example, you question what we ask students to do and you feel we assume we know what is best for students.

> I didn't enjoy my school experience. No. I did not enjoy junior high and high school...things would pop up in my mind...why are we doing the things we are doing? I never got satisfactory answers to those questions. I found myself copying a lot of things down and having to memorize things just for the sake of it and that was called learning. And that was called good for me. So I question the kinds of things that we ask kids to do on a day-to-day basis. (T1 C2 and T2 C2 Cont. September, 12, 1994, p. 30)

I also wonder if this may be connected to the way in which you have structured your business class. Your students seem to actually be doing business projects; that is, signing contracts, providing services and being paid (play money) instead of taking down notes and memorizing theories. It may even be one of the reasons you devote significant energies to ensuring that your students understand the reasons why you give them certain assignments. I wonder, further, if there are connections between the way in which you questioned the relevance of the things you were asked to do in school and the ways you orient the Integrated Occupational Program class packages to practical life experiences.

Your drive to have and allow for personal contact with students and your beliefs about the importance of such contact for students and teachers may also be connected to your experiences as a student in school. Consider another of your reflections.

> I didn't have a lot of personal contact with the teachers...the administrators...didn't get into trouble so I didn't really have the contact with the principal or the assistant principal at any of my schools. I can't even think of speaking with a principal in elementary school...or junior high or high school. Never spoke to the principal...teachers...I had a significant one in high school and I can think of one that I had in elementary school I quite enjoyed. And it's about the personal contact, the time, the caring, listening to you. I was not an outspoken kid so it took somebody to come over and speak to me. (T1 C2 and T2 C2 Cont. September, 12, 1994, p. 30)

These reflections seem to embody the relational dimensions of what I have termed the conversational, questioning and voice and choice elements of your practice. However, it is not totally clear to me, exactly how they are configured. I will need your help in understanding this. Personal contact seems to be a matter of time, care and listening. These elements are expressed when a teacher approaches a student, demonstrates concern for how the student is really feeling and, thus, initiates the talk. It is a particular kind of relationship. You experienced it as a student.

The power of contrasting negative and positive experiences appears quite clearly in your story of what happened when you moved from Trail Elementary to Mountain Hill. There seems to have been a stark contrast between the practices of the two teachers who were living out different stories of school. As a character in both stories you seem to have been influenced by the emotional, moral and aesthetic dimensions of those experiences. That knowledge remained with you.

> Trail Elementary School...my mother had to take me to school for two years because I was scared to death of the teacher. I don't remember her name but I can picture her face in my mind to this day and that my parents had to try and bribe me with things to get me to school. I refused to go I hated it. I was petrified of this teacher and it was a small self-contained classroom and she just iron-fist ruled it and yelled and screamed at the kids. We were scared to death of her. (T2 C2 Cont. September 12, 1994, p. 32)

This story seems to carry an understanding of the emotional effects on the student when the teacher is interpreted as using force, threat or power. It seems to embody an understanding of the resentment and withdrawal when the teacher is perceived by the student to be non-negotiating and authoritarian.

Then you moved.

> We had been living in Trail Community for a period of time and my parents moved after Christmas. They decided that I needed to go to Trail and finish the year off and go to Mountain Hill a little bit later. So I had another year in which I was living in this community but didn't

> really know too many people. I came in [to Mountain Hill]...I think it was probably grade 4 or grade 5...a little later...the kids had time to get to know one another. I was totally lost going into Mountain Hill and generally they do a lot of the...orientation stuff and buddying people up...it took a teacher to help me out and I can remember the person who did it...to take some time and help me out and see how I was actually feeling. (T2 C2 Cont. September 12, 1994, p. 31)

This part of your story seems to embody an understanding of the effect of a teacher who demonstrates care by approaching the student, by finding out how the student feels and by listening. I sense each of the three elements (talk, questioning, voice and choice) being expressed and I wonder about the connections between this story and the ways these elements are now expressed in your practice.

You devoted the first few days of the year in your learning community at Briardon to orientation and the development of relationships with students. I wonder about connections between those practices and your story about changing schools. As a student you seemed to feel that orientation and relationship-building were valuable. I also wonder if your efforts to develop and build community within your learning community might be connected to your elementary school stories.

I am particularly drawn to the emotional, moral and aesthetic dimensions of your childhood experiences of school and how in the contrast between the two teachers, you seem to be informed about what is right and best in student-teacher relationships, about what is pleasing and acceptable for students in such relationships and about the emotional effects of relationships upon students.

Given what I have observed, it seems likely that these stories serve to guide your practice. The teacher who "iron-fist ruled" and screamed at her pupils seems to have drawn forth fear and a desire not to go to school. The one who came and spoke to you personally seems to have provided you with an alternative. He took the time to find out

how you were really feeling. He talked to you and listened to you. That teacher approached you and revealed care. That teacher listened. You noted that is about the personal contact, the time, the caring, listening to you (T1 C2 and T2 C2 Cont. September, 12, 1994, p. 30). This seems to be what you know from these experiences. Again I wonder if I am expressing it in a way you feel best describes it.

You were able to draw forth another story about one of your junior high teachers, Clark. What was significant about this one was that he was involved in the extra curricular dimensions of the school and that he was consistent in his involvement with students.

> He would be involved in the intramural activities a lot...he was there consistently...with all student activities. (T1 C2 and T2 C2 Cont. September, 12, 1994, p. 33)

I wonder if there might be a connection between this experience and the consistency I have observed in your commitment to hallway supervision. There may also be connections to your involvement each year in some part of the athletic program and the extra-curricular offerings.

You told a story about a major turn around in your high school experience and you seem to credit one teacher with this difference. In this story I again seem to sense connections to your practice. You explained:

> [I] had two poor years in math. She was very much like the elementary teacher...just thought she was the dictator...my way or the highway...and yell and scream and I was very turned off and got 50s, 52s in math. My parents were very concerned and upset...all over me about it...took until the Grade 12 year with this guy who was a little more caring...took some time to talk to me and it wasn't necessarily about math. He would speak to you before you came in or at lunch time...you could just...be there. I remember when the Montreal Expos were...in the big pennant run. They won their division...he had his TV set in his classroom and it was open for people to come in and talk to him and watch...that was quite significant. It turned that math experience into a mark over 90%...carries with me [when teachers say] "Oh, they can't do these things!" And when it comes to high school registration...putting them in this class or that class...I have great difficulty. Maybe they haven't come out of their shells yet. Maybe they need a different teacher to tap their talent. They need something...where they're not necessarily in the dummy class or the bright class, quite yet. (T2 C2 September 12, 1994, p. 33)

In this account, two contrasting stories with differing plot lines seem to be featured and you appear as a character in each. In the first, the teacher seemed to be a non-caring, non-relating person whose authoritarian manner did not allow for voice, choice or negotiation. You seem to have responded by withdrawing and losing interest. However, in Grade 12 you seemed to feel comfortable as a character in a different plot, where the relationship was accepting and inviting. You were invited to come and to talk. You appear to have had choice. That teacher listened and that seemed to give you voice. In that atmosphere you responded and so did your math score.

This story again draws me back to our time together. I recall the way in which you and your team of teachers had lunch with the students in the big room. Everyday it was open to any who came and, as teachers, you were there with them. For me the connection between this practice and your story of the math teacher seems strong and I feel I gained further insight when I revisited the transcripts of our very first interview. At one point in the conversation, as you reflected upon the significance of relationship in your school experiences, you talked about that high school teacher and the story was retold.

> If I think back to my school experiences there is only one teacher in high school who stands out in my mind...has a lot to do with the relationship I developed with him. Other than that, I have no significant high school teachers, no significant junior high school teachers and probably a couple of my elementary teachers are the only ones I really remember...the ones I got to know.
>
> I'd gone through Math 10 and 20...was just scraping by...50s, 52s. My parents certainly weren't very pleased with the marks. The teacher was very intimidating, did a lot of yelling and screaming and I can still remember, etched in my mind, a comment she made to me in Math 10... We were doing some adding of integers and when you add the opposite, you change the subtraction sign to an addition and then you change the negative number to a positive number. She said to me, "You don't show that work in high school. That's what you do in junior high. In high school you can do it in your mind." And that stuck with me and from then on I never asked any questions. I didn't want her looking at my work...got by on my own...50, 52.
>
> All of a sudden I had a different person for Math 30 who took a keen interest, not in just me, but in the class as a whole...and spent time talking with you, not necessarily always about math, but just talking with you. Getting to know, trying to get comfortable in setting up a relationship.

> At the time I didn't know what he was doing but now that I'm in teaching I can understand...He would work with you and listen to what you had to say. He wasn't making you conform to any set structure in terms of answering your questions. He wanted to see you work and wanted you to be able to explain the logic of getting from the beginning to the end. That was what he was interested in and I got interested in the math. I enjoyed the math and was able to bring my mark up over 90%. That's a significant increase. (T1 C1 September, 1, 1994, p. 7)

The notion of conversation (talk) seems strong. It seems to be what you see as making the difference. It allows for getting to know, getting comfortable and, in general, building relationship. The fact that you got to explain your thinking and reasoning seems to convey more than mere listening. In this case, it seems that the listening was deeper. It was listening to you and it gave you voice. Further, that you did not have to conform to a pre-set structure may have been what gave you choice.

After telling this story, you reflected upon it. I wonder if there could be a connection between these experiences and the voice and choice expressed in your practice?

> I guess that experience alone sits with me in terms of looking at kids, because in junior high, too, we have a tendency to say "this kid's a dummy and should be going into this class in high school or that class in high school". I say "wait a minute...maybe we haven't seen the potential of the kid. Maybe we've damaged the kid here and they, despite us, are going to be successful later on and we shouldn't be necessarily pigeon-holing some of these kids so early". (T1 C1 September 1, p. 9)

Your own story of going to school seems to inform you and guide your actions. You seem to know that there may be other reasons for students failing to achieve. You also seem to know that can change.

In our interviews you have not only conversed and told stories of your school experiences but you have reflected upon them as you were relating them. In one instance, I inquired as to how long you had held your views about tailoring the curriculum to the level of the student.

> CR: Have you felt this way all along?

C: I don't know if I'm going to be able to express it so clearly or even if I'm expressing it clearly now but I think it's always been a part of me. It must have been, because I try to look back and think about why did some of these thoughts come? Why did I get involved in the learning community?
Well, you know, different events that have happened in my life, different experiences that I've had. It must have shaped what's going on. At times you don't know.

I can see school connections that have given me glimpses of examples and some are my own personal examples and that takes me right through University and dissatisfaction with what I had to do there and not liking the fact that it was so impersonal. That was the highest level of non-contact, the disassociation from the person teaching you in class...university professors might enjoy teaching graduate level courses...they might. They dislike undergraduate and they prefer to just be doing their research. So often teaching is just in the way.

Even...at the graduate level...there was a little more...personal contact...just to be able to sit down and talk about questions you have...enter into some sort of dialogue with somebody about your topic and have them ask you some questions to see what you're thinking. (T2 C2 Cont. September 12, 1994, p 39)

As you were thinking about the different things that have shaped your practice you seemed to know that you are not always aware of the influences. At other times you glimpse connections and can trace them. Your university experience seems to express your understanding of relationship. At university your expectations for talk and conversation were not met and thus there was little relationship. Because you seem to find dialogue and questioning means of teaching and listening, they are important to you. In university those elements were also missing. As you know it, the questioning provides voice and provides the teacher with a means by which to check on the learning. This was missing as well. I will leave this part of my interpretation and I will await your feedback.

Family and Home Life: Another Context on the Landscape

You are a reflective person, Clark. I noticed this when we talked about where your ideas and thoughts come from. I asked if they stemmed from your learning community

teaching experience. You responded:

> A lot of it is from my own experience...going to school...a lot of it would be the way in which things operated in my family and I guess I've come to the point where I look at things differently because of those experiences. (T2 C2, September 12, 1994, p. 29)

When I began to inquire as to the ways in which your practices may have been shaped by the context of family and home life, you seemed to focus on what you described as a confrontational approach. I soon learned that, in opposition to that confrontational approach to things, you embraced something different. I return to that interview.

> CR: I don't mean to pry, but you also said there was another factor besides your school. Experience with your own family. Do you want to share that?
>
> C: Well that would be the more confrontational approach to everything that occurs in life. So I shied away from confrontations with kids and people. I know how they feel when you get into those situations...it was, "my way or the highway". There was no room for negotiation. The biggest thing was that there was no room for talk and discussion [with my father who was a university professor]. "It's my policy! While you are living under my roof, you'll obey these rules!" Well that's fine. I can live with obeying some of these rules. Is there a chance that we could even have a conversation about the rules? "No!" The rules are not up for any kind of discussion whatsoever. So you'll find me...very open to talking about anything, any type of policy, any type of philosophy, anything. I'm willing to listen to the other person's side, at least. (T2 C2, September 12, 1994, p. 35)

While I did not gain a clear understanding of what you meant by confrontation, I did feel that I understood your feelings. You felt voiceless in your family in the presence of your father and there was a lack of flexibility (no negotiation or compromise) on his part. This seems to have been storied into your knowing as no talk or conversation, no listening to your side, no voice or choice. From that you seem to have storied yourself as adopting an alternative view. That alternative view quickly surfaced when I posed a question with respect to your stance when your brand new baby girl, Frances, might one day challenge or question you.

> I hope there's always room for discussion. I would like her to be able to see why I'm coming from the point of view I am...hopefully I'll have better answers than, "Because I'm older than you" and "I'm wiser than you" and "You wait until you're my age and then you'll see". (T2 C2, September 12, 1994, p. 36)

When I heard this and when I studied the transcripts, I felt I was picking up the talk, questioning and voice and choice that I am coming to see as elements of your practice. It may be that "having better answers" acknowledged her right to question. It may be, for you, that voice is implicit. It may have implied, further, that it is through talk and responding to the questions that arise, that things are negotiated. Negotiation happens through talk. Listening seems to be implied in such an interchange. Here again I invite your response. Am I interpreting this correctly?

But, talk and conversation have been significant parts of your family and, particularly as you have described it at the dinner table.

> I come from a situation where at dinner time [my father] would throw up and carry out a topic of conversation. It would be a world issue...the latest thing that he'd read in Maclean's magazine...and you were expected to be able to contribute to that conversation. Basically he'd say "where have you been? I don't believe that you don't know this. You don't understand what is going on here?". (T5 C6 and T6 C6 Cont. September 26, 1994, p. 11)

You were expected to contribute, to have a voice. In fact, you saw this as positive.

It was early in October when I asked you to talk a little about questioning. I observed it as an important part of your practice and I wondered if you were aware of how strongly it was expressed. Your response appeared to be contextualized within the notion of conversation.

> ...we spent time talking about issues...like at dinner conversation. An issue would be brought up and people would contribute and time would be taken. I guess this is one of the positive things that each person would have some time to say something. Generally my brother and I and my father, the three of us...he'd want to know what you've got to contribute and what your feelings are on this topic...the importance of people being able to contribute opinions comes out of that.

> The importance of...ah...sort of pretending that you were at least knowledgeable even if you weren't...came out of that...because you needed to contribute. You couldn't sit there and say, "I don't know what's going on". It didn't sit too well. There would have been an indication that you weren't too bright or, "What's the matter with you?" "You mean to say you don't know this or that?" (T6 C7 October 3, 1994, p. 4)

Talk and contributing to the conversation were positive things. Everyone got some time for voice and it was important to have opinions. But there was a down side to this. If you didn't know or you didn't have an informed opinion, it was very hard to hide.

> You'd pretend that you did and see if you could get away with it...but you couldn't contribute in a meaningful way...would have to make sure that you're up on what's happening in the world, in the news...MacLean's magazine. It was in the house all the time. (T6 C7 October 3, 1994, p. 5)

In attempting to understand the way in which conversations shaped your practice, I asked you to explain further.

> CR: I picked up elements you really appreciated about that and certain elements you didn't. Would you go over that with me and see if I've got it right.
>
> C: I appreciated the fact that people had time to talk...I appreciated the fact that [my father] saved his opinions until after we had an opportunity. But sometimes what I didn't appreciate [was] he would come down a little heavy for people our age.
>
> CR: And if your opinion didn't jibe with his?
>
> C: Well he would lay it out and come down pretty heavy...that you were full of it or he didn't agree with what you were talking about. But I think part of that is good because ...now...sometimes I'll take the opposite side even though I don't believe it, just to get him going (laugh). (T6 C7 October 3, 1994, p. 7)

Although you did not like it when he came down on you, you did seem to appreciate the conversation and discussion, the questioning and the voice. Do I have that correct? When I suggested that some of these elements were observable in your practice, you agreed. Our conversation was as follows:

> C: You've seen some of it in what I do. I think you see it in the fact that I think it's important for everybody to have an opportunity to contribute.

CR: Yes. And when you work with kids you have a tendency, if I'm reading this correctly, to sit down and ask them a question. You seem to start with a question then you are quiet and you listen to them.

C: And that's the way I operate in the admin team scenarios as well. I ask questions. I'm a question person. (T6 C7 October 3, 1994, p. 5)

As you explained the way in which questioning is a part of you, you began to use the term flush out. Initially I interpreted this as fleshing out meaning. You corrected me and used a story to illustrate. It is in this story that I gained a better sense of the purpose of talk and the way in which questioning is a part of that. I'll go back to that conversation and to the story of how questioning seems to have been a part of your father's and grandfather's lived experience.

C: Well I think part of that is probably in me from that experience. If you're going to get into deeper issues and try to flush out what people really mean about what they're saying you're trying to help them gain an understanding of where they're coming from. You do that through questions...to gain a deeper understanding. To really know what we are talking about, not this surface level stuff...."How do you feel about kids?" "Well, I like kids." Big whoopeee. So what do you mean about that? What do you do and how do you know and do you ever check to see if you really do?

We seem to skirt around issues in education and then go onto the next issue. We never get any where. We never get deep enough. It should encompass everything you do and be a part of you. That's how deep it should be.

CR: Am I able to draw a connection or am I forcing the issue...with what you've just intended to tell me that your Dad would do?

C: Well, that's what he wanted. He would be checking to see if we knew what was going on and if we had ideas...yeah. And this goes even deeper. This is part of him, too...in his upbringing...what he and his father used to do. Every Sunday morning they used to have what they would call a debate. They would pick an issue and one of them would be on one side of the debate and the other would be on the other side. He was an only child...only one kid and they would debate back and forth. And they might switch around the next weekend. One would be for the issue, the other against it and you'd have no choice with the two of them. That's what they would do together. So I guess he has taken it to a different level. He had a few more kids, so he was asking questions and trying to do that. And it will be interesting to see what I do with Frances (Laugh). (T6 C7 October 3, 1994, p. 6)

But talk is not enough. As you seem to understand it, it is necessary to do more than scratch the surface. It is important to get to a depth of understanding. A way to do that is by asking questions that cause reflection and response. That gives voice and the questioner really listens. This would appear to be a part of your father's way of being in the world and his father before him. The questions, for him, much like the debate for his father, served as a means of listening, checking, probing, finding out and at a deeper level than mere surface conversation. And now, this seems to be a part of you but transformed from the original version. You seem to know this. And perhaps, as you compose your life as a teacher, parent and leader, you are informed by an empathy for the other. Perhaps your wondering about how it will be extended with Frances informs you of just how much it is expressed in your practices at school and at home.

I conclude this part of my initial interpretation by extending another invitation for you to respond and I will turn to the final context in which I sense some prior shaping of the elements of your personal practical knowledge.

Beginning Teaching: One More Professional Knowledge Context

Your move into teaching and your first two years of experience as a teacher, Clark, appear as another context in which your personal practical knowledge was shaped. As you began university, the influence from your home and family life continued to be strong.

CR: When did you first decide to become a teacher?

C: I think it was in the back of my mind for quite a while, just entering university. The thoughts that I would do that....Teaching is something that's been in my family for a while...especially on my mother's side....my Welsh connection, basically. Welsh people do one of two things. They go down and work in the coal mines or they become

> teachers. And so there's a history of some coal mine work in the family and then the history of people becoming teachers. My grandfather was a principal in Britain. My mother...got a teaching degree and was a teacher before she came out to Canada. She has cousins in Wales who are still teachers...part of the connection was that and part [the] university. (T5 C6 &T6 C6 Cont. p. 7)

With a strong teaching influence in your family, there seemed to be encouragement to commit to teaching and you seemed to have leaned that way. However, the reaction of your father did not appear to be one of support. You interpreted him as holding higher aspirations for you.

> C: There was a kind of pulling away and some thoughts that teaching was not good enough for me to pursue in terms of a profession...that I had more talent and abilities to go do other things and be more fulfilled.
>
> CR: When did that surface and where?
>
> C: Well it surfaced when I was finished my B. Sc. and thinking of going into education...I can remember [Dad] talking to me specifically...if I wanted to do better I could do better than...a teacher. "Don't you think it would be boring teaching the same lessons day in and day out, the same subject year after year after year. I don't think you are going to find it all that satisfying and rewarding". He had a bit of hope and aspiration for me. My mother never made any comments like that. [She] thought it would be good. She enjoyed teaching. In fact, I think she sees a lot of what my grandfather was like in me and was hoping...I would pursue it. I'm sure she would love to see me be a principal one day. I would be one of her connections to her father. (T5 C6 &T6 C6 Cont. p. 8)

While your father did not seem to support the idea of you becoming a teacher, you interpreted your mother as being in favor. Even though your father presented argument to the contrary, you did enter teaching. As in the case of your father coming down hard on you and your brother in dinner conversations, I sense a reaction against your father's perspective.

> CR: You were ambivalent listening to this advice?
>
> C: No. Seeing as my father started negatively talking about it, I knew for sure I was going to become a teacher. (T5 C6 September 26, 1994, p. 7)

And yet you seem to be very clear as to why this is happening, given the way in which you have storied much of your home life as being denied choice.

> A history of being told what to do all the time I was a kid. (T5 C6 September 26, 1994, p. 9)

Now that you are on your own, you seem to take delight in making your own decisions, some of which appear to have been made as a statement of declaration that you do have the right of choice.

> When...I'm out...able to make some decisions on my own. Maybe I don't have to listen to everything that has to be said...I don't regret the decision I made there. I don't regret the decision I made about getting a dog. That's where maybe some of the...wanting kids to take responsibility, wanting kids to ask questions...interested in what the kids are interested in comes out in me because when I went through school and at home as well, I didn't ask questions. I did what I was told. I didn't have choices. He had choice A and B. They were both his choices. (T5 C6 September 26, 1994, p. 9)

There are a number of things that leave me wondering, Clark. The way in which you and your father both seem to express the elements of talk and questioning makes me wonder about the ways fathers shape their sons according to their personal practical knowledge. I also wonder if, in his conversation and questioning, your father may have been posing his point of view for you to check out before you decide. Could this have been his way of presenting alternatives? I am also wondering if that which you find objectionable in your father's practice and that you seem to react against, may be understood best as the lack of choice? Finally, Clark, I wonder about the influence of your mother. In this story she seems supportive. Yet her voice does not seem to appear very strongly. In other stories it seems even fainter. Am I interpreting this correctly?

As you progressed through your teacher preparation, Clark, your penchant for the practical and relevant, expressed in your stories of experience as a student, resurfaced. You explained:

> I thought, originally, I'd be teaching science. Science...was my area of expertise and I didn't know anything different. And then getting in and going through a little bit of the education course...I was getting a little turned off with the courses themselves. I think unless you actually do get into a practicum at some point...that's where I knew what I wanted to do. (T5 C6 September 26, 1994, p. 13)

> Out there doing some teaching...that's where you learn. Get out there and think about what you're doing on a day-to-day basis and working with kids and observing other teachers...that kind of stuff. I really liked my practicum. I was relieved that I was actually feeling that this is worthwhile. (T6 C6 Cont. September 26, 1994, p. 17)

It was the practicum that gave you some feeling that teaching would be worthwhile. However, while in the practicum you again encountered teachers whose practices conflicted. Like the teachers you encountered in your stories of going to school, these teachers seemed to be living out conflicting stories about school. As in your stories of going to school, you were but a character having to follow the plot lines. And the plot lines were different. In the one story, which seems to parallel the first story about you as a student, the plot line was one of control by the cooperating teacher. This did not seem to match with what you knew teaching should be.

> I went to William Smith High school for my first round...teaching...Biology 10, 20, 30 and I had an opportunity to do a little bit of physics...thought it would be good to share what I can do in a couple of areas. I...didn't have any discipline problems...kids...were easy to get along with.

> It was with a teacher who did the lecture stuff at the front then did some labs. I really liked the labs and having the kids work in their lab groups...hands-on stuff. So I increased that end when I was doing my practicum...tried to get as many activities in the lab...less on being at the front preaching to them and having them copy down notes. The experience was good in terms of organization and knowing the importance of being organized and how much planning might be required for a lesson.

> The supervisor was very much into looking at my lesson plans and seeing how detailed they were...wanted to know about timing, about opening of a lesson and the introduction...where the time was for that. She actually timed me with her little watch. She would say, "You ran two or three minutes over in this section, this section and that section." That part really frustrated me. How can you get teaching down to time...forcing what you're doing with kids? I went with it. That was her expectation of me. But what it showed me was, you need to be...in the prepared and planned mode...need to be...willing to go off...just because you taught it, the kid hasn't learned it and if more questions are coming from the kids, you need to deal with those questions or if they're

> not getting it, you need to take another tac right in the middle and stop what you're doing and try something different and go from there and you're not worried so much about how long it's taking you. Things that I got...some sort of introduction, getting the kids excited about what you are doing, some sort of wrap-up or closure at the end of the lesson. The rest of it was too regimented for me and I think I've broken away from most of that. She was in my class every period, all the time...never left me alone. (T6 C6 Cont. September 26, 1994, p. 18)

It is important that you recognized some positive things were learned from this teacher. But, generally, you seemed to interpret your high school cooperating teacher as not providing much voice or choice for you or the students. Further, if I have interpreted it correctly, there was little of the talk and discussion or questioning that might make you feel you were learning a lot about teaching or that she really knew how you were feeling or what you were learning.

In another story about your practicum experience, the plot line seems to fit much better. Here the teacher provided you with some room to make your own choices and then he took the time to talk with you and ask you some questions.

> Then I went to P. J. Boone...Grade 7...science, stained glass...orienteering. Academics were in the morning, options in the afternoon. He [the cooperating teacher] was a little more laid back and was in with me wondering...wanted to know more holistically, what I thought about, where was this whole unit headed and what I wanted to get accomplished with the kids...wasn't caught up on a lot of the details.
>
> He was very willing to let me look at his materials, to help support what I wanted to do. In the high school setting she didn't give me any of her stuff and I had to make it up myself...all my own assessment tools...she always kept a copy of it...this was much more collaborative and I liked the way we'd sit down at the end of the day...and talk in general terms about how things went in that class. At first he was in with me and then he'd leave for awhile and then he'd come back and ask me how the day went and then he'd go through a series of questions with me...without even having to be in the room. I really did feel that he was getting a sense of what I was doing with the kids and how I was responding through just talking with me. And he came out and explicitly indicated that was a bit of what he was doing and how did I feel about the fact that he wasn't in there. Did I want him to be in there more often or not? Was I comfortable? He didn't want the perception that he was just going off and sitting drinking coffee while I was teaching the class. That's what I think he was trying to make sure wasn't coming across. I appreciated that experience. (T56 C6 Cont. September 26, 1994, p. 19)

In this story I sense talk and conversation, questioning, voice and choice. The plot

line seems to fit for you. Things are smooth. The practice of the teacher is congruent with what you know as teaching. I wonder about the connection between these stories and your practice as a teacher.

We talked about your first teaching assignment, Clark, and while there were many different events and happenings of which those first two years were comprised, your overall impressions of teaching were not all that favorable. Once again you seemed to find yourself a character in a story where the plot line of the school did not match your ideals and you did not feel satisfied. This surfaced in one of our early interviews. You explained:

> We need not be answering questions...but asking for possibilities. I thought I used to have possibilities and the possibilities in me have been stifled from being at home, being told what to do and when to do it and without question. You don't back talk, you just do things...well my first year of teaching was appalling in that respect. I came into a school and basically was told that here's how you can run your program. Here's my stuff, you should follow it...if you wanted to make any changes or you questioned what was going on you were shot down very quickly by people saying, I've been around longer than you. I know what's going on here. This is the way you should do things. (T1 C2 and T2 C2, September 12, 1994, p. 47)

As I have tried to make sense of your feelings here, Clark, teaching did not appear much different than you experienced home life and life as a student. Here, however, it was other teachers who were dictating to you, their stories of what teaching was about. There was no conversation, no questioning, no voice, no choice.

And yet, you seem to have found an alternative to accepting their story of school and the plot line they were living.

> I was in a different scenario there that I don't think I'm going to get in too many places that I work unless you decide to be principal again in your life instead of going off writing things (laughter). The scenario was being able to talk. I got involved with writing a journal with you in my first year of teaching there and I talked about things and I felt I didn't have to take what these people had to say to me. The opportunity was there for support. You asked questions of me. I was able to respond. I was able to try different things in my classroom and I didn't

> necessarily have to succumb to the pressure of the people around me but I can see how it could be very easy for somebody in their first year of teaching to get right sucked into the mentality of "you do it this way" because I don't think the support would be out there for them. It's easiest to conform...not to rock the boat, not to confront people. It's easy not to question. Its easy just to let things go. Leave them as is. (T1 C2 and T2 C2 Cont. September 12, 1994, p. 47)

You appear to have found support for your ways of knowing school, support that allowed for talk, questioning, voice and choice. When I inquired more deeply into the ways you had experienced those first two years, the lack of fit seemed quite clear.

> I taught science the first year, every other day...had about eight or nine classes...around 240 kids...cycled in to me. Even at the end of the first parent-teacher interviews, I did not know the kids. If the kids weren't with the parents, I was really uptight because if they didn't have the same last name as the kid...how am I really going to figure out...found myself giving the con job...having a standard little speech that I'd give the parent...eye-ball the mark that was given...give a standard little speech and I wasn't feeling very comfortable that I knew these kids very well.
>
> Next year I saw fewer in number but still I really wasn't getting to know the kids. I also find the curriculum frustrates me...not very practical. You need to be able to apply some of these things to everyday life experiences. In order to do that [the kids] need to able to see some connections between different curricular areas and kids need to be able to pose questions of their own...that they're interested in looking at and find some answers to. So I really found my two years limited. (T1 C1 September 1, 1994, p. 5)

The lack of personal contact, not really knowing how students were feeling, the absence of talk, questioning, voice and choice were apparent. The fragmentation of the curriculum, the lack of relevance and connection also bothered you. You concluded that your first two years had been limiting. Again I find myself wondering. I wonder about your need for close personal contact. As a student you seemed to know what it could do and now as a teacher you also seem to understand relationship. I have a strong sense that you are guided in your practice by the elements I have outlined and presented to you. I find myself wondering about the ways in which these elements are connected to the stories of your experiences in going to school as a student, to your home life experiences and to

your experiences as you trained for and entered the teaching profession. I invite you to read and respond to this letter and I look forward to providing for your voice as we construct the first narrative of your practice.

Sincerely,

Chuck

CHAPTER V

NARRATIVE II

June 28, 1995

Dear Clark,

As we continue to explore the ways in which your practice shapes and is shaped by the context in which you work, I offer you a second letter of interpretation. In this letter I return to your first teaching and teacher-leader experiences, reviewing those five years in your first school in light of the shaping influences as I understand your story and then moving on to the context in which you have been working for the past two school terms.

To frame this second interpretation, I will make use of the teacher knowledge landscape metaphor. The professional knowledge landscape work (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995) will provide a shared context to talk about your practice. As before, I look forward to your response.

The Professional Knowledge Landscape Metaphor

By thinking of teacher practice as situated on a landscape of teacher knowledge at the interface of theory and practice, I am afforded a better understanding of the number and variety of people and things that influence teacher practice. I am also provided an understanding of the tensions and the dilemmas experienced by teachers, as their work in schools takes them back and forth from the relative privacy and security of the in-

classroom place on the landscape to the out-of-classroom place that may include staff room, staff meetings, principal's office, lunchroom, hallways and additional situations in which they interact professionally with others.

In the security and privacy of the in-classroom place, the teacher is in charge and is relatively free to work with students in the way that teacher knows best. It is usually a very practical place where the teacher is able to live out his or her teacher stories. As the teacher moves from the security of that in-classroom place to any of a variety of locations on the out-of-classroom place on the landscape, the numerous demands and expectations of administrators, politicians, curriculum planners and other teachers give rise to tensions and dilemmas. Here the pressures are endless and, in many circumstances, the language is abstract and complicated. Often the teacher outwardly complies with the expectations and demands. However, returning to the security of the in-classroom place, the teacher continues to practice as he or she knows best. When outwardly complying the teacher is said to be living a "cover story" (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995; Crites, 1971).

With respect to our efforts to transform our school between 1991 and 1993, you may have recognized the compliance of some teachers in staff meetings. Those teachers would verbalize their commitment to the notions of integrated, interdisciplinary, team-teaching, cooperative learning and student centredness that were encouraged in our teaching and learning. Yet, visits to their learning communities would find them still teaching independently, in separate classrooms and according to a fragmented timetable in which the traditional subject disciplines took prominence and in which students were segregated for instruction according to "regular", English as a second language, special education, or integrated occupational program (IOP) labels. Their espoused commitment and buy-in to the story of school may be seen as a cover story. What is actually carried

out in practice by those teachers, in the classroom, remains unchanged.

Back in the classroom, the teacher lives out his or her teacher story, for the most part, a "secret story" (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995) which may be shared with others if it is safe to do so. Given the individual nature of teaching, it is, more often than not, only in safe out-of-classroom places that teachers share stories of practice among themselves. In safe places they tell their stories.

Your initial discussions and talk with John might be viewed as the sharing of secret stories, as you shared your feelings about teaching, what was actually happening in your teaching and how things ought to be. And later, when the two of you met with Kay and the talk and discussion continued, perhaps that may also be understood as the sharing of secret stories. Your meetings at the university, at each other's homes and in your classrooms would be the safe places in which you told your stories.

As different teachers live out differing teacher stories, some stories may be seen to compete with one another. When the plot lines are not too different, those stories seem to be able to exist within the tensions of competition. However, when the stories become too different, they can conflict.

In the teaching that characterized our situation at Briardon, many different teaching stories were evident. In addition, as we changed the structure and organization of our school to that in which there were five unique learning communities, there were five very different stories of school being lived out. Often they seemed to compete. While they were able to exist in the tension of competition with respect to some issues, there were other situations in which they conflicted. The issues related to consuming food and beverage in the hallways or being transported to classrooms and being eaten there seemed to exemplify such conflicting stories. In your learning community, for

example, students were allowed to bring and eat their lunches, slurpees and other foodstuff. In other learning communities students were not allowed to do this. The competing stories conflicted in the hallways when students who were transporting their food and drink were challenged by teachers whose stories differed.

Some stories of practice are so strong they are not spoken. They are so much a part of the general society or the profession, and so ingrained, that they go unnoticed and unquestioned. They may be said to have the qualities of a sacred story (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995; Crites, 1971). In the hat story I told earlier, it seemed that the problem with hats pointed to conflicting stories of school being lived out in the differing learning communities. It may be that the hat incident was reflective of a stronger story, perhaps a sacred story that was being challenged by those students who wore hats and by the teachers who allowed hats to be worn inside the building and in their classes.

It is with the teacher knowledge landscape metaphor in mind, Clark, that I offer this second interpretation. To begin, I return to your story of your first five years of teaching in the context of your first school setting.

A New Teacher Begins to Question Things on the Landscape

You described your first year of teaching (1988-1989) as a busy one in which you worked hard to cope with the day to day routines of planning and preparation. In your second year, however (1989-1990), you began to reflect upon and question the way things worked.

> My second year, I think, was worse than my first year...I wasn't as aware in my first year. I was worrying more about myself and my plans and getting things done...my second year I had a bit more time to look back and see what was really going on in the school. (T3 C/S/CPR September 13, 1994, p. 71)

As you have storied it, teaching fell short of what you expected.

> I really found my first two years limited in terms of what I thought teaching was about. (T1 C1 September 1, 1994, p. 6)

To begin with, and as we noted in our first interpretation, you were not happy with what was taking place in your in-classroom place on the landscape. You had been assigned a room from which you were to teach science to students in grades seven, eight and nine. Given a five period day, in that you saw each class every second day and allowing for homeroom, preparation time and assemblies, you taught eight different classes of approximately thirty students. You were expected to know and be responsible for the learning of some 240 students.

You became most aware of the effects of this highly structured and fragmented organization at interview time when parents would show up expecting that you knew their sons or daughters and awaiting your progress report and comments. You were concerned that you didn't really know the students.

> I was really uptight...if they didn't have the same last name as the kid, how am I going to figure out...I found myself just giving the con job. Just having a standard little speech that I'd give the parent. I'd be able to eye-ball the mark...and I'd give a...little speech and I wasn't feeling very comfortable that I knew the kids very well. Next year....I saw...fewer in number, but I still wasn't really getting to know the kids. (T1 C1 September 1, 1994, p. 5)

This did not seem to fit with what you knew about relationships, nor about the way teachers should know their students. You were dissatisfied. In addition, you were experiencing frustration with the curriculum.

> The curriculum frustrates me...not...very practical. You can't see the use...and you need to be able to apply some of these things to everyday life experiences...they need to be able to see some connections between different curricular areas and [kids] need to be able to pose questions of their own...find some answers. (T1 C1 September 1, 1994, p. 6)

The curriculum didn't seem to fit. You thought curriculum should involve students.

Clark, I wonder if your story of the interviews highlights the lack of relationship, care and listening you saw as characterizing that large and complex junior high? Also, with so many students to handle, the fragmentation into subject areas, and the emphasis on teaching subject content, the talk, discussion and conversation that were noted in my first interpretation as being so much a part of your practice, seemed to be missing. As well, there seemed to be little voice or choice for students.

In my first interpretation, I described these elements as a part of your practice. I outlined ways in which you knew voice and choice as a particular kind of care and listening to students. Talk, discussion and conversation seemed to be an image (Clandinin, 1986) of your practice that embodied ways in which students learn and in which teachers interact with students. Questioning seemed to be another image that embodied teaching, in which the student was given voice and in which the teacher listened and guided the student.

In your first school, you appear to have been thwarted in your attempt to live out your story of teaching as you knew it. It would seem that the timetable and the subject discipline approach, as aspects of the out-of-classroom place on the landscape, had a strong effect upon your practice on the in-classroom place. They seemed to shape your practice. I wonder how you interpret that, Clark. I will be interested in your response.

You were also dissatisfied with things on the out-of-classroom place on the landscape. For example, acceptance and encouragement from experienced teachers were not forthcoming. And you could tell that those teachers were not receptive to change.

> My first year of teaching was appalling...I came into a school and basically was told, "Here's how you can run your program. Here is my stuff. You should follow it!" If you wanted to make any changes or you questioned what was going on, you were shot down very quickly by

> people saying, "I've been around longer than you! I know what's going on here! This is the way you should do things!" (T2 C2 September 12, 1994, p. 47)

This was not what you expected to find in teaching and it seems to resonate with your stories of experiences at home and school in which student voice and choice were denied and in which other elements you knew as important in learning and teaching were absent.

In your second year you found it safe enough to express your concerns with one teacher. With that teacher you shared stories about what was happening and the two of you conversed about what should be and what could be possible.

> For me it was dissatisfaction with what was going on and voicing that a little bit with John...knowing he was different than any of the other teachers...you can engage him in a conversation...some people don't want to talk about school. They're not interested in school. "This is my lunch hour"..."talk about the hockey team" or this or that...after school when you're going for a drink..."leave it at school"..."it's over". John wasn't like that. You could bring up a topic and you'd talk to him about it and actually get to a reasonable level and think about it...about possibilities. (T1 C1 September 1, 1994, p. 12)

With this teacher, you were able to begin to express the elements of your practice as you knew them. This talk and discussion soon developed into a story with a plot line that could be lived out.

> We talked a little bit about...if we had a group of kids...we could ask the principal...have a group of kids and...develop the program...thinking that we were looking at a Math-Science combination and Social-Language combination...because those had been some natural connections that had occurred in curricular areas. (T1 C1 September 1, 1994, p. 7)

Near the end of your second school term you and your colleague sought my support for the exploration of an alternative story of school that might be better for our students. In that you seemed to find our relationship one of support, my office became a safe place, a context on the out-of-classroom place on the landscape in which it was safe

to share secret stories. You explained it this way.

> I was in a different scenario there, that I don't think I'm going to get in too many places that I work, unless you decide to be principal again in your life instead of just going off writing things (Laughter). The scenario was being able to talk. I got involved in writing a journal with you in my first year of teaching there and I talked about things and I felt I didn't have to take what these people had to say to me. The opportunity was there for support. You asked questions of me. I was able to respond. I was able to try different things in my classroom and I didn't necessarily have to succumb to the pressure of the people around me...I can see how it could be very easy for somebody in their first year of teaching to get sucked right into the mentality of 'you do it this way'...I don't think the support would be out there. (T2 C2 September 12, 1994, p. 47)

In this story I am again able to recognize the way in which your story of teaching features the elements of practice described in the first interpretation. Reflecting, learning and changing seem to happen through talk, discussion and conversation. In this case, journal writing with me facilitated your learning and my questioning and listening seemed to provide you with support. It seemed to fit with your story of how principal and teacher should relate.

The isolation you experienced in your first two years disappeared as you, John and Kay began to construct the story of your new learning community. In one of our interviews you remarked on the difference.

> I spent more time in the first month, talking with John and Kay than I had talking with any teachers over the past two years of the school. (T1 C1 September 1, 1994, p. 7)

Here your story fits with my first interpretation of your practice. As you know them, relationships begin with talk, discussion and conversation. Your relationship with John and Kay can be understood to develop as you live out your story.

A Transformation of the In-Classroom Place

Your third year of teaching (1990-1991) began with you, John and Kay sharing a

new in-classroom place consisting of three rooms. Two of the rooms were connected by a folding door and the other was located immediately across the hall. You were assigned 101 grade eight students, some of whom had been diagnosed as having learning disabilities and thus had been labeled LD. You were to be responsible for all subjects except for physical education and the fine and practical arts. By means of this assignment of students and space, you acquired more control over time, over the scheduling of academic subjects and over your teaching. Less encumbered by the rigidity of a school wide timetable, you began to live out your new story of school.

Once again referring to the first interpretation, your new story might be expected to feature close personal relationships between students and teachers and among teachers. Talk, discussion and conversation might be expected to lead to the development of those close relationships and the teaching and learning that would result would feature questioning, voice and choice.

In one of our interviews you acknowledged the exploration and the trials associated with constructing your new story.

> Lots of ups and downs...no idea where we were going and what we were doing. (T1 C1 September 1, 1994, p. 17)

Although you intended that things be different in your new community, you started the year off in much the same manner as under the previous structure.

> We started off...I was handling the math...the planning and getting things set. John was handling the science and we were going to take a humanities approach with social and language. We started off with the kids broken up into three teams and rotated them around so I would teach all of the math to them and John would do the science and Kay would do the humanities. (T1 C1 September 1, 1994, p. 17)

There was a lot to sort out. You and your colleagues seemed to have prepared for this by means of the time you set aside for reflecting and talking. Through that

discussion and reflection you came to realize that you were not organized for and doing what was needed. Again you restoried your plot line. In one of our interviews you explained the way this came about.

> We met once a day during the school day...prep time...then we met every day after school to talk about how things are going and where we were headed. We also met every single weekend for a good portion of time...said, "What's different than running a pod system? This isn't really what we are about!" And we explored curriculum and the role that students can play...making it a little bit more real and connected...then...saying, "We're not going to be rotating you around anymore. We're going to run some thematic units...in the big room we'll be team-teaching...a scenario where we will be teaching the thematic unit. And across the hall the same thing will be going on at the same time".
>
> And then we explored and talked a lot about these kids and their language and numeracy skills. And so we set up (at the time it wasn't called skill building...later evolved)...a time where the kids would get a little more formal training in some of the math and language areas and then they would use that in their thematic units. (T1 C1 September 1, 1994, p. 18)

You also acknowledged the part that your students played in reflecting upon their experiences and in expressing their opinions. This was how the learning community came to be storied.

> The process evolved from conversations with the kids and from John, Kay and I...at the end of the year we were up and running as the learning community...dealing with the thematic units. (T1 C1 September 1, 1994, p. 18)

Reflecting upon the way this new story began, how it was restoried, relived and then restoried further, you seemed to understand how difficult it was to do things differently.

> We didn't know any better. That's what we'd been used to and accustomed to. (T1 C1 September 1, 1994, p. 17)

You articulated some of the relational qualities essential to this kind of teaching and learning.

> You have to be able to have a relationship...in which you can be honest with one another... without being threatening...working through the ups and downs of our relationship as a team of three, let alone the relationships we develop with the kids. (T1 C1 September 1, 1994, p. 20)

Storytelling was also significant.

> By the end of the year we were at a stage where things were open...even after we split up into the different learning communities we'd still have conversations and talked about what happened in our first year and how things went...told stories to one another, related it to...our new learning communities...wanted to share with one another some of the similarities and differences. (T1 C1 September 1, 1994, p. 22)

Yet, you still did not feel it was safe enough to share your teaching stories and your story of school in most areas of the out-of-classroom place.

> This involved zero contact with other staff. This involved the three of us and, from time to time, filling you in on what the latest thing was that we were going to experiment with. There was nobody else involved. (T1 C1 September 1, 1994, p. 23)

The In-Classroom Place Begins to Shape the Out-of-Classroom Place

As you, your team and the students began to live out the new plot line, the school became embroiled in a controversy of major proportions. I will share that story as I know it.

> Coping With School Violence
>
> We opened the term under an unusually warm fall weather system. It was hot outside and hot in the building. Staff sensed a different atmosphere among our students within the building. It was tense! Teachers complained of an increase in the use of offensive language by students and the harshness that had characterized the school seemed stronger. There was more jostling in the hallways and fighting would break out between and before classes more frequently. More than ever the counselors and administration would find their days consumed with the aftermath of in-school and playground conflicts which were increasing in intensity and in number. Quite often the fighting involved girls, the use of feet, groups against individuals and weapons.
>
> In explaining these increased and heightened tensions to our superintendents and in making a request for the assistance of a school resource officer (police officer), we cited some other troubling features of our school. Our school was situated on an eight block by four block patch of land and between two large high schools. Over 3000 students attended the three schools and made use of swimming pool, ice arena, soccer fields, rollercade and convenience stores that were also located on that plot of land. The physical layout allowed automobile traffic to bring different forms of intrusion into the school atmosphere. That included visitors from other schools, former students returning to say hello (when they should have been in attendance at their own schools) and intruders who were sometimes under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

> As if matters were not complex enough, our city police department reorganized so as to use a central telephone system. No longer could we call the district office to have officers dispatched when an incident was in progress or when we learned that a gang rumble was scheduled. The telephone system featured an automatic cuing device wherein our calls for help found us listening to, "Your call will be answered in the order in which it was received".
>
> Just before we were catapulted into the eye of the media, I confided in one of the superintendents, informing him of my fears for the safety of students and staff. He was not unsympathetic and assured me that the issue was being addressed. Less than two days later an incident with a knife brought the entire matter to a head. It took place in a girls' washroom and, in short order had the entire school in a panic.
>
> One administrator and several teachers attended to the victim and onlookers, support staff called an ambulance and the police, while our second assistant principal helped me locate the perpetrators. There were three. As a result of the telephone cuing, the emergency number was called and the media arrived with the police. From that moment on our story, and many different versions of it, were broadcast throughout the city, the province and the country.
>
> In response and in a move that was mainly intuitive, I called a public meeting and invited students, parents, members of the community, civic and school system officials. Some 375 people responded. Using large and small group format, with teachers serving as meeting facilitators and recorders, we shared our story and everyone who wanted to speak was heard. Discussion groups brainstormed solutions, gave input and the input was left with a committee under my leadership. A follow up meeting was scheduled. (Personal Journal, November, 1993)

Among the unique aspects of this gathering was a presentation by a group of your grade eight students. Concerned about what was happening in their school and community, they discussed the problem in their classes. As part of their work, they expressed opinions, generated questions and did research. Under your guidance they approached me prior to the meeting and had asked to share the results of their work.

When I asked you about the part this story played in the story of your new learning community, you responded as follows:

> These things were going on about the kids in our school and what was happening...the media...want to talk to the principal. Well that's kind of nice to get the principal's perspective but what's this all about and who is involved? The kids. So this was the prime opportunity. The timing couldn't have been better for us.

> We were starting up this thing with the learning community and we wanted to talk to the kids about real life things that are happening and tie that into their learning. So what an opportunity to get the kids involved and talking about the issues and see how they really feel and have the kids involved in the discussions that happen with the parents in the community and bring them out to the big parent forum.
>
> We just collapsed everything...we were looking at themes...and this was a theme for us...the violence thing...capitalized on in terms of getting the kids involved and setting up our little cooperative learning groups and having them get a chance to express their opinions about what was going on in their area. Was this a bad area? Was this a safe area? And how do you feel in your own community? More importantly, how do you feel in your own school? Do you feel safe here? [It was] a springboard that led into looking at the different curricular areas. The year ended with a survey...somewhere in the neighborhood of 98% of the kids opted to be in the learning community setting the following year. (T1 C1 September 1, 1994, p. 25)

This experience was significant in shaping things to come. Our school leadership team placed before the staff, a plan for change. In part, it was directed at improving the school in terms of the violence issue, but it was also intended to allow other students and teachers to experience the kinds of success you and your team appeared to be enjoying. The plan was offered to the staff in the form of an invitation. It involved teachers forming their own teacher teams and assuming greater responsibility and control over curriculum, methods and the general day to day operation of school. In essence, the plan called for the acceptance, encouragement and support of competing stories. There were to be five learning communities, each empowered to develop the plot line for their story of school and to live out that story with their students.

Conflicting Stories on the In-Classroom Place

As a result of the decision to reorganize into five learning communities, you, John and Kay became teacher leaders for three different communities. In your new team you were joined by another teacher, Sara. Sara's interest and the fact that she had begun to restory her own practice resulted in her request to join your team.

Throughout the first year of our school-wide learning community operations (1991-1992), your in-classroom place was not a secure and private place for you and the other teachers. As you, Sara, four other teachers and some 150 students began to live out a story of school more in keeping with your personal practical knowledge, you quickly came to realize that yours and Sara's teacher stories were in competition with the stories being lived out by the other four teachers on the team. Your teacher stories did not fit with the teacher stories of the others.

> [We] had several meetings...could sense...we were going to have some difficulties right from the onset. The things that Sara and I believed and valued about kids and education were not really jelling with what the rest of the people were thinking. We were not interested in having a separate LD room...ESL kids kept separately...were very much into cooperative learning. The team-teaching aspects were not going over that well. (T2 C/S/CPR September 13, 1994, p. 12)

By the mid-point in the school term, yours and Sara's teacher stories were conflicting with those of the others on the team. The example you and Sara shared in one of our evening meetings supports this interpretation. It was about Saul wanting his own classroom.

> S: We were having difficulty with Saul really wanting to do cooperative learning. He said, "Okay, I'll try it out". And he tried it for one day. The kids were too noisy and unproductive so he wanted them back in rows.
>
> C: He was totally against it and he was trying to indicate that there was research to support the fact that collective learning is no good...even though he never produced any of it...said, "I've given it a try!" One day is not a try! Only one day, by yourself, is not a try either!
>
> CR: So he eventually moved into room 12?
>
> C: Yeah. That was the trade off.
>
> S: He wanted his own kids..."Give me my classroom and my kids!"
>
> (T2 C/S/CPR 1 September 13, 1994, p14)

You and Sara came to occupy the big room where you continued to team teach and live

out your teacher stories around a story of school as a democratic community of learners working cooperatively to grow and develop. The other four teachers returned to the privacy of individual classrooms to live out their stories of specialist teachers, teaching their subjects to students. Sara recounted this in the first of our joint interviews.

> By then we were barely even planning together...Clark and I were planning. (T2 C/S/CPR 1 September 13, 1994, p. 17)

In light of the stories you and Sara have shared, I reflect back on that first year of working in learning communities (1991-1992) and I understand better the way in which your team lived a cover story. In staff meetings, in administrative team meetings, in the staff room and particularly when meeting with me and my assistant principals, the story told was that the learning community was operating well and that there was harmony and cooperation among the members of the teaching team. While it seemed to be commonly known and accepted that the stories of school being lived in different learning communities were in competition with one another, no one was prepared to admit that there were competing or conflicting teacher stories within the team. It was not until I was called upon to address the difficulties experienced by two teachers that I began to understand. Then I could appreciate how the competing stories within your team were in conflict. Something needed to be done.

By the middle of that year (1991-1992), a move had been made internally in order to replace one of those teachers who was unable to complete the year. As a result, Yvonne joined your team. She seemed to fit in very well. At the end of the term she agreed to continue and you were invited to be part of the interviewing for three teachers who would replace those wanting out. Over the summer considerable effort was made to

select teachers whose story of school would fit with what you, Sara and Yvonne storied. One of the three replacements, Gil, was a new teacher who had worked with you as a student-teacher the year prior. Don was also a new teacher. He had a strong background in art and was student-centred. He held strong beliefs about the ways in which subject specialties needed to be integrated to provide meaningful and relevant learning activities for students. Henry was somewhat of an anomaly. A very positive and intense individual, he had been declared surplus from his previous school because he had the least seniority. He had been in the school system for twenty years and was storied by many as traditional. Surprisingly, Henry's teacher story fit and he was welcomed from the outset.

The In-Classroom Place on the Landscape Again Becomes Safe

In the 1992-1993 school term, the second year of learning community operations, things changed markedly. Throughout that year attention was given to relationships among team members, among the students and between teachers and students. In the stories Sara wrote for one of her university courses and later shared with me she told about an activity in which the six of you grew closer together as a knowledge community (Craig, 1992). The setting for the story was Sara's lakeside cabin where some of your planning took place. From her story I gained an awareness of the manner in which your team began to develop a sense of appreciation and care for one another. I understood how the cabin provided a safe location on the landscape for her, for you and the team.

In the same way as I understand the cabin to have been a safe out-of-classroom place on the landscape, I am able to appreciate that the 'big room' in your learning community afforded a safe place within the school. That in-classroom place consisted of

the east wing of the school: the big room, three adjoining classrooms, the mud hall and storage rooms. I described it in my field notes as I worked with Sara.

> This junior high school is served by a large, professionally certificated teaching staff and a complement of support and caretaking personnel. The adults are as diverse in their experience and perspectives as the 700-750 students are in their ethnic, cultural and academic backgrounds. It is a large and complex school.
>
> It is comprised of two separate buildings which have been joined together. The larger building, a rectangular facility, features a row of rooms along three of the sides of the building with a gymnasium and stage along the fourth side. In the middle are staff room, offices, and specialty facilities.
>
> The second building had originally been an elementary facility. It houses a small gym, office facilities and egg carton type hallways with rooms on either side. A space approximating three of the rooms had been used in constructing a library. It was in this wing of three rooms, the old library and mud hall, that Clark, Sara, four other teachers and 150 students had taken up residence for two years in 1990-1992.
>
> The former library is affectionately called the big room. It serves as a general gathering place for the entire learning community. It is open and available before school, at noon and after school hours. Students come early, check in, eat lunch and spend the noon hour and after school times here. Students are allowed to come and go, wear their ball caps and just hang out.
>
> Surprisingly, many do homework and not surprisingly, other students drop by. This includes high school students who were in this learning community in previous years. There are always teachers here. The teachers eat lunch with the students and rarely frequent the staff room when they could be with students. When the entire learning community meets, it is in this room. It is very crowded. For the most part, however, some 60-90 students are accommodated at any given time.
>
> The big room looks lived in. More precisely, it is a little old and worn. It has not been painted for many years. The wood finish on the doors has been chipped and marked. When preparing to make the transition to the five learning communities, Clark's teachers had given up tubular desks and individual flat top tables in favor of larger tables that would facilitate cooperative learning activities and group work. In order to obtain enough of those tables, a great deal of scrounging occurred and the end result was the acceptance of some very ancient and poorly finished wooden tables. The pen and pencil markings that have accumulated on these items over the years contribute to the used look of the place.
>
> At the west end of the big room, the former library office now serves as a general work and storage room. It holds a refrigerator that is accessible to anyone in the learning community. In the mornings, toast and hot chocolate are served to those who need it and both students and teachers share their lunches with others who are hungry. Given the general access to this small storage room by so many people, it can be understood why it looks lived in.

> The width of the former library office spans approximately half of the room. The remainder of the west end serves as a reading corner, bordered by windows and replete with risers, two old chesterfields and some easy chairs. Be it seat work, class discussion time or direct teaching, there are always students who rush to these choice areas to lounge or to do their work in a more relaxed fashion. Those who don't get seated on the old chesterfields or the reading corner risers often make themselves at home on the floor. The floor area is covered with carpet that was donated. The installation was done by parents.
>
> Teacher desks are clustered around the big room, some of them side by side and others separate. Stretching from west to east, the majority of the room is filled with the old tables and auditorium chairs. Simply put, the big room does not look neat and tidy. People seem to be the focus. There is always lots of chatter and, for the most part, it seems like a happy and positive place to be. (Notes to File, September 14, 1994)

It was in the big room, in 1992-1993, that a significant activity occurred in the last period of the day on Friday afternoons. As you tell it, Clark, the team would gather in the big room, in the reading corner and talk. The talk would consist of the sharing of personal stories and experiences; the stuff of secret stories.

> We had one [meeting] a week...there was no agenda. We...had this little area in the room where we just talked...about kids....about how things are going in the unit...often topics would just pop up...and where we're going and what we're doing and revisit our beliefs. Every week we revisited our beliefs...just talking and sharing. (T2 C2 September 12, 1994, p. 47)

In that sense, the big room became a significant symbol on the landscape, a symbol of safety and security for you and the team. I wonder if this understanding fits with your interpretation.

The Out-of-Classroom Place Remains Unsafe

When the school staff made the decision to rethink and restructure our school organization, we realized that it was virtually impossible to get everyone in our large, complex school to live the same story of school. The decision was intended to lessen the tensions and to capitalize on the diversity by empowering one another to live out

competing stories of school. In doing so, it seemed that we intuitively created some safe places within the various wings of the school that housed the five learning communities and the specialists of the fine and practical arts. For the most part, those locations tended to be on the in-classroom place on the landscape. For you, your team of teachers and your learning community, the big room was such a safe place.

Another safe place, as I have noted earlier, was my office. It was an out-of-classroom place on the landscape but it seemed to provide you with the support you required when you came to see me. Other locations on the out-of classroom place on the landscape were not so secure and supportive.

One of the things I noted in the year in which you and your learning community seemed to enjoy so much success (1992-1993) was the way your team avoided the staff room. As a result, and while conducting my research, I have been interested to listen to your stories about what it was like in that out-of classroom location and how it is now.

For you and your team, it did not seem to be a safe place. When I listen to the stories you and Sara tell about the general atmosphere of the staff room, I understand the discomfort you felt. You story it as a very teacher-centred place, often negative and, more often than not, dominated by a few teachers who openly complained and criticized students and other teachers. In general, there seemed to be little that happened in this context that was positive or that centred upon doing things with and for students. There was little to inspire or allow for your learning and growth. For you, it was not a place to be. You and your team did not feel comfortable being there. You expressed it this way in one of our interviews:

> I didn't occupy and visit the staff room at Briardon because there were more important things that were happening in terms of the work with the kids...the learning community was open when we

> got there and it was free for the kids to come down and be there and be with us in the morning. Lunch time it was a meeting place for them; it was their learning community as much as it was ours and they were down there eating their lunch with us, so that was a pleasant place to be, to talk to the kids and that's the place I needed to be, as opposed to being up in the staff room. People thought that we should be shutting it down, closing the doors and kicking the kids out and we should be up in the staff room having lunch, bitching about kids and complaining and joining in the usual staff room banter. (T4 C4 September 19, 1994, p. 2)

I have also concluded that for you, your team and your students, the hallways were not safe places. You may wish to refer to the account of the hallways I recorded in the introduction to my dissertation proposal. There I described it as follows:

> For some it was a gauntlet of conflicting stories as they learned which teachers on supervision on differing days, smiled or did not, greeted or did not, asked or demanded about the foodstuff, said nothing, or demanded the removal of the hats. (Dissertation Proposal, p. 3)

Neither staff meetings nor administrative team meetings appear to have been safe places on the landscape for you and your teachers. I will share some of the discussion from the transcripts of one of our evening meetings in which you and Sara discussed such meetings with me. Your prime area of concern in this segment of the transcript was the nature of the administrative team meetings in which teacher-leaders participated and their relevance.

S: And you go to those s-t-u-p-i-d meetings!

C: Uh hmm.

CR: Which would those be?

S: Well, maybe they weren't as stupid when you were there.

All: (Laugh)

S: ...oh gawd I hate them.

C: Admin team meetings...are just as bad at the school I'm in now.

CR: Well let's talk about what it is that you don't like about them?

C: At the school that I'm at, we don't really deal with things of significance... never look at big picture stuff and then start basing our details on the big picture.

S I agree with you. And then even if we decided to do that at our school...people would just B.S. [about] the big picture and then it would become, "Oh yeah, everybody's doing this, yeah, yeah, yeah. We love these learning communities...yeah, yeah, yeah...and we do integrated, too...in our own way".

CR: Cover stories?

S: People would go back and do whatever they were doing...wouldn't make any difference.

C: Yeah

S: Yeah. Cover stories!

C: That's what happened when I was going to admin meetings when Chuck was running them. People would B. S. their way through and nothing much would change. The meetings that had potential were when we met for breakfast. Those were supposed to be some of the bigger picture meetings but people weren't really interested. They just bitched and complained about having to get up and go to the meetings...never read the book...couldn't contribute, in a meaningful way, to the conversation...a waste of time.

CR: And it hasn't improved any?

S: No! (T2 C/S/CPR 1 September 13, 1994, p. 36)

You and Sara talked about your dissatisfactions with staff meetings as well. The voting was one matter of concern for you.

> Has anybody ever raised an issue of the voting? It's nice in theory...one person, one vote...but what about the crowd and the pressures that in-groups can put on people? So it's 60/40 on the poor decision end! (T2 C/S/CPR 1 September 13, 1994, p. 41)

Such methods seem to have denied Sara's team a voice. The way in which she was outvoted on the practice of moving to the next grade with the students was another example of how the administrative team meeting was not safe for sharing stories. She explained it as follows:

> If we taught Grade 9 last year, we go to Grade 7 and take a group of kids for three years...what happened...at the admin team...he [principal] went around the table and said, "How do people feel about this?" And I said, "We'd like to go to Grade 7 and take kids for three years". John said, "Next year I want Grade 9 and the split grade thing again". He could take the eights he had last year and move to Grade 9 with them. But there were not enough kids so he'd take Grade 8 again. [One leader] had the same kids for Grade 7 and Grade 8. She said that was enough with that group of kids. She wanted to stay at Grade 8. Mac wanted to stay in the curriculum that he was familiar with. Rock's community was in the same position...so we said O. K. (T3 C/S/CPR September 13, 1994, p. 44)

Another area of concern focused upon the idea that everyone had to do the same thing in order to be collaborative. You and Sara commented on that.

> S: I don't know how many times I've heard, "We want to be coherent and we want to be unified and we want to collaborate". But people don't understand that learning communities could be doing different things and have their own uniqueness and be collaborative.
>
> C: And still strive towards a common goal with the school.
>
> (T3 C/S/CPR September 13, 1994, p. 42)

New Stories From the Conduit

In their teacher knowledge landscape work, Clandinin and Connelly (1995) make use of another metaphor. The conduit metaphor is used to describe the manner in which information, policies and directives are funneled into the teacher knowledge landscape. It affords me an appreciation of the many prescriptions, directives and other kinds of information that are handed down to teachers. In outlining the way the conduit works, Clandinin and Connelly note:

> Teachers are required to know, understand, discuss, and do something with the knowledge poured into the landscape via the conduit. This knowledge is packaged in textbooks, pamphlets, workshops, staff meetings, information sessions, memos and the like...abstract diagrams, assessment plans, factors, school improvement plans, schemata, forces, research conclusions, research prescriptions, policy prescriptions etc. fill the landscape. (1995, p. 12)

Through this metaphor I also begin to understand how the practices of teachers are shaped by those who serve in the conduit. For example, I can understand how those in the conduit story particular schools and how certain teachers become storied. Those who operate from within the conduit also shape the practices of teachers and schools by means of the appointments, placements and assignments that situate specific teachers in particular places and positions on the landscape.

In your case, Clark, those in the conduit seemed to have storied you as a character in a story of leadership, within a plot line of leadership development. I have come to this interpretation from the story you told in one of our interviews as to how your move to Sunnybook School occurred. I will share it with you and invite you to respond. I will begin my interpretation by noting that you quickly became aware that what you storied for your future did not fit with the superintendent's story and, at least outwardly, you complied with that story. You recounted it this way.

> I've been at Briardon for five years...probably time to move because the school system was feeling I needed another experience and different location. I was trying for an administrative advancement and the word came down that how could I dare be thinking and doing that, given the fact that I'd only been in one school. So I needed to move schools. I had a meeting with a superintendent, for lunch. [The superintendent] indicated I needed another school experience. So I said, "Sure, I would be open to a new school experience". The very last day of June at about 11:00, the superintendent called me and said, "How would you like to go to Sunnybook School?" I said that would be fine. (T1 C2 September 12, 1994, p.1)

As you reflected upon the way in which the appointment occurred, some familiar elements of your practice seemed to surface. You began to reflect and talk and question.

> I didn't mind it. Of course you would like to be a part of a selection process. It would be nice to get to know a school a little bit. It would be nice to get to know the philosophy and beliefs behind the school, actually have a match between somebody's ideas at the place you're going. But that's not really something that's done. I needed another experience. I was told so. I was happy to come here for another experience. (T1 C2 September 12, 1994, p. 2)

As I understand your statement, you seem to be questioning the process by which you were placed in this new setting. As a result of your reflection and questions, you seem to be less clear about your future.

> My future is foggier now. I'm not sure what my future really entails. To me it's just another trip down the road. I'm not sure where I'll go from here and what school I'll go to. I really don't know where it fits in. I thought I had made up my mind. I was striving to become an assistant principal and principal. I was pretty clear...determined that I wanted to do that. I set my goals pretty high for early in my career and I wanted to achieve them. I'm not so sure that I still have the same goals and aspirations. (T1 C2 September 12, 1994, p. 2)

I wonder if what you were really uncertain about was the administrative process for selection and placement. You seem quite clear as to your own story. The plot line of your story in leadership and administration is to serve students by working with and through their teachers. You seemed to feel that in that manner you could have a greater effect on more students and that you would also be able to address some of what you have found to be wanting in teaching and learning. And you certainly seem well aware of the distance you would be removed from first hand work with students and the rewards and satisfactions of working with them. This is how you expressed it to me.

> I enjoy working with the kids [pause] a lot! And I know this is a big factor in moving into administration. People perceive that you're moving out from the trenches but part of the reason I got into the learning community business [was because] there were a lot of things that were going on in schools that I didn't agree with and really I thought I would be able to benefit kids by moving into administration. I think I have some ability working with teachers, relating with them...developing relationships...I think I can affect a greater number of kids by moving into administration than I can just working with my group in my classroom. I know that it's a little bit more personable for me and its rewarding for me working with that group of kids but I think for that greater good I think I can have an effect in a leadership role. (T1 C2 September 12, 1994, p. 3)

Clark, the plot line of your own teacher-leader story is an unselfish one in which you would contribute to students and make a significant difference by working with and through other teachers. But now, as a result of your experience with the superintendent

and your subsequent transfer and placement, you seem to have some second thoughts. Your story does not seem to fit the one that comes from the conduit.

> I'm not so sure that's where I'm headed...not so sure I'm ready to play the games and jump all the hoops necessary to get into that position...got myself to a readiness level...thought I was ready...told that I was not. Maybe ten years from now. (T1 C2 September 12, 1994, p. 2)

Your searching and questioning leads you to reflect back upon the work you did in your learning community at Briardon. You wonder how it was storied in the conduit.

> The other school experience...I'm not so sure the work there was really appreciated in any respect and I'm not convinced they thought we were doing good things for kids...it's pretty well on it's way down in terms of the things that I thought were really important, in terms of teaching and learning. It's starting to head downhill so the system isn't showing any confidence or support for what we started there. (T1 C2 September 12, 1994, p. 4)

And that leads you to question the nature of leadership in the conduit and what those who reside there really know. They don't seem to story leadership as you know it and you find yourself wondering how your practice fits with theirs and why you were selected and placed here.

> Part of being in leadership is to be able to allow people to exercise some of their beliefs and go with things and experiment and be innovative...you're supposed to set the context...You would think people in the upper levels would be able to see that...part of it...my movement into this position. Why was this the position that was selected for me? What is the experience adding to my...knowledge base...that's so crucial to make the next leap? I guess that's the big question... because in conversations I feel they think that there are huge responsibilities that I have at this school that I didn't have in the last one and that's what tips me off...they really didn't understand my role working in the learning community because my role in the learning community was much more demanding....my role was larger. (T1 C2 September 12, 1994, p. 5)

You seem convinced that they do not understand your story. The superintendent's story as to why you have been placed in this assignment does not seem to fit with what you have found since your appointment. As you seem to understand it, you have progressed backwards.

> So I have come from being able to determine our own timetable...the students and the teachers being able to sit down and decide what we're going to do...where we didn't have something called math and language and science and social studies, where we shaped what we were doing, whether it was around issues or questions, and we focused in on specific skills for the kids and they applied the skills...back into a more traditional kind of setting with all the core academics and the structured mosaic timetable. (T1 C2 September 12, 1994, p. 10)

You seem to have felt that instead of acquiring increased responsibility and the potential for new learning, you actually lost something in coming to this school. What you missed was, in part, relational.

> I did find it frustrating because I missed the teaming. I missed the collegiality and collaboration. I grew a lot from being able to talk to the teachers constantly about how they felt, about how things were going in some of the bigger issues in education. I lost that altogether in coming here. (T1 C2 September 12, 1994, p. 11)

What you seem to be discovering is a discrepancy between the story of school as conveyed to you by the superintendent and what you have found as you have attempted to live out that story of you as a developing leader in the context of your new school. Perhaps you are also questioning and rethinking the prospects of ever being able to construct and live out your own story of school given the way in which the conduit hands down its story of school and given the way in which those in the conduit shape your practice by the manner in which they story you. Once again I invite you to respond.

Dilemmas in Leading From the Out-Of-Classroom Place

In your first assignment as a teacher-leader, Clark, you worked primarily from the in-classroom place on the landscape; the big room, where you and your team of teachers were relatively free to carry out your practices and to live out your story of teaching and learning as you knew it. You taught with your team and you provided leadership from within. Here, in the context of a new school and, for the most part, you

have been situated on the out-of-classroom place on the landscape. As a result, the nature of your teaching and leadership assignments are quite different and you are presented with some new problems and dilemmas.

The difference is apparent in your general job description. You are the leader of the fine arts, practical arts and option teachers and, as well, you provide leadership for the special education teachers. That includes the IOP teachers. Out of a 35 period week, you have 13 periods in which you work with students. In three of those periods you are assigned to teach an option in business while the remaining 10 are devoted to teamwork within the IOP. While you work with students in both situations, your focus in the IOP is upon offering your leadership to the three teachers assigned to teach students who have been labeled IOP. In addition to your teaching and leadership, the other components of your assignment deal with discipline and administration at the Grade 7 level. In one of our early interviews you described your new assignment for me.

> I have a teaching component to my timetable and I'm involved with the IOP. I teach a business class...three periods a week...ten periods a week for the IOP...the other portion of my responsibilities are Grade 7 disciplining and administration. I have another component, now and again, which adds a little more flexibility. I can give some students support. I can set up small group sessions or I can pull a group of kids out and work with them on a period basis or I can go in and work with the teachers and be in a team-teaching role that provides some support as well. (T1 C2 September 12, 1994, p. 9)

Given a relatively small teaching assignment and given the direction and flexibility to assist students and teachers in those areas, it seems clear, Clark, that your efforts are to be aimed at shaping the context of the school from the out-of-classroom place on the landscape. Only to the extent that you teach your option class and team-teach within the IOP in a classroom setting can you be understood as working from the in-classroom place. For the most part, then, you are situated on the landscape as a part of the out-of

classroom place and, from there, you are expected to influence and shape the context in which you work.

Sometimes you begin your day by having coffee with teachers in the staff room. On other occasions, I have been able to observe you with teachers in the staff room over lunch, there with them after school or in their classrooms as you talk and work on a variety of undertakings. As a result of your practice of avoiding the staff room at Briardon, I was not used to finding you there. When I inquired as to why you were now spending time there, you responded that you needed to be there.

> My assignment is different. My teaching load isn't as high. I'm in more of the administrative position where I'm working with the teachers. That's where the teachers are, so you need to go to where the people are. (T4 C4 September 19, 1994, p. 2)

You also commented on the difficulty in working from this place on the landscape. It poses a real problem for you.

> It's tough! You try to glom onto something and develop relationships here and there, as you can. Well, I'm not as satisfied as I was at Briardon. I get satisfaction working with the kids. I enjoy that and I get satisfaction out of working with the teachers. But it's different. I don't feel the closeness. (T4 C4 September 19, 1994, p. 3)

This would appear to be one of the problems you encountered in working with teachers from your new location on the out-of-classroom place on the landscape. As I interpret your statement, you are aware that from the out-of classroom place it is not easy to develop the relationships and closeness to which you have been accustomed and that have been so much a part of your practice. Not situated on the in-classroom place with the teachers and not with the students to the extent that you were in your learning community at Briardon, you notice the limitations in terms of the relationships that you feel are essential in teaching and leading. You know how difficult it is to influence and

shape student and teacher practice without close relationships.

You also found that the superintendent's story of school and the school stories told by those who introduced you to the school in June did not accurately reflect teacher practice.

> When I got toured around my new school at the end of June, I was told about what they were doing here. I thought maybe this will be an alright place. Maybe these things are going to happen. I got in there and boy were they ever traditional. There's no integrated curriculum. They hardly integrate the curriculum when they do a humanities theme and they do that only at Grade 7. They don't really integrate. (T3 C/S/CPR September 13, 1994, p. 51)

In the same way in which the superintendent storied you in a manner that does not fit with your story, this school has been storied by the superintendent and the school administrators in ways that do not accurately reflect teacher practices. For example, the school has been storied as featuring an integrated curriculum. In your first year at the school you found no evidence of this. This problem, like that in which you find yourself as a result of the way you have been storied by the superintendent, presents a dilemma. The way in which responsibility groups have been storied as operating at your school may serve to illustrate the nature of this dilemma. I will share that story as I understand it and I invite your response.

Responsibility groups provided another problem for you and commanded your attention early in your new assignment. The responsibility group concept is much different here than at your last school. At Briardon it involved each teacher accepting responsibility for the general well being of a specific group of students who, in turn, agreed to be responsible to that teacher. Here at Sunnybrook the term responsibility group refers to the grouping of teachers into small discussion groups for staff meeting and professional development purposes.

You acknowledged that the structure for responsibility groups was in place before you arrived but that it had not really been operating well. You felt it was important and thus you worked at it. You contributed to its success by getting it started and focussed.

> Our staff is split into what are called responsibility groups. They had that structure before I arrived but I did have an influence on getting those up and going and having questions regularly for staff to talk about. It wasn't functioning all that well...important just to be able to have time to talk about what you believe is important about kids and try and relate that to what we're doing here in the school. (T1 C2 September 12, 1994, p. 11)

In responding to my question as to whether or not you felt you had been appointed to this school to lead, to initiate change or to enhance such things as the responsibility group program, you expressed concern that the story of school told by the conduit was to the effect that the concept was already operating before you got there.

> The school system belief would have been that it was here before I arrived...no way people would admit that it wasn't here...like schools say we're using such and such teaching strategy and we're doing these kinds of things with the kids. When you get into the school you find that what they talk about and what's happening are usually two different things. People aren't really honest about what's really happening on a day to day basis. (T1 C2 September 12, 1994, p. 13)

You appear to understand the power of the story from the conduit and how, in this school, teachers seemed to respond to the expectations embodied in the story by living cover stories; that is, by outwardly complying with the story of school from the conduit and the school stories told by those who took you through the school when you were appointed. This seems to have been what happened with the responsibility group notion. The superintendent and school administrators storied this as happening at the school and the teachers complied by telling the story. But other than surface compliance, there was little happening until you began to question and encourage the activity.

To accept and live out the story of school handed down from the conduit or the school stories of the administration in light of what you experienced in coming to the

school, you would have to live a cover story yourself and be content with the status quo. On the other hand, to really address the issues, you would have to challenge those stories and point out the discrepancies between those stories and teacher practices. This might place you at risk in terms of the way in which you are storied by your school administrators and by the superintendent as having administrative potential. It might jeopardize your ability to influence the teachers with whom you work. I see this as a dilemma.

As you worked to shape the context of the school through the responsibility group structure, Clark, some teachers reacted. Their reactions seemed to defy your efforts to shape their practices with respect to providing choices for students.

> I brought an article for people to look at in responsibility groups. The admin team looked at it first of all. It was "Choices for Kids"...and we had some guiding questions...to guide our conversation afterwards...and two people in my group came right out and said, "I make the choices. I'm the teacher. I make the choices, that's it". They couldn't care less what this thing says. "It's my program and I tell them what to do! I have what to do and they do it!" And that's the bottom line, not voiced quite as strongly by some, but that's how they live it. (T3 C/S/CPR September 13, 1994, p. 60)

On the part of these teachers, the resistance to student choice is clear and open. I wonder if in their comments the qualities of a sacred story might be detected. I also find myself wondering about their openness in the responsibility group discussions. It seems that they feel confident enough with you and within the responsibility group structure to express their feelings openly instead of outwardly complying and making use of a cover story. In that sense, the atmosphere may have promise and, over time, might be a viable means by which to shape the context. Still, they resist change and your influence. I wonder how you feel about this interpretation.

Another of your concerns, Clark, is the way in which the administrative team gets

caught up in the detail of management. You feel that the big picture kind of talk and discussion intended for use in the responsibility group might be used to help provide direction. You expressed it this way:

> [I am] trying to get that going in our admin team...where we have a paper or a book that we may take a look at and be able to read and talk about. We get caught up in a lot of the management and day to day things...important for sure, but we neglect some of the big picture stuff that drives the details. (T1 C2 September 12, 1994, p. 12)

The problem here is one of influencing or shaping the practices of your principal and assistant principal. In this situation as well, you seemed to find yourself working from a place on the landscape where the opportunity to shape the context is limited. And again I wonder about the risks involved in challenging these administrators.

A similar dilemma surfaced when I asked you about the way you attempted to live out both your new story of leadership and your own story. What I am referring to here are the superintendent's story of you as a developing leader and your efforts to encourage the staff to move towards the learning community notions you developed in your last school. You noted how difficult it was to shape and influence teacher practice from the out-of-classroom place. You felt you needed to tell and live a bit of a cover story on the out-of-classroom place in order to gain credibility and acceptance. That is, you had to change the nature of the language you used and, to some extent, you had to deny your previous experience.

> I have to try and change my language and my vocabulary...there's a stigma that I'm trying to do the things I did at my old school...trying to bring it here and get it done. So I'm trying not to use words like learning community in my talk with people. I'm talking about the groupings of kids we talked about last year and seeing if we can set some teachers with two humanities classes back to back so team-teaching could be there if they wanted it...starting slowly...don't want to use the terminology of pods because people are familiar with what a pod is and that would be...setting a mentality that it's going to be cycling...specialists cycling kids...have to be careful in the terms because people have images or experience with what that word means and right away they're looking at continuing that. (T1 C2 September 12, 1994, p.13)

Clark, you seem to recognize some of the ways in which your own practice may be shaped by the context in which you find yourself. It would appear, for instance, that the context in which you work is shaped by the way in which you have been storied by the conduit, by the school administration and by the teachers. You already know you have been storied in the conduit as a developing leader who is to continue growing by assuming greater responsibility at this school. And you know how that story conflicts with the reality in which you find yourself. Here, the way in which you are situated on the landscape, that is, your responsibilities and working from the out-of-classroom place, have lessened your ability to shape the context of your work.

You can also detect reaction by other teachers to the stories embodied in your language and to the ways in which you have been storied as an advocate of learning communities. This works to thwart your efforts to shape and influence teacher practice from your new place on the landscape. Further, you seem to understand how teacher stories have shaped the school landscape in which you now work. You seem to be able to sense how difficult it is for teachers to change. These things seem to inform you that the way you are now situated on the out-of-classroom place on the landscape restricts your ability to shape teacher practices.

You and Sara shared such concerns and some reservations about this aspect of leadership from the out-of classroom place during a discussion which arose after we listened to your story of leading from the out-of-classroom place. An excerpt from our conversation will serve to illustrate.

S: All that Clark's saying just makes me not want to be an administrator.

CR: But you are:

S: I'm not really. I don't have to be like Clark...anywhere else but Friday mornings.

CR: What do you mean by that?

S: Like the way Clark has to talk...not really being able to...you have your own beliefs, philosophy and commitments but who knows exactly what they are?

CR: So, are you, in essence, living a cover story...going through the motions on things that you don't really believe?

C: Not [merely] going through the motions. In the things that I work with at the school, I still live out my beliefs and values, how I'm working with the IOP kids, how I deal with my business class, how I coach the soccer team...discussions with people...the questions I raise. I think that's as far as I can go. I'm not feeling fulfilled and I'm not happy because I would like to find some more people that were interested in doing some things differently and make some strides in improvement in the school...One of the things I would have to do is I would have to give up my administrative position to do it. (T3 C/S/CPR September 13, 1994, p. 54)

You both seem to be acknowledging the futility of attempting to shape teacher practice from the context of the out-of-classroom place. You seem to know that your ability to shape teacher practice from the out-of classroom place on the landscape is minimized. Sara seems to recognize that, at least to some extent, you have to live a cover story yourself in order to develop and maintain relationships that afford the potential for shaping the context. She does not like this and expresses strong reservations about becoming an administrator if this is what must be done. You seem to deny living a cover story on the in-classroom place and yet you acknowledge the limitations and lack of fulfillment you are experiencing on the out-of-classroom place. There you so seem to acknowledge that you live a cover story. You appear to be considering giving up your position on the out-of classroom place.

In another interview, you compared your position on the landscape to that of the principal and assistant principal. While they seem to have positions of influence, where you are situated on the landscape, the influence and your potential for shaping practice seems minimal. Consider the following excerpt from our transcripts.

> I feel that I'm the guy that's done the work. I know I can do it. Can I teach other people to do it? I'm not in the position right now to be able to teach other people to do it. Unfortunately you need to be in a higher administrative position. For some reason if you are an assistant principal, it carries more...I can see pockets of people in the school who could get some of this up and running, so as an assistant principal I would provide them with the opportunities to do it. I'd make some timetable adjustments similar to what you did. I took a timetable proposal to the assistant principal and principal of our school, in March. They looked at it and were polite but that's the end of it. And who did the timetabling? The assistant principal was able to do the timetable she wanted to have done. So if I was in that role, I would be able to provide opportunities for a few of the people who would like to get it started and then spend some time talking and being with those kids and those teachers. At the moment I can't. I'd have to give up my administrative position and say to two or three of the others, okay how about next year we do this. (T3 C/S/CPR September 13, 1994, p. 56)

This highlights another dilemma that has arisen. On the one hand, you realize that your potential for shaping the context from your location on the out-of classroom place is restricted by how you are positioned as a junior administrator. Teachers and other administrators seem to know that the most powerful telling of the school story is from the principal or assistant principal. On the other hand, you can see how the efforts of those who story the school from those positions in the conduit and from their positions on the out-of classroom place on the landscape draw forth cover stories from teachers.

Although this is another dilemma, you seem to persevere in aspiring to those positions because you also know that without the support of the people in those positions, the stories of teaching and the school stories you wish to live may not be possible. This you seem to understand from what I, as principal, did in altering the timetable at Briardon in order to support your initial exploration of alternatives. From that perspective, the positions of principal and assistant principal still seem to be significant positions on the landscape and you have some things you would do to enable and encourage some of the teachers to try to live their own stories of school.

Your work with the soccer team was an area in which I felt you have made some

headway in shaping teacher practice from your out of classroom place on the landscape. In spite of the administrative team's refusal to accept your notion of the students sharing the playing time rather than cutting kids, you and the other two coaches decided to make three teams so that all students could play. And therefore it is happening. Still, your principal and assistant principal did not respond to the story you were living with any real enthusiasm.

> And I did what I told you I was going to do. I went back in and I mentioned it to the assistant principal and principal. I was pretty happy. I was really pumped up...they kind of look and say, "Oh, that's good". (T3 C/S/CPR September 13, 1994, p. 57)

Here I understand you as recognizing that the two administrators don't understand the story you are living and telling. I would really like your input and response to this.

Recognizing the potential for shaping things differently, you talked about what you would do were you in their positions.

> I would capitalize on this opportunity. I'd be in next time they have a coach's meeting or next time they're talking with the staff..."Boy, this is interesting! Why is it that we would do some things not to cut kids? People who want to play, get to play here." (T3 C/S/CPR September 13, 1994, p. 57)

Once again Clark, you seem to know the significance of stories lived and told by the principal and assistant principal in shaping the context in which teachers work and in influencing their practices. You seem to feel that without these two people hearing your story of school, significant changes will not occur.

Shaping the Context By Working With Students and Teachers

Earlier, Clark, I outlined the way that you have attempted to shape the context of

your new school by working with teachers as they work in a variety of locations on the out-of-classroom places on the landscape. Now I would like to acknowledge the way you have also worked to shape the context of your new school by working with teachers from their in-classroom place on the landscape. Your work with the IOP teachers provides an example. As a leader, you believe it is your responsibility to help them develop.

> My role is just to work with the teacher, to try and be helpful and developmental and those kinds of things. I am not the evaluator. (T9 C8 October 17, 1994, p. 20)

You coteach a homeroom with Lorraine and team-teach some of the IOP classes. As I observed you working with her and with the students, I detected what I thought were efforts on your part to model some things. I asked you about this and you responded.

> Well, I'm trying to model the caring way...the way you interact with kids, the way you speak to them, your tone...showing them some consideration and some feeling...trying to model that you can move around the classroom from student to student...giving individual attention...that you don't sit back and have the students come to you or line up at your desk. (T6 C7 October 3, 1994, p. 12)

It appeared to me, Clark, that you may have been attempting to model your teacher story and some of the elements of your practice as noted in our first interpretation; your notion of teaching as close personal relationships and the special kind of caring and listening to students embodied in your image of student voice and choice.

In another interview, we talked about your intentions and plans for Lorraine's development.

CR: Do I detect some developmental intentions in terms of her teaching?

C: Yes.

CR: Can you share some:

C: Getting out from behind the desk, going to the kids and working with them one on one. Curbing the tendency to speak harshly to them. (T9 C8 October 17, 1994, p. 19)

This also seems to fit with your notions of relating to and developing close relationships with students. To achieve your intentions you made some developmental plans with her. They involved attending a conference. You expressed your intentions this way.

> It will give me an opportunity to go up there and go to a few sessions with her and then have something more that we can bridge and talk about when we come back here in terms of what we are going to do for kids. (T9 C8 October 17, 1994, p. 19)

After attending the conference with her you felt pleased about the talk and discussion and you noted some changes and improvements in her work with students.

> It was good to go up there. The sessions were relaxing....[It] was an opportunity to share some philosophy and things, to know her a little bit more and try and talk about what we're thinking in terms of this program for the kids. And believe it or not, philosophically, we seem to be on line when we talk. So now we need to take the next step in terms of the congruency between our beliefs and our actions. One of the things that she did on this report card...she did not pick one negative comment out of the report card bank for any of the IOP kids...something we talked about...she picked all positive comments seeing if this can be a little bit of a turn around. Instead of getting a real negative report card, this one will look quite positive for a number of them. Some of the numbers won't be really high but at least all the comments will be positive. (T13 C10 November 7, 1994, p.14)

Again I understand you as living out your teaching story, Clark. Your talk with Lorraine seems to be your way of leading and teaching her. And this seems to be consistent with your image of talk, discussion and conversation as noted in the first interpretation. As you relate the story, I also seem to detect some sense of satisfaction. You seem to be pleased with the way in which she appears to have responded. Could it also be that a positive relationship is developing between the two of you?

In reflecting upon what the two of you did at the conference, you again saw it in terms of your image of talk, discussion and conversation.

> We spent a lot of time talking about how we are working with the kids...spent coffee break time and breakfast. The two of us sat and talked about things. We spent a lot of time talking about how you treat kids and work with kids and what we are trying to accomplish in here. She's going to revert back to a few of her cutting comments now and again but at least we need to keep raising them to the surface. I think it was beneficial. (T13 C10 November 7, 1994, p.15)

You appear satisfied and it seems as though you are reaffirmed in living out your story of relating with and caring for students.

Your efforts to shape the context in which you work have also involved working with students from your location on the out-of-classroom place and, to the extent that you teach, from the in-classroom place. Much of your work with students has been directed at providing for the inclusion of student voice and the use of student leadership throughout the school. Once again I notice the connections and threads of unity that link your story at this school with your practice at your last school and with your stories of experience, as outlined in my first interpretation. In this case I refer to your image of voice and choice.

One place this became evident was in the new partnership between the school and a city law firm. When this new venture became a part of your leadership responsibility, you were interested in involving students. In telling me about the undertaking you revealed your intentions:

> I'm actually going to be the liaison person. There are three other teachers who have expressed an interest. We're going to have some parents and we might be able to sneak a kid or two in on this. It sounds reasonable to me but we'll have to run that by the rest of the school. It just seems funny to me...been talking about a few committees in our school...have a push now to get parents involved...but...why aren't we involving kids? (T4 C3 September 16, 1994, p. 3)

Although you seem to expect that teachers will not respond to your idea with

favor, you are prepared to attempt to do things differently by trying to involve students. By virtue of its make up, this committee might be a place to begin. I wonder if by putting the notion before the staff, you are beginning to shape the context?

Another example of your commitment to providing for student voice and leadership may be seen in the context of your after school soccer coaching. You did not seem to do a lot of talking to the students when you coached. I asked you about your methods and you explained:

> There were a few guys on the team who know soccer inside and out and they are leaders, so we utilized that. One of the things, hopefully, that has come out in my conversations with you about my teaching practice...I don't believe I need to be the guy at the front...teaching in front of the class all the time, with all the pupils sitting attentively listening to me...good sound teaching practice prevails wherever you are and I don't care what subject area you're in and I don't really care what age group of kids you are working with either. So these...kids, Ed in particular, led the warm-up. I had a few drills in mind that I wanted to do and I asked them about that and one of the responses they had was that this is a hockey drill and I said, "Yes, it is a hockey drill. I know a little bit more about hockey than I do about soccer, so how about a drill from you guys". No problem and away we go. (T4 C3 September 16, 1994, p. 8)

In this instance the two students who had experience in soccer were asked their opinions and were allowed to offer their leadership. This also appears to reflect your image of student voice and choice.

There was another example that I noticed as you worked with your students after school. I asked about a situation that arose in the soccer practice warm up activity and how your invitation for the leaders to take the others on a light run became quite a workout for the students. You responded with the following story.

> I said to them, "How about...a light casual run for a little bit of a warm-up?" The two kids took them right around the school. I would have never had them go around the school (laugh). If I would have said "I want you to run around the school and back", they would have been swearing and cursing me as they were going around that school...would have walked...Two kids say, "Let's go around the school". They all went around the school. So what does that show us? Power and control is what we are talking...[if] we think...do as I say and they are going to do it smiling...[pause] they [the two kids] led the practice. (T4 C3 September 16, 1994, p. 9)

The other students responded positively to the leadership of your two student leaders and they worked willingly and more vigorously than you would have required. The manner in which this story was lived out by you and the students again seems to have affirmed your belief in the importance of providing for student voice and choice and for student leadership.

In Closing

As you have shared the stories of your work as a teacher and teacher-leader over the past seven years, Clark, I have begun to understand how you have attempted to shape the contexts in which you have found yourself and also how you have responded to the many shaping influences on the landscape. You began your teaching career, bringing with you and being guided by the personal practical knowledge embodied in a story of teaching you wished to live out. Shaping your teacher story and your story of school were your own experiences as a child and student, your family experiences, and of course, experiences in university and teacher education. Very quickly upon your entry into teaching, you encountered people and situations on the landscape which tended to shape you and your story, according to differing stories of teaching and different stories of school. You resisted some of those influences, while others seem to have shaped your practice.

In your first school, over the course of five years, you resisted influences from the out-of-classroom place and even some that arose from within the in-classroom place. These were influences that did not fit with your story of teaching, nor with your story of school. You, John and Kay were able to shape the context of your in-classroom place to describe the plot line of a new teacher story that could be lived. You changed your story,

lived the new story, reflected upon it, restoried it again, relived and restoried it a number of times. It was not long before your story drew my attention and support and began to shape the context of the out-of classroom place. The structure and operation of the school was changed to allow for your story and for other competing stories of school.

You, Sara and your teaching team came together, Clark, when this significant shaping occurred. After experiencing some of the problems and dilemmas of conflicting stories, the two of you were able to successfully live out another story of school with four other teachers and your students. That is, until your interest in administrative advancement resulted in a new story being given to you and you were transferred to your second school. In this new story you were storied as a developing leader who would profit from another school experience and from the assignment of increased responsibilities. However, in your new school you found yourself situated on the landscape differently than in your first school. At Sunnybrook you worked primarily from the out-of-classroom place.

As you have recounted the stories of your work here at Sunnybrook over the past two years, Clark, I am able to understand how difficult you have found it to shape and influence teacher practice in the new context in which you work. Although you have made some progress, the experience seems to have informed you about some of the problems and dilemmas associated with teaching and leading from the out-of-classroom place on the landscape. At the same time, you have recognized different influences that now shape your practice. The way in which you have been storied by the superintendent, the manner in which you are situated on the out-of-classroom place on the landscape, the school story lived by the principal and assistant principal, the way in which you are storied by the teachers at the school, and the way in which those teachers

shape the landscape by their stories all tend to shape your practice. These shaping influences have drawn forth a number of problems and dilemmas. Let me conclude this interpretation by reviewing some of these problems and dilemmas and by again inviting you to respond.

Very quickly, you came to recognize that the way the superintendent had storied you did not fit with your story. In this school you actually had less responsibility than you did in your first school and from the way in which you were situated on the landscape, your ability to shape the context was more restricted. You also recognized that the way the superintendent, principal and assistant principal storied the school did not reflect the lived stories of teachers. Upon your appointment you were led to believe that team-teaching, integrated curriculum and interdisciplinary activities characterized teacher practice at this school. Instead, you found that teachers outwardly complied while in their classrooms they continued to practice in very traditional ways. To my way of thinking, Clark, this problem presented one of those dilemmas. Were you to accept the stories you were given by the superintendent and by the school administration, you would find yourself living a cover story. That is to say that you would outwardly comply without really shaping the context. Alternatively, in choosing to confront the lived teacher stories, you risked alienation from those who authored the stories, that is from the superintendent, the principal, the assistant principal and from the teachers who were living the cover stories. In that case, both your prospects for advancement and the potential for shaping the context in which you work would become severely limited.

Another dilemma seemed to arise from the nature of the out-of-classroom place and the way in which, when situated there, you are removed from the close personal relationships that characterized the in-classroom place in your first school setting. You

seem to have been informed from your first school experience that it is possible to shape both teacher practice and the context of the school from the in-classroom place on the landscape. And you also seem to know that the freedom and power to make changes and to shape the context there is contingent upon strong and close personal relationships. Yet from your location on the out-of-classroom place, the development and maintenance of such relationships is very difficult. Initiatives from the out-of-classroom place have a tendency to elicit cover stories. In this sense you have found yourself frustrated and unsatisfied in working from the out-of-classroom place.

It also seems that you recognize the potential for those in the conduit like the superintendent, to shape and influence the context in which students and teachers work through the ways in which they story individuals and schools and through the assignments they hand down. Similarly you also recognize the potential and ability of the school administrators to shape the context by the stories they tell and live in their practices and by the responsibilities they assign. But when the stories told by the superintendent and the school administration do not reflect the lived stories of teachers, there is a problem.

The stories from the conduit and from the school administrators are very powerful and it becomes difficult to shape the context in tension with those stories. For one thing, teachers have become accustomed to responding to the power and authority of position and they do not readily respond to those who are positioned without that power. In that sense you have also found it difficult to shape the context in which you work.

On the other hand, even if you were positioned on the landscape as principal, you would encounter the cover stories teachers live. You are also in a very delicate situation because, in attempting to shape the stories of school that emanate from the out-of-

classroom place, you must do so without appearing to challenge those situated above you in the conduit.

Perhaps the most perplexing dilemma for you, Clark, centers around your quest for an administrative position as principal or assistant principal. Ultimately, you wish to contribute more broadly than to a single class of students. You wish to influence an entire school and to be able to shape the context of a given school. In order to do that you believe you must serve in the assistant principal or principal positions. To attain these positions of leadership poses the dilemma already noted, that in order to attain that position, you need restory your narrative of experience and accept the way you are storied by the conduit or alternatively, live a cover story. If you accept the story from the conduit, and live it, then you must deal with the problems of shaping the school context from the out-of-classroom place on the landscape and the problem of cover stories again arise. This time it is the cover stories of teachers. You know they live cover stories that fit your conduit story. On the other side of that dilemma, if you live a cover story yourself, you are no further ahead in trying to shape teacher practice.

As I interpret your stories, Clark, you seem to know that the kinds of relationships that are necessary don't seem to stem from positions nor from the stories that emanate from either the conduit or the out-of-classroom place in the school. Thus you face the dilemma with respect to plans to continue your pursuit of a career in administration or to seek a return to the in-classroom place as a teacher. In explaining why you were working at Sunnybook School and your intentions for the future, you underscored the uncertainty and unpredictability of the context. You expressed it this way:

> This is something I have to do. I don't know how to get where I'm going because I don't know where I'm going yet. It's something I have to do right now and then I need to make the big decision whether or not I'm going to continue in administration or I'm going to say, "Not!" and I'll be back full time in the classroom teaching. If I did that here, I would be able to have a little bit more of an atmosphere of Briardon again. I would be within my own classroom but I could look for somebody to join in with me to...start things rolling. I'm a teacher and learner. But in the position I'm in at the moment, because of the hierarchical nature of the administration in the school, I haven't reached the point where I could be as influential because the questions I ask still aren't looked at as coming from the power source. (T4 C4 September 19, 1994, p. 3)

When you consider how unsafe it can be for teachers who attempt stories of school, not in keeping with the mainstream story of school, you know how important it is to have support on the out-of-classroom place. Your story of the learning community experience at Briardon informs you of the ways in which persons and places situated on the out-of-classroom place on the landscape can and need to shape the school context by facilitating and supporting the stories of teachers. You seem to know that you needed that support and facilitation when initiating the exploration and changes that eventually led to the shaping of a school into learning communities and to a story of school in which competing stories of school were encouraged.

As I conclude this second interpretation of your practice, Clark, I sense that this is the main dilemma with which you are grappling. While I am interested in how you will work this out, I sense that it is now that I should request your feedback and responses. I have enjoyed participating with you in your teaching and leadership activities here at Sunnybrook and I look forward to your responses to my interpretations and to the revisions and responses that will follow.

Sincerely,

Chuck

CHAPTER VI

NARRATIVE III

July 20, 1995

Dear Sara,

It has been a considerable time since I began to work with you and Clark to explore the ways in which your personal practical knowledge shapes and is shaped by the contexts in which you work. Throughout the 1994 fall term, on a weekly basis, I was a participant observer at your school and, in a similar manner, I worked with Clark at his school. I appreciated the opportunity to participate in your practice and to undertake my research with you. I am happy that you agreed to share in this inquiry and that we are continuing the collegiality and friendship we enjoyed since you began your teaching career. I am very much aware of the extras involved with such a research undertaking and that they are added on to an already heavy work load. Again I thank you.

Conversations between you and me, between Clark and me, and conversations among the three of us were recorded and transcribed. I made field notes with respect to my visits to your learning community, your activities at lunch hours and some of the meetings and discussions you had with students and your team of teachers. I maintain a reflective journal, as do you and Clark. Other items that contribute to my data collection include excerpts from, and copies of, school and system memos, copies of other materials you shared with me and copies of letters and responses between us.

I spent considerable time analyzing and reflecting upon this data and, by way of an initial letter, I offered a tentative interpretation of some of your practices. I appreciated

your response to that letter and, following revisions, I was very happy to then receive from you, a number of additional stories to help clarify those initial interpretations. What I offer now is another revision, one that includes those stories and responses.

A Brief History

I begin by noting the significance of our shared experiences in the first three years of your teaching, as we worked together to improve our practices and the learning and teaching at Briardon Junior High School. To the extent that this history contributes to my knowledge of your practice I consider it data.

As I recall it, you came to the school for an interview near the beginning of the school year in 1990. Although we were hiring a number of new teachers, the only position available when you arrived was a half-time assignment. That position featured a very fragmented timetable in which you would teach a number of different subjects. It was a difficult assignment with a heavy teaching load.

A number of things stood out in our interview. First, you were very quiet. I found myself asking secondary questions to find out more about you, your philosophy and your personal views. Secondly, you displayed an unusually strong sense of care and concern for our students and I interpreted that as a strong student-centredness. You seemed to understand things well from the student perspective. You were willing to accept the half-time position, even with its complicated and heavy teaching load. And you did not question grade level or the extra curricular activities to which I alluded. I found your willingness and your general enthusiasm refreshing.

In responding to my initial interpretation, you shared your story of the interview as follows:

> My memories of the interview are not detailed recollections of our conversation, but the impressions and feelings I left with. That summer I had been invited to spend three months travelling Europe with my two closest girlfriends. I declined the invitation in hopes that I might get some responses to my applications and resumes. I was excited, anxious, nervous about the interview with you. What I remember most is how strange the interview was. You didn't sit behind your desk, you sat in a chair beside me. You didn't ask any of the typical, expected questions. In fact, I don't remember any questions--only a conversation. You had a pad and paper but didn't write anything down. When you offered me the job I was happily surprised, but wondered how you came to the decision because you hadn't asked me the education interview questions. (ST1 S Journal, June, 1995)

At the end of the interview I offered you the position and made a commitment to extend it to a full time assignment should initial enrollment figures permit. Shortly after school began, we were able to increase your status to full-time. Throughout the year you worked with dedication, for long hours and on many weekends to ensure that your students received all they could.

At the beginning of your first school year we were forced to respond to an emergent problem which would eventually become known as the school violence issue. By the end of the term we were making some headway on the matter and, as a total school staff, we began to address related learning and teaching issues. We were confident that by organizing differently, we could make some positive changes in the atmosphere of the school and increase the potential for student success and satisfaction.

Clark and two of his colleagues had begun to question the ways in which we organized, structured and carried out our teaching practices. They explored some alternatives and enjoyed enough success with their 105 students that many problems began to disappear. Noting the difference, our leadership team became involved in examining possibilities and eventually placed a proposal before the staff. The proposal involved dividing the school into five unique and separate learning communities in which a sense of community and team might be developed by different groups of teachers operating with

different groups of students, each group pursuing and living out their own story of school within their community. The overall story of school was constructed around a plot line of unique learning communities.

Based on the relationship that had been established between you and Clark in that first year of your career, you asked to join the new learning community he was to lead. In that way, the two of you began to live out a story of school within that learning community that was more in keeping with what you knew school could and should be for students and teachers. One of your journal entries described the way you came to know Clark, John and Kay and how you felt about the relationships you observed among them. You recently shared this story with me.

> I remember being in the classroom next door to Clark, John and Kay and initially being curious and eventually envious of their learning community. I was envious of their relationships with one another. They laughed, argued, debated, socialized, questioned and always respected each other. I was intrigued by the way they had designed their interdisciplinary curriculum. Most of all, I wished for the depth of relationships they had with the young people in their community. (ST2 S Journal, June, 1995)

As I worked with your learning community to change and improve our school and our practices over the next two years, Sara, I was afforded opportunities to learn even more about you. Team teaching and cooperative methods seemed to fit your ways of teaching. Before long you were recognized in our school with respect to your success in cooperative learning. One of your undertakings involved attendance at a major conference and an in-depth visit to a cooperative learning project in the United States. By the end of your first year of work in the learning community context, you and Clark were sharing a story of success in presentations: within our school system, to teachers and administrators in other school districts and at two international conferences.

As I prepared to leave the school to return to university at the end of the 1992

school term, Clark transferred to another school and you were invited to assume the responsibility for providing leadership to your learning community. Thus, at the end of only your third year of teaching, you became a teacher-coordinator. In one of your university courses, you reflected upon and wrote about adjusting to your new responsibilities as a teacher-leader.

> I'm still trying to get used to my new role as learning community leader. Although I have to admit I'm enjoying the responsibility and the challenge, I think the team is testing me somewhat, consciously and unconsciously. I hope they don't expect me to be Clark. For that matter, I hope I don't expect me to be Clark. I need to do as good a job as he did and I certainly value him as a role model, but I must be myself and develop my own ways of acting and interacting in this role. There are still so many thoughts, people, and stories rolling in my mind, quite like waves in the ocean, cresting into my mind and then falling out of focus, succeeded by another and another. Endless sets of different magnitudes on their journey toward land. As the ocean does not stop cresting and falling, my ideas, feelings and stories continuously ebb and flow in my mind. (ST3 S Journal, June, 1995)

In concluding this brief overview, Sara, it seems significant to note that in your first year (1990-1991) you taught in a traditional classroom setting, in the room adjacent to the team teaching room being used by Clark, John and Kay as they began to experiment with notions of community in teaching. In your second year (1991-1992) you joined Clark's new learning community in a team teaching situation as he, John and Kay became leaders of the total school change initiative in which the learning community was featured as our organizational structure for learning and teaching. Learning communities became a school story.

While that year had its trials and tribulations, in the next one (1992-1993), significant results began to surface. Over the year that followed that (1993-1994) and into the present year (1994-1995), you were a teacher-coordinator, providing leadership to your learning community of teachers and students. In the context of your work as a teacher-coordinator, Sara, this history seems important. In interpreting your practice, I not

only begin with it, but return to it frequently in order to make connections and to better understand your knowledge embedded in those experiences. I wonder how it fits with your interpretation of those first three years.

Community as Family: Welcome, Acceptance, Caring

By analyzing the data, I identified a number of threads which seem to express your personal practical knowledge in your practice. The ways in which you attempt to shape your context as leader of a learning community are expressions of these unities. Let me describe one of them and ask you to respond. I describe it here as I sensed it in my early visits to your lakeside cabin, to your home and in the atmosphere that seems to encompass the work you and your team engage in with the students in your learning community. I begin with my reflections of my visits to your cabin and to your home. I then describe the big room in your learning community.

On one of my return trips from the university in Edmonton in the fall of 1993, I visited you at your cabin to talk about the possibility of conducting my research with you. It was overcast, bordering on rain and there was a strong breeze. You greeted me at the door. Inside, you introduced me to your aunt who, with a friend, was engaged in assembling a puzzle. Your brother, Luke, also had a friend visiting. As I remember it, Luke and his friend were immersed in some activity and the radio was playing. The cabin looked lived in and seemed to be a place to relax. The decor was casual and informal and the feeling was warm and hospitable. I described it as accepting. Everyone greeted me and then returned to what they had been doing. You took me out back, through the property, along the lakefront and around the perimeter of cabins that made up the community. We then returned through the driveway by which the residents entered their

cabins. In that way you showed me around and shared some of the community with me.

We talked about the possibilities provided by the research and I asked you to consider participating with me. In the short time I was there, and especially inside the cabin, I was taken by the unquestioned acceptance and the sense of warmth and belonging that seemed to permeate the place. It was as though I had been accepted as part of the family.

On two other occasions I joined you at your city home. In the first instance, I again met Luke and was introduced to your mother and father. Then and since, when I have spoken with them by phone or at your house, they have been warm, friendly and welcoming. Again I sensed a special kind of caring.

That same year, at the end of July, 1994, I met with you and your team in a summer planning meeting. The meeting was at your house; the atmosphere was noticeably relaxed and informal. Like the cabin, the important thing seemed to be the people rather than the organization of the house or the preparation for the meeting. It was welcoming. There was care and acceptance.

Somehow, these feelings seem to carry over into your team teaching area. Consider the following descriptions of the big room. One account comes from your journal while another has been taken from my field notes. First, the journal excerpt.

> The big room, our triple sized classroom, is the heart of our school wing in much the same way as the kitchen is often the heart of a family home. It is the first place teachers and students go in the morning to talk, over coffee and breakfast. The big room even has a fridge, microwave, kettle and toaster for anyone to cook up what they would like. There are six teachers who share this school wing and we team-teach our one hundred and fifty or so students. The big room contains all our desks, many tables and chairs, is fully carpeted and has a corner with comfortable couches and air chairs. The couch area has been dubbed the relaxation zone. This is where we sit with the students, in the morning and at lunch, to talk about our lives. It is also a place where we most often meet with our 'student ministers', to talk about ways of improving, changing and shaping the work we do together. During our common preparation time, we all gravitate to the relaxation zone to consider the days behind and ahead of us. We talk about our successes and the

> concerns and ask ourselves why certain approaches worked while others did not. We share conversations we have had with our students, parents and colleagues and wonder what our responses should be. It is a safe place to agree, disagree, argue, debate, question, dream and wonder. I suppose the relaxation zone isn't really all that relaxing, but I guess it depends on your definition of the word. (ST4 S Journal, June, 1995)

Although I had been in the big room many times in my capacity as principal, as a participant observant I attended to things in a different way. I described the school and the big room in my field notes.

> This junior high school is served by a large, professionally certificated teaching staff and a complement of support and caretaking personnel. The adults are as diverse in their experience and perspectives as the 700-750 students are in their ethnic, cultural and academic backgrounds. It is a large and complex school.
>
> It is comprised of two separate buildings which have been joined together. The larger building, a rectangular facility, featured a row of rooms along three of the sides of the building with a gymnasium and stage along the fourth side. In the middle were staff room, offices, and specialty facilities. The second building had originally been an elementary facility. It housed a small gym, office facilities and egg carton type hallways with rooms on either side. A space approximating three of the rooms had been used in constructing a library.
>
> It was in this wing of three rooms, the old library and mud hall, that Clark, Sara, four other teachers and 150 students had taken up residence for two years in 1990-1992. The former library is affectionately called the big room. It serves as a general gathering place for the entire learning community. It is open and available before school, at noon and after school hours. Students come early, check in, eat lunch and spend the noon hour and after school times here. Students are allowed to come and go, wear their ball caps and just hang out. Surprisingly, many do homework and not surprisingly, other students drop by. This includes high school students who were in this learning community in previous years. There are always teachers here. The teachers eat lunch with the students and rarely frequent the staff room when they could be with students. When the entire Learning Community meets, it is in this room. It is very crowded. For the most part, however, some 60-90 students are accommodated at any given time.
>
> The big room looks lived in. More precisely, it is a little old and worn. It has not been painted for many years. The wood finish on the doors has been chipped and marked. When preparing to make the transition to the five learning communities, Clark's teachers had given up tubular desks and individual flat top tables in favor of larger tables that would facilitate cooperative learning activities and group work.
>
> In order to obtain enough of those tables, a great deal of scrounging occurred and the end result was the acceptance of some very ancient and poorly finished wooden tables. The pen and pencil markings that have accumulated on these items over the years contribute to the used look of the place.

> At the west end of the big room, the former library office now serves as a general work and storage room. It holds a refrigerator that is accessible to anyone in the learning community. In the mornings, toast and hot chocolate are served to those who need it and both students and teachers share their lunches with others who are hungry. Given the general access to this small storage room by so many people, it can be understood why it looks lived in.
>
> The width of the former library office spans approximately half of the room. The remainder of the west end serves as a reading corner, bordered by windows and replete with risers, two old chesterfields and some easy chairs. Be it seat work, class discussion time or direct teaching, there are always students who rush to these choice areas to lounge or to do their work in a more relaxed fashion. Those who don't get seated on the old chesterfields or the reading corner risers often make themselves at home on the floor. The floor area is covered with carpet that was donated. The installation was done by parents.
>
> Teacher desks are clustered around the big room, some of them side by side and others separate. Stretching from west to east, the majority of the room is filled with the old tables and auditorium chairs. Simply put, the big room does not look neat and tidy. The people seem to be the focus. There is always lots of chatter and, for the most part, it seems like a happy and positive place to be. (Notes to File, September 14, 1994)

Somehow I sense a connection here among the welcoming acceptance at your home, at your cabin and in the learning community. Everyone seems to be accepted and welcomed. No one is turned away. It is like family. And the focus is upon the people rather than the surroundings. I wonder if this fits with your understanding.

The Professional Knowledge Landscape: A Metaphor

As I continue to share this tentative interpretation of your practice, Sara, I will use the metaphor of a professional knowledge landscape (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995). This enables me to more fully explore, understand and communicate the complexity of your work context. By thinking of teacher practice as situated on a landscape of teacher knowledge at the interface of theory and practice, I can better understanding the number and variety of people and things that influence teacher practice. I also understand the tensions and dilemmas experienced by teachers as their work in schools takes them back

and forth from the relative privacy and security of the in-classroom place on the landscape to the out-of-classroom place that may include staff room, staff meetings, principal's office, lunch room, hallways and other places where they interact professionally with others.

In the security and privacy of the in-classroom place, the teacher is in charge and is relatively free to work with students in the way that teacher knows best. It is a practical place where the teacher is able to live out her or his teacher stories. As the teacher moves from the security of that in-classroom place to the out-of-classroom place on the landscape, the demands and expectations of administrators, politicians, curriculum planners and other teachers give rise to tensions and dilemmas. Here the pressures are numerous and, in many circumstances, the language is abstract. Often the teacher outwardly complies with the expectations and demands. However, returning to the security of the in-classroom place, the teacher continues to practice as she or he knows best. When outwardly complying the teacher lives a cover story.

In our efforts to transform our school, for example, you may have recognized the compliance of some teachers in staff meetings. Those teachers would verbalize their commitment to our notions of integrated, interdisciplinary, team teaching. When you visited their learning communities, however, they still taught independently, in separate classrooms and according to a fragmented timetable in which the traditional subject matter disciplines took prominence. Students were still segregated for instruction according to "regular", ESL, special education, or IOP labels. Their commitment at the staff meeting could be seen as part of a cover story. What is actually carried out in practice, by those teachers in the classroom, is much different.

Back in the classroom the teacher lives out his or her teacher story, for the most

part, a secret story which may be shared with others if it is safe to do so. Given the individual nature of teaching, it is, more often than not, only in a safe out-of-classroom place that teachers share stories of practice among themselves. In safe places they tell their stories.

As different teachers live out differing teacher stories, some of those stories may be seen to compete with one another. In our situation, at Briardon, the different stories of school lived out in the five learning communities could be seen to compete. When the plot lines were not too different, the stories seemed to be able to coexist within the tensions of competition. However, when the stories became too different, they could also conflict.

Once again reflecting back to the first two years of our learning community experience (1991-1993), it seemed that while all five communities seemed to function under the tensions of competition, it was when they conflicted that dilemmas and problems became unbearable. For example, in the hat story I told earlier, it seemed that the hats and whether children wore them pointed to conflicting stories of school lived out in the differing learning communities. I outline the above work, Sara, so we have a shared context in which to talk. I continue my interpretation within this context.

The In-Classroom Place on Your Professional Landscape

As I understand your practice, Sara, the in-classroom place for you since the second year of your teaching has been the big room, three adjoining classrooms and the mud hall and storage rooms which comprise the wing of the school in which your learning community is located. Throughout your second year (1991-1992), that is, the first year of learning community operations, your in-classroom place was not a secure and private place for you and the other teachers. As you, Clark, four other teachers and some 150 students

began to live out a story of school within that learning community, more in keeping with your personal practical knowledge, you quickly came to realize that your and Clark's teacher stories were in competition with the stories being lived out by the other four teachers. Your teacher stories did not fit with the others' teacher stories.

By mid-point in the school term, your and Clark's teacher stories had begun to conflict with the others' stories. The example you and Clark shared in an evening meeting supports this interpretation. It was about Saul wanting his own classroom.

> S: We were having difficulty with Saul really wanting to do the cooperative learning thing. He said, "Okay, I'll try it out". And he tried it for one day. The kids were too noisy and unproductive so he wanted them back in rows.
>
> C: He was totally against it and he was trying to indicate that there was research supporting the fact that collective learning is no good...although he never produced any of it...said, "I've given it a try!" One day is not a try! Only one day by yourself is not a try either!
>
> CR: So he eventually moved into room 12?
>
> C: Yeah. That was the trade off.
>
> S: He wanted his own kids..."Give me my classroom and my kids!"
>
> (T2 C/S/CR 1 September 13, 1994, p. 14)

It would appear that you and Clark came to occupy the big room where you continued to team teach and live out your teacher stories around a story of school as a democratic community of learners working cooperatively to grow and develop. The other four teachers returned to the privacy of individual classrooms, to live out their stories as specialist teachers, teaching their subjects to students.

> By then we were barely even planning together...Clark and I were planning. (T2 C/S/CPR 1 September 13, 1994, p. 17)

In light of your stories I reflect back on that first year of working in learning communities (1991-1992) and I understand how your team lived a cover story. In staff

meetings, in administrative team meetings, in the staff room and particularly when meeting with me and my assistant principals, the told story was that the learning community was operating well and that there was harmony and cooperation among the members of the teaching team. While it was commonly known and accepted that the stories of school lived in different learning communities competed with one another, no one was prepared to admit there were conflicting teacher stories within the team. It was not until I was called upon, as principal, to address the difficulties experienced by two teachers that I began to understand. By that time I could appreciate that the competing stories within your team had become conflicting ones and something needed to be done.

By the middle of the 1991-1992 year, an internal move had been made to replace one of the team's teachers unable to complete the year. As a result, Yvonne joined your team. She seemed to fit in very well. At the end of the term Clark was invited to help interview for three teachers to replace those who wanted out.

Over the summer considerable effort was made to select teachers whose story of school for that learning community would fit with what you, Clark and Yvonne storied. One of the three replacements, Gil, was a new teacher who had worked with you as a student-teacher the previous year. Don was also a new teacher. He had a strong background in art and was very much student-centred. He brought some strong beliefs about the ways in which subject specialties needed to be integrated in order to provide meaningful and relevant learning activities for students.

Henry was somewhat of an anomaly. A very positive and intense individual, he had been declared surplus from his previous junior high because he had the least seniority. However, he had been in the school system for twenty years and was storied by many as traditional. Surprisingly, Henry's teacher story fit with yours and he was welcomed from

the outset.

In the 1992-1993 school term, the second year of learning community operations and your third year in teaching, things changed markedly. Throughout that year, attention was given to relationships among team members, among the students and among teachers and students. In that regard, a significant activity occurred during the preparation period that fell on the last period of the day on Friday afternoons. As Clark tells it, the team would gather in the big room, in the reading corner and talk. The talk would consist of the sharing of personal stories and experiences; the stuff of secret stories. In that sense, the big room became a significant symbol on the landscape, a symbol of safety and security for you and the team.

In the stories you wrote for one of your university courses you told about another significant activity in which the six of you grew closer together as a knowledge community (Craig, 1992). You shared that story with me as part of your reflective journal. In part, it was a story of getting to know one teacher in particular. That teacher was Henry.

> When the six of us decided to go to my cabin, I didn't know what to expect other than that we would, hopefully, get a unit of study prepared. As it turned out, I probably would never have been able to predict how those two days progressed!
>
> It was in mid-October, on Friday evening when Yvonne, Henry, Clark, Gil, Don and I arrived at the cabin. That evening we decided to make a nice dinner and retire early so as to be as productive as possible the next day. Henry, a teacher new to our school, with a traditional language arts background, was up the earliest and was outside watching the birds and doing some general nature appreciation things. It was the time spent with Henry, in particular, this weekend that made it so interesting, enlightening and entertaining for all of us.
>
> When everyone was awake and stuffed with a cholesterol-laden breakfast, we sat down to plan our Consumer Product Testing Unit. We were trying to balance the curriculum requirements in the different subject areas, the role of the student in making curricular decisions and all of our ideas on the best approach. A lot of time was spent revisiting our beliefs about students, teaching, learning, knowledge, schools and our philosophy so that whatever we decided upon, it was based firmly on our values and beliefs about what is best for students. After about three hours we had worked out a general idea of how the unit was going to look but had not begun to hash out any details. It was at this point that Henry shocked us all.

> In order for anyone who does not know Henry to appreciate our reaction, a bit of background is required. He is a religious man, very caring, considerate and positive. At least this was my impression of him after almost two months of working together. He interrupted what we were discussing about the unit and blurted out, "I haven't spent so much _____ time planning in fifteen years! When the hell are we going to have lunch?" We all stared at him in disbelief. I don't think any of us had heard him swear at all before, much less twice in one statement! We all laughed and took a break for lunch.
>
> That evening, when the unit was as prepared as it was going to get, we spent some time debating life's more important issues. Who were better, the Beatles or the Rolling Stones? Should Clark name his first born Kent? What are all the words to the Brady Bunch theme song? Which is better for you, beer or red wine?
>
> Back at school on Monday, we all felt we knew each other a little better and felt closer together. More than anything else though, I began to realize what a special part of our team Henry was going to be. He has a lot of experience in education that is invaluable, but is also willing to try something completely new and foreign to him. He kept us rooted in reality without discouraging what we were trying to do and he did everything with a great sense of humor.
>
> At the end of the year Henry said something that I have carried around with me ever since. "At the beginning of the year I didn't know what to expect and I was leery of how it was going to work out. Now I look back on this year and think it was one of the greatest years of teaching in my career. I feel revitalized!" (S Journal Entry, September, 1994)

From this story, Sara, I gain an awareness of the manner in which your team began to develop a sense of appreciation and care for one another. The cabin provided a safe spot on the out-of-classroom place on the landscape for you and the team. I also sensed the same atmosphere of welcome, acceptance and family that was present when I visited. In the same way, I appreciate the big room as that kind of safe place on the teacher knowledge landscape. I wonder if this fits with your interpretation.

The Out-of-Classroom Place on Your Professional Landscape

At the time our staff decided to attempt a new story, we realized that it was virtually impossible to get everyone in our large, complex school to live the same story of school. The decision was made, in part, to lessen the tensions, to capitalize on the diversity and to

empower one another to live out competing stories of school. In doing so, it seemed that we intuitively created some safe places within the various wings of the school that housed the five learning communities and the specialists of the fine and practical arts. For you and your team of teachers, your learning community, the big room, was such a safe in-classroom place.

Another safe place, this one an out-of-classroom place, was the principal's office. While you and I did not share the journal writing, coordinator-principal talk and other one-on-one kinds of conversations that Clark and I did, there were a number of times we did talk and where I believe you came to trust and feel secure in speaking openly about your practice. I recall one day when things were not going well for you. I had someone cover your classes and we talked. You recorded your story of this event in your reflective writing for one of your university courses. You shared it as a journal entry for our research.

> I walked into school Monday thinking that it was a great accomplishment just having gotten myself out of bed. My boyfriend of two years had unexpectedly ended our relationship the day before. I was an emotional wreck, had not slept, had been in tears for eighteen consecutive hours and was incapable of rational thought. In this state, I decided it would be best to get out of the house and go to work. Having given very little attention to my physical appearance, many of my students thought I was terminally ill. With every look of concern and question about my well being came a quick trip to the washroom to cry, blow my nose and wipe my crimson eyes.
>
> In my first class of the day I was team teaching with Don Tepler, a close colleague and friend who immediately gave me a hug and asked me what was wrong. This, of course, led to fresh tears. But between sobs and deep breaths I was able to tell him what happened. He offered to cover the class for us both, but I declined as I wanted to be at least distracted for a while.
>
> By a strange act of fate, May, one of our students, arrived late and looked upset. Ten minutes later, a teary-eyed May asked to go to the washroom. When she hadn't returned to class after five or ten minutes, I went into the washroom to find her. There I found her sitting cross-legged in the center of the bathroom floor with her face in her hands and her little body wracked with sobs. I wondered to myself, "Am I able to handle this now?" I sat on the floor with May, put my arms around her and asked her what was wrong. With her head on my chest, she told me that her boyfriend had broken up with her the day before. Was this some male conspiracy to break our hearts on that particular day? I told May of my similar experience and we decided, there on the

> bathroom floor that we were smart, attractive, well-adjusted women who could make it through this. By noon hour May was looking much better (the recovery time for two week relationships is much shorter than for two year ones) and I was still a mess.
>
> I sought refuge in one of the only places I knew I could be alone--the principal's office. Chuck was out of the school for the morning so I hid away in his office to cry. He returned earlier than expected, to find me curled up in the fetal position on his couch. I ended up telling him the whole story. When I was finished, he went out to our secretary and told her that he and I wouldn't be back for the rest of the afternoon because he was taking me out to lunch. He piled me into his truck and drove and drove telling me story after story about his life and relationships while I merely listened and sniffled, feeling sedated by the sound of his voice and the motion of the truck. I was asleep when we arrived at the restaurant in Pinegrove. At the restaurant, Chuck talked some more, but this time about my career. He got me thinking and talking about my future as an educator and what my vision for school is. When were finished lunch, I realized I hadn't cried in over an hour--a new record!
>
> On the way back to school Chuck put in his tape of the Royal Canadian Air Farce and I actually laughed. As I stepped out of his truck in the parking lot, I saw May waiting for me at the school doors. I was immediately concerned, assuming that she needed to talk to me. I asked what was the matter. I was deeply touched when she responded that she was feeling much better but that she was worried about me and was waiting to make sure I was alright. At the time it was difficult for me to feel fortunate about anything, but with the passing of five months, I am able to look back and see just how lucky I was to have May and Chuck (and many others not mentioned) there to care for me. (ST5 S Journal, September, 1995)

In the note you wrote when sharing this story with me, Sara, you described the story as "a telling one, of a safe place outside of the big room". You seem to have storied me, as principal, and the principal's office, as safe and supportive.

In the 1992-1993 school term, your third teaching year and the year in which your learning community enjoyed a great deal of success, you and your team avoided the staff room. As a result, and now while conducting my research, I have been interested to listen to your stories about what it is now like in that out-of classroom place. For you and your team, it does not seem to be a safe place on the landscape. When I listen to your stories about the general atmosphere of the staffroom, I understand your discomfort. You story it as a teacher-centred place, often negative and, more often than not, dominated by a few

teachers who openly complain and criticize students and other teachers. There seems to be little that happens in the staffroom that you see as positive or centred upon doing things with, and for, students. For you, it is not a place to be. You and your team do not feel comfortable being there. You feel you need to be with your students, in the big room.

This was evident in your story of a weekend team meeting at Gil's place where one of the topics discussed centred around what you called "whole school unity".

> I recall a team planning meeting we had one Saturday afternoon at Gil's house, at which the topic of the staffroom came up. Our school's teacher-librarian, who taught with us part-time, mentioned that we may make a start in improving relationships with staff if we spent more time in the staffroom. Our constant absence had not gone unnoticed. Believing that these relationships did need improving, we discussed the idea. We didn't get too far, however. All of us were reluctant to give up that time with the kids in our learning community. Some of us said we'd go if we went in pairs, while others outright refused. The idea of a staffroom lunch schedule was even discussed (similar to hallway supervision). We couldn't come to any agreement, so we ended with a commitment to try to spend more time in the staffroom. Months have gone by, now, and none of us have spent any more time in the staffroom than we had before. (ST6 S Journal, June, 1995)

I wonder if, in this story, I sense more than the desire to be with your students in the learning community. Somehow the idea of a schedule for visiting the staff room, and doing so in pairs, conveys reluctance and apprehension. I also thought about the perceptions of other staff that the librarian appeared to address. Could she be describing a new story of school, a story of unity, one story of school that everyone must tell? Even though you and your team discussed the suggestion, no one seemed comfortable enough to commit in action. Somehow, and in light of this story, I am left with the feeling that the staff room remains an unsafe place on the landscape for you and your teachers. I wonder how you feel about this interpretation, Sara.

For you, your team and your students, the hallways are not safe places. In the account of the hallways in the introduction to my dissertation proposal, I described it as

follows:

> For some it was a gauntlet of conflicting stories as they learned which teachers on supervision on differing days, smiled or did not, greeted or did not, asked or demanded about the foodstuff, said nothing, or demanded the removal of the hats. (Dissertation Proposal, p. 3)

In my field notes I also mention my feelings this year as I encountered various teachers in those same hallways en route to your learning community. I know our collaborative research does not have the support of all staff. On one of my first visits I recorded these reflections:

> As I make my way down the corridors, I get a strong sense of what kids must feel when teachers are on supervision. Everyone seems to see me. They ask questions. What are you doing here? Are you back? I answer the questions. It is not easy to read the responses. Some seem quite genuine and warm. The response of one learning community leader makes me uncomfortable. Was I glad to get through that gauntlet! (Notes to File, Monday, August 29, 1994)

Neither staff meetings nor administrative team meetings appear to be safe places for you and your teachers. In 1992-1993, the second year of our learning community organization, we were aware that we had opened ourselves to competing stories and we attempted to make our staff meetings safer for all teachers by sharing responsibility for their operation. Each learning community organized and hosted at least one meeting. In the end, however, teachers could still be found seated within their own teams. I now interpret this as a symbol of the competing stories of school that our learning communities lived and, as such, I was interested to find out how you and your team now feel about this out-of-classroom place on the landscape.

You described one staff meeting for Clark and me. You were not happy about it. It took place in the 1994-1995 school year.

> At our staff meeting we spent the first 45 minutes on [pause] the parking fee [pause] 40 bucks. People thought that was just outrageous and so we had to hear ourselves talk about that and then we talked parking lot...coffee fund...different kinds of announcements...social committee. And

> then there was a discussion about how we make decisions....what should be the processes...and it was opened up for people to express their opinions...started off quite good because people were talking in a general sort of way...the more say you have in decisions, the more you feel responsible for them...so someone on my team said, "Then we should be involving students". And then it got down to things like, goddam it, we need a rule on slurpees and we need to all agree to it. Everyone needs to agree to it and then we need to legislate it, we need the kids to know it, we need to enforce it and we need to make sure that there are absolute consequences if those rules are broken. And it got down to...complaining about different things and wanting those types of rules...the word jail came up...just unbelievable! (T7 C/S/CPR October 4, 1994, p. 24)

From this excerpt, it would appear that, now, one dominant story was being composed as the story of school. The story did not allow for student focus or student involvement.

When the staff meeting called for a discussion centred upon decision-making models, the notion of collaboration came up and you were not only surprised by what you heard, but you appear to have been silenced. You shared this in our three-way interview.

> People were just throwing out..."we should collaborate on decisions...that's the decision-making model we should use wherever we can". They don't know what collaboration is or what it means...as if it's just...we need to make a decision so we're going to collaborate...going to be collaborative now...never at any other time. I sat there. [pause] I didn't say a word at that staff meeting because I thought, if I say some of these things, people are...not going to know what I'm talking about...half will shut themselves off as soon as they know it's me talking and the other half will say, "What's she talking about?" (T7 C/S/CPR October 4, 1994, p. 25)

Staff meetings are not safe out-of-classroom places for you and your teachers. It is not safe to share your teacher stories or your school stories there. As a result, you became silent.

Administrative team meetings were not what you expected and you appear to have come away from them feeling alone and unsupported. When you shared some of your feelings about this place on the landscape with Clark and me, you indicated that you felt it was helpful for you to sit near Alan. You said:

> Chuck was asking me about who I found as a person that I might feel comfortable with on the administrative team and I said I made sure I sat beside Alan every time I went in there. He is the only person that I feel I have some support from. (T2 C/S/CPR September, 13, 1994, p. 38)

You also spoke of your dislike for what you saw as administration and that included the administrative team meetings. In one of our interviews you described the administrative meetings in which you participated.

> S: Well if this is what it is [administration], I don't want to do it.
>
> CR: You mean handling the disputes [conflicts between students]?
>
> S: And going to stupid bureaucratic meetings where people just want to hear themselves talk...business items...we don't ever really talk about important educational issues or ideas for improving...the big picture. It's all what do we need to get done this week and finish and what I need to communicate with you so you can communicate with your team and (sigh), people just go there to hear themselves spiel off.
>
> CR: What would you rather see?
>
> S: I would rather see some things where we actually talk about what we are doing in our school as a whole and what do we do as a leadership team to work with our learning community to do some of those things. (T10 S1 October, 18, 1994, p. 7)

The administrative team meeting is another out-of-classroom place where your learning community's story of school does not fit. Sensing this, you question whether there is room for your story in administration.

Changes on the Out-of-Classroom Place

By the end of the 1992-1993 school term, some significant things had been achieved in your learning community. Care, welcome, acceptance and family had become embodied within your notion of the learning community as a democratic community of learners. More than a slogan, it seemed to embody what the community was. Student

operations were guided by a charter of rights and accompanying responsibilities developed by the students. These elements structured the learning community. Further, the staff agreed to have teachers remain with their students for a second year. That held the promise of consistency within the learning communities and removed the pressures and tensions of the arbitrary and artificial fragmentation in learning necessitated by a June shut down and September start up. The summer was merely a break. Relationships and programs would continue in the fall.

Following the staff meeting that ended that year (1992-1993), your team met at Don's house. While I felt privileged to have been invited, I detected mixed feelings. A strong sense of achievement and satisfaction was evident but there was a little nostalgia as well as anticipation. Earlier that day we learned that, in addition to Yvonne, who was leaving to teach in an elementary setting, Clark was transferring to acquire a different administrative experience. We also learned you would be the new team leader and that Alana and another teacher, Fred, would join the team. Some time ago I announced I was leaving to pursue doctoral studies. As in other years, the landscape would again change as people moved on and others replaced them.

Fall, 1993 heralded the beginning of your fourth year of teaching and your first as a teacher-leader. It did not take you long to recognize changes on the out-of-classroom place. To begin with, the new principal seemed concerned there were competing stories lived out in the school. Rather than fostering unique stories of school within each learning community, he wanted a common story of school across learning communities. You picked this up from his opening address and from other conversations in the fall. You spoke about this in one of our interviews.

> Well it was pretty obvious last year that his goal was for everybody to get along...people in learning communities to come closer together. (T16 S2 Cont. November 17, 1994, p. 31)

You alluded to this in a story you wrote for your university class. You noted that:

> Our principal has recently circulated some of his thoughts based on his interviews of all of the staff...learned that our staff members were extremely diverse philosophically and pedagogically. (Personal Journal S January 10-14, 1993)

The plot line of the new story of school was to be "harmony among learning groups", the same story of school in each learning community and a radically different story of school for Briardon. That would mean the story of school at Briardon would no longer be a story of school as five distinct learning communities, but a "one-vision" story of school.

As I work to make sense of your stories of your first year as a teacher-coordinator (1993-1994) and on into this year (1994-1995), I sense that your attempts to relate to, and talk with, your principal left you somewhat frustrated. In a journal letter you reflected upon these efforts. You wrote:

> I spent about one and a half hours talking with Norman on Friday afternoon. We began to talk about the problem with staffing, the alternatives, and eventually, my frustrations. He also wondered about "the strain" he'd felt between us. I tried to explain that I felt, not misunderstood, but not understood at all, outside of our learning community, when issues of philosophy and beliefs arise. Norman sincerely told me that he liked me and valued my ideals and philosophy. Why, then, do I feel a lack of support? Last year I oscillated between thinking Norman had a similar philosophy...needed to be given time to feel out his new position and getting frustrated with his ambiguous, treating everyone equally approach. I can feel that pendulum swinging again. (Letter to CPR, September 17, 1994)

On one hand I interpret your feelings as another attempt to trust and to relate, to openly respond to his questions about the tension he perceived and about the frustrations you were feeling. On the other hand, I also understand it as another effort to enlist his support for the story you and your team are attempting to live. You recognized your

feelings as similar to those in the 1993-1994 year and again you felt ambivalent. This suggests you did not feel his support. I wonder if this fits with your interpretation.

Even so, you continued to try to relate with and to seek support from him. You made that clear in one of your journal letters to me in which you shared a number of experiences that gave you cause to reflect upon the nature and purposes of administration. The second of these stories seems particularly relevant. You noted:

> A few weeks ago I gave Norman a copy of the writing I did on the staff meeting and collaboration. He read the first paragraph while I was still in the main office and he commented on what I had written in it on collaboration as a buzz word being used inappropriately. He agreed with me and said he shared my feelings and concerns with that issue. Since then he hasn't responded to me at all. The letter ended with my feelings of a lack of support, outside the team, at the school. On a previous occasion I told him that there was an open invitation to come down while we were teaching or on our prep and that this would help us feel like we had some support.
>
> I'm trying to make sense of why he hasn't responded to these invitations, without getting angry or judgmental. I think that I may not be appearing open or approachable to him. I wonder if he feels comfortable in our learning community, the way it looks and sounds at first glance. Suppose he does want to talk with me, the team or spend time in our classrooms, what would my response be? (Journal Letter S, October 26, 1994)

This time, Sara, you seem to be reflecting upon things as they may be seen from his perspective. It may be, for example, that the big room represents something different to him than it does to you, your team and your students. You now wonder if he does not feel comfortable in your learning community.

As I interpret these interactions and your responses, Sara, the relative safety and security of your relationship with the principal as a person on the landscape appears to have changed. It seems that the support you feel you had from me as a principal is not forthcoming. Over the past year and one half, your efforts to relate and to acquire such support have been thwarted. In a recent interview, I shared an observation I made in one of your team meetings when I inquired as to your relationship with your principal. I share

an excerpt from that conversation.

> CR: Throughout the one meeting, when you had that agenda of things that came out of your administrative team, you referred to the principal as "him" and "he". Throughout the entire meeting you did this. That was the first time I heard you refer to the principal that way. I wonder if this means that perhaps you are getting to the end of trying to relate?
>
> S: I am and I know that I am...and it's not because I don't...I think he's probably a nice person but he's not doing a heck of a lot to help us out and I'm just sick of trying to relate and trying to find common ground and get support when it just has never ever happened. It's a waste of energy now. (T16 S2 Cont. November 17, 1994, p. 30)

I wonder if the principal's responses have informed you that the principal is now situated on teacher knowledge landscape as an unsafe out-of-classroom person.

As the present school year (1994-1995) has progressed, Sara, the number of safe locations on the landscape has been reduced. The hallways, lunch room, staff room and general areas of the school, the out-of-classroom places, are unsafe for the story of school you and your team live out in your learning community. The people to whom you may turn for support and with whom you may share your stories also seem fewer.

Outside the school there is support. The members of last year's team have continued to meet over dinner on special occasions. With Clark and Yvonne, the group is a knowledge community (Craig, 1992). For example, there was a fall dinner at Jennie's Restaurant and another night out at The Hut. While not everyone was able to attend those two events, almost all made it for the Christmas evening at Pepper's where, in addition to enjoying the Mexican food, everyone caught up on things, socializing and reaffirming belief in "the revolution".

Saturday mornings continue to be reserved for your meetings with Clark and Pierre. As a consultant, Pierre first worked with you and Clark in the 1991-1992 year. Still serving as a consultant, he is unable to work with either of you in your school

contexts, given the patterns of organization under which you now work. Instead, the three of you maintain your friendship and manage to work collaboratively on a special project as another kind of community.

The Out-of-Classroom Place Permeates the Boundary

As the story of this year (1994-1995) has unfolded, even the in-classroom place on the landscape seems to have become less safe. The boundaries seem more permeable to the out-of-classroom place. In this regard, your context has given rise to a unique dilemma and set of tensions. Through my participation with you, I observed this developing dilemma. It was evident from the beginning of the year. I will outline it as I understand it and I want your comment and response.

As I understand it, the problem was precipitated at the conclusion of the last year (June, 1994) when the staff voted on a number of proposals for change for the coming school year. The success you and your learning community had enjoyed confirmed your belief that a full three years within the same community of learners and with the same teachers were needed to ensure a successful junior high school experience for many of these students. After your students graduated, you and your team wanted to begin a new three year commitment to a learning community of Grade 7 students. It was decided, however, that teachers of learning communities would no longer progress to the next grade level with their students. While this was by no means a unanimous decision, the perspectives of your team and of another learning community did not seem to be heard. You were simply outvoted.

As things worked out, instead of being assigned a new learning community of Grade 7 students, you were asked to handle a learning community comprised of Grade 9

students, special education students, ESL students and a group of approximately 60 students who were in IOP. When this was planned in June, there were plans for up to 150 students. You were asked to integrate curriculum and to work with these students of varying abilities.

Instead of the anticipated enrollment, however, you began with almost 30 students above the 150 maximum size for a learning community. You were asked to be patient until enrollment stabilized and staff allocations could be adjusted. However, as time wore on, it became obvious that, in spite of a decline in their student numbers, other learning communities did not wish to give up staff they already had. Few teachers, if any, relished the idea of making changes after classes began. The problem became even more complicated when the administrative team met to discuss the matter. One alternative was for you to give up the 60 IOP students. This presented the second part of the dilemma as you and your team seemed to feel that you couldn't put these students out of the community. I reflected upon this in one of my journal entries. I noted:

> It came upon me early in my observations that there was some uncertainty and tension amid the learning community teaching team. The learning community is very crowded and that complicates, even further, a situation in which the team is trying to handle difficult students who have not been that successful in school. Without the use of authority and using only unqualified acceptance, love and relationship, these students are a handful. Perhaps 60+ IOP students in one large learning community is not the answer.
>
> What was a maximum...150 when we began to operate in learning communities...has now become 180. To complicate matters further, some 60+ students are classed as IOP students. The staff required for a learning community of that size and configuration is eight. Sara's team knows that.
>
> Sara's team (six) has been coping with the load and awaiting relief since Aug 31. They are not happy and are beginning to get the message. What they had expected in terms of relief won't be coming. The story line has changed. They face a dilemma. Having accepted all of these students and having established the group as an integrated community of learners they cannot bring themselves to turn the IOP students out of the community...particularly to others who will, no doubt, segregate them. (Personal Journal, September 20, 1994)

I wondered about the nature of the community you establish with your students and why you and your team were reluctant to switch these students to another learning community. As I reviewed my field notes and the transcripts of our interviews, I began to understand your reluctance. In the first two weeks of school these very difficult and, for the most part, unsuccessful students were led through a process of prolonged relationship-building with focus on the development of community. There was acceptance and that acceptance was unconditional. Everyone was told they belonged. They explored and developed a charter of rights and a set of responsibilities to go with those rights. These two things provided the structure for the learning community and were the guiding notions for student operations. Students were not kicked out of this learning community and the students knew it. From my vantage point, the resulting atmosphere seemed to be very much like that at your cabin and at your house. Everyone who comes to your house or to the cabin is cared for and welcomed. People are not excluded. It is inviting and secure. Thus, having been welcomed as a part of the learning community, they belonged here. You could not ask some to leave.

In one of the stories, in response to my first interpretation, you clarified what happened in the special administrative team meeting called to address the problem.

> A lunch time administrative team meeting was called near the end of September, when the enrollment had appeared to stabilize. The learning communities still had imbalanced pupil-teacher ratios and our team believed we should have at least one, if not two, full-time teachers added to our team. All the other learning community coordinators came well-prepared and were able to give reasoned and convincing arguments for not giving up any of one of their teachers. It was then suggested that we transfer a group of students to a community with a lower pupil-teacher ratio. My colleagues around the table didn't seem to understand that this would have been acceptable in the first or second week of school, but not after the completion of our community unit that emphasized inclusiveness, belonging and student voice and choice. We seemed to be at an impasse, with people unwilling to move from their bargaining positions. The lunch bell rang and everyone agreed we would have further discussions. I wondered how long we would have to wait for some resolution, and what form that resolution would take. I was frustrated and angry. (ST7 S Journal, June, 1995)

As the first few days of September went by, your team became more concerned because nothing was happening to address the problem of insufficient staffing. You had six teachers and you needed at least eight. It was very difficult to teach in your accustomed manner. You looked to the principal for support and you continued to try to explain your learning community to your administrative team colleagues. The administrative team seemed to take a position that acknowledged you had a problem. However, rather than reassign full-time teachers, they would "help" by loaning you a teacher on a period by period basis. They seemed to feel that would address "your" problem.

At the September mid-point, your principal engaged you in a lengthy conversation. He wanted to talk about the issue, about how you were feeling personally and he asked that I, as researcher, not be directly involved in those aspects of your learning community that dealt with such total school decisions. At the time you were quite concerned about this and felt caught in the middle. As you reflected upon the situation over the weekend while at your cabin, you wrote a letter to me. You noted:

> I'm not sure how to make sense of that conversation or the events that preceded it. Norman wanted to talk about three things; the practicalities of our staffing situation and possible solutions, the fact that, you, Chuck, were a part of some of our conversations, and about how I, personally, was feeling. He requested that you not be a part of these whole school discussions in the school. He thought that you may present a biased view of the situation and, hence, influence the conversation and perhaps the decision of our team. I felt uncomfortable and awkward. But Norman was asking that you not be a part of this (someone may see you, hear you, think it is inappropriate). I felt caught in the middle.
>
> We began to talk about the problem with staffing, the alternatives and eventually my frustrations as I tried to explain that I felt not misunderstood, but not understood at all, outside of our learning community when issues of philosophy and belief arise. The staffing story is an example. Everyone thought our problem was solved with different teachers coming in and out for different classes. No one seems to understand how important community and relationships are to us. Norman sincerely told me that he liked me and valued my ideals and philosophy.
> Why, then, do I feel a lack of support? (Letter from S September 17, 1994)

We agreed to comply with his request that I not participate and I left it to you to share with me your interpretation of those meetings. However, the tension and anxiety of your colleagues continued. It was difficult to handle the large numbers.

When it eventually became obvious that your learning community would not receive additional full-time staff and that your team was unwilling to exclude the IOP students, a solution was reached by the administrative team. Even though that solution left your team well short of the eight teachers to which you were entitled by staffing formulas, and even though it was unacceptable to you and your teachers, the matter seemed to be closed. I wrote about it in a personal journal entry:

> What is offered as a solution is perceived by the team as a threat to much of what is embodied in their notion of a learning community. Sara is frustrated that her administrative colleagues and principal do not seem to understand or see the problem...she and her team seem to feel isolated, marginalized and devalued. She attends administrative meetings and feels isolated. She returns and shares with the team and they all feel isolated. This tends to keep them even further away from the staff room and total school functions that do not directly relate to students.
>
> They seem to feel that everyone sees them as having the problem and that they are unable to cope. They are viewed as wanting more and demanding that others give up what they have. They are perceived to have been favored in the past and others are unwilling to bend. Specifically, they have been offered another teacher. That would come in the form of
> a) the librarian for two periods (integrated time). She would plan with them.
> b) an assistant principal for one period (skill building).
> c) another teacher who would teach for a single period (skill building).
>
> As they see it, this moves the team back to the pre-learning community structure where students were rotated through teachers who do not spend time to really know them--one of the problems the learning communities were created to address. This was expressed by Henry and Alana in the team meeting on Friday September 16.
>
> In addition, the sense of community becomes lost as students are timetabled out to the non-community teachers. And the sense of community among the team is further fragmented as the extra or part time teachers must commit to multiple teams and thus they cannot really plan together or commit fully to the professional development undertakings of the learning community. (Personal Journal, September 20, 1994)

So the sense of community was fragmented and the focus on relationships was compromised as the librarian, an assistant principal and one teacher were scheduled into

the learning community to teach specific subjects rather than to work as an integrated part of the team. The commitment to the integrated whole was lost. The learning community teachers must now pick up much of the planning, preparation, marking and general relationship and management responsibilities for the whole group.

What was also evident was the subtle manner in which the control of time and timetable was wrestled away from your team. Once specified individuals are scheduled for specific times, then the schedule takes precedence over the spontaneity and student interest that demands flexibility in time. I observed an example of this type of problem in the middle of October, the day after a major fight and beating resulted in one of your students being transferred, others suspended and the victim afraid to return to school. Others were involved but had not been caught. The entire incident, although not uncommon in this school and area of the city, seemed to fly in the face of what your community of learners was all about and thus period three was scheduled for a discussion about fighting, honesty, and other matters of concern. You and your teachers were also worried about the use of drugs and alcohol among the students of this small group in the learning community. Throughout the discussion, feelings ran high and there was no shortage of opinion. The majority of student speakers seemed strong in their support for those suspended. There was no support for the victim. Just as the discussion turned to the larger perspectives and the moral dimensions of the issue, the bell sounded to end the period. Half of the class had not yet spoken. I felt disappointed at having to leave the discussion at that point. I could tell you felt the same way. I recorded this in my field notes.

> The period ended. I know this is not finished and I feel an opportunity has been missed. I felt frustrated...Sara seemed to sag as well...But Alan would be down to help with skill building in math, so we had to change classes...What a shame! (Notes to File, October, 18, 1994, p. 7)

Amid a discussion, where only one side had been voiced, more time was needed. In the previous year, when the teachers were in charge of scheduling learning community time, this was possible. But now, with the addition of the part time teachers, your entire program had to be scheduled in accord with the school master schedule. I could sense your frustration and understood that this is what you had attempted to explain to your principal and to your colleagues on the administrative team. I began to realize how one dominant story of school had come to conflict with the alternative story you were attempting to live.

There were other indications that the story of school being lived and told in your learning community was now in conflict with the one dominant story. Consider the incident in which Spiro first-named a teacher in front of the principal. In one of our meetings with Clark you told us the story.

> It was Gil's name that started it. He has arranged in his leadership class for Spiro and Gord to go out and clean the field or to clean the inside of the school when it's too cold to go outside. That's what they wanted to do for leadership, keep Briardon clean. And so Gil is at his locker getting his coat on at the beginning of leadership...Norman sees Spiro at his locker. "Spiro, what are you doing?" Spiro says, "I'm getting my coat on and I'm going outside".
>
> Norman: "Well, what are you doing [there]?"
> Spiro: "I'm going to be cleaning up the field during my class."
> Norman: "What class is that?"
> Spiro: "Leadership."
> Norman: "Under what teacher's supervision?"
> Spiro: "Zeke's."
>
> Just at that time I'm walking out the door, taking some kids up to the computer room. I can hear Norman. "Pardon me young man!" And Spiro, knowing what he's..."Oh, I'm sorry! I mean Mr. Zeblonski". I said, "No Spiro, don't be sorry! Norman, we allow kids to call the teachers by Zeke or Fonz [Mr. Fonerola] or their first names". I kept walking to the computer room. (T7 C/S/CPR 2 October 4, 1994, p. 1)

Spiro went about his business and you went on to the library. But the matter wasn't over. You were called to the office to see your principal. You recounted that part

of the story as follows:

> The beginning of our prep [I] get the phone call..."Can you come up and talk to Norman?" I knew what it was about because [when the incident occurred] he kind of gave me this weird look and went, "Oh!" He says, "You know, I've been thinking a lot about your community over the weekend and there've been concerns". I guess lots of people have come into his office concerned about food and drink and slurpees, especially. And other people have heard this first name thing. His whole approach is very good. He said, "You know, these things like slurpees and first names and hats and that sort of thing end up getting a lot of play and air time because they sometimes occur outside your learning community and if you want to continue to do the good work you're doing, then you need to somehow work with your kids so that they don't run into those difficulties and then other people don't start attacking your program because of these smaller things that are occurring". He said, "When kids walk down the hallway carrying a slurpee and are asked by some teacher on supervision to take it outside or throw it out, they respond, we're...allowed to". (T7 C/S/CPR 2 October 4, 1994, p. 2)

Clark and I questioned you about the responses of the teachers to these students. You described the situation from the student perspective. The conversation went as follows:

> S: Apparently teachers insist and our kids are then rude.
>
> C: They take it [food and drink] from the kids in the hallway? They won't let them transport it down to your learning community?
>
> S: If they go outside and around.
>
> CR: You mean go around the whole school?
>
> S: Yeah. Our kids get hit in the main hall, library hall, guidance hall and then they're safe. You know it's like monopoly or something, trying to miss the ones with houses. (T7 C/S/CPR 2 October 4, 1994, p. 2)

As you related the story of the discussion, you seemed to be trying to make sense of the principal's message. You noted:

> He really didn't like the 'Zeke' and 'Fonz' things. He thought that first names are one thing but 'Zeke' and 'Fonz'? "Could you imagine if there was a parent in the hallway?" [He] said he heard one student yell, during physical education, for the keys to the locker room, "Hey Fonz, toss me your keys!"

> And I tried to explain that these aren't things we just make up out of thin air to make our learning community more isolated and to piss people off. These are small things but significant things when we're trying to break down hierarchical structures between students and teachers. And if I call Zeke, 'Zeke' and we want to form the same kind of relationship that I have with Zeke, with kids, then why can't the kids call him Zeke? If they're just calling him Zeke...not being jerks.... using it as respectfully as anything else, then... [pause]...(sigh)...[pause]...aw god!
>
> He understood, but it still upsets people. He said it is fine in the context of our own learning community, but the more things like slurpees in the hallway...if our kids want to start calling other teachers by their first names, then these other teachers are going to start attacking our program and we've got to do some things so that our kids understand the other contexts of the school. He said he's under extreme pressures to create rules and make a total no-slurpee rule or a no-food-and-drink-anywhere-but-the-cafeteria rule.
>
> I don't want to make him sound really awful. He is trying to avoid making these overriding school rules. But if our kids continue to be rude or do these things that piss people off, then they're all going to be rallying around these incidents and trying to use them to have a no-food-and-drink-anywhere-else-but-the-cafeteria rule or a no-first-name rule or whatever. He used the word compromise. We have to compromise some of the things we do outside of our learning community to keep going some of the things that occur inside.
>
> And it's all...said in the terms of, "I want to do everything I can to maintain the innovations that you're doing". I sit in his office and I think what he is saying is good. He's sounding like he's on the same wave length and he might be supportive of what our learning community is doing-complimenting...using some of the same language (collaboration, integration) but then we end up with the solution to our staffing problem like we did and we end up with this new timetable and we end up not being able to move up with our kids....not starting with Grade 7. None of that is facilitated. Then, after the fact, he says, "I really support"...lah, lah, lah. And then nothing happens. It's hard to know what to think. (T7 C/S/CPR 2 October 4, 1994, p. 4)

Somehow I understand your principal was attempting to cope with how the story of school in your learning community conflicted with the story of school in the rest of the school. In this account, he suggests you need to control your students and that you are responsible for their attitudes and actions towards other teachers.

As I interpret it, Sara, the dominant story is strong. You seem to be aware of this and you don't feel good about what you perceive to be the lack of support for what you and your team are attempting to do with these students. However, you appear to have heeded his advice. You met with your students and reviewed the ground rules. This you

recounted to Clark and me as you continued your story.

> So we had a learning community meeting with the kids after that...told the kids that...we need your cooperation on some of these things. We want you to be able to come down here and eat your lunch with us and bring whatever you want from 7-Eleven, as long as you're cleaning up after yourself. And we want you to call us by our first names if you want to, but other teachers in the school don't feel that way so we have to be a little bit more careful about what we do outside the learning community. If it's slurpees, they're really a touchy subject right now and maybe you want to try a different doorway to come in. And first names are only for these teachers, not for other teachers, unless they say so. (T7 C/S/CPR 2 October 4, 1994, p. 6)

Again I seem to sense your awareness of the strength of the dominant story. I wonder if, at this time, you were feeling that the dominant story was lived by the principal. He did not understand your alternative story of school. One of the things that led me to wonder this is your reflection upon the principal's concern for what things will look like to others. Here you seem to reflect as you assure Clark that the use of teacher first names by students has not been a problem.

> I really don't think they've tried to call anyone else by their first name. They may be more curious about other people's first names. I don't think Norman liked the nicknames. I don't think he likes [the names] Zeke and Fonz. "What if I'm with a parent and the parent hears a kid? "What if I'm touring [the Superintendent] through the school and he hears, in the hallway, one of your students calling Mr. Fonerola, Fonz?" (T7 C/S/CPR 2 October 4, 1994, p. 7)

For the first time you appear to have become concerned that you seem to be the focus of the principal's lectures. You expressed this frustration directly to him. In concluding the story about Spiro, you told Clark and me how you questioned your principal about this.

> I said, "I can't believe (pause) I'm getting a little bit frustrated that I'm sitting in here getting a little bit of (pause) a lecture almost (pause) about our kids with...things that we're trying to do that build positive and meaningful relationships with kids, whether they're making some mistakes on the way or not, these are all efforts to do something that we think is good for kids...I can walk down a hallway and hear teachers yelling at the top of their lungs at kids, humiliating them. Everytime Spiro Quering walks by, the BA teacher says, "See you soon Spiro? I'm betting on you!" He's placed bets with Spiro on how quickly he'll be back in the behavior class. I can't believe this!" (T7 C/S/CPR 2 October 4, 1994, p. 7)

Clark wondered about the principal's response. You explained by saying:

> He said, "Oh I fully understand that and don't think that I haven't had conversations with the type of people you're talking about". And he said, "I know you could be in my office every day complaining about what other people do with kids, just like some of these other people complain about you. I understand that but that doesn't mean I ignore their concerns".
> (T7 C/S/CPR 2 October 4, 1994, p. 8)

I asked how these teachers knew about these things. I wondered if they had been in your learning community to observe your practices. You were definite in your answer. The following excerpt from the interview transcript illustrates.

> CR: How often are teachers in your wing? Each day that I've been there, I have not seen a teacher other than the ones that were helping.
>
> S: Nobody but Alan. Never! Ever! (T7 C/S/CPR 2 October 4, 1994, p. 8)

In concluding the story about Spiro and the resulting discussion with your principal, you described what seemed to be an offer to help. You responded to the offer by issuing an invitation to him and by restating your feelings of isolation and your need for support. Your principal's reaction seemed to inform you that such support would not be forthcoming.

> Norman said, as he was leaving, "If there is anything I can do..." I said, "I'd like to put out a totally open invitation. Please come down and spend some time...walk into the middle of a class, come in and sit down in a team meeting with us, because our team is feeling totally isolated. The only place I feel support in the school is when I'm with the team. And anywhere outside there, except for Alan, I don't feel support for what we're doing or our philosophy. It would really be helpful even if you spent more time and seemed interested in what we were doing. That would be something you could do for me".
>
> [He said] "I don't like to interfere in your work. I come down right into classrooms and into team meetings on an invitation basis. If you want me to come in and see a particular lesson or a particular team meeting and you want me to come and sit down and you invite me down, I'll come. I've been intending to do that with all of the school. I'm going to get out more this year."
> (T7 C/S/CPR 2, October 4, 1994, p. 9)

While I will need you to help me understand this more fully, Sara, it does not seem like your learning community has the principal's support and you did not seem happy with his reaction to your invitation. I wonder if my interpretation fits.

Yet another indicator that your learning community story is now in conflict with the dominant story of the school can be detected in the way in which physical education classes are now handled. This change has upset you and your teachers and continues to be a problem. Before offering my tentative interpretation of this, let me attempt to reconstruct the chain of events.

Apparently there were some concerns with respect to the way in which a couple of learning communities taught physical education over the course of the first two years of the learning community organization and operation (1991-1993). Your learning community and another had involved the entire teaching team in teaching physical education and this drew concerns from the physical education specialists on staff. It was a concern expressed to the new principal during the 1993-1994 school term. Amid the voting on changes for the 1994-1995 school year, it was decided that the practice of providing physical education to all students on a daily basis would be discontinued. Instead, students would receive the subject twice per week. In addition, it was decided that one of the teacher-coordinators would lead and coordinate all of the physical education for the school. This leader, a physical education specialist, would also teach with the teachers in each learning community when their classes were scheduled. Such supervision would bring a greater degree of standardization and consistency to the program and would, as well, serve to control and lessen the loss of, and damage to, equipment and supplies. Resulting from this change was an effect which worked directly against the learning community concept. With the addition of the teacher-coordinator specialist, one teacher would be displaced each

period when the specialist joined the team. That teacher was, in turn, redeployed in the elective block of another learning community. The end result was a further fragmentation of the learning community and a return to the mosaic timetable. In my field notes I reflected upon the reaction of your teachers to this change.

> Sara's learning community teachers and, if I have interpreted it correctly, John's team, were unhappy with all of this. In the minds of these teachers, the coordinator-specialist had become a glorified equipment manager...it meant a lack of access to equipment. They also seemed to feel that they could do a better job of teaching their own students and it is to that end that Sara and John, as leaders, continue to argue for the right to teach their students. (Notes to File, November 22, 1994, p. 2)

In the same journal entry I recorded more about this issue.

> Since the new change was implemented, students have complained about their physical education classes and discipline problems have resulted in Sara being called in regarding the lack of cooperation and deportment on the part of their students.
>
> There seems to have been laid on her, a moral guilt. The lack of appropriate response on the part of the students, and their challenging manner, was deemed to be related to her team's low expectations and their tolerance. (Notes to File, November 22, 1994, p. 2)

After listening to your team's expressions of concern with respect to the changes, I was interested in learning more about the way in which the new physical education worked. I was pleased to join you for one of your classes so that I might better understand what was happening. I recorded a number of observations and feelings about that class. My first observation dealt with what I perceived to be control over you and your students by the other teacher-coordinator.

> The principal came in and spoke to the coordinator-specialist but not to either of the other teachers (Sara or Gil). They noticed. Sara, for example, stiffened a little and turned her back on them. This did not seem natural. It seemed to emphasize the coordinator-specialist as being in charge of the other two teachers. (Notes to File, November 22, 1994, p. 1)

The matter of control surfaced again when, in the middle of your class, the specialist reentered the gym, looked around and then went into the equipment room. I made a record of this in my field notes.

> The coordinator-specialist returned part way through the class. Why did he need to do that? He did nothing except check to see that equipment was in order. What was happening in his class while he was checking on this group? No wonder these teachers are upset with this! (Notes to File, November 22, 1994, p. 3)

As I sat with you and your students, I noted that the organization and administration that precedes physical education classes now seemed to require more time. On the other hand, all students seemed orderly and were changed for the class. I share these observations from my field notes.

> There were no sponge activities or warm up activities when the students entered...took approximately 20 minutes for the students to change, to check off their names...to be seated and to wait...for everyone...and for the coordinator-specialist to call them to order. (Notes to File, November 22, 1994, p. 1)

The specialist explained to the students that he would be taking one third of the group to the weight room while Gil would take a third to the small gym and you would remain in the large gym with the rest of the students. Once the other classes dispersed you began your lesson. I recorded more observations and thoughts as you worked with these students in a very active class.

> Sara had them partner, get a ball and she called them to the centre of the gym. She outlined what would happen. There would be a little skill work on dribbling the ball and shooting. They would close with some three-on-three play. To this point, they were quite attentive. Two boys whispered while she was talking but that was not as extensive as I had observed in regular classes. Sara moved them quickly through the basic basketball dribbling and she referred to the rules as she went. After practicing dribbling with each hand and after practicing switching back and forth, they passed to a partner who tried it. The next drill, also with a partner, found them progressing around the gym, in a given direction, until she called upon them to switch hands or to pass the ball and reverse the direction. They had fun with this. They were totally absorbed and they did it well. Sara reviewed the one hand set shot and they all practiced. Teams of three were formed and four distinct games ensued. She was required to play as one team was short one participant. Students had a good work out, improved their skills and used those skills in a game

situation. They enjoyed it. Upon the close of class, they put away equipment and went to the change rooms. She accompanied them and unlocked the doors. They changed and went to their classes. (Notes to File, November 22, 1994, p. 3)

In interpreting the physical education issue, Sara, I begin by wondering if I understood and explained the background as you know it. I also wonder about the way in which your team seems to have accepted the decisions to reduce the amount of physical education and to follow the direction of the other teacher-coordinator. There does not seem to have been much reaction to these decisions but rather, a focussed and continued effort to address the loss of student choice in the selection of activities for the classes. In our first three-way interview, Clark and I questioned this. When Clark asked you to outline the physical education issue, for example, instead of focusing upon the control over your teaching or the reduction in time, you addressed the way in which students were now deprived of choices they had last year. You noted that Don was attempting to influence the teacher-coordinator physical education specialist to allow for some student choice in your learning community's program. Your conversation with Clark went as follows:

C: So he's teaching all your kids physical education is he?

S: With two of our team members going up every day. But Don, our diplomat, was able to get him to let kids choose sports...they offer six different things and kids can pick which ones they want to do...as a rule.

C: Does he do that with other groups?

S: No.

C: If they really believed that it was valuable, why isn't he doing it with the others?

S: No, he doesn't believe it, because those were some of his comments about choice...last year. So he doesn't believe it at all.

C: No. It's a tough thing to fight because most people do not believe that kids should have any choice. Our school is just as bad. (T2 C/S/CPR September 13, 1994, p. 59)

Sometime later Clark again pressed you to explain the physical education issue. That conversation follows:

C: What's the Phys. Ed. issue?

S: Kids being able to choose what sport they want to participate in...the way we did it last year...two or three classes at each sport for a week...teachers...offer the sport they feel comfortable with...kids cycle through that and then...sign up for the one that they really like to do.

CR: The kids are trying to push it?

S: No. Don and Fonz are. The coordinator-specialist doesn't think [choice] fulfills requirements.

CR: Fred [Fonz] was upset about the activity ratio, the fact that the specialist didn't show up several times.

C: Doesn't show up?

S: [He] didn't get there until twenty after one today.

C: And he is supposed to be there all the time?

S: Yes. [He] gave [the kids] a checklist a couple of weeks ago...grouped the sports into groups of four...kids were either in one grouping that cycled through those four sports or...another grouping. But what is it? Soccer, football, volleyball, and one other real aggressive...floor hockey. Then the other ones are volleyball, tennis, low organized games and field hockey....one has all the girls and one has all the boys. There are no co-ed classes anymore by virtue of how he's grouped the sports together.

C: (Laughs)

CR: Don was saying that, in this short time, more kids were complaining and saying they hate physical education than all of the kids in the last two years?

S: Than in the last two years...Yes! (T7 C/S/CPR 2 October 4, 1994, p. 9)

In responding to my interpretation, Sara, you explained further.

At the end of the 93-94 school year, when the staff was making organizational decisions regarding the upcoming school year, our team argued for daily physical education taught by learning community teachers. We were outvoted.

> We decided...to work with the coordinator...to work our beliefs about student voice and choice into the physical education program...largely unsuccessful...coordinator...believes every student should participate in every unit...resulting in constant struggles with young people, to change into gym strip and to participate...a topic of heated discussion at our team meetings...made an attempt to talk...about our frustrations, but to no avail. We believe the only way to change the program would be for us to teach and plan with our own students, as we have in the past years. We know that can't happen, so we have resigned ourselves to showing up and teaching the units the physical education coordinator has planned, as best we can. (ST8 S Journal, June, 1995)

You also clarified the matter of the student survey in the following note to me.

> The survey of sports that students filled out has only occurred that <u>one</u> time. Since then, all subsequent rotations have been decided by Rocky and all kids have gone to all rotations.
> (S note to CPR, June, 1995)

The decision to reduce the amount of physical education given to your students is not a part of the teaching story your learning community teachers would choose to live. Given the gregarious nature of your students, their needs for activity, and the way your learning community's story of school leaves curriculum decisions to teachers and students, I do not see how this fits. Further, control over the structure and operation of your classes by a leader from outside of the learning community is an intrusion that rarely happens in the in-classroom-place for most teachers. I sensed tension about this but I have not perceived any rebellion or refusal on your part or on the part of your team. Instead, you and your teachers have attempted to work with the teacher-coordinator specialist to get him to allow some student choice. Finding little satisfaction from those efforts, you and your team decided to accept the situation. I wonder about this.

The way in which the out-of-classroom place has permeated your in-classroom place seems to undermine your story of school as a community of democratic learners learning together cooperatively. The story of school on the out-of-classroom place seems to have forced you and your teachers into a school-wide timetable which limits your

flexibility. Student choice in physical education has been removed and some of your teachers do not get to teach their students but, instead, are redeployed to teach in the elective areas. The amount of time scheduled for the subject has been reduced. The students are complaining and, now, many students say that they hate physical education.

I understand the effect this is having on you from reading a letter you wrote to me about the whole collaboration issue. You said:

> I'm still feeling more than knowing, when it comes to whole staff issues. I feel like our team's philosophy is not valued, but no one will just come out and say it. I feel confused about the ideas of collaboration, common purpose and cohesiveness and how they are intertwined with honoring individual integrity and philosophy. I feel I am not doing my best work with kids. I feel anxious and worried about our community; what it means and what we are facing. Perhaps I feel too much....am too passionate. (S Journal Entry, October 4, 1994, p. 2)

You seem to know, Sara. Your feelings inform you. Your learning community story is not accepted. It conflicts with the dominant story of school. You know how strongly you feel about your story of school. It is right for you. Unable to live out that story, you feel you are not doing your best work and here you assess the effect the conflict is having on you and your learning community. You articulated the effects of the dominant story and the way the out-of-classroom place has now permeated your team's practice.

> It seems that small (or seemingly small) decisions and changes are undermining our team's work. The word community, like collaboration, is a word used frequently in our school but without a shared meaning. Our team spends a lot of time talking and working with kids on community and what it means to be a part of one. Relationships, democracy and voice are of utmost importance. But the change in timetable, with less flexibility, the change in the way physical education is now managed, how our staffing shortage was dealt with and how moving up with kids through grade levels was stopped are all examples of decisions that have worked against our sense of school as a learning community. These have not been decisions made in collaborative relationships. (S Journal Entry, October 4, 1994, p. 2)

As much as you strive to understand and accept what has happened, you cannot seem to make it fit your knowing of community and collaboration. The out-of-classroom place has permeated the privacy and security of your learning community and is so strongly conflicting with the story of school your learning community attempts to live, that you and your team are having difficulty practicing according to your learning community's story of school.

Response From the In-Classroom Place

When I arrived at the school one morning I became aware of two different problems that seemed to highlight the degree to which the story of school in your learning community was now in conflict with the dominant story. They also seemed to embody your own response to the conflict. One was a problem that had arisen when six substitute teachers replaced your teachers on the day of your team professional development outing. The other problem involved the painting of the learning community.

It seemed very tense in the big room and you seemed very reluctant to talk about either issue when I arrived. I recorded this in my field notes.

> It was the beginning of homework option. There were a couple of surprises. To begin with, I noted that the place had been painted. Well, not totally. And upon second look, not professionally.
>
> I spoke briefly to Sara. She greeted me but seemed occupied. She seemed more than usually concerned that her students were at work. It seemed tense in the big room. I couldn't help but conclude there had been another session with the principal.
>
> There was a bouquet of flowers on her desk. As a part of its make up, it had a little hug-a-bear. I noticed it and commented. She responded that her mother had sent it after a bad day upon their return from the team's professional development outing. (Notes to File, November 8, 1994.)

As I understand it, Sara, the team professional day outing resulted in another

discussion with your principal. Evidently the substitute teachers found the students difficult to manage and the day was unpleasant for the substitutes, the administration and the students. After I talked to you and your teachers about it, I again made field notes and entries in my personal journal. I refer to my field notes and journal to describe my reflections on the team professional day outing problem. My field notes describe the history behind the outing:

> We initiated the off-campus professional outing when we embarked upon the learning community story. It was intended to provide teachers with time to reflect upon and to consider the dimensions of their operations. It necessitated substitutes for all six members of the team undertaking the outing. That usually resulted in a stressful day for the administration, unless they knew how the team operated and became a part of the coverage. I experienced several of those days as the various teams took turns having their outings. I could imagine what had transpired in Sara's learning community with so large a group, all Grade 9s, the teachers not having them previously and the outing scheduled near the beginning of the term. (Notes to File, November 8, 1994)

My personal journal provides another history.

> While Sara has yet to elaborate, I think I can comprehend what has happened. My understanding is based upon my experience when we first tried this entire team planning thing, where substitutes come in for a total team. In recognition of the task before each learning community (not only living amid, but planning amid major change and the need to rethink, back up and start again), I utilized some professional development funding, school funds and solicited the parent committee for help in providing a one day substitute per teacher such that each team, at a different time during the year, might be allowed a day for professional development or planning with respect to their operations as a learning community.
>
> For substitutes whose teaching style was from a base of power and authority, it was particularly difficult to teach in the style to which Clark and Sara's students were accustomed. The problems were compounded when the substitutes had neither handled the students before nor had been at the school before. Aware of that, each team maintained a list of substitutes for such days. At the best of times, the administration and office staff felt the impact when a given learning community was out.
>
> On one team's outing, I returned to the school from a field trip to find that students had given the substitutes a bad time. Some returned to school late from lunch and some had run from my assistant principal who was trying to restore order. It was physical education time. Donning runners and garb, I gave them a workout and while they recovered, I reviewed what had happened and asked those who were involved to raise their hands. The group had to help a couple of students own up to their misdemeanors but most were open and honest. I spent time with each

> person, hearing from him or her and working out a plan. Some met with the assistant from whom they had run, others met with their teachers. I trusted that the teachers would follow up. It was a learning experience for students, their teachers and for me. One of the interesting things was the lack of rebellion by the students. Did they enjoy having me run them around? Did they know I cared? They were really nice kids. From one perspective they were not very successful in school or in life generally. Yet, when I reflect upon this story, I appreciate that these students are, for the most part, open and honest. They tell it the way they see it, often in the vernacular of the street. They are impressionable and with consistency from adults, are open to change. They are inquisitive and will work to prove a point or to acquire what they want. They push beyond their fears and are willing to question and to experiment. They reciprocate, responding to loyalty with loyalty. They can live in both mainstream and adolescent worlds at once. They are survivors. Behind many of these students were parents (or a parent) who cared and was trying. Some of those parents face much more than the rest of us. These are normal students. (Personal Journal Entry November 8, 1994, p. 2)

Once again, Sara, you were expected to account for the behaviors of your students when you were called to the principal's office. This time, however, you were chastised rather severely. You left feeling isolated and unsupported, feelings which seemed to weigh on you. I wonder if the flowers from your mom were intended to provide some support in the situation.

When I reflect upon these experiences and the problems faced by the substitutes and the administration, I wonder what caused so much furor. Perhaps the untidiness, unruliness, the unpredictability of work in this learning community began to show. I wonder if what happened was the result of six substitutes having to teach the number of students that required eight teachers. I wonder if anyone knows the history behind the activity? Were the substitutes familiar with these students? Did the students know the substitutes? Had either substitutes or administration drawn forth rebellion or challenge through the use of methods of power and control that contrasted the accepting relationship methods used by the learning community teachers? Whatever the answer, the day had not gone according to what was expected in the dominant story and you were told that you and your team were responsible. You were told that it was, in part, a result of the lack of high

standards for student deportment and your failure to demand that students meet the expectations of adults. The wearing of hats, the use of first names in addressing teachers, the slurpees and foodstuff in the hallways and in your learning community seem to have been interpreted as symbols of disrespect and disregard for the rules established by teachers. Questioning and challenge were certainly not considered appropriate.

It seems to me that your notion of a community of democratic learners which focuses on relationships between people of equal status (students and teachers) and in which methods of acceptance and care replace the hierarchical methods of power and control, does not fit the dominant story being lived in the school. What may be interpreted as a reminder of your responsibilities, or a reprimand for failing to control the attitudes of your students, may also be understood as a response from the dominant story to bring the plot line of your alternative story in line. You were expected to make some changes to correct this. Is this how you understand it?

The second problem arose as a result of the painting. Even more than the substitute problem, the painting of your learning community seems to be symbolic. At once it appears to embody the manner in which your learning community's story of school is now in conflict with the dominant story of school and the way in which the dominant story responds with sanctions. It also embodies your own response to the conflict. I begin with a field note excerpt.

> Sara said she would fill me in on this at a later time so I decided I would help by listening to Garreth read. I usually did that in this period. He was, wearing his extra large 'Raider' jacket and had his walkman with him. His earphones were jammed into his ears. I told him I would wait while he signed out the book he wanted. As I waited, I surveyed the area one more time, examining the painting more closely.
>
> The former library office, now the store-it-all-area, was a combination of wallboard and gyprock panels, ringed at the top with a brown, wood colored wall board. It was now painted white and didn't look that bad except for a few runs here and there and someone had attempted to paint over

the metal PA speaker. However, paint marks had been left on the brown roof trusses. The book cupboard was painted white and actually looked a lot better than the old wooden and unpainted finish that had been there from the start.

The three doors to the big room had been painted in a dark mauve and plum motif, the plum color on the door itself and the mauve on the metal trim surrounding the door. The yellowish-white cinderblock walls had not been painted.

It was on these doors that the lack of professional training and experience of the painters really showed. They were splotched quite badly, a sign that the paint had not really taken. In all liklihood, there had been no sanding or scuffing of the original oil base, high gloss finish. There had probably been no filling or other preparation of the scars and marks that made the doors so unsightly. The cupboards and trim in the other rooms of the learning community had been painted as well. Room 2, for example, was primarily white, with its long side counters and shelves. The bulletin boards had been covered with wallpaper.

What had probably brought forth complaints and concerns were the tell-tale markings on the carpet. It had obviously been a project with the students.

The new colors were not unlike the school's main office and other areas that had been painted during my time at the school. This area had not been done at that time. I am led to wonder where they got the paint. Did the caretakers supply it? Not likely, given the history of painting in this place! (Notes to File, November 8, 1994)

My own experience in this school informs me as to the degree of response your painting project might draw. I made another entry in my personal journal regarding this history. I share that entry as follows:

My first September in the school was hectic. A large number of teachers, many of them new to teaching, a large support and caretaking staff and many, many students...faces to remember, names to learn, a plethora of cultures and ethnic backgrounds requiring new learnings on my part. As part of the opening agenda for the term, I attempted to schedule a school assembly. The effort was strongly resisted by one assistant principal and a majority of those teachers who had been at the school in prior years. Their advice was to the effect that large gatherings were too hard to control and that, "we don't have total school assemblies here". Strongly sensing the need to communicate with the students as a total group, I persevered by offering the staff a free period at the end of the day. After escorting their students to the gym, teachers were invited to have an additional prep period. Should they prefer, they might go home. Some of the newer teachers stayed but the majority wanted no part of what they thought would be a management nightmare. I must admit, it was not easy to acquire the attention of 750 teenage people.

On the other hand, as the dialogue progressed, more and more students spoke and more and more students listened to each other and to me. I began by trying to assure them that their administration and teaching staff truly cared about them and wanted to make the year successful,

rewarding and pleasant. I told them that some of our concerns centered upon student deportment and the apparent lack of respect and care for our building and equipment, both inside and out. One of my suggestions dealt with ways in which we might enhance the quality of our life in the school by painting the place.

One student mumbled rather loudly. I asked the audience to hear out their classmate. His statement was significant. He asked why students had to obtain their food from a small, corral-like hole-in-the-wall on the stage, carry it down to the gym floor without spilling and then eat on the floor while teachers enjoyed relative luxury in the staff room. He continued, "Why are we required to eat on the gym floor or on bleachers and benches? If you really want to help us, then get us a lunchroom".

I could understand. In the short time that I had been principal there I had already added to the stack of requests for repair and refurbishing that had accumulated over the years. In front of the students, the problem weighed on me. Six weeks of frustration were drawn forth and focused by this student's questions. It had been hard trying to work in the depressing confines of a dilapidated building, with many teachers who seemed to have lost hope or had become hardened.

In a flash it came to me. Here was an opportunity to unite. Why not build a cafeteria and paint the school? We will start with the lunchroom. I invited any and all who would like to help, to meet me after school, in the three rooms across from the gym. There we would knock out the cinder block walls and create our own lunchroom. The total area was as big as the lunchroom in my last school. That would serve as our model. With the help of caretakers, teachers with home improvement experience and volunteer parents we could address the students' complaints.

The project received great response and started off very well. Everyone was excited and there was an air of anticipation. However, all work came to an abrupt halt when we discovered that the wiring and piping for the three rooms had been constructed within the walls. It took only a matter of hours for school building officials to arrive and a few days later I accounted for my actions before a superintendent and provincial building inspector. Armed with my stack of neglected requests, my best argument--"on behalf of our students"--and relying heavily on the good will and student focus of those officials, I walked the school with them, explained the history as I understood it and offered my plan of hope for the future.

The result drew cheers from our students when the following day I informed them that in return for our promise to refrain from such school improvement projects in the future, system workmen would finish the removal of the walls, wiring and piping. We would then make due in that space until the fall when a new facility would be constructed and completed by Christmas. More good news--the school would be painted.

The policies and regulations governing painting, the use of nails, scotch tape and other material were carefully reviewed with me. I dutifully conveyed this information to staff and students.
Using left over supplies and labor diverted from other system projects, as much of the school as possible was to be painted. Ceilings would be patched and painted, the main hallway areas, offices and common areas would be done as well. Classroom walls and trim would be retouched as far as supplies and budget would permit.

> Even that was stretched further through the good will of the painters, who responded to the staff's impromptu wine and cheese reception at the end of their first week of work, by locating more paint from other projects and by working over-time. For the remainder of my time as principal of the school, I kept my end of the bargain by encouraging students to respect the building, by helping teachers accomplish their projects in accord with policies and by working with our caretakers. Where teachers wanted to paint, we would line the walls with a wallboard material that could be painted and later removed. While the effort was an example of what can be done working together, there was one wing of the school that was not painted. That wing now houses Sara's learning community. (Personal Journal Entry, November 8, 1994, p. 4)

There is one more bit of history that came to mind as I reflected upon the situation you were facing. It was also recorded in my personal journal.

> In order to help my teachers live competing stories of school, I attempted to meet their needs for furniture. I began by encouraging learning community leaders to share and cooperate in the redistribution of existing furniture. Still, there was competition for student desks and chairs.
>
> There were not enough to go around. Clark's group said they would settle for tables in their learning community and therefore I borrowed from other schools and made several visits to the discard furniture outlet. With a shortage of chairs in the school, it was agreed that the metal chairs from the gym would suffice. The end result, in their area, was a hodge-podge of old and weathered furniture. It would serve their group purposes temporarily and would eventually become a symbol of their cooperative learning mode of operation.
>
> Who would expect that five years later, without painting or upkeep, they would still be operating with the same old dilapidated furniture, with 30 more students and the addition of several old sofas and chairs. (Personal Journal, November 8, 1994, p. 6)

Given this history, I can understand how the painting of your learning community would receive a great deal of attention. I wondered about the response from your principal. Later, when we met for one of our interviews, I asked about his response to the painting.

> CR: What happened to you about the paint job? You said you got a letter?
>
> S: It just said thanks for all your hard work in trying to make your learning community a brighter better place to be, but there were some things that you should have done first before you did this and there's a list...certain chemicals...types of paint...on certain surfaces...supposed to report these chemicals...certain things you use to clean brushes and on and on...a list of four things.

CR: So why do you think that letter was written? Was it a reprimand?

S: Ahh.....it was trying not to be.

CR: Okay, it was trying not be, but was it?

S: Yeah. (T15 S2 November 17, 1994, p. 25)

It seemed to me, as we explored the matter of the letter, you knew that receiving such a letter was not a good thing and that you had been reprimanded. For some reason, however, you had difficulty viewing the letter as such. When we talked about it, you admitted it was a reprimand. I inquired further.

CR: So when did the idea come to you that you would do this?

S: About a month before we painted. I talked to one of the assistant principals, probably because I knew she'd just say go for it. She's the doer-action kind of person. You know...[I guess I was] playing the [role of] kid with the parents.

CR: Where did you get the money?

S: On my Visa. Then I turned in the receipt. She signed it (Laugh).

CR: Have you ever painted anything before?

S: The cabin, with my mom, when I was about 10.

CR: So you wouldn't remember things like sanding first.

(She says "No" and laughs)

You wouldn't remember things with a metal finish require a little scuffing?

S: (Laughing) No.

CR: Did you buy latex or oil-base paint? Do you know?

S: Latex. I asked the person at Totem.

CR: So what happened? How did you get discovered?

S: The caretakers, I'm sure. The Serve-Pro people were there when we were painting on the Friday. They couldn't vacuum. They complained. Then the caretakers on Monday, when we were doing the big cleanup. All of a sudden these people in suits were getting toured around by the caretakers and looking at the paint job...in the middle of our classes and looking. No one talked to me, just all of a sudden people came in, needed to look at the paint...then I got the letter. (T16 S2 November 17, 1994, p. 26)

In this excerpt, it appears you were aware you were stepping outside the boundaries. You knew what the dominant story required of you and you were neither willing to accept it nor to live a cover story. You knew which administrator was likely to give permission and you asked her. You even submitted the receipts for approval and payment. It would seem, however, that you had not expected quite the amount or kind of attention that the project received. That became evident as our conversation continued.

CR: Your principal didn't come and talk to you first? He just gave you the letter?

S: Gave me the letter...a day or so later, he came down...was pretty [pause] fairly positive...said it looks pretty good...[pause]...after I got the letter.

CR: But the letter is not a positive letter is it?

S: Well, it was positive at the beginning and at the end a bit, not the middle.

CR: Oh, a sandwich?

S: Yeah.

CR: Do you have a copy?

S: I threw it out.

CR: Oh, did you? Why did you throw it out?

S: Umm, because it pissed me off. I didn't want to keep it or look at it sitting around. (T16 S2 November 17, 1994, p. 28)

Even though you tried to find something positive in the letter, your response left little doubt in my mind that you were not happy with it. I wonder if you saw this as

another indicator of the conflict between your learning community's story of school and the dominant story of school. I wonder if you interpreted it as another indicator of the way in which your story was not supported.

As you reflected upon the story of the painting, you seemed to realize that the out-of-classroom place had permeated the in-classroom place so much that you had little control over how the dominant story of school shaped the story of school in your learning community. The painting seemed to be the only way you could respond. You shared that with me this way.

> The paint thing was, now that I think about it, one of the few things I felt I had control over. If I couldn't make our learning community a better place to be, reducing the numbers or anything like that, then at least we can make this physical space look a little brighter and happier.
> (T16 S2 November 17, 1994, p. 26)

The painting of your learning community may be viewed as an attempt to preserve some small element of control over your in-classroom place and the story of school you and your team were attempting to live out in your learning community? It may also be understood as a response, in protest, to the invasion of the in-classroom place by the out-of-classroom place.

Once again, Sara, I find myself reflecting upon the way in which the out-of-classroom place has changed in the two years since 1992-1993 when you, your teachers and your students were so successful in living your story of a democratic community of learners cooperatively working together to learn and develop. What used to exist as the story of school, that is, five unique learning communities living out different stories of school in competition, now stands as two stories in conflict. The dominant story features one story, that of learning communities in harmony and living out the same story of school. The story of your team stands in conflict as you attempt to live out an alternate

story of school. The conflict can be seen in many of the stories over the two years you have led the team.

The substitute teacher story and the story of the painting of your learning community reveal the strength of the dominant story's response and sanction. And your own response has also been evident. In the painting story you feel isolated, unsupported and somewhat frustrated in your attempts to relate, to find common ground and to acquire the support of your principal. You seem to assess the futility of the conflict and its effect upon your practice. You expressed this to Alan and he responded by telling you there would be no change. You related this to me as we discussed the situation in one of our interviews.

> CR: If you didn't have 180 but you had 150 students would it make a difference?
>
> S: Yes.....Yeah.
>
> CR: They are not going to change it now? Is there anyone you can talk to?
>
> S: No. I said that to Alan today when he came down. I told him I don't really believe in this and I feel like I'm doing a really shitty job. I feel really horrible. Every time I think about it, it comes back down to the staffing thing at the beginning of the year... having people coming in to help for different periods of the day is not the same as having a whole teacher and we are still a teacher short. And he just said, "Well that is not going to happen now". (T15 S2 November 17, p. 24)

More than two months after the decision was made on the staffing matter, you still do not feel good about the decision. You know that the increased number of students makes a difference and you know that you are still coping with one teacher less than you require. You also know that your practice continues to be inhibited by the differing teachers scheduled into the learning community on a period by period basis. The encroachment by the out-of-classroom place and its dominant story of school has

prevented you and your team from practicing in the ways in which you are accustomed. The staffing decision allowed that to happen. You know it is not going to change and you are now feeling badly about the quality of your work.

When I reflect upon the history of this conflict, I understand your story of school in your learning community in terms of relationships which sharply contrast with those that comprise the dominant story of school. Your story seems to favor a relationship between students and teachers in which there is no hierarchy, little or no difference in status and no control of students by the power of that traditional difference in status. Instead, the preferred relationship is one of mutual respect, cooperation and friendship. That is reflected in the relaxed atmosphere of unconditional acceptance, welcome and caring that permeates the big room. It is also evident in your positive and accepting approach to discipline. These elements also seem to be embodied in your invitation for students to call you and your team teaching colleagues by first names.

Somehow, Sara, this draws me full circle, back to the thread of unity I initially and tentatively identified at the outset. I wondered if it might be an image of your practice; a notion of community as being family and in which acceptance, welcome and care are featured. I feel I understand the way in which this unity is reflected in your practice. It sets the tone, it conveys the tenor of relationships and it invites and welcomes the student. It is unconditional and is devoid of the control and power that many of your students have come to associate with school. In the stories of this first and tentative interpretation, this unity seems to be featured. It seems to be that for which you seek support and for which you stand.

Voice and Choice

There appears to be another unifying thread which is prominent in your practice, Sara. I will offer Clark's term to describe it. It seems to be the notion of voice and choice. I wonder if this is what is embodied in the invitations and choices you extend to your students to wear their caps or hats, to come for breakfast or to eat lunch in the learning community, to hang out and in the idea of being there with your students. The development of a community charter of rights and responsibilities also seems to convey this element.

I looked forward to your response to this interpretation, Sara, and you recently addressed the matter in one of your journal responses. You clarified it this way:

> I believe that the voice and choice I hope to develop with the people in the learning community is connected to my image of family. All four of us in the family have always had a valued and listened to voice, and opportunities to make choices. Whether it was choosing living room furniture, deciding on a holiday destination, or everyday concerns like meal planning, homework times or curfews, we all felt our input would be heard and we would make the decision together. I don't remember a time I have felt silenced by family, and I sincerely hope I have never silenced one of their voices. (ST9 S Journal, June, 1995)

There is also a sharp contrast between the dominant story of school and what you prefer in terms of relationships among staff members. I find myself wondering if this embodies both community and voice and choice for teachers. In your journal, when you reflected upon the October staff meeting, you wrote:

> The staff meeting on Wednesday has been on my mind for a few days. There were some interesting points brought up...stirred some thought, questions, and yes, passion. Collaboration was a word used in both the handout and during the meeting. My sense was that although we were all using or hearing the word, we didn't share a common meaning...referring to collaboration as a method or technique to make decisions. For me, collaboration is more than this...involves talk about beliefs, understandings, values...shared language develops...involves sharing a purpose and finding support and understanding when issues and dilemmas arise. Respect, trust and the preservation of individual integrity are also important aspects of collaboration. (S Journal, October 4, 1994)

While you did not express this in terms of different groups of teachers living out different stories of school, clearly your way of understanding collaboration makes it safe for competing stories to exist. You posed a significant question in asking if there is collaboration in this sense on staff. In answering your own question you compare and contrast the tenor of your learning community with that of the staff.

> I have a true and heart-felt feeling of collaboration with the teachers in the learning community. We have a common, explicit purpose, we talk often about beliefs, values and understandings. In fact, they drive everything we do. We respect and trust one another, we value individual perspectives and feel comfortable disagreeing and arguing. However, the staff as a whole, I believe, does not collaborate. We may consult, bargain, negotiate but we are not collaborative. We don't share a common purpose, have respectful and trusting relationships, don't spend much time talking about beliefs and values. (S Journal, October, 4, 1994)

In the following excerpt from your journal you make the point that voting on decisions does not fit with collaboration. And you draw upon the comments of a fellow teacher-coordinator who saw the staff voting in terms of winners and losers.

> LaRocque and Downie state, "there is a tendency to provide for collaboration through decision-making or governance structures. While these structures may be collaborative...most often they are not...we have rarely seen voting on a decision in collaborative schools". This makes me think about John's comments at the staff meeting last year regarding the voting and the sense of there being winners and losers. I empathized with John as our team has been feeling the same alienation and lack of support. It seems that small decisions and changes are slowly undermining our team's work. (S Journal, October, 4, 1994)

The elements of community and voice and choice seem to be embodied in each of these excerpts, Sara. I would appreciate your comments and opinions on this interpretation.

Making Room for the Voices of Others

Let me conclude this interpretation of your practice, Sara, with some questions about a third thread of unity in your practice. I have sensed it in your work with students, in your leadership with your team members and in your attempts to relate to and work with

your administrative colleagues and your principal. While I again need your help in drawing it out and describing it further, I see it as an important part of your practice in which you make room for the voices of others. Let me offer four instances in which this unity appears. As I attempt to interpret each of them, I again invite your input and response.

First, I ask that you reflect upon your work with Tina. I observed her behavior many times as I worked with you and the students in your learning community. She is one of many of your students who are not typical teenagers. Tina is very volatile. That is, she is prone to outbursts of anger and hostility and she does not take direction well. She is very dominant in the classroom, shouting out at will, bringing chips and other items to eat and drawing attention to herself in a manner that often takes from others and from you as you work with the class or with individual students. Other students, for the most part, are afraid of her and seem to be relieved to be with her rather than against her.

At all times you demonstrated the care and unconditional acceptance that I have noted as a part of your practice. In dealing with her many outbursts and what appear to be attention seeking behaviors, you do not use your position or authority as a teacher. Rather, you are low key, quiet and personally accepting. Many times you stop talking or trying to teach. At those times I have found myself wondering how you feel as you give up your position in the classroom or your train of thought to allow her to continue until she has finished. I have noted that you sometimes meet with her after classes, at lunch time or the end of the day. Even those personal moments seem to be on an invitational basis. I interpreted this as making room for voice and choice.

I was very interested in your interpretation, Sara, and I am pleased that you responded. Your story of the way you work with Tina is significant. It seems to illustrate

the way you make room for her voice. That story follows.

> I worry about Tina's impact on her peers and our community, because she is so domineering, outspoken and volatile. I wonder why she is like this. In the two years previous to being in our learning community, Tina was responded to in authoritarian behaviors by her teachers. She spent quite some time in the highly structured behavior class. Those responses didn't seem to make any positive changes. I consciously decided not to work with Tina in an authoritarian role. I hoped that she might not act so domineering or be so outspoken in the face of my cooperativeness and patience. I wondered if she might learn that you can be in a power position, like a teacher's but not be threatening or intimidating. I truly had no idea what would work with Tina, but I felt more comfortable with this role than the authoritarian one. (ST10 S Journal, June, 1995)

While Tina can still be observed living out a story of volatility, she can also be observed responding to your care. That is a positive thing, particularly given her history.

The second example I would ask you to reflect upon concerns the day students were called to the big room to select alternate activities to the afternoon dance. The gathering was called as the learning community prepared to dismiss for lunch. The big room was more crowded than usual and the students were very noisy and inattentive. You stood on a desk top to address them. You were inordinately patient as students arrived irregularly, as intercom announcements interrupted your calls for order and as your team members tried to quiet the large group. After fifteen minutes of waiting and politely requesting attention, showing no sign of the frustration or disappointment you must have felt, you politely told them it wouldn't work, you dismissed the entire group and you quietly stepped down from the desk top. At the time I wondered why you chose that response and I have since reflected upon the way in which you seemed to give way to the group. I wondered if this was another way in which you make room for the voices and choices of others. I looked forward to your comments and responses to my earlier interpretations and I am pleased to add to our narrative, the story of clarification you provided after reading them.

> I realized, while standing on the table, that instead of blaming the unruly students, perhaps we, the teachers, were at fault. Having all 180 warm, hungry and restless bodies gather into the big room to listen to and carry out the instructions for the activities was not a great organizational choice on our part. Too often, teachers try to force these situations and end up silencing and punishing the young people. (ST11 S Journal, June, 1995)

In this response I sense your ability to see things from the student's perspective. I also find myself wondering about the potential for yet another dilemma. I wonder if, in making room for the voice and choice of students, your own voice may become silenced.

As a third example of the way in which you seem to make room for the voices of others, I refer to the Saturday the team met at Gil's house. There were a number of items that required consideration and discussion. Report cards and yearly objectives topped the list. As the conversation bounced around from one person to another, the focus turned to the issue of staff room presence, a matter over which your team of teachers continued to receive criticism in that they spend the pre-school, noon hours, team planning time and after school time with students in the learning community instead of the staff room. Your experience over the five years you have been at the school seems to have informed you that this is another area in which your learning community's story of school conflicts with the dominant story of school. Yet, instead of offering your opinion and advice, you became rather quiet.

I could tell that your colleagues knew how you felt about the matter. When they were considering the development of a staff room attendance schedule as a means of appeasing the other teachers, they were careful to note that you wouldn't have to undertake such duty. In the end, the idea was abandoned as they were not willing to give up time with their students. Once again the way in which you seemed to hold back your opinions so that the others could speak, discuss and reflect seemed to make room for the voices and

choices of others.

Finally, Sara, I would ask you to reflect on some of your discussions with your principal. As I review and analyze your stories and the excerpts of the transcripts used in this tentative interpretation, I seem to find you thinking about and reflecting upon things from his perspective while choosing not to make demands or confront him with your own views and frustrations. I wonder if this may be another way of making room. In these circumstances it may be that you are making room for the principal and for his voice and choice. It may also be the case that in doing so, you become silenced. Here I again wonder if my understanding fits and if I am interpreting this element of your practice as you understand it. I wonder how you feel in consistently making room for the voices and choices of others. I wonder where your voice and choice fits.

In response to my wonderings, Sara, you recently shared some of your reflections on your relationship with your principal.

> As I reflect on the relationship I have had with Norman since he became principal, I am left with mixed feelings. Unquestionably, he is a kind and intelligent man with a good sense of humor. He is friendly and approachable. However, I often sense a lack of support or interest in the teaching and learning that occurs in our learning community. In the beginning of his principalship, I made attempts at forging out a deeper relationship and encouraged him to join our team meetings or come in when classes were on. His response was disappointing and discouraging. At this point in my storying, my tendency is to wonder about this from his perspective--to seek out possible reasons for his response to me. I suppose I am hesitant to criticize, especially when he is a nice man, without considering how his story may be interacting with mine. I'm not sure that my doing this is a good thing or whether I end up silencing myself (or letting myself be silenced). (ST12 S Journal, June, 1995)

You wonder if, in making room for your principal's voice, you may be letting yourself be silenced. While you are considerate and unselfish in making room for the voices of others, the other side of that dilemma may find you either being silenced or silencing yourself. Perhaps we need to talk more about this.

Let me conclude, Sara, by again inviting you to respond. My initial and tentative interpretations have been reworked and rewritten to reflect your feedback. In this third presentation of my interpretation, I have also incorporated the stories you have added. I now await further response. I have enjoyed participating with you in your practice and I have enjoyed sharing in the stories that are so much a part of you and your teaching.

Sincerely,

Chuck

CHAPTER VII

SHAPING IN THE CONTEXTS OF TEACHING

This is a case study of relationship. It is about two teachers and their need for relationship. It is also about their relationship with a principal. It is a story about possibilities, possibilities new teachers bring to the context of their first assignments and possibilities some principals dream about. It is a study of stories; stories within stories, stories about the past, stories of the present and intentions for the future. It demonstrates the need teachers have to tell their stories, their need to reflect upon them, to reconstruct them, to relive them and to tell them again. It is about the ways teacher knowledge is embodied within the stories of their practice, and is carried autobiographically. It is about how they are guided by that embodied, narrative and relational knowledge. It is also about the power of the story that is dominant in schools, a story in which theory drives practice. It is a story of the tensions, conflicts and dilemmas experienced by two teachers as they attempted to live out an alternative story and, in the process, shaped and were shaped by the contexts in which they worked.

Over the course of this inquiry I worked collaboratively with Clark and Sara in the construction of three narratives which form Chapters IV, V and VI of this dissertation and which reveal some of the ways in which this shaping occurred. These narratives tell a number of stories that are complexly interwoven and nested, story within story. They record the ways in which Clark and Sara brought to the context of their first teaching assignments, stories of teaching and a story of school in which their personal practical knowledge was embedded. They show the ways both participants attempted to live out those stories in interaction with others who also brought their personal practical knowledge

to the context and who also lived out their stories. They provide an understanding of the ways in which their contexts were altered and shifted by people and events, in Clark's case, over the first seven years of his teaching career, in Sara's case, over her first five years. They also convey a story of the ways in which these two teachers shaped and were shaped by those contexts.

As I worked with them in the mutual construction of the three narratives, it was important to find a way to describe their practices without simplifying or reducing the complexity in which they operated. For that reason, and in order to provide a common base for communicating about their practices, I made use of the professional knowledge landscape metaphor (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995). I again make use of that metaphor in analyzing some of the stories in which the shaping of Clark's and Sara's knowledge can be detected and in offering my interpretation of the narratives. I begin within the context of the out-of classroom place, a place shaped by a particular story of school and the context in which my research participants began their teaching careers.

A Dominant Story Shaped the Context

In recalling his first two years of teaching, Clark told a story of discomfort. As he made his way back and forth across the boundary from his teaching as an individual on the in-classroom place to work with others on the out-of-classroom place, he did not find the acceptance and encouragement he expected from experienced teachers. Nor did he find them receptive to change. As a result, he did not feel safe to express himself, to share his beliefs nor to question current practice. Instead he lived a cover story of compliance.

When he reflected upon his practices on the in-classroom place, he recognized that his teaching was shaped by a structure and organization from the out-of-classroom place

that featured a story of school in which teachers were specialists. That story of school did not fit with his teacher stories told in safe places where he described things like: not really getting to know the students; cycling the kids; the fragmentation of curriculum; and the strong focus on content. The specialist story seemed to have the qualities of a sacred story, so deeply ingrained and dominant that it went unquestioned and unnoticed. There was no room or tolerance for an alternative. As a result, most of the out-of-classroom locations within the school were not safe places for him. He resisted the strong and powerful influences, of which the dominant story was one manifestation, by living his cover story of compliance on the out-of classroom place on the landscape.

Shaping in Relationship

Clark's account of his first two years in teaching is a story of beginning. It is also a story of the powerful shaping influence of the out-of-classroom place and the dominance of one story of school. At the same time, I interpret it as a story about the way in which he resisted that shaping influence and, alternatively, shaped and was shaped in relationship, with other people and in places that were safe for him. In journal writing throughout his first year and in subsequent conversations and activities, a relationship developed in which he felt it was safe to share with me, his school principal, his teacher stories in which his personal practical knowledge was embedded. Within that relationship he felt it was safe to share, to reflect, to question and to propose alternatives. He storied our relationship as one of voice, support and exploration. He felt comfortable in the relationship.

As a beginning teacher, our relationship provided him with encouragement and support in constructing, living out and restorying his own teacher story. When I reflect upon my responses to his journal writing and stories, I understand I was sharing my

stories of practice, my personal practical knowledge. My stories provided an alternative teacher story and an alternative story of school. They fit with Clark's stories.

My inclination to make room for the practices of this new teacher within the ongoing story of school was connected to my own stories as a beginning teacher. I therefore interpret our relationship as embodying a fit of stories, a blending and a shaping of both his and my personal practical knowledge. It was the construction of a new story that both of us could live. It was a shaping within relationship.

When Clark and John met with me to share the plot line of the story they intended to construct, two things happened. First, I was able to shape the story by suggesting that they involve Kay, who had previously worked in an elementary school open-area setting. Secondly, I became a facilitator. I made room for their story.

When the three returned to share their brainstorming and to officially request my support, I realized I had already made the decision to support them. What was required was that I make room for their story within the ongoing story of school. Thus, I made changes to the timetable, adjusted teaching assignments and altered room allocations in order to assign them a group of students for whom they could be more fully responsible. As a result, I was storied into the plot line as a collaborator, a character located on the out-of-classroom place with whom it was safe to share secret stories. The principal's office was storied as a safe place in which to tell those stories, to talk, to reflect, to question and to propose alternatives.

In responding to my invitation to restory their practices, they were shaped. In supporting their story and making room for it within the context of the dominant story, my practices were shaped. We were shaped together within the context of a mutual relationship.

Throughout her first year, Sara lived her teacher stories within the security of her in classroom place. In our interviews, she told of two significant places on the landscape and two people with whom she found it safe to share her teacher stories. She told of becoming aware of the alternative teacher story being constructed and lived out in Clark, John and Kay's classroom next door. In her visits to Clark's in-classroom place and in safe locations with him on the out-of-classroom place, she heard his stories and shared her own. In that way, they developed another relationship in which it was safe to tell secret stories and to explore their practices.

Like Clark, Sara storied me and the principal's office as being safe and supportive. Narrative III contains a story which supports this interpretation and which she described as a telling one, of a safe place outside of the big room. It is a story about a day in which she experienced some personal difficulty and I responded with support. In some distress, she felt the need to leave the bustle of her in-classroom place and she sought a place in which she would feel safe and could be alone. I was out of the school and she knew she would feel comfortable in my office. Upon my return she shared her story with me and I attempted to comfort her.

Clark and Sara were shaped in relationships: together within the contexts of their in-classroom places and with me in the context of my location on the out-of-classroom place. It was a location they felt it was safe for sharing their teacher stories. Within the security of these relationships, they found support and continued to resist powerful shaping influences from other teachers living out the dominant story and a story of school that did not fit with theirs. Based upon these relationships, they began to author their own story of school, one that would eventually shape the context of the entire school.

A New Story of School Shaped the Out-of Classroom Place

Another influence from the out-of-classroom place was the violence issue that engulfed the school and shaped the context with interruptions to daily school rhythms, threats to safety and security and exposure of a story of school in which the school was portrayed as a difficult and violent place. That issue and the story of school as a violent place gave rise to a new story of school when students with whom Clark, John and Kay were working requested to speak at a public forum to share the results of their inquiry into the problem of violence in and around their school and community. Clark's story of this event provided insight into the alternative story he, John and Kay were attempting to live out. It also illustrated how the in-classroom place, instead of continuing to be shaped by events on the out-of-classroom place, began to shape the context.

In this new story, the notion of community became a theme of study and the violence issue, an opportunity for inquiry. Personal experience was the starting point for student research. Students questioned, researched and then presented and supported their arguments to other students, teachers, and adults who attended the open forum. Three things became apparent. First, the view of students held by teachers shifted to one in which students were viewed as already having knowledge. Second, the students were given voice, an opportunity to express their knowledge, to share their personal experience, to learn from others and to take part in the dialogue. This was accomplished through conversation, a way of knowing embodied in Clark's own stories. Finally, the students questioned and were encouraged to question. In this way the curriculum took on a new relevance and personal meaning. The students had an influence on their community. They became authors of the story they would live out in the future as they lived out their stories in their school and community. In the context of the violence issue, then, Clark resisted

the shaping of another powerful influence and, in turn, took action, with his students, to shape the context of his in-classroom place and beyond that, the context of the school and the community.

Once again I was shaped and influenced. The quality of the students' presentations, the research that had been done by them and the progress that appeared evident by way of improved student attitudes and relationships within their new learning community, drew me closer to the story being lived out by Clark, John and Kay. Through the school leadership team, the new story of school was presented to the staff and accepted. The new story became one of five learning communities, each empowered to develop its own plot lines and to live out those stories with their students. In this new plot line, Clark's story would be supported, those who followed the dominant story could continue and there would be support for others who might live other different stories.

When I reflected upon this story in light of my own autobiographical history in Chapter I and Clark's in Chapter IV, I again detected strong connections. There was a fit between the hope and intentions for the future that were embodied in Clark's alternative story and those embodied in my own stories. That fit and those connections may account for the way in which I was shaped towards the alternative story Clark, John and Kay were pursuing. They may also account for the way in which I was able to shape Clark's practice. In both cases, our hopes and intentions arose from our experiences as students when we were student characters in the stories our teachers were living. They arose again, later, as we attempted to address moral issues in the contexts in which we worked as teachers. They were based in our histories and in the relationships in which we shaped and were shaped by each other. In this regard, my decision to put the students on the agenda of the public forum can be interpreted as another example in which I was shaped,

shaped by my relationship with Clark, shaped by the alternative stories embedded within my own history, and shaped by the possibilities of a new alternative. To the extent that I supported and facilitated Clark's new teacher story and then helped author the new story of school, I also facilitated the shaping of the out-of-classroom place by the in-classroom place.

Conflicting Stories Shape the In-Classroom Place

Narrative II and Narrative III also tell stories of life within competing stories as the five new and unique learning communities began to live out the new story of school. The new story of school began within a context that had again been altered, this time significantly so. Teachers formed their own teacher teams and started to organize, structure their own timetables and negotiate what was needed to live out their own teacher stories with their students.

When the five different learning communities worked in the confines of their own physical spaces in the building or with their own teachers, that is, on the in-classroom place, they seemed to be able to operate well within the context of competing stories. But the different stories conflicted on the out-of-classroom place, as is revealed in the incident that inspired this inquiry. What was not so obvious was a story of conflict that took place in the context of Clark's new in-classroom place and which shaped Clark's and Sara's intended story in the same way in which the original and dominant story of school shaped their practices previously.

Sara joined Clark's team and their prior relationship continued. The two of them worked together with the other four teachers on the team in order to organize, structure and live out their teacher stories within a story of school which saw the learning community as

a democratic community of learners working cooperatively to grow and to develop. They quickly began to realize that their teacher stories were in competition with the stories of the other teachers in the learning community and before long, the competing stories became conflicting stories. That was clear in their story of one teacher in their learning community, Saul, who wanted his own students and his own classroom. The Saul story symbolized the unworkability of the conflicting stories and, before long, Clark and Sara occupied the big room by themselves while Saul and the other three teachers returned to individual classrooms to live out their specialist stories. The story that was once dominant in the school continued to be lived by the four teachers.

In spite of their espoused commitment to the new story of school, the four teachers found it impossible to live by. Their practices, their teacher stories, shaped the in-classroom place in such a way as to thwart the teaching story Clark and Sara were attempting to live and the story of school that I attempted to facilitate. I interpret this conflict as a shaping influence of significant resilience and power. To the extent that the story of Saul represents adherence to the story of teaching as specialists, I see in that story the qualities of a sacred story that resists shaping and itself continues to shape the context. I also understand the way in which conflicting stories shape the context to prevent teachers from living out their stories.

Clark was aware of the conflict from the outset. Yet, rather than acknowledge the conflict, he joined Sara and the others in living a cover story. Even after I became aware of the conflicting stories, the cover story continued, until, at the end of the year, the context of the in-classroom place for Clark and Sara was restoried by replacing those who wanted out, with new teachers who wanted in.

The living of a cover story in this situation was understandable. Given the new

story of school and the degree to which it received support, few would feel confident in risking conflict by challenging that story. In addition, Clark's status in the school might also suffer were it to become known that he, as one of the initiators of the new story, had difficulty living out that story. This was a situation that called for support from the out-of-classroom place.

Restorying the In-Classroom Place

The 1992-93 school year was storied by Clark and Sara as a satisfying and successful year. It was a year in which positive relationships enabled them to live out their teacher stories and to significantly shape their in-classroom place for, and with, the other four teachers and 150 students for whom that learning community was home. In the confines of their in-classroom place, and at Sara's lakeside cabin, another safe location on the out-of classroom place, the six of them shared secret stories, grew close and became a knowledge community. The context of the in-classroom place again became safe and it soon began to reflect many of the elements characteristic of Clark's and Sara's practices.

The learning community developed around their notion of a democratic community of learners working cooperatively to grow and develop. Embodied within this plot line were elements of care, welcome and acceptance from Sara's practice and the special kind of care and listening from Clark's practice. Voice and choice were central to the learning community and were prominent in the charter of rights and responsibilities that was developed by the students and which served to structure the learning community. Over the course of one year, the in-classroom place was significantly shaped and the alternative teacher story initially authored by Clark and Sara was lived out with considerable success and satisfaction.

When I reflected upon the way in which the context of their in-classroom place was so significantly shaped, it was clear that a great deal of energy and effort was expended by Clark, Sara and the four replacement teachers in developing positive and supportive relationships. They gave voice and audience to one another. They were shaped in relationship, through the sharing of secret stories in safe places and as a knowledge community working within the security of the in-classroom place where their teacher stories were compatible.

However, the restorying of the learning community required support from the out-of-classroom place, more support than merely articulating the new story of school. Once competing teacher stories were in conflict, the situation needed to be addressed. The conclusion of the year provided a natural opportunity for some teachers to voice their preferences to move and for the principal to alter assignments. I invited Clark to participate in the selection of replacements and we made a special effort to select teachers whose teacher stories would fit with the story he, Sara and Yvonne were attempting to live.

From one point of view, my actions may be interpreted as continuing support for Clark's and Sara's alternative teacher story. On the other hand, and again considering the strong connections to my own autobiographical history and how those stories served to guide me, I may be interpreted as taking action that I deemed to be morally appropriate, given my embodied, relational and narrative knowledge. I had shifted from supporting and facilitating Clark's and Sara's story, to a point where I was living it as my own story. I facilitated and led the presentation of the new story of school to the staff and it was accepted. I could legitimately, and with the power of that support, articulate the new story, live it out and expect others to support it. This was now my story and I was living it collaboratively with Clark, Sara, the four replacement teachers and their students.

Stories From the Conduit, Lived Stories and Dilemmas

Clark found himself amid new challenges at the end of the 1992-1993 school term as the contexts of his work changed and he encountered new stories. He experienced the shaping influence of those in the conduit. He was shaped by the way he was storied in the conduit, by the story he was expected to live out in being appointed to a new position and by the story of school that was handed down from the conduit for those in the school to live out. He was shaped by the story of school told by his principal and by the stories lived out by other teachers. In trying to live the new stories as well as his own, he experienced a number of dilemmas which also served to shape his practice.

Clark's new story was provided by a superintendent, in response to Clark's desire for administrative advancement. He was storied as a developing leader in need of another school experience. The plot line of the new story called for him to transfer to Sunnybrook where he would continue the teacher story he constructed and lived out in his first school, but in a new context, one in which teachers were already living a teacher story like his at Briardon. He was to provide leadership to those teachers in those stories and it was intended that the increased responsibility would help prepare him for realizing his goals of becoming an assistant principal and principal.

What he found when he began his work at the new school, however, was that teachers were not living the story of school told by the superintendent and the principal. Instead they were responding to the expectations embodied within those stories by outwardly telling cover stories of compliance. Where the superintendent and principal storied the school as integrating the curriculum, Clark found that the lived story was much different. In practice, the teachers were living stories which were quite traditional. Curriculum integration was minimal.

Similarly, professional development responsibility groups were storied as a feature of the school but Clark did not find them operational when he got there. Even though he expended a great deal of effort leading and encouraging these groups into action, he knew he would receive little credit or recognition for his leadership because those in the conduit had already storied the school with this feature. He knew that intuitively and, in the same way, he also knew how difficult it was for a teacher to change a story from the conduit.

The discrepancy between the stories of school told by the superintendent and principal and the stories lived by the teachers provided Clark with a dilemma. To accept the stories handed down from the conduit, he would have to live a cover story himself and be content with teacher practices that fell short of what he knew were possible. In doing so he would not be able to live out his own teacher story and he would not be able to shape the context as was expected. Alternatively, he would need to challenge what was really happening at the school and point out the discrepancies between the stories that were told and those the teachers lived. That might place him at risk in terms of the way he was storied by the superintendent and principal as having administrative potential. It might also jeopardize his ability to influence the other teachers.

The story of Clark as a developing leader did not fit. To the extent that he was a teacher-coordinator and not yet a principal, there was nothing wrong with that story. But the difference between the superintendent's view of the challenge and responsibility in the new assignment and what he actually had to live out, posed a second dilemma. Instead of greater responsibility and the opportunity to influence teachers and students on a greater scale, he was given less responsibility than in his previous assignment. In that regard, his opportunity to shape the context was further limited. As before, he could accept the circumstance and live a cover story, or challenge the nature of the assignment and risk

offending or alienating the superintendent, the principal or the other teachers. In any case, he would be unable to live his own teacher story. He would not be able to shape the practices of the teachers he was to lead. Nor would he be likely to shape the context towards a new story of school that would permit his teacher story.

Complicating matters even more, Clark learned that the teachers at his new school knew of the story he lived at his previous school. They also knew that he had been storied as a leader who would foster that story and they did not want him to live that story with them. This provided Clark with a third dilemma. If he acquiesced and abandoned his own story, he could not live the new story of leadership. Teachers would continue to live out the story they were living and he would not be able to shape the practices of the teachers nor the context of his new workplace. It was likely that his leadership would be questioned. On the other side of the dilemma, he risked alienating the teachers he was to lead by questioning the story they were living.

He responded by disguising his beliefs. While on the out-of-classroom place he was careful not to use the language of his own story but, rather, he sought to gain credibility with the staff by using language based on their experiences. In brief, he lived another cover story. He also continued to live a cover story of compliance with the superintendent and principal, choosing not to openly challenge their stories nor the stories the teachers lived on the in-classroom place. On the other hand, he reflected upon the situation and began to question the storying that emanated from those in the conduit. The stories from the conduit did not fit the stories lived in the school. Those in the conduit seemed oblivious to that. In that regard, he wondered if those in the conduit appreciated the significance of his work at Briardon. There was now a new story being lived there. Clearly, that demonstrated a lack of confidence in the story of school he coauthored.

He also questioned whether those in the conduit really knew him and his story. Instead of continued growth and greater responsibility, he lost those elements in accepting the new stories from the conduit and in coming to Sunnybrook. He lost the shaping potential of close relationships and he questioned whether he would again be able to reconstruct and live out the teacher story and story of school to which he was committed.

Shaping the Context From the Out-of-Classroom Place

Clark's practice was also shaped by the manner in which he was located on the landscape at Sunnybrook School. Without his own class of students and without a teacher team with whom to practice, he became another person located on the out-of-classroom place. From his experience at Briardon, he knew how teacher practice can be shaped through close relationships in which teachers work collaboratively. He also knew how difficult it was to shape the practices of students or teachers without those close relationships. So he worked at developing relationships with teachers in the staffroom, in other out-of-classroom locations and in their classrooms before and after school. His work with Lorraine typified his approach. He teamed with her in her classroom, attended a conference with her and engaged her in conversations in an effort to share stories and to explore different possibilities with her. Even though he observed some changes at report time, he found it consumed time and was onerous to shape the context from his new location on the out-of-classroom place. And he recognized how teachers responded to input from the out-of-classroom place with cover stories of compliance.

In responsibility group settings, teachers openly resisted Clark's notions of voice and choice for students. While I interpreted their openness as progress, as meaning they felt comfortable enough to voice their opinions rather than offering cover stories of

compliance, Clark was not content. In the resistance, he detected the elements of the same sacred story he had worked so hard to change at Briardon and, again, he missed the close relationships to which he was accustomed in working from within the in-classroom place with teachers.

Some of Clark's efforts to shape the context were directed at the principal and assistant principal. He was concerned that the administrative team frequently got caught up in the detail of management matters to the neglect of the larger picture and he felt that without these two people hearing his story, significant changes would not occur.

In the final analysis, he felt unfulfilled and he recognized the futility of attempting to shape the context from the out-of-classroom place on the landscape. Instead, his own practices were shaped in being assigned to work from the out-of-classroom place.

Changes on the Out-of-Classroom Place Shape Sara's Practice

Sara's practice was again shaped, this time at the end of the 1992-1993 school term, when significant people moved off the landscape and were replaced by others. Those in the conduit constructed a new story for the school when I decided to return to university. As part of the new plot line, the superintendent arranged for Clark to transfer and invited Sara to become a team leader. A new principal was appointed and different teachers took the places of those who left. Sara anticipated that she would coordinate the team as they continued to live out their teacher stories within the overall story of Briardon School they had initially shaped. That story was one in which five learning communities lived out unique stories of school. It was a story of school which supported and encouraged competing teacher stories.

But things did not unfold as she anticipated. The changes brought new people.

Relationships shifted and a different story emerged with the new principal. From his opening address and from conversations she had with him during the fall, Sara became aware that he wanted a different story of school. He was concerned that competing stories were being lived in the school. Rather than unique stories of school within each learning community, he wanted a common story across the learning communities. The plot line of the new story was to be harmony among learning groups, the same story of school in each learning community. It was to be a one vision story of school, with each learning community living a similar story.

Sara did not abandon her team's story of school for her learning community. Over the course of that year and into the next, she worked hard to acquire the support of her new principal. In the end, however, she felt that her efforts to talk, to relate, to get him to visit her in-classroom place, and to enlist his support for her story were unsuccessful. She felt ambivalent towards him. She felt frustrated and unsupported. Her story, the story of school lived by her team, did not fit with his one vision story of school. She began to realize that the relationship she once had with the principal, as a safe person on the landscape, had changed. The principal was now situated on the professional knowledge landscape as an unsafe person. He didn't support her story and he saw it as conflicting with the new story of school he was trying to construct.

The hallways, lunchroom, staffroom and general areas of the school were also unsafe for the story of school she, her team and the students lived in their learning community. As a result, there were few persons in the school with whom she could share her teacher stories or her stories as a new teacher-leader. As a team leader after only three years of teaching, she needed support. In the absence of the safe relationships and the support to which she was accustomed from Clark and from me, she sought support from

outside of the school, in locations where there were people with whom it was safe to share her secret stories.

One source of support involved Clark and Yvonne who, along with the present team members, met socially in order to maintain relationships and the sense of community they had developed in working together. In the context of close relationships that were not a part of the formal organization, structure or hierarchy of the school, they comprised a knowledge community in which they continued to share their teacher stories. Sara, Clark and Pierre formed a knowledge community, this one based upon the relationship they developed when Pierre worked with Sara and Clark from his location on the out-of-classroom place in 1991-1992 and 1992-1993. Our relationship was a third kind of knowledge community, with me as a researcher and Sara and Clark my research participants.

The Out-of-Classroom Place Permeates the In-Classroom Place

When Sara became a teacher-leader, teachers in the school advanced to the next grade with their students. By the end of the 1993-1994 year, she had confirmed her belief that three years in a learning community with the same teachers were needed to ensure a successful junior high experience for many of their students. Yet, in the planning that followed, and after trying it for only one year, it was decided that the practice would be abandoned. Those like Sara and her team, who supported the concept, were outvoted. Instead of beginning the 1994-1995 year with a learning community of new Grade 7s, Sara's team was assigned a group of students who had been in another community for the previous two years. The group included mainstream Grade 9 students, students labeled English as a second language, special education, and a group in a special program category

whose program needs were addressed with a staff allocation of two teachers rather than one. Given the story lived in her learning community by all of the teachers and students, it was assumed that subject matter would be integrated and that her team would be able to work with students of such varying abilities.

But the year began with about 180 students in her community, 30 more than projected. It quickly became difficult for her and her teachers to work in cooperative groups, in the way they were accustomed. The principal asked Sara to be patient until adjustments could be made. As they awaited the addition of two teachers, Sara and her team began to work with their new students to develop relationships and to develop the sense of community around which their story of a democratic community of learners would continue to be lived. Instead of an orientation to the rules and procedures set by the teachers, students were engaged in group work and activities in which they became acquainted and from which they developed a charter of student rights and a set of student responsibilities.

Their story also called for an alternative to the hierarchical basis of power and control from which teachers traditionally practiced. They dressed casually and invited the students to call them by first name. In addition, the big room was open and accessible to students for lunch, after school and in the morning before classes. The teachers were there and they supervised, ate with the students, worked with them and hung out with them. Some students brought lunch from home, others purchased food and beverages from the school cafeteria or from the lunchroom vending machines. Still others brought slurpees, burgers or fries from the neighborhood fast food outlets and convenience stores. Food and drink were shared with those who had neither food nor money and in the morning, prior to school, toast, hot chocolate and coffee were available for those who were hungry.

The plot line of the team's story of school became that of working with students throughout the day and in all phases of the curriculum, rather than in specified subjects. That involved thematic units of study in which research projects were undertaken and for which skill building classes were conducted. Positive relationships and knowledge of the whole group of students were the focus.

As September passed, it became clear that the anticipated adjustments would not be forthcoming. The other learning communities did not wish to give up staff and the only alternative offered was for Sara and her team to transfer some of the students into other learning communities. If the 30 special program students left, there would be no need to provide additional teachers and the learning community numbers would be reduced to 150, the number of students originally agreed upon as acceptable.

This presented Sara with a dilemma. Her teaching team were struggling with 180 students, 60 too many when the special program formula was used. However, given their commitment to community, and the month they had now been together, they did not want to put any of the students out of the community. The sense of care, community, and voice and choice embodied in Sara's practice and lived out in the learning community would be compromised were any of the students to be transferred now that a sense of community had been established. Sara waited. She waited some more. The other teacher-leaders would not give in. Finally, near the end of September, the administrative team imposed a solution in which Sara's team was loaned the equivalent of one teacher, in the form of different teachers, on a period by period basis.

Fragments of teacher time were available to be redistributed. It was a story that was remarkably similar to the specialist story once dominant in the school. Like a sacred story, it went unquestioned and was assumed to be the only way. The fragmentation that

characterized the specialist story was evident in the manner in which the other leaders responded to the problem. First they seemed to believe the problem was Sara's. Second, they felt it could be resolved by loaning her different teachers in different periods, rather than by providing full time teachers.

The imposed solution shaped Sara's practice in a number of ways. It forced her and her team back into a story of teacher specialists where some of the students were rotated and scheduled through the teachers assigned to help. Because those teachers were committed to particular subjects and scheduled into Sara's learning community for one period only, they could not spend the time with students in the variety of contexts required to know and to relate to them as called for in the learning community story. In that way, the focus on relationship was compromised.

Some students were scheduled with the specialists while others remained a part of the learning community. In this way, the sense of community was also compromised. The teaming was compromised as well. Teachers scheduled into the learning community for a single period could not fully commit to Sara's team as well as to another team which they saw as their own. They could not be available for collaborative team planning, nor could they be available for the ongoing dialogue and professional development that were a part of the everyday work of Sara's team. What was lost was the commitment to the integrated whole upon which Sara's learning community story rested.

Under this new arrangement, Sara's team were still short of the staff enjoyed by the other learning communities. And yet, they found themselves responsible for the care and general well being of all 180 students, for supervision, preparation, record keeping and paperwork. It became even more difficult to integrate curriculum, to do cooperative group work and to have students move from group to group.

Sara's practice was shaped further. The integrated, interdisciplinary, team teaching and cooperative learning aspects of her story were severely constrained as flexibility was lost and control of time was relocated from the classroom to the out-of-classroom place through a master timetable. This shaping influence was subtle, yet was evident in the situation in which the team attempted to readdress the matter of community following a fight in which students from Sara's learning community beat another student.

The teachers undertook special class discussions so as to involve all students and to revisit their commitments to the dimensions of community established by the students at the beginning of the year. The charter of rights and responsibilities was to be discussed as it pertained to the incident and the general caring and support within the community were to receive attention and review. However, as events unfolded in Sara's group, the bell to change classes interrupted the discussion at a crucial point. The school wide timetable took precedence. To ensure that the outside teacher met the class as scheduled, the discussion was curtailed before the goals and purposes of the activity were realized. Under the story lived by Sara before the imposition of the administrative solution, the bell would have been ignored, the discussion would have continued and curriculum plans would have been adjusted in the following team meeting.

Here, as in the staffing story, the story of school from the out-of-classroom place permeated Sara's in-classroom place. It shaped her practice and the story of school she had earlier helped initiate. No longer was her learning community free to teach according to its own teaching stories. No longer did the story of school support competing stories within different learning communities. The new story was a single story of school.

The pervasiveness and dominance of the new story of school was further exemplified in the manner in which the teaching of physical education was wrestled away

from Sara and her team. In the planning that preceded the 1994-1995 school term, her team argued that they should be allowed to continue to teach the subject to their own students. In this instance, they were not only outvoted, but it was decided that the amount of time devoted to physical education would be reduced and that a teacher-leader who was a specialist would teach with each learning community as a means of coordinating the program. That meant that one teacher from Sara's learning community would have to teach a scheduled subject in another learning community each time one of their groups was scheduled for physical education. This was deemed to be acceptable and would, according to the administrative team, ensure program consistency and less damage and loss of equipment.

As this plot line was lived out, student voice and choice were sacrificed in order to ensure that the traditional physical education program was taught. Students lost interest and began to complain. Unable to convince the specialist to modify the traditional program or to provide choices for the students, Sara and her team resigned themselves to teaching the specialist's units as best they could. Clearly, the specialist story shaped the practices of Sara and the other teachers in the learning community through a most unusual form of intrusiveness. Not only were some teachers prevented from teaching their students, but the means by which the interest and cooperation of students had initially been garnered and the program made relevant for them was eliminated. The story that was dominant in the school and lived on the out-of-classroom place now pervaded Sara's in-classroom place and shaped her practice dramatically.

Recognizing the Conflict and the Shaping

Sara began to appreciate how much her story was in conflict with the dominant

story following an instance when she interceded in support of a student named Spiro when he used a teacher's first name in front of the principal. She was summoned to the principal's office and, in the discussion that ensued, the principal implied that she was responsible for her students and needed to control their attitudes and responses to other teachers. He referred to complaints by other teachers about the hats, foodstuff, slurpees and the use of teachers' first names as well as to complaints about the students' responses to teachers who challenged them on those issues when in the hallways and common areas of the school, the out-of-classroom places.

As he had in the past, he espoused support for what Sara was attempting, and he offered to help. But he did not commit to talk with her team of teachers or to visit her in-classroom place in order to understand what they were trying to do. In this she recognized the same lack of support as when she had talked to him on other occasions, only she now realized he was working to change her practice. She responded by questioning what was happening in the school and why she was receiving a lecture when many teachers following the dominant story neither displayed care nor respect for students, and frequently humiliated and berated them. The principal maintained his focus on her actions and he suggested that she make some compromises regarding her students' behavior on the out-of-classroom place so that he would not have to meet the demands of complainants by issuing rules that would prevent her from allowing students such freedoms on the in-classroom place.

As she reflected upon the matter, shared the story with Clark and me in our evening meetings, and wrote in her journal, she began to figure it out. For her students, traveling through the out-of-classroom places to the sanctuary of the in-classroom place, it was not safe.

There were two very different stories being lived in the school but there was no longer support for her story, that is, the alternative story her team lived. She felt the principal was bothered by the first names and that he was concerned for how it might look or how it might be interpreted by visitors or the superintendent. She also felt he was uncomfortable with the appearance of the big room and with the aggressive and boisterous manner of the students, their questioning and challenges. He did not support her story.

I interpreted the principal's discussion with Sara over the first name issue as an attempt to cope with her alternative story, a story he intuitively knew was in conflict with the story that was now dominant in the school. That he asked her to compromise on the out-of-classroom place in the school demonstrated his awareness of the conflict. I am not certain whether he was explicitly aware of his own support for the story that was now dominant. He wanted a story of harmony, a single story. What emerged was very much like the specialist story that characterized the school when Sara first began teaching.

Explicitly, Sara recognized the way in which the changes and the decisions being made conflicted with and undermined her teacher story and the story of school around which her learning community was constructed. What was embodied in her notions of community and collaboration differed widely from the story being lived out in the school even though the dominant story was also named a story of community and collaboration. The decisions with respect to the staffing issue, the teaching of physical education and the teachers moving up with their students, combined with the subtle return to a school-wide timetable, demonstrated the lack of collaborative relationships in the way Sara's team had imagined them. Yet, those who lived the specialist story perceived themselves to be collaborative and democratic. They voted on things with the result that on every matter significant to their story, Sara's teaching team were outvoted.

The view of voting as voice and democracy did not fit with what she knew as collaborative. Clearly, there were two conflicting stories being lived and Sara recognized it. She knew that her practice was shaped by the other story and by the conflict between the two stories. As a result, she felt she was not doing her best work with her students. She also knew that her principal supported the dominant story. She worried about her learning community and what would happen to their alternative story.

The Conflicting Story Receives A Reprimand

Although Sara recognized the futility of argument and, although she could understand things from her principal's perspective, she could not bring herself to live a cover story. Instead, she and her team withdrew, became more isolated and merely did their best to continue their story and to uphold their commitments to the care, relationships and the voice and choice which served as the plot line for their learning community story. In other words, she continued to live out her alternative story in spite of the knowledge that it was in conflict with the dominant story.

This interpretation is supported by the manner in which she assembled and addressed the students in the learning community after her discussion with the principal. She warned her students about the different expectations of other teachers, but she did not modify any of the elements of her practice. As a result, the conflict continued.

When she and her learning community teachers took their team professional development and planning day and left the principal, assistants and six substitutes to handle their students for the day, things did not go well at the school. Once again she was required to meet with the principal and again she was held accountable for the behavior of her students.

She was reprimanded for failing to demand that the students meet the expectations of adults and for not holding high enough standards of deportment for them. Instead of understanding the bad day in terms of the number of substitutes in the school at one time, the lack of relationships between the students and the substitutes, or even the difficulty for the substitute teachers to cope with so many students, the problem was interpreted differently. The wearing of hats, the use of teachers' first names, the foodstuff and slurpees in the hallways and in the learning community, and the questioning and challenge by the students were interpreted as disrespect and disregard for the authority of teachers. The substitute problem seemed to highlight the conflict between the two stories. The notion of a democratic community of learners focused upon relationships between people of equal status, in which methods of acceptance and care replaced the hierarchical methods of power and control, did not fit the dominant story of specialists.

The Alternative Story Responds: Another Reprimand

The painting of the learning community and the principal's letter in response to the painting seemed symbolic of the escalating conflict between the story of Sara's learning community and the story that was dominant in the school. The painting embodied Sara's response to the shaping of her story by the dominant story. The principal's letter embodied the way in which the dominant story drew upon its power in order to shape and to assert its dominance.

Sara knew the dominant story required conformity, yet she was unwilling to change or to live a cover story of compliance. In preparing to paint the learning community, she knew which administrator to approach. She received permission and even submitted the receipts for approval and payment. Her actions were a response to the loss

of supportive relationships on the out-of-classroom place and to the intrusion of the out-of-classroom place into her in-classroom place. She felt unsupported and frustrated. She felt she had little control over things and she recognized how the dominant story was shaping her practice. The painting seemed to be the only way she could respond.

It was an attempt to preserve some small element of control over her in-classroom place and the alternative teacher story she and her team were attempting to live in their learning community. It was also a protest against the encroachment and intrusion by the out-of classroom place and the story that was now dominant there. Even though Sara was reluctant to interpret the letter as a reprimand, it was just that. That she threw away the letter because it upset her to read it or to have it lying around tends to support my interpretation. It was a formal reprimand.

A Story in Conflict

The story of school lived out by Sara, her teachers and the students in her learning community was a story of relationship. It contrasted sharply with the traditional story of relationship between students and teachers that was again dominant in Briardon. The preferred relationship among students and teachers in Sara's story was one of mutual respect, cooperation and friendship. There was no hierarchy; no difference in status between teacher and student. The power embodied in the traditional difference in status between students and teachers was absent and, therefore, was not used to control students. Students were not kicked out.

Those elements were reflected in the relaxed atmosphere of the big room. They were embodied in the unconditional acceptance, welcome and caring that characterized teacher practice there, in the positive approach to discipline that was featured and in the

invitation for students to call teachers by first names. Sara's image of family set the tone and invited the kind of relationships she intended. Around her image was a story in which she believed. It was a story she was prepared to stand up for, a story in conflict with the dominant story in the school.

Shaping: Three Matters for Reflection

Clark's and Sara's narratives tell a story of the ways in which they shaped and were shaped by the contexts in which they worked. They were shaped in collaborative relationships through which they also shaped others. They were shaped in contexts they shared with others, in which relationships were not supportive. They were shaped by stories, their stories, stories told and lived by others, by the way they were storied and by dilemmas which arose when the stories they lived conflicted with the stories lived by others. Finally, they were shaped by the influence of the out-of-classroom place and by a dilemma that seems to accompany influence from that place on the landscape.

The Significance of Relationship

In their first teaching assignments, Clark and Sara were able to shape the context of their in-classroom place and, over time, the context of the out-of-classroom place. That shaping occurred in relationships; with one another, with other teachers in safe locations on the out-of-classroom place, and with me, the principal, as I worked from where I was positioned on the out-of-classroom place on the landscape. Our relationship facilitated their teacher stories and in doing so, it shaped my practice. In turn, and through that relationship, I shaped their practices. The result was the construction of a new story, a story of school which radically shaped the landscape.

The landscape changed with my return to university, Clark's transfer, and Sara's appointment. There were other changes and different relationships formed as new people appeared and brought new stories. Clark and Sara found it difficult to shape the contexts of their new assignments. Relationships had been significant in shaping the contexts of their work at Briardon. Relationships had been significant in shaping them. Relationships continued to be important but they were unable to develop relationships that were supportive of their stories. As a result, their practices were shaped dramatically.

Stories Shape Practice

As they worked in the contexts of their first teaching assignments, Clark and Sara were guided by their own stories of experience in which their narrative, relational knowledge was embodied. These were the teacher stories they shared in relationships with one another and with me. These were stories they lived, the stories by which they shaped the contexts of their work.

The contexts of their work also shaped their practice through stories. My stories, for example, were shared with Clark and Sara. Through them I shared my personal practical knowledge and Clark and Sara were shaped. In Clark's second school he was shaped by the way in which he was storied by the superintendent and the principal. He was shaped by the stories handed down for him to live by the superintendent and the principal. He was also shaped by the way in which he was storied by the teachers whose practices he was to shape. In addition, he was subjected to shaping by the cover stories of compliance those teachers were living in response to the stories of school handed down from the superintendent and the principal for them to live. The disparity between the stories handed down and the lived stories of teachers created a dilemma which complicated

his practice and again shaped him.

Sara's new principal wanted a different story of school than the story around which her team's teacher stories were constructed. What emerged was a story of school much like the one she and Clark had earlier shaped to make room for their alternative. Before long, that story was dominant and her story conflicted with it. Amid the conflict, she not only found it difficult to shape the context of the out-of-classroom place, but her in-classroom place was permeated by the out-of-classroom place and the story that was dominant. Her practice was again shaped. Her stories helped shape the contexts of her work and she was shaped by the stories of others in those contexts.

Dilemmas From the Out-of-Classroom Place

As their work at Briardon took them from their in-classroom place on the landscape to the out-of-classroom place, Clark and Sara resisted strong shaping influences. Initially they resisted by living cover stories of compliance. Then, as our relationship developed, they were supported in their resistance and encouraged to live out and explore their own teacher stories. It made a difference that a significant person on the out-of-classroom place supported their resistance and their alternative stories. That provided assurance and support for their work on the in-classroom place and also for them when they were on the out-of-classroom place on the landscape.

When we constructed the new story of school I lived that story. As I worked from my position on the out-of classroom place on the landscape, I also encouraged others to live it. In that way Clark and Sara were supported further. Their confidence grew. They felt safe in exploring and reconstructing their practices. Their story was in harmony with the story of school I was living on the out-of-classroom place. There was no need to live

cover stories.

In his second school, however, Clark experienced the out-of-classroom place in different ways. The way he was storied by the superintendent and the principal did not fit but he found it too risky to address their story. In addition, the way the superintendent and the principal storied teacher practice did not fit. Again he did not feel safe in talking to the superintendent or the principal about their story. Nor could he bring himself to address the cover stories of compliance being told and lived by the teachers in response to the ways they were storied by the superintendent and the principal. To do so would either alienate the teachers or the principal and the superintendent. It might do both. In the face of those dilemmas, Clark chose to live a cover story.

The way he was positioned as a person on the out-of-classroom place informed him about the dilemma in attempting to shape practice from that location on the landscape. He was expected to influence the practices of the teachers living the cover stories. But without the close, personal relationships that came from working with teachers as part of their in-classroom place, he found it difficult to shape their practices. At the same time, he found it difficult to develop close relationships positioned as he was on the out-of-classroom place. Again he experienced the cover stories teachers told and lived, this time in response to his influence.

When Sara became a teacher-leader she also experienced the out-of-classroom place in different ways. Unlike Clark, however, Sara chose not to live a cover story and soon came into conflict with the story that had again become dominant in the school, the story her principal supported. Before long, the normally secure and private in-classroom place was permeated by the out-of-classroom place. The story of school that had again become dominant shaped her practice and that of her teaching team.

Unwilling to abandon the story lived by her team and their students, and unwilling to live a cover story on the out-of-classroom place, her story continued to conflict with the story being lived by others on the out-of-classroom place and she was reprimanded. Her effort to retain some measure of control over her story and to protest the invasion of her in-classroom place resulted in further reprimand.

Sara's experience informs me of the ways the out-of-classroom place can shape teacher practice. Clark's experience informs me of the ways teachers resist the influence from the out-of-classroom place by telling and living cover stories. In analyzing their stories I also discovered a dilemma that seems to arise when those located on the out-of-classroom place on the landscape attempt to shape teacher practice. On one hand, Clark and Sara needed support from the out-of-classroom place in order to resist the powerful shaping influences of the dominant story and they needed that support to live out and explore their alternative teacher stories. On the other hand, the influence of the out-of-classroom place drew cover stories from them as they resisted shaping from that part of the landscape. Influence from the out-of-classroom place was not wanted but support from that part of the landscape was needed.

Sara responded to the out-of-classroom place dilemma by questioning herself and her desire to remain a teacher-leader. She worried about her story and the future of her learning community but she was not prepared to live a cover story. The story of collaboration she lived did not fit with the story of collaboration lived by the other leaders. Her story did not fit. It was not supported.

In the context in which Clark found himself, he chose to live a cover story. He did so in order to avoid conflict but his purpose was to maintain the capacity to develop the close relationships with teachers that would eventually allow him to shape the context to

make room for the story he lived at Briardon. He also chose to live a cover story in order to persevere in his aspirations for positions of leadership. He felt that, should he attain the position of assistant principal or principal, he could make a difference. Even though he would be positioned on the out-of-classroom place on the landscape, he would develop close, personal relationships with teachers who were willing. He would offer support and encouragement for them to explore and live out their stories had been done at Briardon.

In understanding the ways in which Clark and Sara shaped and were shaped by their professional contexts, the professional knowledge landscape metaphor has been helpful. It allowed Clark, Sara and me to explore the two places in which they worked on the landscape. It facilitated our understanding of that shaping and beyond that, the influence of stories and the significance of relationship in their work. It also inspired reflection and raised questions. It holds meaning for teachers, administrators, for teacher educators and those researching teacher education.

CHAPTER VIII

DAUNTING POSSIBILITY

To conclude the story of this research I returned to the origins of my inquiry. I reflected upon the complexity of the contexts in which my teacher participants worked and the ways they shaped and were shaped by those contexts. I considered the ways in which this case study addressed the questions that gave rise to it and some of the aspects of teacher practice that were opened to me by the use of narrative method. I also considered the potential for greater understanding and improvement in teaching, programs of teacher education, and programs of educational research by continuing to conceptualize teacher practice in terms of the professional knowledge landscape metaphor.

I attempted to draw forth specific implications. I sought implications for teachers, for administrators, for teacher educators and for those who do research in teacher education. For considerable time I struggled to find a way in which to present and discuss those implications. What I wrote seemed over simplified and removed from its context. It was as though I had discovered some immutable facts or theorems about teaching and leadership and, like researchers before me, I was adding to the weight of prescriptions and moral admonitions already shouldered by practitioners. I realized that in making recommendations to others as to what they needed to do I was stripping particular items from their contexts and suggesting that they be applied in other situations. I had somehow slipped into the tradition of research to which this was to be an alternative.

This inquiry arose from my own practice as a principal and in relation to the teachers with whom I worked. I set out to explore the practices of two of those teachers. I was interested in understanding the knowledge they brought to the contexts of their work

and the ways in which they shaped and were shaped by those contexts. I wanted to understand the contexts in which they worked, from within. I was interested in their interpretations, their constructions of reality, their stories.

My approach to the study featured narrative method, participant observation and collaboration. Those methods were intended to facilitate an insider perspective and to maintain the voices of my participants while recognizing the way in which my own stories were inexorably embedded in my inquiry and the ways in which my stories, as principal, were, at times, nested in and inseparable from the stories lived and told by them. The research was, in part, an inquiry into my own practice. In that sense I am a researcher telling a story that is grounded in the teaching practices of my two participants and in my practice as a principal. While I do not intend to offer findings or prescribe solutions for others in the tradition of naturalistic inquiry, I have learned much from my inquiry and more questions have arisen. And I wish to share what I have learned and experienced.

I am mindful, however, that, "people make sense of text in relation to their own past experiences, their beliefs and expectations, and their present needs and aspirations" (Clark, 1990, p. 338). I invite the reader, therefore, to examine the narratives we mutually constructed and to consider my interpretation of those narratives. The compellingness (Barone, 1992) of my participants' stories and my researcher story and their resonance with the stories of other teachers, principals and administrators, may offer insight into their practices and may raise questions for further inquiry. Similarly, teacher educators and teacher researchers may find meaning in this work. To those ends I devote this final chapter to my own reflections. I share some of my learnings and insights. I reflect upon a number of questions that have arisen and I explore some of the possibilities opened by this research.

The Landscape in Teaching: Complex, Deceptive and Formidable

By framing my inquiry within the professional knowledge landscape metaphor and by conceptualizing Clark's and Sara's practice in terms of that construct, I gained insight into the ways in which they were shaped by the contexts in which they worked and the ways they shaped those contexts over their respective seven and five years in teaching. The metaphor allowed me an understanding of the dilemmas they encountered as their work took them back and forth between two very different places on the landscape. It helped me understand the nature of those two places and the way in which Clark and Sara were positioned on the landscape in relation to other teachers, in relation to their principals and in relation to others. It presented a view of the professional landscape in teaching as complex, deceptive and formidable for new teachers.

Clark's story of beginning to teach revealed the dominance of the story that was lived on the out-of-classroom place at Briardon. His story and the stories Sara told of her experience as a teacher-leader dramatically illustrated the influence of the out-of-classroom place and how it permeated the boundaries of the in-classroom place to shape their practices. In that respect, this case study challenged my understanding of the landscape. It suggested that new teachers are not received well on the out-of-classroom place and that it is difficult for them to shape that place to make room for their teacher stories. It also presented an anomaly for me in that it seemed to indicate that any understanding of the in-classroom as a safe and secure place for teachers is deceptive.

The solitary nature of the in-classroom place informed me that it was a secure and safe place for teachers. Working with his students, alone and in isolation from other teachers, Clark seemed to be in charge there, free to live out his teacher stories with his students and to explore his practice as he saw fit. Because he worked alone, other teachers

knew little about the teacher stories he lived. Conversely, he knew little about the stories lived by others. In that respect, I understood the in-classroom place to be a secret place. And, when I reflected upon it further, I was better able to understand the way in which my own teaching practice might be viewed as a secret story, lived alone in the confines of my classroom and told outside only to those with whom I felt safe. Rarely were there other adults who observed, let alone participated with me on that part of the landscape.

My own stories also informed me how principals work to shape teacher practice there and how difficult it is to shape practice on that part of the landscape. Living out the stories of reform and management I was handed by those to whom I was accountable when I was a principal, I lived such a story. Much of my work focused on shaping practice on the in-classroom place. Even when I was bold enough to live my own story, my efforts were directed at practice on that part of the landscape. In spite of my efforts to transform that place and my strategies for supervising what happened there, it remained difficult to shape. Teachers controlled that place.

Yet, Clark experienced the landscape differently. When his work at Briardon took him to the out-of-classroom place, he was prepared to explain, justify and negotiate the story he wanted to live with others who shared that part of the landscape. But that did not happen. Instead, he quickly discovered that it was not safe to question current practice, to voice his own opinion nor to share the stories of his practice. He was expected to accept and live the existing story of specialization. Because he was a new teacher, there was no negotiation. His voice was discounted. He had no experience. He was viewed as not having knowledge.

On the in-classroom place his practice was again shaped by the story of specialists. By means of a timetable, students were scheduled and rotated through teachers who

specialized in subject content areas. The structure, the organization and even the schedule of bells were guided by the same story of specialization lived on the out-of-classroom place.

When I examined the specialist story more closely, I recognized that it embodied a logistical conception of the relationship between theory and practice. Such a view of theory and practice is consistent with the technical-rational perspective identified by Schon and traditionally reflected in schools and school systems. Underlying the specialist story and evident in the attitudes of experienced teachers at Briardon was a perspective in which knowledge was viewed as separate from the individual.

Like some commodity, it was presumed to exist in a form that could be obtained, stored and transmitted to others. Those who were recognized as having accumulated such knowledge could pass it along to students. Specialists were seen as possessing more knowledge than generalists and therefore it was better to have specialist teachers. In that mindset, theoretical and practical knowledge were deemed to be separate entities with theoretical knowledge obtained at universities in teacher preparation programs while practical knowledge was acquired in school settings, with experience and over time. Because new teachers had no practical experience, they were viewed as arriving without practical knowledge and it was expected that they would learn from experience in their own classrooms and from working with teachers who were more experienced.

Under such thinking, little thought was given to the potential for Clark and Sara, as new teachers, to bring significant knowledge to the contexts of their work and, similarly, little credence was given to the possibility of students bringing knowledge to the contexts of their learning. Given the unquestioned acceptance of that story, the way in which it was tacitly known and embedded so deeply within practices at Briardon, it may be taken to be a

sacred story. It was not taught per se, but was known so implicitly as to be taken for granted. It was a powerful influence.

When I reflect upon it further, I wonder about the extent to which that sacred story is lived in other schools and school systems and if such a sacred story might be inherent in the way the in-classroom and out-of-classroom places are positioned on the landscape. Positioned as they are, they seem to mirror the relationship between theory and practice in the specialist story. And, reminded that there is a hierarchy embodied in the logistical perspective, I find it reasonable to suggest that the in-classroom place is taken to be subservient to the out-of-classroom place, in spite of any rhetoric to the contrary.

I am persuaded, therefore, that the way in which the in-classroom place is positioned on the landscape in relation to the out-of-classroom place makes it vulnerable to the influence and the power inherent in that positioning. Any interpretation as to the nature of the in-classroom place must take that positioning into account. The anomaly in which the in-classroom place is interpreted as a safe and secure domain of the teacher, on one hand, but on the other as susceptible to the influence and shaping from the out-of-classroom place, illustrates how deceptive and complicated the landscape can be. For teachers who live the sacred story, there is no conflict. Because they live that story, the in-classroom place appears as it is storied, the domain of the practitioner. However, for teachers who attempt to live alternative stories, the sacred story is powerful. Its influence may be felt on both places on the landscape and the in-classroom place is not the safe place I thought it to be.

This understanding of the landscape raises other questions. I question the extent to which teachers are prepared for their work on the landscape. Do their teacher education programs prepare them to work in the two very different contexts that comprise the

landscape? Are they alerted to the sacred stories embedded within the contexts of their work and in their own practices? Are they prepared to resist the powerful shaping influences they will encounter? Does their teacher education enable them to shape the contexts in which they find themselves?

This study would seem to suggest that neither Clark nor Sara was prepared for what they encountered on the out-of-classroom place. Rather, they seem to have been prepared only for the in-classroom place. While it seems somewhat inconceivable that the need for training and preparation for work on this part of the landscape could be overlooked in both pre-service and professional development components of teacher education, it would appear that little, if any, attention is given to preparing teachers for negotiating their teacher stories on the out-of-classroom place.

For the most part, teacher education programs, in-service programs and programs of professional development tend to focus on elements of the very story that Clark and Sara found so dominant. They tend to address specific content areas, subject disciplines and the teaching techniques and methods deemed appropriate to those specialized fields of study. If the specialist story lived on the out-of-classroom place may be viewed as a sacred story, then I also wonder about the story lived in teacher education programs which features the same fragmented, subject specialist approach. Could it be that the story that guides teacher education pre-service programs is rooted in the same sacred story?

On the other hand, I wonder what form an alternative story of teacher education would take. Would it fit into a particular course? Would we have need to identify skills or develop and classify content? Would there be sufficient content to warrant status as a course for study? Were teacher education programs to be conceived in terms of the professional knowledge landscape metaphor, I wonder if we would focus on subjects,

course content or specific methods and techniques at all. Were we to base such teaching on a conception of the relationship between theory and practice wherein the two were equal and if we were to conceive of teacher knowledge as narrative, relational and embodied in nature, perhaps our focus would change. We might find a shift from concern about what the teacher does, the methods and techniques of transmission, to the stories brought to the contexts of activities shared by students and teachers. In that way, the need for a hierarchy might be removed and perhaps the landscape would take on a different flavor.

Responding to a Landscape of Complexity, Tension and Conflict

Through the narrative method used in this case study I became aware of the personal practical knowledge my research participants brought to the contexts of their work. I learned how deeply it was embedded in their practices and the stories they lived and told. I learned how tacitly they were guided by that knowledge.

Linking the stories in their autobiographical histories were a number of unifying threads. An image of conversation embodied Clark's knowledge of relationship and teaching. For Clark, conversation meant more than surface talk. It involved dialogue and discussion in which questioning and listening provided voice and choice. This kind of conversation characterized the relationships he knew and because teaching involved such relationships, conversation was an important part of Clark's teaching.

For Sara, the relaxed and informal aspects of her practice embodied her image of community as being like family. Thus, the elements of welcome, acceptance and care she knew from her own family could be seen in the way in which she allowed students to be themselves, to drop into the learning community, hang out or come and go, in the mornings, noon hours and after school times.

Given the emotional, moral and aesthetic aspects of the stories in which such embodied, narrative and relational knowledge was rooted and the personal practical nature of that knowledge, their need and desire to live out their stories was understandable. They came to the contexts of their work as individuals, with stories to tell about who they were and what they knew. They came to live those stories with their students.

On the other hand, they knew the sacred story of specialization was strong, that it was accepted without question and that they were expected to accept and live it. Somehow they seemed to understand how they were positioned on the landscape and they knew what could happen when stories conflicted. They knew teachers do not win when conflict occurs and that such conflict was to be avoided.

In the face of pressures to live the sacred story, the drive to live their own stories and their awareness of the potential for sanction in conflicting stories, Clark and Sara lived a constant tension. In that context, the cover stories they lived may be understood as responses to that tension and to the dilemmas, conflict and complexities that shaped their practices.

Cover Stories

As I worked to understand this response, I realized that there was no moral judgement to be attached. Cover stories were not bad. They were offered in response to stories Clark and Sara were asked to live that did not fit. Cover stories embodied an awareness of the hierarchy behind the stories they were handed and, at times, also served to mask the dilemmas that were presented when those stories conflicted with their own. Cover stories may also symbolize honest efforts to cooperate.

Clark lived cover stories that suggested he was complying with expectations when he was unable to comply. When there was uncertainty in relationships, when silenced or when he did not feel he could reveal his thoughts and beliefs, he could be interpreted as living a cover story that all was well. At Sunnybrook he lived a different cover story when he encountered a situation in which he was forced to choose between challenging the cover stories of teachers or the stories handed down by the principal and superintendent. With each choice there were risks and, thus, he found himself joining the teachers in living a cover story of support for the story of school told by the principal and superintendent. Cover stories seemed to embody his knowledge of relationships. They involved not only an awareness of the power and authority that drew them from him, but an understanding of the problems that result when relationships are damaged through conflict.

Again I reflect upon my practice and the way in which this understanding of cover stories explains some of the complexities I encountered. In the negotiation and construction of the three narratives, I was able to recognize and name as a cover story, the way some teachers at Briardon professed their commitment to integrated, interdisciplinary, team teaching methods while their learning communities continued to feature individual classrooms with desks in straight rows and clearly defined subject specialization. In the complexity of a landscape in which stories told and lived on one place take precedence over the stories from another place and in which sacred stories are so deeply embedded, it seems reasonable to conclude that those teachers could not live the story to which they committed.

They may be interpreted as responding to what they felt I was expecting. To them, my story of school in which competing stories were accepted and encouraged did not fit. What they saw may have been another plot line in which everyone lived the same story,

except that the new story was Clark's and Sara's story. After all, my reasons for articulating the new story of school were to make room for Clark and Sara to live their stories. That the new story embodied my stories did not go unnoticed. As a result, I understand that my teachers were attempting to comply with something that did not fit what they knew, responding to dilemmas my new story presented, cooperating as best they could, or otherwise unable to respond differently. On an already complicated landscape, my efforts to transform the school, to resolve the dilemmas and complications for some teachers, further complicated the context for others.

When I reexamine the support that was given to my proposal to make room for alternative stories, more questions arise. Was such unanimity a harbinger of the cover stories that followed? As a principal, should I expect cover stories? And if I expect cover stories and recognize them, do I challenge them? However kindly that undertaking, it may be likely to draw other responses, perhaps damage relationships. Alternatively, what does it say about my care for teachers, for their stories, for their voices, for them as people, if I ignore cover stories? Am I further complicating the landscape by responding to one cover story with another?

Therein lies another dilemma that complicates the contexts in which teachers and principals work. It may be that principals live a tension as a result of the way they find themselves situated on the out-of-classroom place amid the hierarchy of the landscape. Perhaps, in the silence of that dilemma, we affirm what teachers already know about the power of stories from principals and those in the conduit. It may also be that in the same void we have come to understand the in-classroom place the way we do. After all, researchers, administrators and teachers complain about the ways one thing is espoused but something different is lived in practice.

I also find myself wondering if that dilemma suggests that principals should refrain from presenting their own stories for fear that they will draw cover stories. Sara objected to that aspect of administration. Perhaps knowing this dilemma is what prompts some administrators to adopt a leadership philosophy referred to as leading from behind. Under such a philosophy, administrators work through such techniques as 'planting seeds' or 'giving away ideas'. A principal, for example, might give away ideas in the hope that recipients will develop them and present them as their own. While the propriety of such techniques may be open to debate, I am now tempted to view them like cover stories, as responses to the complexities of a landscape on which teachers and principals are positioned unequally.

Any temptation I may have entertained to dismiss cover stories as mere matters of trust and relationship was abandoned when I realized that, notwithstanding our positive relationships, when Clark, Sara and the other four teachers became aware that their teacher stories conflicted, they all lived a cover story that their learning community was working as it should. Given Clark's and Sara's part in authoring the new story and their knowledge of the dominance of the story of specialists, they could hardly be expected to reveal the problems they were experiencing. That I was not taken into their confidence might speak to professional ethics as yet another moral matter which complicates the landscape for teachers. At the least, it adds to our understanding of cover stories as a response by teachers to the tension of the landscape and to the dilemmas and complexities of the contexts of their work.

It may be profitable to inquire further into the matter of cover stories and how such a response becomes part of our practices. In reflecting upon how much of my schooling and university work was directed at meeting the expectations of those who held power

over me, I seem to recall an implicit form of negotiated exchange in which I exhibited cooperative behavior and learned what was required of me. Whether or not I agreed with, or would ever again read, reflect upon or use what I was learning, I seem to recall complying in order to avoid the embarrassment or punishment that accompanied failure. Living alternatives, questioning, non-compliance and failure were synonymous. It was how the game was played and at various times in the stories of my schooling I was reminded of those rules. In my teaching practicum I did not have to be reminded. I knew that my entire future depended upon the judgment of the cooperating teacher and I willingly complied. Even so, one of the two sessions of student-teaching found me living a cover story of compliance that I have never lived since. Like a sacred story, it did not have to be taught; years of living the stories of compliance served to guide me.

Finally, cover stories suggest that teachers know how difficult it is for those located on the out-of-classroom place to shape their practices and that by maintaining those stories, they avoid attention, scrutiny, intrusion and conflict with those who work from that place on the landscape. In that sense, cover stories are a means by which teachers resist the shaping influences of the landscape by using the in-classroom place to their advantage.

Secret Stories

There were other responses to the tension, conflict and complexities of the landscape. As already noted, at times Clark and Sara responded to being silenced on the out-of-classroom place by living out their own stories in the confines of the in-classroom place. In those circumstances and given the isolated and solitary nature of that place on the landscape, I understood them to live secret stories. For the most part, however, secret

stories accompanied other responses. Because Clark lived a cover story of compliance on the out-of-classroom place, his own story became a secret one.

Although there were times Sara lived a cover story, she may be understood to respond somewhat differently to the tension and conflict she experienced. Often she seemed to silence herself in deference to the stories lived by others. This I observed in her work with students and in her responses to her new principal. Her actions embodied what she knew about relationship, specifically, caring for others and providing the space for voice that they needed. In those cases her story was also lived in secret. When she averted the potential for conflict by avoiding the staffroom and or other locations where her teacher stories were likely to conflict with the stories of others, her story again became a secret one.

By choosing to avoid the out-of-classroom place in favor of the seclusion of the in-classroom place, Clark and Sara may have escaped some of the tension that comes with the cover story, however they were still forced to live their stories secretly. Whether or not they lived a cover story on the out-of-classroom place, their actions inform me that the way in which the landscape is structured in schools, one response open to teachers is to withdraw and live their teacher stories in secret.

Seeking Safe Relationships

Clark's and Sara's narratives story their need to tell and live the stories they brought to the contexts of their work. Those narratives also story the ways, in response to the complexities of the landscape and how they were positioned in the isolated and solitary confines of the in-classroom place, they reached out to others in search of support. Clark accepted and maintained our relationship by sharing his journal throughout his first year.

He storied that as supportive and as significant in permitting him to resist the shaping influences encountered on the out-of-classroom place. His relationship with John provided the conversation he needed to reflect upon the teacher story he was attempting to live. Clark's and Sara's relationship, the relationship that developed between us, relationships with other team-teaching colleagues, and those in knowledge communities provided support. From such relationships they were supported in resisting influences that did not fit what they knew and in constructing, living and reconstructing their own teacher stories.

Preserving Identity

Sara's story of the paint job embodied another and more dramatic response to the tension and conflict she experienced. It illustrated the frustration that arose from the tension, the constant shaping influences and the silencing she lived. It was clear that Sara knew the story she, her team and students lived was in conflict with the story of harmony advocated and supported by her new principal. It was also clear how the sacred story had permeated the boundaries of her in-classroom place and the extent that her story was being silenced. For those reasons, I interpreted the painting as another response, an attempt to maintain some element of control over the learning community that was her in-classroom place and control over her story. Understanding the way her personal practical knowledge is embodied in her practices, I recognize it, also, as an attempt to maintain her voice and who she was in her teaching.

This case study informs me of the need by teachers to tell and live the teacher stories they bring to the contexts of their work. Their need to reflect, to restory and relive those stories requires contexts which are safe. Where the stories do not fit, the pressures

to shape those stories are strong or expectations cannot be met, teachers' responses further confuse a complicated landscape. They provide another indication that teachers find the landscape in teaching formidable.

A Daunting Landscape for Principals

Through narrative method, participant observation and collaboration, this inquiry provided the insider view I sought. It opened the practices of my research participants to me in such a way that I acquired an understanding of the knowledge they brought to the contexts of their work and was able to identify and comprehend ways they shaped and were shaped by those contexts. By conceptualizing their practices in terms of the professional knowledge landscape metaphor, the complexity of the landscape in teaching was revealed, as were the ways Clark and Sara responded to the ongoing tension and conflict they lived. I was presented a picture of current practice that challenged my thinking and aspects of my practice that had previously gone unquestioned. Like the hat issue that inspired my journey, my inquiry left me with a sense of hopelessness with respect to the prospects for change and improvement in face of the dominance of the story that appears to guide practice in education.

I am chagrined at the ubiquity of the sacred story in which theory drives practice. It is ensconced in the structure and organization of the university, in teacher education programs, including practica. It is resident in the structure and organization of school systems. While not always explicit in schools and in the stories lived and told by teachers and principals, it pervades their practices. It is so embedded in the very fabric of the landscape in teaching as to defy change.

In the light of this case study, it is clear just how difficult it was for me to escape

the cloak of positivism and technical rationality in which the logistical view of theory and practice is embodied. In the wake of my own teacher stories in which I lived an alternative plot line, I undertook an alternative story of principaling. In spite of my efforts to live that story, my practice was shaped by that sacred story as I lived out stories I was handed in which I was held responsible and accountable for the quality of teaching and for the supervision, growth and development of the teachers at Briardon. Each year would find me participating in a process by which teachers were hired, transferred, placed or provided new stories to live. Although my interviewing and selection practices may have featured my alternative story, the structure of the system, its staffing process and the organization of the school which accommodated that structure reflected the sacred story and thereby contributed to the complexity of the landscape for teachers as one story was espoused and another was lived.

I also worked to equalize teaching loads, to place teachers within subject areas of their choice and to provide quality program offerings for students. New teachers were welcomed and encouraged to live out their teacher stories, to bring new ideas, to explore their practices. At the same time, they were oriented to the school, presented with handbooks, timetables, lists of routines, procedures and, at times, they may have been shepherded by an experienced teacher who would show them the ropes. By viewing my own practice in terms of the professional knowledge landscape metaphor, I can see how I was not only shaping the practice of new teachers by the way I structured the contexts in which they worked, but I was helping to maintain the very story to which my own practice was to be an alternative.

The use of the landscape metaphor enabled me to appreciate the complexity of those contexts for my research participants, the ongoing tension they lived, the dilemmas

they encountered and some of the conflict that arose as they attempted to live out their stories, meet my expectations and those transmitted through me from those in the conduit. It also allowed me to understand that, positioned as I was as principal, on a landscape in which the sacred story is inherent by virtue of its structure, it was very difficult to live anything but the sacred story. And my efforts to live an alternative story may be understood to compound the complexities of the landscape for many teachers. In retrospect, I can understand how this was reflected in the different ways in which teachers responded to my efforts at reform and to my encouragement for them to rethink their practices.

The dilemmas Clark encountered at Sunnybrook further inform me of the hopelessness of my efforts to shape the contexts in which I work, given the way I am positioned on the out-of-classroom place in relation to my teachers. Knowing the hierarchy and power inherent in the positioning of the two places, teachers are bound to respond and those responses are likely to feature cover stories.

Given the foregoing discussion, it becomes difficult to tell what stories are really being lived. It seems to me that principals, along with teachers, are subject to shaping by the sacred story by virtue of their positioning on the landscape.

The susceptibility of the in-classroom place to shaping by events, relationships and stories from the out-of-classroom place was illustrated in the way the violence issue shaped the context at Briardon. It was shown in the way in which the school was storied as a difficult place for teachers and students. It was revealed in the way the dominant story of specialization shaped Clark's practice on the in-classroom place by the timetable and bell schedule. The exit of one principal and the entry of another principal on the landscape brought a new story of school which shaped teacher practice. When Clark and others left

and new teachers appeared on the landscape, relationships changed and the in-classroom place became susceptible to further shaping. Safe places and safe people became more limited. They responded by living cover stories, secret stories and, in need of support, they sought and found safe places and relationships in which to live their stories in secret.

Seeds of Possibility: New Stories for Principals to Live

While it may be futile to challenge the tide of technical-rational and positivistic thinking that serves to guide thought in education, it is equally hopeless for me to continue to live the plot line of a story so obviously flawed. In response to this dilemma I entertain the thought that it may be more profitable for me to focus upon what I can do as a principal to make room for teachers like Clark and Sara to live out the teacher stories they bring to the contexts of their work. Clark and Sara shaped the contexts of their in-classroom place and, in addition, as they were shaped in relationship with me, they shaped my practice. The result was the construction of a new story of school that shaped the contexts at Briardon and made room for alternative teacher stories. Within that shaping lie seeds of possibility.

In the face of what this research has revealed about the positioning of the landscape and the influence of stories lived on the out-of-classroom place, I find myself wondering about new stories that might be lived and told by principals. I wonder about the single plot line embedded within the specialist story Clark and Sara encountered at Briardon and what would happen if principals were to live plot lines which supported competing stories of teaching.

I am inclined to wonder if goals are attained when the plot line fits the stories being lived by the participants rather than when they live the same story. Be it as simple as an

attempt to unify staff behind a rule with respect to gum chewing, or calling for unanimity on the issue of hats, single plot lines seem unlikely to fit all teachers and are more likely to draw the kinds of responses illustrated in this study. In the uniqueness of the stories teachers bring to the contexts of their work there may be an inherent difficulty in achieving the uniformity storied as essential to the day to day operations in school and in efforts at reform. The need for uniformity seemed to be taken for granted at Briardon.

By making this adjustment in thinking and by undertaking new stories, I wonder what horizons principals might open for teachers who would otherwise live cover stories. Were principals to live and tell stories that accept and encourage alternatives, might that lessen the effects of the hierarchy implicit in the landscape? Might such plot lines create safe places in which teachers could tell their stories, explore and restory their practices?

Clark and Sara sought safe places in which to tell their stories and explore their practices. Other than their classrooms, after school hours, and, by virtue of our relationship, the principal's office, there were few places within the school they considered safe. They tended to meet at each other's homes, at the university and in meetings like the weekend at Sara's lakeside cabin. Maybe safe places can be created in schools when competing stories are accepted. Perhaps teachers like Clark and Sara could be encouraged to explore their teacher stories in relationships with others, without the need to do so in secret or in response to pressures to live a single plot line story that does not fit.

Clark and Sara storied my support as significant in resisting the shaping influences they encountered and in constructing and living the new story of school. My support was again needed to ensure that the story continued once their stories conflicted with the others on the team. In a context where competing stories were accepted, I wonder if support and permission from the principal would be necessary. The entire plot line lived by principals

might change.

Consider the possible plot lines of principals' stories if teachers were allowed to group themselves into teams according to their understanding of the fit of their stories and according to relationships they were willing to undertake. It occurs to me that the importance of subject specialization and techniques for transmitting material might become minor elements in their decisions. Instead, the resonance of autobiographical histories and relationships might become important. It could also be that the story of school around which they would construct their teacher stories would be of significance. In order to live that story, different kinds of relationships might be required. The result might be a transformation in relationship and community.

At the end of a year, when some teachers move off the landscape and are replaced by others, those who work in a given context might be invited to select replacements and assume responsibility for organizing and, if needed, preparing timetables; for the creation of new stories to live when old stories change. That aspect of principals' work might disappear.

This is not to suggest there would be no conflict or difficulty. Such plot lines, while providing for and inviting the unique stories teachers bring to their work, would, no doubt, open the landscape to elements of negotiation that were not previously present. A different kind of complexity might appear by way of ambivalence and ambiguity. Stories would need to be negotiated. For example, access to facilities, equipment and materials, the distribution of and sharing of resources, and cooperation regarding total school undertakings would require a different kind of communication, different ways of making decisions and a different kind of leadership. Was this what I encouraged when I asked teachers to reflect upon and consider restorying their practices? I think not.

Given the conflict evident in the Briardon case, some might ask about the problems that are inevitable in the tension of competing stories. Admittedly, such issues might require support. That support might come from principals, initially. Although, under new stories, with different plot lines, that conflict might be more open and conflict resolution might not be directed at principals.

I inquire, then, as to what principals would do in school. What would be the plot lines of their new stories? For some, dependent as they are upon a story of school in which principals' stories guide practice, this might pose quite a challenge. Further, principals who might dare to live new stories of school, with different plot lines, could find themselves storied unfavorably. They might be viewed as lacking the ability to bring people together in following a single plot line. It might also be unnerving for those in the conduit, should principals live new stories of school and follow plot lines in support of competing stories. That could render it difficult to control teacher practice. The undertaking would not be without challenge.

Yet, what seems to be called for, by this case study, are new stories for principals to live. Can principals be bold enough to explore the possibilities embodied in this case study? Can teacher educators risk crossing traditional boundaries? Can researchers separate themeselves from mainstream methods to explore alternatives? While the challenge is daunting, perhaps the promise of the kinds of relationships and community in embodied in Clark's and Sara's stories will inspire the effort.

Conclusion: Reflections on the Research Journey

By working from within established relationships, I found that much of the risk in the beginning of my study was eliminated, for my participants and for me. From the start I

felt an atmosphere of trust, acceptance and comfort. I was familiar with the school system and I was acquainted with the principals of both schools. I needed little orientation to Briardon and introductions to the teachers sharing the contexts at Sunnybrook were facilitated by Clark. Valued time that would normally be invested in gaining entry, in relationship building and familiarizing myself with the contexts of my participants' work was refocused on data collection, analysis and interpretation.

From the vantage point provided by my five years as principal at Briardon, I was also afforded insight into many of the stories in that setting. My awareness of the history and my understanding of the plot lines lived out by teachers who were characters in the stories was an added benefit. Those advantages were not open to me at Sunnybrook.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge that I conclude my research with broader horizons and more questions as a result of my relationship with my participants. I carry a greater appreciation of their many talents and qualities and an awareness of the personal practical knowledge embodied in their practices and their stories. I am also satisfied in knowing that they, in turn, have heard my stories. While we have yet to bring closure to this project, we are contemplating future collaborative inquiry.

On the other hand, the research experience was not without surprise and tribulation. I was received openly by both principals but neither made himself available to me nor questioned me about the research. Also, within the first week of the study, access to staff meetings in both schools was denied.

At Sunnybrook, the library, hallways, lunchroom, staffroom, office areas and even classrooms were accessible. I interacted freely with teachers, was involved in some parent and student conferences and took part in extra-curricular activities with students and teachers. My return to Briardon drew warm response from some, more moderate reaction

from others and some I did not meet. While my access to common areas was not restricted, given the story lived by Sara and her team, the majority of my time was spent in one wing of the school. Other than caretakers, lunchroom workers, support staff, assistant principal, Alan, and the teachers who worked in Sara's team, my contact with others was minimal.

I was surprised at how Briardon had changed. More than 75% of the students were new and there were many new teachers. Other than a few familiar bulletin boards and the graduation pictures that lined the halls, it was as though the past did not exist. At first I dismissed those observations as mere personal feelings; principals might like to feel their history lives on. In the context of this case study, though, I am inclined to view the truncation of history as connected to the transition from one principal to another and, in that sense, as an opportunity for further research. Notwithstanding, stories change and so does the landscape. I returned to a different school and, to a large extent, I was a different person. I was living a different story and following a new plot line. Others were living different stories as well.

Earlier, I noted our compliance with the principal's request that I not be a part of discussions on total school issues while in the building. While I was surprised that my return was storied as a potential influence on the new story of school, I must admit there were times I warned myself that my plot line was that of researcher and not the former principal. Sara's reprimand following the professional day outing provides an example.

By the conventions of participant observation it might have been possible to share some of the history giving rise to the activity and, in doing so, avert some of the conflict. But the line between participating collaboratively and the potential for the influence that troubled the principal is a fine one. That dilemma provided me with considerable

difficulty. It accounts for a number of the entries in my personal journal as I needed to tell the history. In that respect, I thank my research colleagues. By listening to my stories and responding to my interpretations and writing along the way, they helped me stay within my researcher plot line. I am convinced that research colleagues and journals are essentials for those considering similar investigations.

The prominence of principal Norman in Sara's stories and the extent to which he was a character in the research story were not anticipated. By limiting the number of participants, a wise decision in terms of the thickness of my data, it would appear that I created a problem. Norman's story is not told. As Sara noted a number of times, Norman is personable and approachable. She did not want to story him unfavorably. Like all of us, he is living a story. His practices are, no doubt, shaped by his autobiographical history, his personal practical knowledge and the contexts in which he works. What is Norman's story? Was he given a story to live out by those in the conduit who appointed him? What are the teacher stories that inform his principal story? His story needs to be told.

Norman's story could not be separated from my part as a character of study in my own research. Although I cautioned myself to remain non-judgmental, to play the believing game, I was, after all, the former principal and the story I labored to construct was being changed. In Norman, and Sara's stories of Norman, I saw reflections of my own story of principaling. Far beyond the satisfaction and achievement in the story of relationship between my teacher participants and me, the research story carried a sobering reality. The stories I lived as a principal shaped the contexts of teachers' work in ways that were unexpected, unintentional, and in ways I was unaware.

As I contemplate these aspects of my research journey, I remind myself that we are

all characters in the stories of others. This has been but one story. Norman's story, the stories of Clark's and Sara's teaching colleagues, the superintendent's story are others that need to be told. They offer potential for future research.

This has been an inquiry into stories of teacher practice and the ways in which teachers are shaped by their stories, the stories of others and sacred stories. It challenges my practice as a principal and, at the same time, it leaves me with a sense of possibility in the potential for new learnings and insights arising out of the ways in which Clark and Sara explored the professional knowledge landscape and shaped the contexts of their work.

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