WORKING IN THE NEXUS: A NEW VIEW OF SCHOOL-UNIVERSITY COLLABORATION

by

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Abstract

This dissertation describes an inquiry aimed at identifying the defining features of school-university collaboration focused on school reform. While promising much, many collaborative projects are undermined by culture-based tensions. The literature reports tensions between participants arising from time and resource constraints, competition for power and control, and bureaucratic structures. Using qualitative research and conceptual analysis, I examine collaborative relationships from a cultural perspective, propose an understanding of "workplace culture" explaining the tensions, and offer an alternative conceptualization of collaboration intended to improve these relationships.

The qualitative studies, including two autobiographical narratives and a case study, provide practical perspectives on these tensions. The narratives document collaboration between consulting academics and teachers developing an Innovative School Program and my experience as a seconded teacher working within a teacher-education program. The case study describes an "unplanned" but informative collaboration arising from five practitioners' concurrent participation in graduate studies and development of an innovative program. I conclude that the successful collaboration, I documented, resulted from the existence of physical settings supporting interaction, a clear need for change, a capacity for change, and a graduate school culture encouraging problematization of practice.

The conceptual analysis focuses on the notion of *workplace cultures* as applied to education academics and school-based practitioners. I found the categories of institutional frames of reference, representational forms, and operational practices from the literature on workplace cultures and that of predominant epistemologies from literature addressing collaboration particularly useful. The analysis together with

dimensions of each category, allows for comparison of their workplace cultures as well as identification and elaboration of sources of conflict and tension.

Building on the conceptual analysis and considering the literature on "factors supporting successful collaboration," I develop an alternative view of collaboration identified here as *nexus culture*—an independent workplace located between schools and universities. This view raises questions about reframing roles within collaborative relationships, considering alternative forms of representation, re-evaluating operational practice(s), and including various orientations towards knowledge.

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to the many secondary school students I have worked with, my Science and Mathematics teacher-colleagues at the Innovative School, and my academic mentors for raising substantive questions about my understandings of teaching and learning.

I also dedicate this thesis to my deceased father, who fought for his country and his beliefs, and in the end, found peace.

Acknowledgements

While many thoughtful individuals have contributed to the construction of this thesis, I owe three mentors specific debts of gratitude. First, Professor Peter P. Grimmett encouraged me to take seriously and make problematic the roles of reflection and inquiry in pre-service teacher education. He did this through practice "at his elbows" and by his example as an academic focused on improving education. Professor Roland Case has been a constant supporter throughout my graduate program and this support made a big difference during the difficult times. His critical minded approach to both editing my work and dialogue about things that matter, have played a major role in my leaning to write and to think more clearly. Finally, Professor Marvin Wideen has been a steadfast supporter over wonderful meals and during robust conversations. His persistent encouragement to take account of the big picture and to check the veracity of my claims have helped develop my current understandings about collaboration

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Glossary

Collaboration — the deliberate coming together of academics and practitioners (teachers and administrators) for the purpose of improving schooling.

Epistemological Orientation — the different varieties, grounds, and ways of validating knowledge or the ways we claim to know what we know.

Frame of Reference — the institutions, ideologies, and myths and images establishing the standards governing practitioner and academic social behaviour in relation to their work.

Operational Practices — the customary patterns or ways of doing things and/or performing as practitioners and academics go about their work.

Representational Forms — the action or fact of exhibiting or producing in some visible form texts, talk, codes of behaviour, and narrative structures that exhibit or convey dimensions of practitioner and academic work for the purpose of influencing actions or opinions both within and between these groups.

Workplace Cultures — the social structure of academic and practitioner work characterized by their frames of reference, practices, representational forms, and epistemological orientations.

Chapter One:
Forward to the Thesis

Introduction

This thesis is an inquiry into the defining features of school-university collaboration focused on educational reform. At the same time, it is about changing approaches to such collaboration. The literature indicates pervasive tension between academics and practitioners that often undermines their work together. Here, I analyse these collaborative relationships from a cultural perspective, propose an understanding of "workplace" culture that helps identify and explain the tensions, and offer an alternative conceptualization of collaboration intended to change and improve the effectiveness of these efforts.

I develop the work from a practical perspective through my experience as an educator in school and university settings and a theoretical one through an analysis of the literature. My inquiry addresses the promise and the problems associated with collaborative work. The promise involves a wide variety of advantages over independent work and I review these in Chapters Five and Six. I argue throughout the work that many of the problems associated with collaboration are culturally based and that by examining these tensions practicing teachers (practitioners) and academics can develop more constructive ways of working together. The following two questions guide this thesis.

> What are the sources of tension limiting the ability of school-based practitioners and academics to collaborate with one another to improve education?

> What conditions would improve collaborative work between practitioners and academics in their efforts to improve education?

Within this first chapter, I provide selected autobiographical background to explain my understanding of the connection between personal and professional change, and my motives for undertaking this work. I then outline the structure and methodology of the thesis. As well, I identify the epistemological assumptions that underlie my methodological orientation, and educational change in relation to the conception of collaboration argued for throughout this thesis, and finally, I outline the limitations of the studies.

Autobiographical Background

My formal inquiry into my two guiding research questions began during the twelfth year of my practice as a secondary school Science teacher. At that time, I felt I had lost my way and was not meeting the needs of most students. I carried a deep visceral sense that my work and that of my colleagues could be far more meaningful to our students. As a means of addressing my concerns, I enrolled in a Masters' program, which led in turn to this thesis—the story of my search to answer the questions identified above and to find a more meaningful approach to work with others.

While the central focus here is on my professional search, at times this intersects with a similar search within my personal life. As my inquiry proceeded, I came to understand that many of my perspectives on education, like many of my perspectives on life in general, are rooted in my childhood experience. These experiences are worth exploring at the onset as they inform my motives for, and interpretation of, this study.

Reflecting on Childhood

In grade three, I remember gathering with several other children in the basement of our small school to play a cooperative game. During the game, we would blind fold one person at a time, spin the blindfolded pupil around, and then carefully guide the disoriented child about the room.

During my turns, I recall developing a new sense of the white, apparently flat walls as I felt the cold, polished surface of the enamel-painted concrete. I remember

discovering the patterns where the boards left their imprints on the surface of the cement walls of our little school. Around this time, I watched my father build forms for the foundation of his new store and I remember the imprints causing me to wonder who had built our school. Was it the strange Mr. P who drove around the community in an army surplus truck filled with every imaginable tool and who always had a "roll-your-own" cigarette hanging out of his mouth? Or was it the group of Italian workers from a nearby city who seemed to invade our little town from time-to-time to construct a new building? I only discovered the answer a few years ago during a walk with my aging father, as we talked about that time so long ago in our attempts to better understand our relationship with one another.

I also recall the experience of touching other children's faces during another blindfold game where the task was to guess student's identities—something that was both exciting and thought provoking. For example, I remember being startled while feeling the head of another six year old because she wore earrings hidden under her hair. Over the following weeks, I often took note of the tiny gold studs and wondered why she wore them while most others did not. Later, I recall watching the Italian families during church services with far more curiosity than before. I eventually noticed that all of the female children, even very young ones, wore small gold earrings. This seemed very odd to me at the time, as in my experience, only grown woman wore earrings and only when they were going somewhere special such as weddings, funerals, or parties.

Another student sometimes smelled very strongly of smoke. I recall that he was shy and withdrawn during the games and at times he would pull away, run, and even hide from the rest of us. He lived across the river on Moccasin Flats.[1] By the time the

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[1] "Moccasin Flats" was the term used to refer to an area along the banks of the Fraser river where a small group of native families lived. Even as a child I had some sense that there was a negative connotation attached to the term and the way that people in the town used it—an unacknowledged racist disposition of the community. Since then, I have learned that this small band of native people were the few reaming members of a group that had inhabited the area for hundreds of years—what I witnessed as a child was the demise of this centuries old village.

group reached grade three this student had left the school and I never saw him again. I later heard that the three or four native families living on the small reserve by the river had left the community. Curiously, this event seemed taken-for-granted by the adults in the town. I never really came to know the boy, but I do recall being curious about why he seemed so different and why he was so uncomfortable with our games and the classroom.

While blindfolded, other students supported me as I was off-balance, about to run-into a wooden bench, or to crash into the wall. The new sense of things provided by this other way of exploring the world enriched and often changed my sense of the physical space, of the other students, and often raised questions about life in general.

As observers, we would typically laugh and point at blindfolded students' attempts to make sense of the situation from this sightless and temporarily disoriented perspective. While enjoying the fun, we also knew that we had to protect and support others as we touched and rediscovered objects during our attempts to make new sense of the world.

This simple way of suspending our familiar ways of apprehending things seemed exciting for all involved in the games. There was something daring and challenging in deliberately suspending our usual ways of coming to know about objects or people in the room while at the same time we learned to trust one another.

During this period, I wondered how students who were blind or deaf experienced things without having seen the objects that made up our world or having heard the familiar sounds that framed our experience. Sometimes, I wondered just what their sense of things might be like. Our temporary blindness seemed to provide some insight about other ways of knowing, while even as a child I knew that I could never really understand what it meant to be blind or deaf or to have no sense of smell. I believe that our teacher picked up on this as she read us the story of Helen Keller. I also recollect that this wonderful story served to heighten my curiosity about being blind.

By the time I reached grade six, we had outgrown the blindfold game, which we replaced by an "outside" game—King of the Castle. This involved students from the intermediate grades congregating around huge snow piles left in the playground by those working to keep our typically snow bound community functioning. The stronger, more aggressive and in retrospect more privileged students would fight their way to the top of these piles. Once there they would push or throw others attempting to climb the piles, down to the bottom again. This process would repeat itself over-and-over again, often with the same results. Despite the general sense of having fun, students often ended up crying, developing bloody noses, and becoming otherwise bruised. It also resulted in a few students dominating the game because they were bigger, stronger, or just plain more aggressive. This group suppressed, excluded, and sometimes even physically hurt others to maintain their status. The strange thing was that we all seemed to accept this situation as "the way it is." These hierarchical and competitive ways of playing together dominated most games from then to the end of my school days. By the time I reached high school, teachers organized the games into team sports involving only a few students while others were typically marginalized or excluded.

Learning from the Past

As I have puzzled my way through various stories about school and university collaboration it seems as though the two very different childhood ways of playing together—one where participants trust and learn from each other and the second where privilege, coercion, and exclusion lead to a few students playing school team sports—are reflected in both the practices and outcomes of different approaches to collaboration explored later in this work.

During my current attempts to understand other kinds of events from the early part of my life, I find myself engaging in activities that are somewhat like the blindfold game of long ago. With the help of a therapist, I am learning similar strategies to step outside of my usual ways of seeing the past and to understand events in new ways as a means of developing other perspectives about my childhood. For example, with

knowledgeable guidance, I have learned to focus on particular body sensations in my back, neck, and shoulders as ways of connecting with long suppressed memories. By viewing my past through this process, I have recalled lost memories which in turn have helped me contest much that I had long assumed to be true about my early life and to see my childhood in a way that better explains who I am as an adult.

At the same time, by forcing myself to view my childhood from different perspectives, I have learned to see my present life differently and to look to the future in new ways. These experiences have often proven to be very painful, but highly constructive. For instance, I have used the emotionally charged insights to change my understanding of the sometimes-overwhelming fear and loneliness that have characterized much of my adult life. I have come to accept that this sense of being alone and my inability to trust those in authority are likely the consequences of the lack of nurturing during my childhood. This self-knowledge has in turn led to a better understanding about my relationships with others and changes in current ways of being with others. These changes have helped develop a new and more satisfying sense of my place in the world—a view that both acknowledges the loneliness, fear, and lack of trust while at the same time providing for a constructive way ahead.

By using such strategies to step outside of my common stock ways of viewing the past, I have been able to question long held assumptions and to review and contest the behaviours that define my current relationships with others. To do this, I have had to understand that I was born and grew-up with certain conceptual lenses including my biological predisposition; the general cultural frame of reference provided by my extended family, church, and community; and a specific set of family variables that partly determine my sense-of-self.[2] Through guided reflection, I gradually came to understand the partiality and limitations of these lenses and with that, the notion that other students such as the Italian girl and the first nations boy had different biological

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[2] This "cultural framing" of early life is provided in the scholarly work of James Hollis, the Director of the C. G. Jungian Education Centre. His interpretations and writing are based on a life-time of practice and research.

predispositions, cultural frames, as well as dramatically different family situations that informed their perspectives on our shared experience.

Eventually, I came to see my life differently by learning to contest the limited cultural and familial lenses that informed the story of my childhood. Ironically, I have only rediscovered the lesson about the power of re-viewing things from a variety of perspectives that I learned as a child playing the blindfold game, so long ago. During extensive conversations with my father, siblings, cousins, and friends from these early days, I learned that these others often saw or understood the same circumstances that I experienced in ways that were quite different from mine. For example, during the many conversations with my father about his childhood during the "dirty thirties," and his terrifying wartime experiences and the impact that these events had on his adult life, I gradually broadened and deepened my understanding of his participation during my early life. This led in turn to my acceptance of his behaviour and understanding of why this time was so hurtful for both of us.

I believe that my recent mid-life passage is the culmination of a life-long need to escape from my childhood experience and to find a better way of being in the world.[3] As I moved, sometimes passively, through my life, I have been plagued at times by the notion that things could be better. I have come to understand that my sense of what it means to be a human being was flawed and that my experience was not necessarily the experience of most others.[4] My recent attempts to once-again review my personal life have been about addressing this nagging hope that there must be a more satisfying approach to life.

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[3] Hollis (1993) explains the notion of "midlife passage" as a modern construction denoting when a person is obliged, by the circumstances of life, to take account of their life as something more than a linear progression; it is a time when one asks, "who am I, then, and whither bound?" It is a time when we search for meaning.

[4] Hollis (1993), in *The Middle Passage: From Misery to Meaning in Midlife*, suggests that the child phenomenologically interprets the tactile and emotional bonding, or lack thereof, as a statement about life in general. For different children the world then becomes predictable and nurturing or uncertain, painful, and precarious. This primal perception then shapes the child and the future adult's capacity to trust.

I also believe that this need to find a better way has continually affected my drive to understand and to improve my teaching practice and in turn to improve the experience of students. I believe that this need to understand and improve has both compelled and enabled this inquiry. One particularly fruitful outcome involves my ongoing examination and re-examination of my relationships with others working within the broad culture of education. Just as my personal mid-life passage involves intense autobiographical inquiry, so has my professional passage.[5] Building on the research literature, I have extended my search to include the perspectives of others working collaboratively to reform education .

Structure and Methodology of the Thesis

In essence, the thesis is the story of my attempts to view, re-view, and construct understandings of the relationships within the broad educational community from the perspectives of academic and practitioner cultures.[6] In particular, I am concerned with attempts made by groups of academics and practicing teachers to engage in collaborative work with the purpose of reviewing and improving public secondary school education. I have divided the thesis into two sections—the first is largely empirical and the second is more conceptual.

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[5] Usher (1998) explains autobiographical inquiry "as a site of interplay between the humanistic vision of autonomous egos and postmodern decentered-selves, where autobiography stands at the intersection of the individual and the social, of agency and culture (p. 20). Autobiography as research is defined specifically as "a special kind of representational practice; a representation through inscription, telling the story of self through a written text and writing a text through a culturally encoded meta-story" (Usher, 1988, p. 19).

[6] Lieberman (1988) identifies the cultural distinction between school-based educators and University-based educators in her school-university partnership related work when she observes that "she was living professionally between two worlds...I was in a word, bi-cultural" (p. 70). This bi-cultural perspective, is recognized and referred to by many academics including Sarason (1971), Haberman (1971), and Ruddock (1992). I also view school-university collaboration in this workplace cultural way but see this bi-cultural view as a problematic simplification of these important situations.

The first section is narrative in form and presented as three separate stories representing practitioners' voices within a theory and practice dialogue. I occasionally interrupt the primary text within these first chapters with comments drawn from material presented in the second section. These italicized interruptions represent the academic voice within the dialogue. I present the "theoretical" Section Two in a more conventional form and introduce material from the first section as a means of maintaining the dialogue between theory and practice. This structure models the dialogic practice underpinning the concept of *nexus culture* presented in Chapter Six.

I have used Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three categories of narrative texts (field, interim, and research texts) to inform the writing of these sections. According to Clandinin and Connelly, field texts include journal entries, interviews, pictures, minutes from meetings, e-mail, and the other minutia that are often referred to as "rough data." Interim texts are interpretations of field texts and vary according to the narrative inquiry, the research, and the scholarly life of the inquirer. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) note that interim texts are typically written at different times in the inquiry and take forms such as letters, interpretive accounts, paper presentations, or storied accounts of particular events around a significant idea or concern. I discuss the kinds of field texts used to inform this work in the methodology section below and in greater detail in the Appendix

Section One

Chapters Two and Four are storied accounts written at different times. Chapter Three is an interpretive case study written originally for one of my graduate course. Together these chapters represent my attempts to puzzle out the theory emerging from my experiences as a practitioner involved in various collaborative enterprises.

Chapter Two

The setting for Chapter Two is my work within a collaborative approach to reforming secondary education involving the design of an innovative secondary school.

This situation provides much of the context for my thinking about educational change, or in Clandinin and Connelly's terms, it "narrativizes" my inquiry. This narrative illustrates an inside view of one approach to collaboration and identifies several sources of practitioner-academic tension. The central questions guiding the thesis emerge from this story.

Chapter Two is an autobiographical narrative covering seven years of experience during the construction and implementation of the new secondary school program (hereafter referred to as the "Innovative School"). The study presents my autobiographical reflections about the interplay between practitioners (practicing teachers) in their role of implementing a new program and academics (representatives from the academy involved in the Model Schools Consortium) in their roles as consultants and researchers into aspects of the Innovative School. This chapter provides a context for the subsequent chapters by identifying questions about school-university collaboration in school reform.

I draw from Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) conception of narrative method, which in turn builds from Dewey's notion of experience involving interaction, continuity, and situation. More specifically, my storyline focuses on the interaction between my personal experience and the social context provided by others involved in the work. Continuity is provided through my temporal considerations of my past experience and understandings as a high school teacher, present experience and understandings working within the Innovative School program, and speculations about the future as I consider effective planning structures involving academics and practitioners. The Innovative School facility and the unique program provide the situation for the inquiry.

The Chapter is an "autobiographical narrative inquiry" on two counts: it uses autobiographical (family life, religious background, personal attitudes towards dimensions of education, community and family background) details to illuminate and

inform my personal context of the story; and more importantly, because I use personal experience as the primary experience (empirical data) considered in the inquiry.[7]

The narrative involves three interwoven texts. The central text is my experience during the seven years under consideration. The field texts or "rough data" informing the story are my journals documenting my practice during this time and public documents used to validate historical claims included in the narrative. These "public" documents include research reports presented to the local school district and local newspaper reports collected over the years. My journal entries document observations, experiences, and interpretations of life at the school.

As mentioned earlier, the central story includes interpretive inserts illustrating my current theorizing about the cultural tensions between academics and school-based practitioners during a variety of reform-related attempts at collaboration. This theoretical perspective also involves my conceptualization of practitioner and academic "workplace cultures" informed by Morris (in Frow & Morris, 1993); Hartman (1997); de Certeau (1997), and Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999). This interpretive part of the narrative is categorized as "interim" by Clandinin and Connelly. In general, these inserts are my analysis of the culturally framed relationships as informed by professional experience, literature reviewed, and theorizing about collaboration between academics and practitioners. In addition, the narrative includes periodic footnotes defining, qualifying, and providing examples for terms that I use in ways that may be unfamiliar to the reader.

Before writing the chapter, I received permission from the District Superintendent of Schools to conduct the research and use the findings for this thesis and other writing projects. Later he read and approved the narrative, while deferring to

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[7] Usher (1998) explains autobiographical inquiry "as a site of interplay between the humanistic vision of autonomous egos and postmodern decentered selves, where autobiography stands at the intersection of the individual and the social, of agency and culture (p. 20). Autobiography as research is defined specifically as "a special kind of representational practice; a representation through inscription, telling the story of self through a written text and writing a text through a culturally encoded meta-story" (Usher, 1988, p. 19).

the school-based administrator for comments (see his letter approving of the research in Appendix A). In addition, I provided the chapter to the primary school-based administrator associated with the project. Coincidentally, he was involved in his own reflections on our work together, in preparation for a presentation to local politicians on lessons learned from the "Innovative School" experience about "how to go about changing other schools in the Province." During our conversation, he agreed with my position that this project represents limited success but he did not endorse the questions I raised in the chapter about the program design and implementation process. In general, he felt that reading my work reminded him "what it was like during those early years," while he was "surprised" about my interpretation of the experience particularly in relation to the various consultants who in his view, "guided the process." He did not take issue with my description of events.

Chapter Three

Chapter Three is set within the same context as Chapter Two but focuses on five teachers' shared experience at the Innovative School while concurrently participating in a graduate program in education. This case study describes my emerging "cultural" understanding about the sources of tensions and the structures supporting the graduate work as an "informal" form of academic/practitioner collaboration. Case Study is an appropriate method because, as Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Lancy (1993) argue, it is especially suitable for examination of new programs developed in situations that are unique in some way, as is the case with the Innovative School Program. Although graduate work is not typically viewed as collaboration, such attempts to improve education involving practitioners and academics fit with the definition of collaboration used in this thesis.

In addition, while Creamer and Shelton, (1988); Knapp *et al.*, (1989); Turner, (1990); and Drake (1994) conclude that graduate work is *not* a viable form of in-service education resulting in changes in school practice, it appears that in this case, graduate school experience positively affected the practice of this group of secondary school

Mathematics and Science teachers making it unique and therefore worthy of inquiry. This study helps to identify and characterize the tensions between academic and practitioner cultures while at the same time informing my conceptualization of *nexus culture* by identifying the importance of work "between" these cultures and some of what supports successful collaboration.

I was granted permission to conduct the study and, following approval by the Superintendent (see Appendix B), I contacted the four other teachers and asked them to participate (see "request for participants informed consent" under Appendix B). I derived the data for the case from three kinds of sources as described by Yin (1989). My journal records played an "archival" role in developing my interview questions, establishing the chronology of events, and documenting my understandings at different points in time. Public documents such as newspaper articles, minutes from school board meetings, and publications about the program helped to "triangulate" various issues that emerged from the study. Interviews with the four participants formed the core data used in the study.

After receiving the teachers' consent, I arranged face-to-face interviews in a mutually convenient place. (As a participant observer having a relationship with each of these teachers, I felt that face-to-face interviews would best support the open-ended, conversational style of the interview protocol.) I conducted the interviews using Van Maanen's (1988) "open-ended" techniques, where I ask the others to talk about their graduate programs in relation to our work at the Innovative School. Following each interview, I transcribed the conversations and returned the transcripts to respondents for corrections or additions. I reviewed the interview transcripts looking for possible relationships between new or altered practices at the school and the teachers' graduate courses in the hope of identifying the program's role in their professional growth. I used Miles and Huberman's (1994) methods to interpret the data by first collecting and coding them, then analyzing for "patterns of meaning." The various "conversational frames" outlined in the case surfaced from this as did the conclusions outlined at the

end of the chapter. I discussed a first draft of the findings with my supervisor, made editorial and interpretative revisions and provided it to participants for feedback. In response to their concerns, I deleted several comments that respondents did not want included in the study.

During our conversation, I discovered that four of the five participants had moved on to other work, but that there was a unanimous sense that the five years covered by the study were "pivotal" ones in relation to advancing their practice. The same four have also returned to the academy in one capacity or another to continue their inquiry. The one participant remaining at the school, "worries" that new staff members bring their conventional practices from other contexts with them and that they do not have the opportunity we had to review their work in relation to the possibilities within the program. She identifies a trend towards the displacement of "new practices" with those found in conventional secondary schools.

More recently, I provided participants with copies of the completed chapter included in this thesis as well as a version that is out for publication.

Chapter Four

Chapter Four is a second autobiographical narrative focused on my experience as a seconded teacher (hereafter referred to as a "faculty associate") working within a pre-service teacher education program.[8] The focus of inquiry is my experience as a member of a collaborative teaching group (module team) involving another faculty associate, a faculty member, and two graduate students as we work with a cohort of thirty-two student teachers. The account does *not* touch upon the action or practices of the pre-service teachers.

As a seconded position, this faculty associate work provides a unique opportunity to view both the *workplace cultures* of the professoriate and of practitioners

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[8]Faculty associates here are seconded teachers who work for a period of two years to collaborate with faculty to teach modules of student teachers. In some jurisdictions they are referred to as "clinical professors" and others "adjunct faculty."

as it resides, in a cultural sense, between the two. This unique vantage point allows me to observe and characterize these two cultures; to study the often-cited tensions between the two groups; and to develop an understanding of what working in the *nexus* space between the two is like. (Here my use of the term *nexus* refers to the notion of a temporary culture of inquiry residing between academic and teacher workplace cultures.) The study plays the additional role of informing my claims in Chapters Six and Seven about the educative value of work within this intercultural space.

As in Chapter Two, the inquiry is narrative in form and an autobiography in that it is a "re-presentation" of my experience (Molloy, 1991). The narrative method is Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three-dimensional space as outlined above. The chapter involves a "story-line" of the interaction between my experience as a new faculty associate and the social context of those working in the teacher education program including support staff, coordinators, other faculty associates, teachers in partner schools, faculty members, and my module group. The Faculty of Education as a whole and the teacher education program in particular provide the situation for the inquiry. Continuity for the narrative involves my temporal considerations as I bring together past experience as a high school teacher and graduate student, my current experience and understandings within the teacher education program, and my speculations about future collaborative work involving academics and practitioners.

The narrative involves three interwoven texts. The field texts or "rough data" informing the central story of my experiences are my journals and public documents such as the *Program Booklet* used to validate context-related claims included in the narrative and others such as meeting agendas addressing more specific aspects of the work. The chapter also includes interpretive inserts illustrating my current theorizing about the cultural tensions between academics and school-based practitioners. This theorizing also involves my conceptualization of practitioner and academic "workplace cultures" and I categorize these as "interim" texts. In general, these inserts are my analysis of the culturally framed relationships as informed by professional experience,

literature reviewed, and theorizing about collaboration between academics and practitioners. The third category of texts is the collection of footnotes intended to explain terminology specific to the context of the studies.

As an initial step in the inquiry, I requested research-related access from the Director of the Professional Program and asked permission to write about my program experiences (see the letter requesting access and providing informed consent in Appendix C). In addition, I asked my module group for permission (see the "letters of informed consent" to the various participants in Appendix C.) As promised in the letter, I provided the Program Director and module members with a draft for their feedback.

I met with the participants and with the director separately to discuss the work. The module team met at a participant's home for a general discussion about our work. Rather than focusing on the details within the narrative, in addition to "catching-up with one-another," we agreed to focus on the tension within the group over the period described. There were two main outcomes of the conversation. The first is that we expressed different understanding about the sources of the tension we experienced. Two of those present felt that these were based on individual differences, while two others agreed that there was a cultural basis for differences that surfaced. One participant did not feel that there were any tensions present, but that the day-to-day problems from personal life interfered with our attempts at collaboration. The "individual differences" interpretation reflected my original interpretation of similar tensions within the Innovative School. After stepping away from the situation, and seeing common experiences across several similar scenarios, I have concluded that, while such tensions are experienced at the individual level, they are often sourced in cultural difference. The difference between these two perspectives, does however, inform my ongoing concern that generalizations based on culture sometimes lead to stereotypes and the possibility for discrimination.

The second outcome was an unanimous sense of the constructive value of coming together in such a way to discuss our different experiences and the sources of

tension. As we parted company, one participant remarked, "this would be a good place to start our work together." At the same time, she noted that the demands of the workplace did not provide for such dialogue. I take up the importance of directly addressing such tensions and the role that dialogue can play as central to *nexus* work in Chapter Six.

The Program Director provided several pages of thoughtful feedback including the following points: He too recognizes the uniqueness of the hybrid culture I describe in the narrative and views the *nexus* construct as a useful one as we try to understand the collaborative potential of this situation. He also acknowledges several shortcomings of the program that I identify in the piece including the lack of work to "figure out what we mean by reflection and the capacity we have for it" and the "binder diving" activities leading to a "great activities" approach to curriculum as opposed to some more substantive version. He also points out several weaknesses in my representation including my focus on the lack of gender balance as a problem. He identifies the strong oral culture in the program as an artefact associated with the feminist presence in the program and wonders whether my search for gender parity is warranted. He also questions my position on the lack of an inquiry disposition in the program while noting the difference between "academic research" and "faculty associate inquiry." This inquiry-related criticism influenced the perspective on inquiry I include as underpinning work within the *nexus* described in Chapter Six.

The corroborative comments by the Director together with two publications covering this period, Smith's (2004) *The Beginning of Inquiry in Teacher Education: The SFU Experience* and Beynon, Grout, and Wideen's (2004) *From Teacher to Teacher Educator* provide the academic voice for the narrative.

Section Two

The second section of the thesis, including Chapters Five through Seven, consists largely of what Clandinin and Connelly (2000) refer to as "research text." In this section, I review selected literature focused on school-university collaboration and I theorize

about an alternative conception of school-based practitioners' and academics' work together.

The literature on university-practitioner collaboration is massive and encompasses academics' work with such groups as engineers, architects, nurses, medical doctors, as well as teachers. While I did review work within these other areas, my focus is practitioner-academic relationships. Even within this sub-field, there is a very large body of literature encompassing the many interest groups involved in schooling. I further narrowed my focus to the most relevant literature on general school reform. Again, I had to decide between diverse sources such as those considering the role that teacher education or technological change might make. I reduced the review to a manageable body of literature involving about two hundred works based on two criteria: a primary focus on the qualities of relationships between academics and practitioners and attention to cultural understanding of these two groups. An example of a reference meeting these two criteria is Baldwin's (1999) work *When Public School and University Cultures Meet.*

Chapters Five and Six

Chapter Five reviews the literature on school-university collaboration as it relates to school reform and introduces the notion of "workplace cultures" as a means of characterizing and differentiating between academic and practitioner professional worlds.

Chapter Six continues my review of the literature on collaboration with a specific focus on what seems to work when these two groups join forces. I present a synthesis of this review as an alternative view of collaboration—hereafter referred to as *nexus* culture—within the final part of Chapter Six. I also raise questions about the feasibility of the various dimensions of my *nexus* view and address several themes arising from the thesis.

The methods employed in Chapters Five and Six include "concept analysis" informing my interpretation of what *workplace cultures* means in the context of academic

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and practitioner cultures and "concept development" in relation to my notion of *nexus* culture. As Coombs and Daniels (1991) explain, these methods help us better understand or improve the concepts or conceptual structures used to interpret experience, express purposes, and frame research. More specifically, I explicate the notion of "culture" as it applies to collaborative work of academics and practitioners and introduce the idea of *nexus culture* as an alternative conceptualization of school-university collaboration.

Coombs and Daniels describe categories of philosophical inquiry supporting concept analysis. "Concept analysis" refers to seeking and providing adequate concrete interpretations of the concepts. According to Coombs and Daniels, this area is particularly important as a means of providing an "account of a concept by clearly detailing its relationship to other concepts and its role in our social practices—including our judgements about the world" (p. 29). In addition to the concept of workplace culture, I provide concrete interpretations of cultural *frames-of-reference, representational forms, practices,* and *epistemological orientations* in relation to school-university collaboration.

Their second category of "concept development" involves modifying or reconstructing aspects of existing conceptual structures such as those identified above. Within this category, the primary goal is to identify the problem or problems concept development should help solve. In this case, my development of the concepts of academic and practitioner *workplace cultures* informs our understanding of the tensions between these two groups and that of *nexus culture* provides a more constructive version of school-university collaboration.

The Appendix

The Appendices contain details and supporting documents of the individual research chapters. These include background information, methods, epistemological considerations, and ethics related concerns such as ethical review, gaining access and informed consent, and providing for confidentiality and anonymity.

Before proceeding with the first of the narrative studies, it will be helpful to layout my understanding of key assumptions in the areas of *epistemological considerations, change theory, educational change* and *the limitation of the study.*

Epistemological Considerations

This thesis employs several methods relying on different assumptions about knowledge, kinds of knowledge claims, and approaches to validating claims. These epistemological differences belie some of the sources of tensions between academic and practitioner cultures. Consequently, they are one of the four key categories I use in Chapter Five to distinguish between practitioners and academics and in Chapter Six to describe the hypothetical *nexus* culture. While I address the epistemological considerations associated with autobiographical narrative, case study, and concept analysis below, the tensions between these epistemological frames contribute to the overarching structure of the work as a dialogue between theory and practice.

In his work, *Critical Ethnography in Educational Research: a theoretical and practical guide,* Carspecken (1996) offers three categories of research-related truth claims forming the basis of my epistemological framework. His first category is objective claims or claims about "The" world. Carspecken argues that these claims are presupposed by all statements that can be understood and then judged as true or false according to the principle of "multiple access." By this he means that objective-referenced truth claims are claims where others would agree with one's observations and thus depend upon a presupposed ontological category to which all humans in principle have access through their senses. Carspecken notes that this category is not suggesting that there "is" an objective reality, but rather that this ontological presupposition is necessary for certain kinds of human communication within a given cultural context.

While examples of such claims run throughout this thesis, I provide several here as illustrations. For example, in Chapter Two my claim that "the curriculum design strategy used to produce individualized learning packages before the Innovative School

opened was not successful as both students and staff found them "wanting" is viewed by my colleagues as "the" truth and they verified this during the interviews reported in Chapter Three. The fact that the staff had to re-write these guides shortly after opening the Innovative School further corroborates this claim. Other examples include claims about the chronology and outcomes of particular studies undertaken by others and the sequence of events associated with the design and implementation of the program.

Lincolin and Guba's (1985) *Naturalistic Inquiry* provides several techniques for validating such objective claims including: *triangulation* by using several sources of information to validate them; *peer debriefing* to check for possible bias and limited or excessive focus in certain areas; and *member checks* by sharing notes with participants in the study to see whether or not they agree with the record. I refer to my use of these techniques in the Appendices.

The subjective category or the "my, her, your" world arises with statements that can only be understood with "privileged access" to a certain form of experience. These kinds of claims make honesty or veracity of the central actor and may be validated when that person referred to confirms the statement about her/his subjective state. Carspecken recognizes that under certain conditions the privileged person may not be aware of certain subjective conditions (e.g. repressed anger). In this situation, if all evidence points to this condition then it is reasonable to claim that if the person was self aware they would have privileged subjective access to this knowledge.

Subjective claims run throughout the narratives presented in Chapters One, Two and Four. In the case of autobiographical work, this category is particularly germane as each piece is based on the "subjective" claims that I make as the author. From a research perspective, autobiographical narrative inquiry of the sort described above involves a researcher representing her or his subjectivity. As the researcher, I have the same responsibilities as non-autobiographical researchers to maintain a "wakeful" disposition by attending to the responses from others (Clandinin & Connelley, 2000, 184). Other criteria for assessing the "adequacy" and "plausibility" of such narratives include "life

criteria" such as narrative truth, continuity, and conviction (Connelly & Clandinin, 1991). These criteria help the reader determine whether "he or she could see this happening." According to Carspecken (1996) this means using "peer debriefings" (other researchers) that are helpful in providing feed back about such things as consistency, adequacy, plausibility, and veracity. In addition, he recommends "member feedback" to question and consider claims made by the author about his or her experience.

My uses of these techniques are described in the Appendices. In addition to these external sources of feedback, I have exercised a degree of subjective "wakefulness" through the process of reflection. This has led to my most significant insights about the experiences reported in these chapters and has involved "looking back" through the feedback provided by others and the new conceptual vantage points described in Chapters Five and Six. Just as the looking back at my personal life through new conceptual lenses provided insight into my life as a whole, these new points of view provide an additional strategy for questioning the subjective claims within my work.

Carspecken (1996) describes the normative-evaluative category as claims that are about what is "proper, appropriate, and conventional" within a certain cultural context. These kinds of claims are usually articulated as *should statements*; suggesting for example that people should act in such and such ways at such and such times. Normative-evaluative claims thus concern a sense of the nature of "my" or "our" world rather than "the" world.

It is important to distinguish between normative-evaluative claims and existing norms—the objectified modes of acting in certain situations. The underlying claims associated with norms being that, members of a particular cultural community regard particular norms to be "in place" and that members of a group adhere to them. Carspecken suggests that there is an ongoing tension between what the norms "are" within cultural groups and the claims that individuals or groups make about what the norms "should be"—these are normative-evaluative claims. An example is the claim I make as a practitioner within Chapter Two when I suggest that visiting academics

"should" directly contribute to development of the Innovative School program. Within the storyline, I note that providing such help is not a normal.

This normative-evaluative category is particularly important as I develop my conceptualization of *nexus culture* in Chapter Six. Here, I recommend a particular framing of collaboration including representational forms, practices, and epistemological orientation that should lead to more successful work involving academics and practitioners. In the concluding chapter, I also make recommendations about future courses of action. These claims deviate from the norms operating within academic and practitioner cultures.

Validating these claims is a tricky business. Here, I rely on the strength of the argument running throughout this thesis and the informed judgement of others to determine their adequacy. In the longer term, my work with practitioners and other academics together within ongoing scrutiny by others will serve as a means to verify these claims.

Change

This thesis is essentially about change. The general educational reform agenda is addressed by many researchers including Ellsworth (2000), Reigeluth and Garfinkle (1994), Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) and Sarason (1971). Specifically, this thesis is about changing approaches to practitioner-academic collaboration in support of more effective reform. The conceptualization of *nexus culture* outlined in Chapter Six represents my proposal about how collaboration should look if the goal is deep and sustained change in students' experience. In addition to structural changes in approaches to collaboration, this view includes change at the individual level as both practitioners and academics are encouraged to "change their ways" providing for a more constructive way ahead.

General Change

Chin and Benne (1976) offer three general strategies for effecting "planned" change in human systems: normative-Re-educative, empirical rationale, and power-coercive. These approaches have been used historically to consciously and deliberately affect change. Of particular relevance to this thesis is their notion of "normative-Re-educative" strategies — an approach intended to foster changes in norms leading to "sustained and deep changes in an organization." According to Chin and Benne the normative-Re-educative approach is founded on several assumptions. First, it assumes that participants are "actively" involved in establishing a fit between individual and group demands and environmental resources. Second, this approach assumes that intelligence is social rather than narrowly individual, that is, a normative culture guides participants. Change therefore involves altering habits and values at the sociocultural level by shifting normative structures, institutional roles and relationships, and perceptual orientations. This approach to change provides conceptual support for *nexus culture* as such change involves:

- the establishment of a temporary problem solving structure
- experience-based learning
- providing a safe environment where participants "learn to learn"
- emphasizing norms of openness in communication, trust, lowering of status barriers, and mutuality between those involved
- valuing creativity by providing conditions which support creative responses
- believing that creative adaptations may arise *within* the group and do not have to be imported from *outside*

The *nexus* approach to collaboration presented in Chapter Six addresses each of these factors. The notion of a problem solving orientation and the experience-based aspect of this change model are addressed by the underpinning "inquiry orientation" of *nexus* work. The communications-related norms and the valuing of creativity are both supported by the "open" approach to leadership and the particular understanding of dialogue outlined as core practices within the *nexus*. Recognition that the group may be

the source of both the questions for inquiry and their solutions is emphasised by the knowledge-in-practice epistemological orientation proposed for *nexus* work.

A limitation of Chin and Benn's explanation of normative-Re-educative approaches is their separation of personal and organizational change. The literature reviewed in Chapters Five and Six indicates that for collaboration to support deep and substantive change both the personal and organizational aspects of this work require concurrent consideration. As Christenson and Eldridge (1996) conclude from their five year-long project: collaboration "is a powerful means of significant and lasting personal growth that may, through our relationships, lead to substantial organizational change" (p. 187). The dialogic practices proposed as essential to *nexus* work requires a deliberate focus on both personal and organizational change.

This normative-Re-educative strategy is in contrast with "empirical-rational" or "power-coercive" approaches to change. Chin and Benne conclude that empirical-rationale strategies, where knowledge is seen as the source of power, are typically successful in relation to changing use of "thing technologies" but typically fail in fostering change in "people technologies." Power-coercion emphasizes the use of political and economic sanctions to change systems or individuals often leading only to temporary and superficial change.[9]

While the normative Re-educative strategy both informs and frames my conceptualization of *nexus culture* in Chapter Six, both empirical-rationale and coercive approaches appear in this work. For example, assumptions underpinning the transmission oriented graduate programs reviewed within the case study presented in Chapter Three involve the rational-empirical approach to change and partly explains the general failure of these people-centred programs. The Innovative High School program addressed in Chapters Two and Three represents a power-coercive approach to change as consultants and district administrators used political and economic means to design

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[9] See Chin and Benne (1976) for a detailed comparison and examples of these three general approaches as applied across western culture. (pp. 24-45)

and implement the new school program.[10] As is the case for many other power-coercive attempts at reform, this program is for the most part shallow and short lived. Fullan (2000) suggests that these kinds of changes result in strong adoption and initial implementation, but lack institutionalization. What I have learned is that all three approaches contribute to effective collaboration with a particular focus on the normative-Re-educative.

Education Change

While Chin and Benne's work informs general thinking about change; Fullan's focus is specific to change within the education context. Fullan (2000) reviews various approaches to school reform and argues that deep and sustained change is only possible when internal school development (the inside story), connected to a variety of outside support (the in-side out story), and that these two are "challenged and nurtured" by an external infrastructure (the outside story). This "Three Stories of Educational Reform" understanding of change, provides conceptual support for the framing of *nexus* work as a temporary structure separate from both school and university where norms, practice, and knowledge from the outside, coalesce with those from the inside. A major distinction between *nexus culture* and Fullan's "external infrastructure" is that *nexus* work is focused on reform within *both* school and university cultures while Fullan focuses narrowly on school-based changes.

At a more specific level, in his (1993) *Change Forces,* Fullan identifies eight "lessons" that inform the establishment of new norms and practices essential for fundamental reform. First, he argues that you "cannot mandate what matters" — that is changes in skills, attitudes, practices, and beliefs cannot be forced — a position that harkens back to the power-coercive approach to change identified by Chin and Benne. Within the *nexus* proposal, participants pay explicit attention to tensions sourced in different skills levels, attitudes, practices, and beliefs through planned reflection and dialogue. Providing time and opportunity to address these tensions and their

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[10] The nature and consequences of this process are the subject of my Masters' thesis.

underpinning cultural differences is intended to support personal change in the belief that this will result in cultural change. This approach is also supported by Chin and Benne's inquiry into "personal" change.

Fullan also argues that participants must view change as "a journey, not as a blue print" leading in a linear fashion towards a specific goal and a related point that "visions and strategic plans come later." Within the *nexus*, each collaborating group determines the focus for inquiry, timing, action taken, practices, and representational forms based on the specifics of each situation. The group determines who will take on different leadership roles and how things will proceed. This comes with the caveat that while dialogue plays an important role, this work is action-oriented. That is, it is about taking action and learning from that action as opposed to constructing a firm vision in advance of action.

Fullan's third lesson is that "problems are our friends" — that is to say a group must acknowledge up-front that problems are inevitable and that these problems are often the sources of innovation. Again, the inquiry framing of *nexus* and the essential roles that reflection and a particular understanding of dialogue play in this approach to collaboration underscore the importance of Fullan's position here. As I argue in Chapter Six and as Fullan points out, approaches that reach consensus by sweeping conflict under the rug miss the point that breakthroughs are often the result of conflict.

I address three additional Fullan "lessons" within *nexus* through the unconventional approach to leadership outlined under practices in Chapter Six. These lessons include recognition of the tension between "individualism and collectivism," requiring respect for diversity and individualism as well as for group activity and group effectiveness. Fullan adds the tension between "centralization and decentralization" recognizing the need for a group to have autonomy but be coordinated in some way. He also suggests that the recognition of each participant as a potential change agent is essential to successful change.

Finally, Fullan identifies the importance of "connection with the wider environment" as critical to the success of attempts to change schools and schooling. He says that it is only when a healthy relationship with both its local and larger environments is achieved that the "collaborativeness" will last. He goes on to claim that practitioners need to link with a variety of outsiders as a means of "reculturing" their workplaces. While *nexus* takes account of this need through collaborative work with academics as one approach to this form of outreach, it stresses the need for academics to link with others as a means of reconceptualizing their work with those in the field.

Together these general (Chin and Benne) and more specific (Fullan) understandings about change help unpack the approach to collaboration I propose in the form of *nexus* culture.

Limitations of the Study

The individual studies are limited by the innate characteristics of the methodology employed and by my approach to working with such challenges. As noted above, Chapters Two and Four are *autobiographical narratives* and as such have several limiting characteristics. The first and most important is the role that the author's biases play in the narrative. As Denzin (1989) points out, these need to be acknowledged and reflected in the work. My life-long difficulty with authority figures, rooted in my relationship with my father and elaborated on in the Autobiographical Background section above, is the major bias I bring to this work. It has influenced my reaction to various approaches to administration and leadership and to the research practices as described in Chapters Two, Four and Five. I have been explicit about this challenge throughout the thesis. In addition, the workplace cultural bias informed by my work as a practitioner influences early interpretation of events as does my current workplace identity within the academy. These bias are reflected both in my chosen representational forms as the work progresses and in my interpretation of events.

Chapter Three is a *case study* and as such involves its own set of limitations. Creswell (1998) proposes identifying the "bounded system" for the case, deciding on the rationale for the case, finding adequate information, and deciding on the "boundaries" of the case as potential challenges. The case presented in Chapter Five is bounded by the five practitioners' concurrent experience and time as graduate students and implementation of the Innovative School program. The rationale for the study is my observation that our experience apparently ran against the grain when compared with some other graduate students experience. The question of "adequate information" is one that I would reconsider if I could redo the study. While I feel that I collected adequate data from participating practitioners, I could have interviewed participating academics rather than relying on published data about their experience. The boundaries question—how it was constrained in terms of time, events, and processes—was not a significant issue in this case because the system was clearly delineated.

Chapters Five and Six involved *concept analysis* in the form of concept interpretation and development as outlined by Coombs and Daniels (1991) where ach of these methods have as their purposes "understanding and improving the sets of concepts or conceptual structures in terms of which we interpret experience, express purpose, frame problems, and conduct inquiries" (p. 27). As noted earlier, concept development as method is used as a means of improving understanding of academic and practitioner workplace cultures and helping to interpret tensions arising when they work together. The analysis also provides for improvements in the framing of inquiries into collaboration. However, there are limits to such inquiry.

As Coombs and Daniels point out, knowledge of analytic techniques and adequate background knowledge of analytic concepts are important to effective concept interpretation. As a novice working with these methods for the first time, they suggest working with someone who has been trained in such work helps provide the kind of "sensitivity and good judgment required" for competent analysis. I believe that the mentorship provided by committee members has provided for my competent analysis of

the concept of "workplace culture" and the development of *nexus* culture as a new view of collaboration. I view both the work to develop these concepts and my work to participate in such inquiry as ongoing and I look forward to both aspects of my future experience.

In the chapter that follows, I tell the story of the practical experiences working leading to my interest in such analysis. Along the way, I develop the questions that underpin this thesis.

Chapter Two:
Finding My Questions

Prologue

The text that follows is comprised of three parts. First is the central narrative, written during the summer after I had left my teaching position at the Innovative School. The story is an interpretive work, told from the inside of a collaborative relationship between academics from the Model Schools Consortium[11] and the local School District, during our attempt to construct a "different sort of secondary school."[12] This core part of the chapter is not italicized and I have divided it into a first section covering my experiences during the two years leading up to the opening of the Innovative School and a second section where I tell of the first five years of the school's operation. The story provides a context for my research questions and informs my inquiry into collaboration.

In addition to the central story, I have inserted a second part as italicized comments where I offer my current interpretation of the core story informed by my theorizing about practitioner-academic relationships. I have also included footnotes where I feel clarification is required. My use of these three kinds of text is a deliberate recognition of the layered, non-linear aspects of narrative inquiry, and of the dialogue between theory and practice represented by this thesis.

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[11] To the best of my knowledge, the Model Schools Consortium involves academics from Texas State University, UCLA, Florida State, and the US Principals and Vice Principals Association.

[12] It is important to underscore that this is an "interpretive" piece. As Geertz (1995) and Clandinnin and Connely (2000) suggest all narrative inquiry is infused with uncertainty as a consequence of a variety of possible interpretations. The "core" 1997 story is very close to being a field text although my 2004 interpretations of events are included. This meta-text, in *italics*, is far more interpretive and is both informed and limited by my theorizing about workplace cultures, the importance of conversation, and the significance of collaboration.

In the Epilogue, I interpret the experiences represented in the story and articulate the overriding questions for this thesis.

Preparing for Work at the Innovative School

My experience with the Innovative School program began at a time when I contemplated leaving the teaching profession. As the Science department head at a secondary school, I had just finished participating on a yearlong school accreditation committee. At the conclusion of this process, the external team gave the school the highest possible rating as recognition of "achieving a remarkable level of success; one which many schools never achieve." After spending the year reflecting on my own practice, the work within my department, and the school program as a whole, my feeling was that our school program, along with the secondary system as a whole, should have been given a failing grade.

This overwhelming sense that something was terribly wrong drove me to consider leaving a profession that I love. This sense worsened when a group of students invited me to accompany them to a three-day environmental education conference in another city (they needed a bus driver and a chaperone). The event was not sponsored by educators, rather, it was initiated by students interested in "making a difference." During this conference, I observed my students and noted high levels of interest, authentic engagement, and thoughtfulness that were not typically present in our high school setting. During the following months, these students organized themselves, established a local group including students from other schools, and worked on ecology-related issues of concern in their community. This kind of active participation was in stark contrast to what I observed in Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and English classes at my school.

A short time later, a change in leadership at the school prompted me to act on my feelings and apply for a leave of absence. I hoped that time away would provide the opportunity to think through my feelings about secondary schooling in general and more specifically about my future as an educator.

Six weeks before my leave began, another administrator, here after referred to as Dan, approached me about a proposed Innovative School program. He knew that the self-paced nature of the proposal would be attractive to me as I had been experimenting with self-paced learning within my practice.[13] Dan explained that he had been invited by the local superintendent of schools to plan the construction of an Innovative School. He went on to suggest that students at this School would be self-paced, have access to a variety of technological innovations, and be supported by a teacher advisor program. In addition, he suggested that teachers and others would play significantly different kinds of roles and have different kinds of relationships than they do in conventional secondary schools. Given my feelings about my practice and about secondary schools in general, this felt like an opportunity worth pursuing. I was excited and optimistic about the work ahead.

I agreed to join Dan's team and to write curriculum for the new program while on leave. This work would involve using the provincially prescribed goals and learning outcomes for individual courses, dividing each course up into twenty sections, and writing self-paced learning guides intended to support students' work.[14] I was told that this approach was modelled on an existing program operating in another province and that I would have a chance to visit our "sister school" at some future date.

At the end of June, I started my one-year leave with the intention of writing curriculum part time and restoring a Victorian house at the same time. These two jobs were highly compatible and both were personally satisfying. In my restoration work, I

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[13]At that time, my understanding of self-pacing was that students had choices about how much time they would spend on various aspects of their biology program. They worked as collaborative groups to complete various projects that framed parts of the course. During my time at the Innovative School, this notion took on a much broader and deeper meaning that might more aptly be called "self-directed"—a notion that includes choices about when individual students work on specific parts of their programs, what they focus on, and how they engage in learning and subsequently represent what they have learned.

[14]Learning guides are documents that outline a focus for study (learning outcomes), strategies for inquiry into the material under consideration, and strategies for assessment and evaluation. Students acquire these documents for subject-centred kiosks throughout the school and meet with teacher markers to discuss their learning process and to problem-solve difficulties.

felt as though I was repairing something of great value to my local heritage community while enjoying working with others to meet a common goal. At the same time, I welcomed the opportunity to participate in something new and potentially productive in my professional life. While I enjoyed both experiences, there was a significant difference between them. In my curriculum writing, I worked alone aside from periodic meetings with the district administrator to discuss my progress. In my restoration work, I was part of an extensive network of people who spent some time together sharing expertise, equipment, and materials. In retrospect, this working together with others from within the heritage community informed my close collaborative work with department members when the Innovative School opened, while the working alone that typified my previous professional experience became a thing of the past.

Before starting the work, I met with three other teachers hired to write learning guides and a district administrator who was coordinating the project. He provided specific timelines and a template illustrating how the district wanted the guides to be organized and written. Although I never met with the other writers again, the administrator modified the template in response to various writers' struggles, questions, and suggestions. This revised template was used by many additional writers who prepared other learning guides required when the school opened. Later, while conducting research for my Master's thesis, I discovered that it was the district administration's intention to market these Writer's Manuals. This decision was taken because the district and the Model Schools Consortium expected to sell the guides to other districts interested in implementing the Innovative School's program.

Upon opening the school, it turned out that many of the guides were of little or no use. As I report in the next section, although the guides were developed according to the template, they had little relevance to teachers' or students' lived experience at the school—the consequence was a huge re-writing job during the first several months of the school's operation—a subject that I take up in Chapter Three.

In the fall, my appointment as the Mathematics and Science department head for the school, required that I meet with teachers hoping to work at the school, publishers hoping to supply texts and other reading materials, and others such as architects designing various areas of the school. In addition, the district asked that I take part in the deliberations about the computer technology planned for the school. My thoughts about computers and other forms of technology and its uses were focused entirely on student applications and I spent time reading and thinking about technology-related applications at the Innovative School. In this role, I attended a series of meetings with administrators from a consortium of districts planning similar Innovative School projects involving "improved uses of technology."[15]

At one of these meetings, it became clear to me that the others were talking almost exclusively about using technology to manage "their" institutions. In addition, I was told that several members of this group were not, for undisclosed reasons, going to follow through with their intention to "self-pace" their programs. Two things occurred to me at this time: I realized that my focus was different than the administrative agenda attached to the project and I became aware of a serious difference of opinion between districts about the value of implementing a self-paced secondary school program. I was surprised by this latter revelation because the benefits seemed obvious. From my naïve point of view, I did not understand the reasons for disagreement nor did I understand the difficulties associated with attempts to change anything within the system.

This period was the beginning of a shift in my understandings about the relationship between school administrators and teachers. Before this time, I had viewed these relationships, for the most part, from the union member (teacher) versus manager (school or district-based administrator) perspective. This naïve view involved a very narrow and simplistic perspective on

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[15] The term "consortium" is used throughout this chapter as it was the term used by district administrators to refer to a broad range of discussion groups. For the most part, these groups were informal and usually involved deliberations about some issue of common concern e.g. technological change. On other occasions, the term was applied to more formal affiliations, where the district became a formal paying member of a consortium e.g. the Model Schools Consortium.

teachers and administrators, where teachers had control over their classroom environments and administrators had some responsibility for the school climate as a whole, and power over the availability of teaching resources and teachers' classroom and course assignments. This view was informed by my role as a staff representative where much of my experience involved disputes between teacher-colleagues and school-based administrators.

Through my experience with the district administrator coordinating the writing of guides for the new program and my participation on the technology consortium, I began to develop a more complex view of the role of teachers working within the innovation. I also started to view administrators as a group whose decisions could have a great impact on the direction of an attempted innovation as they approached the problem from their unique point of view. I came to see that the district perspective on the learning guides could potentially determine the relationships between teachers and students at the Innovative School. Over time, I questioned the effectiveness of this "top-down" notion of educational leadership, curriculum implementation, and change. At the same time, I began to see myself in my role as a teacher-practitioner, as someone who could do things differently and who could make a difference outside of my own classroom. I started to see myself as an agent of change who had unique and useful ideas to contribute to my own school and to schooling in general.

As a consequence, of my participation on the technology consortium, I started to see the administrators as a group who tended to see education-related problems from a different perspective than teachers. The group's preoccupation with how computer technology might be used to "manage" teaching and learning versus the possibility of technology supported learning illustrated this point very well. I felt this difference to the core of my professional being and was very confused about these different points-of-view. This tension between the roles of school-based and university-based administrators and the leadership requirements for successful collaboration emerges as a major theme within the literature and my proposed cultural understanding of an effective approach to collaborative work.

My growing concern about the intended uses of computer technology, the motives behind the construction of a self-paced secondary school, together with the

educational possibilities associated with it, caused me to apply to a Masters' program in curriculum as a means of "finding some answers." At the same time, I applied for a second leave from teaching as a means of supporting both my participation in graduate studies and my ongoing curriculum writing and planning for the Innovative School.

I should note here that applying to return to school was not easy. I had considered returning to school from the time that I completed my teacher training but felt that, among other things, I needed to improve my writing abilities in order to be successful. It was with great anxiety and a sense of vulnerability that I put together an application focusing on my interest in educational uses of technology at the Innovative School and delivered it to the graduate programs office at a local university.

I was told that I was two weeks late for application, but that I could speak with a faculty member about this problem. After introducing myself and addressing the distinguished professor, I made my case and was subsequently admitted to the program. I was both excited and apprehensive at the prospect of beginning graduate work. However, I reasoned that I would be able to work on my emerging interests in writing and at the same time find answers to my growing list of questions about the proposed Innovative School program.

Meanwhile, my work on the self-paced curriculum guides continued. I developed guides including three alternative modes of learning hoping that offering choices to students would improve their school experience. I contacted local publishers for lists and examples of the most recent learning resources and included many of these within the guides. I hoped that these new resources would motivate students and provide alternatives to the "one size fits all" approach used in most conventional secondary classes. In addition, I tried to imagine working with students in the Innovative School and included directions and comments that might help students navigate through the program of studies.

This was a very exciting period and I felt that I was doing work that would make a real difference for students. I believed that I was helping create something that would

provide students with real choice and personal power within a system that I believed typically denies both of these things. As it turned out, I made a few correct decisions and very many wrong ones. I will address some of these in the next section where I describe the opening months and the first years of work at the Innovative School.

When the time came to begin my graduate courses, I chose the course that had the most interesting description. I arrived at the designated hour and introduced myself to the professor and the four other students. During that first hour, my worst fears were realized as the others announced that they were all doctoral students and that they were prepared to meet the course expectation of "producing a publishable work by the end of the course." I felt that I made a contribution during the four hour long discussion by relying on my practical experience, feeling all the while that I was "in over my head."

The next day I got out my calendar, read over the course offerings, and located a course that looked most reasonable as a place to start. I made my apologies to the doctoral course instructor and arranged to enrol in the Masters' course. As it turned out, this was the best thing that could have happened to me. The course content was Developing Educational Programs but the real agenda was "let's learn to write clearly and thoughtfully." Participation in this course allowed me to lower my very high anxiety level, after being away from university for twelve years. At the same time, it provided an opportunity to work on my personal goal of learning a little about writing.

My time within this course also provided an opportunity to introduce others to the Innovative School program. To my surprise, there was very little interest and a lot of scepticism. One student, referring to a similar project he had participated in a few years earlier, pointed out that teachers had "burned out" due to the workload and lack of support from the local administration and education community at large. At one point, I presented my learning guides and the assumptions associated with their use. These included the notions that students would work at their own pace, have choices about their modes of learning, and that teachers would work with students individually or in small groups—never as part of a conventional class group.

My classmates were highly critical while at the same time providing helpful feedback. They suggested, among other things, reducing the amount of reading and increasing the number of visuals such as comic strips, diagrams, and other graphic representations that might add some colour or as one of them said—some pizzazz. In the end, they were cautiously supportive of this alternative learning model, but were unsure of its feasibility within a secondary school with a population of one thousand students.

I feel that this early critical conversation about curriculum matter, constituted the beginnings of my move away from a narrow and somewhat conservative view of curriculum. Despite having participated in Science curriculum-related deliberations at many levels, this was the first time that I allowed myself to question the authority of the curriculum as delivered by the Ministry of Education and to experience the value of a conversation where a critical view was expressed. While this realization is hardly ground breaking, it is important to note that my uncritical disposition at the time and my apprehension about questioning the authority of the Provincial Curriculum Branch are representative of the disposition of most teachers. These kinds of experiences together with other conversations associated with various graduate classes contributed to my eventual conceptualization of "practitioner culture."

Away from the university, while dealing with the physical, fiscal, and political aspects of the new program, Dan in his administrative role, arranged for the teaching staff to get together and begin developing what I have come to see as a shared understanding about the Innovative School program. We met as department heads, as department groups, and as a staff as a whole. This was an interesting time for me because I was seen as a leader helping others develop a sense of where we were going and, at the same time, I was struggling to gain a clear sense of direction for myself. I was relying on Dan's quiet confidence and apparent clear vision as my touchstone. He led the group through "mission statement" exercises, "exit outcome" development exercises (borrowed from outcomes based education), and general discussions about what the school would be like. Keeping an earlier promise, he arranged for twenty

teachers to visit our sister school in another province. These teachers reported their findings back to the group and made several recommendations that became part of the planning. I was not among this group but I recall that this visit caused some teachers to change their minds about joining Dan's staff. I was surprised that these thoughtful teachers would choose not to change how they practiced. It was not until I visited our sister school, four years later, that I understood their profoundly negative view of the proposed self-paced approach (I will revisit this topic later in the story.).

In my meetings with the Science and Mathematics group, I tried to follow Dan's lead and help others develop confidence in the project. In addition, I began to feel that the only way forward was through collaboration. Perhaps it was Dan's influence, as he always seemed to be working on the sidelines or in the background helping to develop a common understanding about the program. Alternatively, I may have been influenced by the graduate course I was beginning. In any event, the Science-Mathematics group started reading each other's work and organizing our ideas about how we might cooperate in this new place. Gradually, we developed an ongoing strategy where group conversations about our work became common-place—a practice that was dramatically different from our experience in other schools.

This group conversation eventually evolved into periodic formal conversations at the end of each school year during a retreat where the past year was debriefed and the following year planned. I became clear about the importance of this process as time passed and will address this ongoing conversation throughout this story.

In the spring, I enrolled in a course on Mathematics and technology in the classroom. I remember regarding this course as an excellent venue for finding support for my ideas about technology uses at the Innovative School. What happened was quite different. Instead of affirming my preconceptions, the course introduced a transforming range of alternatives. I began the course viewing technology as a set of support systems that would "serve-up" information for students as they worked independently within their courses. Instead, I was introduced to the potential power associated with

collaboration between students while using technology. I moved gradually from this information source notion, to a view where technology provides an opportunity to support students as they construct their knowledge and understanding. This view includes students working at home and bringing ideas to school, students working with students located elsewhere in time and place, students working with mentors on-line, and students working with on-site mentors as they construct their understanding. I came to view students' use of computer technology as a creative activity in the same vein that artists use various tools to represents their ideas.

These insights, as simple as they seem now, significantly validated my student focus for the use of technology and my opposition to the extensive administrative information management focus at the Innovative School and elsewhere. I observed that the administrative applications of technology continued to consume most of the school's technology budget. As I thought out possible uses of technology through, I began to see both the physical location and general access to technology in the school as problems deserving careful consideration. I raised these concerns with the architects and the district principal in charge of computer technology, resulting in minor changes within the Science work area.

In the fall of 1991, I remained on leave and again had the luxury of working on the school program while participating in graduate work. My new course involved consideration of the recent history of educational thought, taught by the wrong name professor mentioned earlier. This course intimidated me partly because I hold the professor in very high esteem and because this was my first foray into formal educational philosophy—a subject that intimidates many graduate students.

I believe my lack of self-confidence and position were based largely in the sense-of-self that I carry from childhood. I also believe that parts of my experience are not unlike that of most teachers entering the academy to begin graduate courses. I found much evidence supporting this view within my case study group in Chapter Three and within the literature considering school-university collaboration reported in Chapter Five. This "sense of difference" also contributed to

my understanding of the environment that frames the workplace experience of both school and university-based educators.

Despite my apprehension, the course went reasonably well. I resisted the professor's expectations and decided to take in the course content and participate in the discussions but to not focus my writing efforts on the prescribed readings. Instead, I researched and wrote about self-paced learning from the 1960s onward. Within this literature, I discovered evidence of the Model Schools Movement, which, as it turns out, provided the conceptual framework for the Innovative School and was the basis of the collaborative efforts supporting the development of the program. Later, I discovered that the "master mind" behind the Innovative School program had been an active participant in the Model School Experience during the early seventies and had maintained a connection with some of those involved in this work.

I was unsettled by these "its been done before" revelations. I felt naïve and somewhat let down; however, this historical perspective explained the curious disinterest expressed by some members of the academy. The literature review showed that there were very few examples where self-paced programs measurably improved academic achievement. However, I did find a glimmer of hope in suggestions that self-paced programs might provide opportunities for "affective gains." As an educator who was, and still is, concerned about the affective experience of students I was encouraged by this possibility. Incidentally, my only real feedback from the esteemed professor was "logically and thoughtfully written although somewhat plodding." I interpreted this to mean that my personal writing-related goals were gradually taking shape and that I belonged—while also realizing that I had a long way to go.

Both the coursework and my curriculum writing had an impact on my understanding of the Innovative School program. In writing the guides, I focussed more on what I imagined the day-to-day lived experience of students and teachers might be rather than placing the prescribed curriculum at the centre of all deliberations. This shift meant less directive language in the learning guides, which encouraged students to meet

with their course markers to "negotiate" learning activities, time lines, and ways of demonstrating learning. I also included expectations that students take responsibility for booking equipment and time with teachers in advance.

With my graduate course ending and the school opening looming just nine months away, I felt that it was time to address methodological issues and formalize my thesis proposal. During discussions with my advisor, it became clear that qualitative methods would best address the questions I hoped to consider within my thesis. Paramount among these questions were "Where did the ideas for the Innovative School come from?" and "Who was responsible for initiating this oasis of reform within conventional district and provincial educational communities?"

In preparation for finding answers to these questions, I registered in a qualitative methods course. As it turned out, this was one of the most perturbing experiences during my Masters' Program.

At the time, I perceived qualitative methods from the perspective of a conventionally educated "Science guy," — I was sceptical about such quasi-scientific methods. As an undergraduate, I had completed a Science degree with a quantitative (statistics) methods background founded on my work in genetics. My understanding at this time was that the only way to get at "the truth" was through the scientific method and that validity, reliability, and reproducibility were essential to any "real" research.

On the first evening of class, I found myself in a group composed mostly of self declared radical feminists who's mission seemed to be the deconstruction of the "positivist view" of research. The professor responsible for teaching the course seemed to be of a similar mind-set although she was a little less confrontational. My initial response was to withdraw from the course, but I stayed, and am glad that I did, even though I was angry and frustrated much of the time. I was angry because I was consciously excluded from the conversation and sometimes verbally attacked seemingly for being male and having a background in Science — what I wanted was an opportunity to discuss qualitative methods in an open but critical way. I was frustrated because it

was such a struggle to confront my own beliefs about research within such a hostile environment, making it difficult to trek up the hill to the University each Thursday evening.

By the end of the course, I had changed both in how I viewed research and my sense about the various ways we come to know what we claim to know. The course content gave me some knowledge and a framework from which I could begin discussing a research proposal with my supervisor. At the same time, I started to contemplate the construction of formal knowledge at the research level and to relate this to what happens with students in schools as they acquire their new practical knowledge and understanding. In addition, our discussions about the broad ethical issues associated with research in general and qualitative methods in particular had a powerful impact on me.

I view this experience together with my personal difficulties with what I see as abuses of power, as the foundation for my reactions to the various researchers who visited the school (I describe these in the second section of the story). While I do not agree with much of the visitors' behaviour I describe later in this work, I have come to view my reactions as somewhat self-righteous and certainly naïve. As I sorted through the difficulties associated with my own research and developed my cultural understanding of what frames academic work, I developed a degree of empathy for, and understanding about, the ways visiting academics experienced practitioners' work at the Innovative School. It appears as though it was an exciting and unique school situation where they could follow up their respective research interests, and they did just that. However, I still see the various visits as being very much about the interests of, and benefits to, these visitors and not in the least about supporting improvements in the school's program. This situation raises questions about how academic participation in the design and implementation of the program could have been more effective in our program development and in improving schooling in general.

My Master's research involved interviewing the five administrators who appeared to be the main policy-makers behind the Innovative School program. As well,

I collected any artefacts such as minutes from meetings and planning reports that I could find. I felt that I needed to complete this work before the Innovative School opened in September, as I believed that the story would change because of participants' perceptions of the success or failure of the program.

This research proved to be almost as perturbing as my qualitative methods course had been. For one thing, I discovered that Dan was not the guiding force behind the construction of the program. Although, he facilitated the practical work at the school, the District Superintendent had predetermined the overall design. It turns out that the Superintendent had participated in a similar Model School's project in the seventies and was working with academics that had been part of that initiative. This group, in collaboration with several local administrators, provided the initial template and ongoing direction for the new program. I report on several of these interactions within the next section.

In August, I was completing the research for my thesis and doing what I could to prepare for the school's opening in September. This included completing the learning guides, visiting the school to fuss about the unfinished construction, and meeting with Dan's team to continue our deliberations about the new program. As I look back, I'm certain that there wasn't any way that we could have anticipated the range of problems that confronted us during those first difficult months at the new school.

The Innovative School Opens

Opening day saw 750 bewildered students and 40 mortified staff members in the midst of absolute chaos. There were recently arrived boxes of books, dozens of "still in the carton computers," pieces of furniture sitting about everywhere, and construction workers finishing up their work. At the beginning of each day we met with students in teacher advisories—the only place where there was any real sense of order for teachers

and students.[16] On that first day, my advisees asked anxiously about learning guides, daily planners, teacher markers, kiosks, the testing centre, curriculum work areas, tutorials, and the teacher advisor group. Negotiating a shared understanding of these unconventional terms for high school students and the teachers at the Innovative School was on going for several years.

We dismissed students after the first hour allowing teachers to unpack some of the equipment, eat a hurried lunch, and then meet as department groups. We spent the time deciding how to survive the next day. I went to the end-of-day staff meeting exhausted and uncertain about the way ahead. Some staff members were in tears, others in shock or panic, I'm not sure which; all asking many more questions than Dan could handle. We were short of textbooks, computers were still in their boxes or set-up, many staff did not know how to use the computers, and we had no idea how we were to facilitate 750 students working on their own. We wondered aloud, "where are the experts now?"

I went home that evening after the first of many ten- or twelve-hour days feeling exhausted and disoriented. The next morning I met with the Mathematics and Science group for breakfast and we began the task of gradually making sense of things and creating a program that was meaningful for students, teachers, and parents—this process continued over the next few years.

My memories of the first few months are a blur although as always I was keeping notes in my journal. Like my colleagues, most of my time and energy were focused on re-writing learning guides in an attempt to make them reflect the lived

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[16] Aside from being self-paced, the Innovative School is organized around an advisor program where each teacher meets with about 20 students from grade eight to twelve to plan and monitor student progress. Students remain in their advisor group throughout the five or six years that they spend at the school. It is primarily within this program that relationships are formed between teachers and students and it is within the context of these TAs that students negotiate their personal understanding of life at the Innovative School. It is widely understood that this program is the true cornerstone of the Innovative School.

experience "on-the-floor" at the Innovative School.[17] Along with the rest of the Mathematics and Science group, I struggled to solve the countless day-to-day problems associated with getting a new program and a new school "up and running."

We agreed that the guides were, for the most part, useless. The group worked out the needed changes and each of us took on writing new guides. We continued to revise the learning guides throughout the next five years and the work continues as I leave the school. At the same time, we were negotiating how to team-teach, a practice that is not part of the experience of most secondary teachers. Much of this involved giving up the conventional view that teaching is a solo performance at centre-stage and seeing the importance of conferring with colleagues about management, evaluation, or how to help an individual student or group with a learning problem. In addition, we taught each other the required physics, chemistry, and biology concepts while supporting students studying these disciplines. This ongoing conversation and learning from each other have been important parts of our work together, and I address this later in the narrative and in the chapter that follows.

In the beginning, at weekly staff meetings there were many calls to return to conventional ways of doing things as a means of coping with the overwhelming chaos. We agreed after a heated debate that if we accepted this easy solution we would never get the program operating. This and other quick-fix solutions continued to surface in different forms whenever difficulties arose. The proposed quick fixes included "transition classes " (conventional classes for some students who were not seen as being successful) and "school within the school" proposals where groups of struggling students enrolled in several conventional classes.

I saw these, as well as similar proposals involving one-size fits-all classes, as backward steps in that they removed opportunities provided by our timetable-less

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[17]The notion of conversation surfaced as a major theme during the case study reported in Chapter Three. The category of "on-the-floor" conversation is one of three kinds of conversations where my colleagues and I worked to construct a shared sense about our work. In particular, the term refers literally to the conversations we had with each other "on-the-floor" as we worked as a team teaching as many as one hundred and fifty students at a time.

system. Sometimes, I felt the proposals were means for individual teachers to step back into the safe and predictable roles they had left behind. I believed that we had before us the opportunity to truly work individually with students and to allow all students to work at their own pace. The conventional proposals were based on the perceived need to move students through "the curriculum" at a predetermined and synchronous rate. This tension between actual learning rates and institutional expectations—everyone meeting predetermined rates of progress— is referred to within the school's deliberations as the "completion rate problem" and is a topic of ongoing discussion and a source of frequent conflict.

As I review this period from my present position, I see a group of practitioners involved in the reconstruction of their workplace identity—in a sense, reconstructing their workplace culture. As a group, we had to let go of practices that had been central to our teaching in other schools. At the same time, as typically pragmatic teachers, we were struggling to find new practices that would fit the new setting—we were constructing a new sense of what it means to be a secondary school teacher. For me, this provided an opportunity to ask what it is to be a teacher. As I considered the relationships between teachers and academics, I eventually extended this question to include, what does it mean to be an academic?

Throughout this time, Dan continued to "be there" for all of us. In staff meetings, he always had a positive anecdote about staff, students, or parents to help combat our shared sense of being overwhelmed. He consistently maintained a positive and forward thinking position about the program. Throughout this time, I knew with certainty that if I needed materials, equipment, or just moral support Dan would be there.

Aside from the practical problem solving many "external" events had an impact on life at the school. There were endless visits both by members of the various consortia that the district administrators had joined on our behalf, and by groups of interested educators. There were attacks by the local media, parent group, and teacher and administrator colleagues from within the district. While the visits were distracting and

often time consuming, the criticisms by colleagues were far more difficult to deal with. These criticisms took many forms: counsellors and administrators from other schools telling our senior students that they could not graduate on-time if they remained at the Innovative School; colleagues from other schools commenting at teacher social events that "it must be nice getting paid and not having to teach;" and respected administrators saying "there is no way that the program will last more than three years."

Again, I am surprised at my naiveté. Although I had been an active participant in local and provincial teacher politics throughout my career and had read about individual or group tendencies to entrench when confronted by change, I was not prepared for this unprofessional hostility. Gradually, I came to understand that many of these colleagues perceived the mere existence of the new school as a challenge to their conventional ways of providing secondary education. Our program raised questions about teacher and student roles and relationships, about administrative roles, the participation of parents, the use of technology, and the architecture of schools. Curiously, members of the local academic community maintained their distance, although academics involved in various reform movements from Florida, California, Texas as well as Japan, China and Germany made regular visits to the Innovative School.

Several of these early visitors invoked my concerns about the kinds of educational research that are ethical and constructive. Often, visitors would walk through with video cameras or audiotapes, interview staff and students, and leave without so much as a short conversation about their interests or intentions. On one occasion, I specifically asked a visiting graduate student to return a transcript, he promised to do so, and I never heard from him again. Several of these visitors, when asked, would report that district administrators had given them permission to conduct their research and then simply walked away.

During that first year, one visitor from the Model Schools Consortium, spoke to the staff about his interest in "learning styles" and convinced the district that all teacher

advisors require their students to complete "his" inventory of learning styles and that we should use the information in our curriculum planning. We administered the inventories, as directed, but found that this material had little or no relevance to our work. The following year, while I was collecting literature published about the Innovative School, a district administrator sent me an article written by this "learning styles expert." In his article, he reported that his work in use at the Innovative School during daily planning and to inform curriculum work. I was dumbfounded by this fabrication. Once again, I grew concerned about the motives and methods of some academics involved in the collaboration and with the communication between administrators and those consulting about the program.

My response was to write a letter to several District Assistant Superintendents about establishing a "district research ethics policy." I forwarded samples of policies from several other districts as well as a copy of a University Ethics Review Policy. I received a short e-mail acknowledging receipt of my letter, but to this date, I am unaware of any action taken.

These experiences together with several others reported later in this chapter raised my level of concern about the behaviour of these visitors. In retrospect, I view these incidents as examples of workplace culture conflict although I suspect that most of these visitors were operating outside of accepted research norms. These situations illustrate my growing awareness of the tension between the intents and interests of visiting academics and the teacher-practitioners working in the school. The administrators seemed to view the school and the program as "theirs" and therefore felt free to give others permission to conduct research. On more than one occasion I was present when a school-based or district administrator would refer to the Innovative School as "my school." This kind of language was very telling in that little account was taken of the many hours of sometime painful, thoughtful, and creative work done by the teachers who had, in my view, brought the program to life. The visiting academics seemed to see the school as an interesting situation worth studying and little more. They simply did what they typically do— data collection, analysis/interpretation, and representation as they create new

knowledge. As a practitioner in the school, I felt violated, generally ignored, and under-valued especially since as a group, we teachers saw the program as "our creation." Of course, this too was a limited view of the situation. All of those involved—students, teachers, administrators, and collaborating academics—had a hand in the creation.

By the end of the year, I was exhausted and planned to leave teaching behind for the summer and to concentrate on writing the final version of my Masters thesis. As I wrote my concluding remarks the tension between my uncovering of the "top-down" implementation of the program and my sense that we teachers had created the program remained a dilemma. I mused over this problem much of the time while fishing that summer.

As school opening in the fall approached, I was far along on my Masters' thesis in preparation for defence in December. During the fall, as I worked with the department group to continue our program development, my preoccupation with my thesis became part of my conversation with department members. This conversation about graduate programs was timely as one of my colleagues was beginning to write her thesis proposal and two other department members declared their interest in applying to graduate school. My colleague settled on a topic associated with constructivist approaches to teaching Mathematics, with a focus on potential applications at the Innovative School. My two other interested colleagues were drawn into our ongoing discussion and by Christmas they both applied to and were accepted into the graduate program in curriculum at a local university. As it turns out, their initiative played an important role in our developing conversations about our work and is the focus of the case study reported in Chapter Three.

With four department members now engaged in graduate studies, our deliberations about the school began to change. Our new conversations included discussions about graduate course work, our colleague's musings about Mathematics education, and my anxious preparations for my thesis defence. Much of this conversation was on-line and other bits surfaced during our energized and often

animated noon hour and after school discussions. Other members of the department started asking for articles that we were discussing and several teachers in other departments asked to participate in our conversations.

By November, I was ready to defend my thesis and had reached the point where I did not want to see it again. I recall approaching my advisor with what I thought was the final of several final drafts of my work. He suggested a few more punctuation changes and I replied, in a good-natured way, that if he thought they were important he could make any changes he wanted before forwarding the final copy. My defence went well and, to my surprise, several department members showed up and sat through what I thought was a rather boring event. This peer support became commonplace as other members of the group completed their theses over subsequent months—a measure of our collective sense that our academic achievements were somehow shared. Unfortunately, there was a conspicuous absence of exchange between school or district-based administrators, consulting academics and members of the Science/Mathematics group about what we learned from our various studies.

Back at the school during the spring, our department, as well as the school community as a whole, continued to deal with the challenges of day-to-day survival and the issues raised by external critics. During January and February, the superintendent organized a Formative Evaluation Project as a means of "validating the program and providing support for the school community." A distinguished academic from a US university chaired this project. The other four members of the group were familiar with the Innovative School program and were viewed by administrators as "friendly" participants.

They presented their report to district administrators, to the school board, and to the school staff. Administrators and the school board saw it as validation for the program, as did the school board, based on my discussions with colleagues, the teaching staff saw it as supportive but largely irrelevant. The report said the staff and administration were doing a good job and offered minor recommendations. A few

specific recommendations, such as the need to improve the computerized "marks-management tool," were seen as helpful by the staff as they also recommended more funding to attend to this problem. Aside from these two aspects, the report was largely irrelevant to the Science and Mathematics group because many of the recommendations did not reflect our sense of reality at the school. For example, while we recognized that we could continue to improve in this area, teachers had gone to great lengths to include broad range of learning strategies for students, many more than would be found in most secondary schools. The Formative Evaluation Team also recommended that "the Mathematics and Science staff consider implementing regularly scheduled, small (15 student) group, mandatory, teacher directed instructional groups." This recommendation was made without any questions being asked about the rationale for the approach that we were taking and seemed inconsistent with the individualized notion of the program. Our group had made a thoughtful and informed decision to dispense with prescribed tutorials for students from grades nine to eleven. We did this because we did not have the staff to provide this service while responsibly facilitating individual learning in the large Mathematics and Science areas. In addition, we had come to believe that the most powerful social learning situation was spontaneously organized small groups (4 or 5 students) where we could focus on topics of immediate interest to and perceived need by student(s).

This was the one time where visiting academics could have been available to engage in thoughtful and critical conversation with those working in the program and where staff and the visitors could have learned from each other. Instead, the result was reminiscent of the accreditation processes that I had been part of in other schools. I saw the report as patronizing and generally lacking an informed critical perspective. What I was looking for and what I now believe would be most constructive in such situations is an ongoing critical conversation that is informed by the immediate problems from practice while infused with, theories, considerations, and examples from elsewhere. What we got in this case was a report, written by those with "credentials," that could be used to ward off criticism. I also see the report as a document representing the views held by district administrators and that these "supported"

recommendations were part of the top-down implementation strategy, although I do not know this to be true. From the inside, this was both frustrating and disenfranchising. While I recognize, with hindsight, that this report had a role to play, there was an unmet need for the kind of critical dialogue and reporting that I now believe could have played a significant role in the construction of the program.

The Mathematics and Science group continued to refine the program by making many adjustments such as getting rid of teachers' desks from our work areas. This might seem insignificant but this change reflected a pivotal shift in our interactions with students. In the beginning, many of us would sit at desks where students would line-up and wait for help. Other teachers would stand behind a kiosk and expect students come to them. These approaches wasted students' time and often led to frustration and in some cases acting out. (We called this kind of arrangement the "store-front" model.) Another approach involved small teams of teachers moving from table to table to work with individual or small groups of students. (We called this the "door-to-door" model.) One teacher established an approach somewhere between the two by using a chair on wheels and having students arrange themselves in a horseshoe-shaped seating pattern around him. He would shuttle among students on his gliding chair.

Our ongoing conversation about these various approaches and their pedagogical and epistemological implications played a central role in our deliberations at the end that the year. At the beginning we had a tenuous consensus on the need to support each other by moving around the Mathematics and Science areas, engaging individual and small groups of students in talk about the subject matter and their learning. We believed that this approach better supports students learning although we did not have empirical evidence for this position. However, a persistent tension remained between those who believed that we needed to teach each student "the course" and those who believed that there is a different course for each student.

The changes in practice that we implemented were both gratifying and frustrating for me. They were gratifying because I believed that we were moving in the

right direction in our relationships with students and, in so doing we were strengthening our ability to have meaningful educational impact on them. They were frustrating because I had to put aside my concerns about those colleagues who pursued a "store-front" and "prescribed curriculum" approach. I recall my Masters' thesis supervisor asking "how things at the school were going?" I said that, "things would be fine except that at least half of my time and energy is spent dealing with the conflicts that arise between colleagues who view our work differently." In some cases, colleagues would not talk with each other for weeks on end and it was my role to help sort things out despite being overwhelmingly partial to one side of the argument.

Even after completing my thesis, I remained somewhat intellectually engaged through our practice related conversations, by conversing with two of my colleagues who had recently enrolled in graduate programs, and by providing editorial feedback to two other colleagues who were writing their theses. Although these activities were thought provoking, they were not meeting my growing need to pursue new questions. In response to this feeling, I explored the possibility of returning to graduate school by talking with members of my Masters' committee and discussing the possibility with Dan.

As part of the case study following this chapter, I review a body of literature considering graduate programs as in-service for teachers. In one study, Dipardo (1993) reports about the experiences of teachers returning to schools after completing graduate programs. To her surprise, she found that many told of personal conflicts around issues of power and status, membership, and isolation. The vitality gained through these teachers graduate work slowly disappeared as they struggled in school systems that supported neither their work as graduate students nor the new ideas they brought to their practices. I see some of this effect in my experience and my journal entries indicate a kind of "void" opening as I completed my thesis.

By the year-end retreat, I had decided to pursue a doctoral program the following year. Another unforeseen event pushed me in this direction. For personal reasons, Dan decided to leave his position as Principal and Director of the Innovative

School. This change was disturbing because I felt that Dan had played a central role in the establishment and subsequent growth of the school program and I believed that our future success depended on his particular approach to administration and leadership.

I had developed a sense that the program's growth was supported by an ongoing conversation among teachers about the everyday practical facets. In the case of the Mathematics/Science group, these conversations led to incremental changes that improved learning opportunities for students. In addition, it was clear to me that the school community needed protection from district administrative impositions such as participation in consortia, year-round schooling proposals, and curriculum marketing proposals. At the same time, the school staff needed the ongoing encouragement and confidence building that comes about by being involved in proactive, honest, and thoughtful deliberations. Dan had facilitated an environment where conversations about practice were validated, outside interference was minimized, and teachers felt they had a voice. My emerging questions about leadership within our fledgling reform project played a significant role in my decision to return to graduate school.

School opening in September of the fourth year was an interesting and complex time. There were the administrative changes, new provincial curriculum (Instructional Resource Packages), several new and inexperienced staff members to mentor, and I registered for the first course of my new graduate program.

I vividly recall arriving at work on the first day of classes and encountering Peter in his new role as principal. While as a VP, he had always dressed quietly and been in the background. In contrast, this year he arrived at work dressed in highly polished shoes, a grey striped suit, starched white shirt, a bold tie, and a pair of red suspenders. My reaction at the time was, "here is a man ready to take charge." This was a significant contrast to Dan, who would often sit at a desk in one of the student work areas interacting with students while attending to his paperwork. I confess to being quite worried whether or not this "new personality" could fill the large leadership gap left by

Dan. As it turns out, Peter is still working successfully in his role as Principal and Director of the program.

In retrospect, my reaction to Peter's authoritative dress was likely predicated on my characteristic negative reaction to "assumed authority" and my concern about the ways that a change in administrative style might negatively impact on the school. After several weeks of stewing, I decided that my reaction was unfair and presumptuous. However, I was s left with my questions about how different approaches to administration affect our attempts to reform secondary schooling.

My first graduate course in the new program was a re-run of the history of educational thought I had taken in my Masters' Program. I was not as intimidated this time, although I did feel as though I was somewhat out of practice in the academic game. This course involved a considerably expanded version of the earlier course material adding a few new voices to my sense of the Euro-centric history of educational thought. In addition, I had an opportunity to read and respond to an interesting piece of the professor's work-in-progress that greatly influenced my use of technology at the school.

In January, I was asked to spend time with another group of invited academics from the United States. Coincidentally, this group was particularly interested in educational technology and its uses at the Innovative School. The positive aspect of this visit was the group's support for our innovative uses of technology that focused on student learning rather than on information management. However, we had no opportunity to talk about their interests as they were "visiting to conduct research."

When I happened on one of the visitors completing a video interview with two of my students who were working on an innovative computer project, my concern about ethics and research surfaced once again. When I asked about the reason for interview , the visitor answered "we have been given permission by the district to conduct research." According to the students, the researcher approached them and simply asked if he "could talk to them about their work." This experience tugged at my ethical

sensibilities. Where was the respect for these students' intellectual ownership of their ideas? Had there been appropriate research ethics review? Where were the parental release forms? Just who would benefit from this? Where would this video footage end up and how would it be used? Was this what some intended when they talked about collaboration?

During the second term of that year, I registered for my next graduate course that focused on "mapping" the field of curriculum studies. In addition, we spent considerable time considering the role of action research. The mapping function of the course was important to me as a neophyte. Our discussions provided a general frame of reference for curriculum studies and gave the term "the field" new meaning. I followed up on our considerations of action research, by formalizing one piece of my ongoing inquiry in a paper titled "Sharing Local Wisdom: an Action Research." The work emphasizes the earlier mentioned tension between, on the one hand program implementation as determined by administrators working in collaboration with selected academics and, on the other hand, emerging attempts by teachers to construct a program. This paper described a school-wide professional development activity, planned by the teachers, where the staff identified successful practices and recommended changes in areas where teachers and students were struggling. The results of the professional day were included in a school brochure about successful practices and several departments planned to follow-up on the recommendations. Unlike the research by outside consultants, the paper addressed issues of concern for teachers and they weren't active participants in the inquiry.

The practice identified in the action research was the suggestion that conversations with students were very important. I continued to develop this notion as I revised learning guides, pursued my graduate program, and talked with others about our school. *The notion of conversation as a practice became the subject of inquiry and a paper. Eventually, this work informed my thinking about dialogue within the nexus.*

During the spring, I visited two other school sites where similar programs were in operation. The first visit involved me and colleagues from my school meeting with educators and parents from a new program. We did this in an attempt "to help them deal with a crisis at their school." On the day of our arrival in the district, we were greeted with a newspaper headline titled "Big Trouble at Utopia High." This school had just opened the previous September and the administration and teachers had modelled their program on the Innovative School.

In retrospect, it seems as though I was viewing the situation at the school through the lenses provided by both my practical experience and my graduate work. While using my teaching experience to answer specific questions about learning guides and teacher advisory relationships, I was also seeing this situation as a curriculum implementation problem. In addition, my emerging views about how we learn are evident as I emphasized "learning conversations" and the important role such personal communication have as we make meaning about the subject under consideration. This visit also reaffirmed the competing voices that surround school communities—in this case, local politicians, parents, district administration, students, academics, and teachers.

The second visit that spring was my long awaited trip to our sister school in another province. Coincidentally, the day that Peter, a district administrator, and I arrived in the city where our sister school is located, the news headline read:

"Special Report, Ranking High Schools."

As the only high school of its kind in [the city], the principal of [our sister school] is not surprised that grade twelve students there had the best diploma exam results in the Catholic School System.

[The principal] heaped credit Tuesday on [Our Sister School's] "model school philosophy"—a unique, individualized learning approach which enables students to write tests when they're ready to write tests.

And even if a grade twelve student requires an extra semester to complete high school—a frequent knock against [our sister school] —[the

principal] thinks the end result is worth it if a graduating student has the grades to begin post secondary study.

We drove directly from the airport to the sister school where I expected to feel at home. The school was anything but comfortable or familiar. Although it is true that the program involves similar elements to the Innovative School including a self-paced curriculum in the form of learning guides and a teacher advisor program, the similarities end there. During the afternoon, I visited the Science and the Mathematics areas and chatted with several teachers, teaching aids, and students. I discovered significant structural and affective differences between the programs.

Our sister program has a lower teacher-student ratio resulting from its use of many teaching assistants working in what I would view as teaching roles. This practice is identified as "differentiated staffing," a notion that was considered during the planning for the Innovative School but was aggressively opposed by the local union. In spite of this difference, I saw many more students working on their own without any conversational interactions between students and teachers or teaching aides. Students worked in large study areas where they were monitored by an aide sitting at a desk — in one case, the aide was reading a novel. In the Mathematics and Science areas, "the store front approach" was standard teacher practice. This involved long line-ups of students waiting for their one-on-one encounter with the teacher. Meanwhile, other students visited quietly or worked individually in the self-study areas.

The next day, I returned to these areas and observed much the same situation, but on this occasion, I had an opportunity to visit with several students. One grade eleven student, who was recommended to me as a good representative of the school by the administrator, was as anxious to talk about his experience, as he was curious about the Innovative School program. During our conversation, he suggested that he did not enjoy coming to school but that he knew participating in this program helped his chances of doing well on government exams. In describing how he learned, he said that he "simply did what was laid out in the learning guides." I asked if he was ever offered

opportunities to design a learning activity himself or develop an assessment strategy with his markers. He appeared amazed and responded, "I'd love to be able to do that." I left this and several other conversations feeling sad and concerned.

Two things strike me here. First, as an invited guest, I was doing just what I had taken exception to in others—I was engaging in a form of research as I followed up my questions. I did this without taking account of the student, ethical implications, or what I might offer the school in return. In addition, I see myself shifting from the role of colleague teacher to the conventional role of academic entering the situation, staying for a short time, and then leaving with my data to be interpreted through my own conceptual lenses.

During the evening, our hosts introduced me to two members of the Model Schools Consortium who were visiting with the administration from our sister school and representatives from my district. Our hosts arranged the meeting to discuss the logistics of ongoing communication between those interested in a common approach to secondary education. During the discussion, I discovered that the consultants who had participated in conceptualizing the Innovative School Program also belonged to this group. Although I agreed with much of what they espoused, I left the dinner meeting with a renewed feeling of being manipulated. It tuned out that this group was the source of the "imported wisdom" behind the Innovative School program that I had written about in my earlier work. It finally dawned on me—the Innovative School was not a local innovation masterfully orchestrated by a local district administrator, rather, it was part of a much larger curriculum project—the Learning Environments Consortium.[18]

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[18]What I refer to here as "imported wisdom" is really the "fidelity" approach to change that Fulan writes about. He suggests that this approach is based on the assumption that an already developed innovation exists and the task is to get individuals to implement it faithfully in practice—that is to use it as it is 'supposed to be used' as intended by the developer (Fullan 1991, p. 38). This approach is in direct opposition to what I believe we as a group were engaged in and called "practical wisdom." This kind of understanding is characterized by Fullan (1991) as the "mutual-adaptation" approach to change. He sees this approach as change based on "

Upon my return to the Innovative School, I reported on my visit to our sister school. I was uncertain what to say during the staff meeting, and so I simply reported that "the sister school" was surprisingly different from our school. I suggested that the major differences had to do with teacher practices (the store front model). I observed that the teacher advisor program was also very different as teachers only met one-on-one with students rather than in small community groups as we did. I also suggested that these differences might explain what I perceived to be a less positive and enthusiastic tone in the school.

In addition, I suggested to my colleagues that our authentic assessment practices seemed to give students permission to actively represent their work in a variety of ways. I also suggested that this practice led to a more "open ended" interpretation of the curriculum than the apparently rigid approach in place at our sister school. These observations were not intended as a condemnation of the sister school's program nor did I mean to suggest that our program was doing a vastly superior job.

Aside from the use of guides and teacher advisory, the experience for students at the sister school seemed pretty conventional and uninteresting. I pointed out that the general goal of their program, as suggested by the principal, is high grades—just as it is in most other secondary schools. In contrast, I felt that the Innovative School program was making some progress in providing students with curricular alternatives, as well as a safe, social learning environment in which to explore individual interests and personal needs. I suggested to my colleagues at that time, and I still feel, that we had a long way to go in these areas.

One series of e-mail communications among our staff indicated that all was not well within our particular brand of utopia. The e-mails focussed on a barrier placed across one of our large common work areas, "the great hall" where as many as 400

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adaptations and decisions made by users as they work with particular new policies or programs with the policy or program and the user's situation mutually determining the outcome" (p. 38).

students worked in four distinct subject areas (Languages, Social Studies, Language Arts, and Mathematics). One day several teachers erected a divider constructed of side-by-side study carrels between the Mathematics and English areas in the Great Hall. Over the following week, there was a heated and sometimes vitriolic exchange of questions, explanations, and interpretations about the construction of "the wall." These conversations revealed deep divisions within the school-wide teacher group about the "best" ways to go about our work. My interpretation at the time was that this conversation paralleled the questions that the Mathematics and Science group had been working on for the previous four years. Although the e-mail conversation brought the controversy in the open, at no point during my remaining time at the school did we ever address the fundamental differences underpinning the controversy.

Although tense deliberations were on going at the Innovative School during this period, the Mathematics and Science group's annual retreat in 1996 focused on largely practical matters. The major issue up for consideration was the Ministry's imposed curriculum changes, the IRPs (Instructional Resource Packages). As it happened, the following year was the implementation year for several new senior Mathematics and Science courses. In addition, we were expected to implement the new junior Science and Mathematics programs over the following several years. These expectations posed substantial organizational and curriculum writing problems for the group. A special problem arises here at the Innovative School because entire courses must be "on the shelf" ready for opening day in September. This differs from conventional schools where the teacher determines what all students will work on each day of the year and then gradually implements curricular changes as the year proceeds. In response to this need, we set about planning who would team-up to write the required learning guides and what kinds of approaches would work best. In addition, we viewed examples of authentic student products from the previous year and discussed how we assessed this work and what changes we should make.

The following year, my final year at the school, the first weeks were predictable for the first time. Although I had planned some curriculum over the summer, the process of putting changes into practice seemed much easier than in the past. As usual, my colleagues and I met the first day to make adjustments to include new curriculum written over the summer as well as changes in work assignments negotiated the previous June at retreat. This feeling of predictability and routine persisted throughout the fall.

In the evenings, I continued my graduate work by taking a course on critical pedagogy with a focus on authenticity, representation, and practice. While reviewing significant practices from my work, I realized that I had been talking about and espousing the virtues of conversation as we constructed our school program without actually working through what I meant by "having a conversation." I choose to focus on this topic for my term paper.

A short time later while guiding a group of visitors through the school, I was asked, "In one sentence, how would you characterize this program?" I considered the possible responses throughout the rest of the tour, and finally, I turned to the visiting professor and said, "this is a program that relies on the 'practice of conversation.'" He tilted his head, shifted from foot to foot, as he did several times during the tour, and said, "I don't understand, how can simple conversations be so important in a program such as this?"

As mentioned earlier, last year during a professional day, my colleagues identified conversation as being the most important practice supporting student success in this self-paced program. However, it wasn't until I reflected on my response to the visitor's question, that I came to understand the rich contribution that conversation

makes, as my colleagues and our students exchange information and ideas.[19] I followed up on this line of inquiry within one of my courses resulting in my first publication.

The spring of the fifth year and last year at the school was a complicated time. In addition to my regular duties, I was sponsoring a student teacher, preparing a folio as part of my application to teach in a local pre-service teacher education program, and beginning my doctoral research on "school reform." My efforts with the student teacher were trying: I wanted to support her as best I could, but there were already many demands on my time. We worked around my time constraints and learned much from each other. Although my student was not aware of it, her presence caused me to reflect on my experience as a student teacher, as well as to look forward to the following year when I hoped to be working as a teacher educator.

In retrospect, the teacher education program I had graduated from was very different from that of my student. She was expected to approach her program with an eye to reflective, critical analysis of her daily experience. In support of this expectation, we each wrote our impressions of each day (sometimes the week) and then we debriefed our respective impressions over lunch. In this way, we constructed a mutual understanding about her emerging practice. The Innovative School program provided a particularly rich venue for this experience as it challenged many of the "taken for granted" understandings that she had about secondary schools. At the same time, her presence pushed me to consider the role of teacher education as I worked to better understand secondary school reform.

During my last few months at the school, two further significant events occurred. The first of these involves a local sociologist's who invited by Peter, the principal, to meet with interested staff to explain her research plans. Although the researcher and

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[19]Conversation as defined by the *OED* is a special way of talking where "the action of living or having one's being, [of] consorting with intimacy, or the interchange of information [and] of ideas [between those who are] intimate [or] close, innermost friends" occurs. This definition of what conversations are, suggests that they involve two-way communication, a willingness by all participants to listen and to be changed, and that conversations involve some form of positive relationship. As an educational practice, conversation is an oral communication involving friends as they exchange ideas and information in an environment where all participants are prepared to listen and be changed.

Peter seemed to assume that the staff would approve the project, several teachers, myself included, took exception to this proposal. I was concerned about benefits to the school and how the "subjects" were to be treated (45 of them would be students). I felt that any planned study should involve the active participation of those in the program and should offer potential benefit for the school. The issue was hotly debated and was finally voted on at a poorly attended staff meeting where eleven votes were cast in favour and seven opposed with the total number of possible votes was forty-four. The study went ahead with minimal input or participation by staff.

The second key issue was an article published in a local newspaper that acclaimed the "success" of the Innovative School because of students' excellent grades on standardized provincial exams. My reaction to the article goes back to a point I made in the conclusion of my Master's thesis when addressing another local newspaper quote five years earlier. The earlier article was published during the first year that the Innovative School was open. I remarked about it in my thesis:

> ...a local newspaper reported recently that most of the scholarship winners in the district had attended another school offering a traditional program. The immediate question, as I can imagine in the minds of, say, parents of [the Innovative School's] students, is: Why not [the Innovative School]?
>
> The matter is rather difficult, however, as the scholarship program could be seen by some, not solely as a measure of academic achievement, but as a manifestation of a school structure and culture that may be more concerned with "tokenism" than with students' self-directed and active learning. In fact, the educational program at [the Innovative School] would question the authenticity of measuring and reinforcing students' accomplishments by such means. It would be another thing altogether to detect and measure the sort of goals and objectives anticipated by the [Innovative School]—those of critical thinking, self-directedness, excellence in expression, and communication, to name a few.

As indicated in this quote, I believed that those designing the Innovative School program were not focused on "token ends" such as high scores on standardized tests. Since that time, my experience has shown that like our sister school and more

conventional secondary schools, high achievement on standardized tests is the key goal for some educators associated with the Innovative School program. I have been personally complicit in this vision by agreeing to treat grade twelve students in a more conventional way and do little more than prepare them to write the government exams.

I left the school feeling certain about a few things. Working together in committed and serious ways can help teachers find meaning in their work. Practical solutions to problems can be found through the collective experience of those working together to construct educational programs. Oral communication (conversation) involving those who care for one-another as they exchange ideas in an environment where all participants are prepared to listen and be changed, can lead to new knowledge and understanding. There are unique opportunities for teachers and students to plan individual learning experiences when a school community decides to dispense with the "tyranny of timetables." Finally, I feel that organized "process time" such as that provided by teacher advisory offers unique opportunities for teachers and students to be exposed to each other's humanity in ways not easily found within conventional secondary school classrooms.

Our annual retreat at the end of the fifth year was an emotional time for me. It was filled with energetic searching for solutions to the many practice-related and human-relations problems confronting us. The group decided to outline our ways of working with students and our beliefs about how students learn in a brochure in an attempt to help others, both inside and outside of the school, understand our approach to the Innovative School program. We agreed that this work would carry over into the next year and I looked forward to visiting the school and hearing about my colleagues' progress.

Epilogue

As I review the narrative from the cultural perspective outlined in Chapter Five, I see practitioner and academic cultural groups in new ways. While I once believed that academics were conspicuous by their absence in the development of the Innovative School program, I now

see this group participating in four different ways. In addition, where I once saw administrators only as managers, I now view their work as a far more complex collection of roles.

I view the practitioner group not as representative of secondary teacher culture but as teachers in the process of reconceptualizing their professional roles within a new workplace. The great irony is that despite the changes in teachers' roles represented within the narrative, there appears to be little change in their ultimate expectations for students—the general preoccupation with high scores on standardized tests remains central as the outcome of secondary school education.

I note that while looking for academics to play some sort of direct problem-solving role as the program developed, I ended up feeling that this group did not play any deliberate significant role in the construction of the program. In fact, this group did participate in a variety of ways that I now see as typifying conventional approaches to their collaboration with schools. There was the "consulting with administrators" role both before and after the implementation of the program. Others used the site as an opportunity to follow-up on their individual research interests. Still others conducted a review of the program and then provided "expert" opinions in the form of a report supporting the program. One academic and her graduate students provided a somewhat less friendly and critical review of the program meant to create new knowledge about "schools of choice" for use by the broader educational community.

Each of these roles contributes to the knowledge production or community service function of academic work, yet in my view, little of this was particularly helpful to the practitioners working to construct the program from the inside. All the while, other academics were unwittingly playing a constructive role through their interactions with teachers participating in graduate courses.

Like many of my colleagues, I was working hard at constructing a fit between the realities of our workplace and fidelity to what the Innovative School program "should" be like. At the same time, I felt the tension between the press from above and the needs emerging from our experiences with students in the school. In addition, there was ongoing tension between conventional understandings of what it means to be a secondary school teacher and some new

view of our work as expressed through the discourse about the construction of "the wall." For some of us, our work in graduate programs also created tension between what we were coming to understand as being important (e.g. constructivist approaches to teaching and learning and the importance of an inquiry stance with respect to our work) and the ways that others conceptualized the program.

In the final analysis, the Innovative School program is a "limited success" because it does include limited constructive changes in conventional secondary schooling. The teacher advisory for example provides students with an elementary classroom-like sanctuary and mentorship that are typically absent in secondary schools. In addition, this structure provides ongoing interaction with most students' parents, something that is absent from many secondary school programs. Finally, the school program as a whole recognizes that students learn at their own rates.

However, the success stops there. Like other schools, the Innovative School program does not deliberately support participants in considering their practice as being problematic. The Provincial curriculum remains, for the most part, unquestioned and the system-wide preoccupation with final exam results remains the central measure of success. The school's claimed innovative uses of technology were limited to management through technology for the most part and ignored the potential use of technology to support student learning. While the program provides a powerful opportunity to explore what it means to teach and to learn, there is little support for, or opportunity to engage in ongoing critical conversation about these central questions. Despite the opportunity to explore changes in the roles of administrators, counsellors and supporting staff such as librarians, such role changes have not been part of general discussions. Nor has their been a discussion about the kinds of role(s) that academics might play in ongoing program development.

While recognizing the limited success represented by the Innovative School program, I must assume that other substantive improvements are possible. As suggested by the narrative and the literature on school-university collaboration the culturally informed tension between

teacher-practitioners and academics is a major difficulty confronting these groups as they attempt to work together to change' secondary school experiences.

My eventual recognition of this major difficulty led to the central questions considered throughout this thesis. These overarching questions are: What sources of tension limit the ability of school-based practitioners and academics as they collaborate with one another? What conditions would improve their collaborative efforts to improve education? In addition, I wonder how future attempts at planning new school programs might sustain a disposition towards ongoing inquiry? In the following chapter, I tell of my emerging cultural understandings about collaboration and some of the conditions that supported changes in practice for some members of the Science and Mathematics group.

Chapter Three:
School Reform And Graduate Programs as In-Service: A Cultural Perspective

Introduction

In September, as part of my final graduate course I began to compile a case study involving five colleagues at the Innovative School who had enrolled in graduate classes. My primary aim was to better understand the effects of the accidental interplay between the culture of the graduate program and this group's workplace culture. A secondary aim was to identify cultural factors from the graduate program and workplace contexts that supported changes in practice. (My emerging understanding of the concept of cultural, as applied to workplaces, framed my considerations of both areas).[20]

While recognizing other goals associated with graduate programs, most educational jurisdictions in North America offer teachers financial incentives to participate in graduate programs on the assumption that it will provide an "in-service" role in improving professional practice (Knapp, McNergney, & Herbert, 1989). However, the effectiveness of graduate programs as a form of in-service education or as a means of school improvement remains unclear–the literature is scant and ambiguous. Many graduate programs for teachers focus on teaching *about* education rather than teaching to improve education, so the lack of change in teacher practice should not be surprising (Creamer & Shelton, 1988). The dubious assumption of conventional graduate programs is that knowledge learned in graduate classes will transfer to teachers' practices. In contrast to this "knowledge transfer" view of graduate programs, like DiPardo (1993), I argue that knowing and understanding are linked through social

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[20]The literature review and interpretation of the data were both informed and enriched during discussions and collaborative writing with David Boote, another graduate student in the course, and Professor Marvin Wideen my Program Supervisor.

activity and that graduate programs could benefit from an examination of their program outcomes from this social activity or cultural perspective.

My study examines the work and graduate program experience of five graduate students, including myself, who felt that our graduate coursework had contributed significantly to improvements in our teaching practices. Through an analysis of interviews with colleagues working in the same school department, I gain insight into how questions from our workplace become questions for graduate study and how ideas from graduate school become part of our standard practice and cultural resources. From this analysis, I derive lessons that may help graduate programs understand how they can better collaborate with educators to improve practice.

Graduate Programs as Teacher In-Service

The literature on graduate programs as teacher in-service is ambivalent about its efficacy.[21] Creamer and Shelton's (1988) review of graduate programs across the US confirms a pervasive recognition that such in-service education is imperative for quality professional practice. In their review of the effectiveness of teachers' participation in such programs, Knapp *et al.* (1989) found little evidence of improved teacher effectiveness. In contrast, Darling-Hammond (2000) reviews a number of large studies using data from the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMMS), National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), and Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) where possession of a Masters' degree is an indicator of teacher quality. These studies found that possession of a graduate degree correlated with improved student performance in Mathematics, Science, and reading. However, these studies did not differentiate among the kinds of Masters' Degree programs, confusing subject-specific Masters, and pre-service and in-service Masters' programs (Luft, Narro, & Slaughter,

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[21]The literature reviewed for this paper focused primarily on the efficacy of graduate education programs as a form of in-service—playing a role in the reforming of schooling. While I occasionally refer to the school improvement literature, it was not the focus of the background literature because for the most part it did not deal with university coursework as the prime vehicle of reform.

2002). In Darling-Hammond's study, possession of a Masters' had a small positive (statistically insignificant) effect on student outcomes on standardized tests across grade levels. In sum, the existing quantitative research on the effectiveness of a Masters' degree suggests no effect or at best a statistically insignificant effect.

The widely accepted explanation for the lack of in-service effects of graduate programs focus on the content and methodology of graduate programs. The typical approach in graduate school is the "academic instructional model" (Creamer & Shelton, 1988, p. 412). This model consists of professor-directed lessons and use of traditional term papers for evaluation (Drake, 1994). Many writers suggest that the traditional content emphasis and methodological approach of graduate programs undermines its value as teacher in-service. For example, Turner (1990) suggests that graduate programs should focus on the "capabilities of teachers" to improve their own practice. Turner recommends that, among other things, Masters' programs support teachers' ability to solve professional problems by turning away from the traditional focus on academic abstractions. Both Drake (1994) and Regan-Smith (1994) agree with this position and provide examples of this problem-based approach including qualitative data in which teachers report success. The pedagogical approach in Regan-Smith's group includes work with diverse students and faculty, thesis support groups, and critical feedback from peers and faculty. Regan-Smith suggests that the in-service value of graduates course will improve if planners "focus on *process* as much as they do on content because the course process through which learners learn can be as important as the content" (emphasis added, p. 55).

A large number of more recent studies echo Regan-Smith's suggestion, advocating various "alternative Masters degrees" as in-service for teachers. Such programs tend to be offered at school sites, focus content around teachers' expressed needs, and use school personnel and consultants to teach the graduate classes (Marx & Cromwell, 2002). Other research suggests that these strategies fostered teachers' perception of ownership of what they were learning (Rainer & Matthews, 2002) and

empowers teachers in their professional lives (Livingston & Robertson, 2001). Advocates of such changes use the cohort model (groups from a single school or district working on a set of problems together) as a means of collaborative knowledge construction and combating professional isolation (Potthoff, Batenhorst, Fredrickson, & Tracy, 2001; Slater & Trowbridge, 2000; Freeman, 1993; Selke, 2001; Holt & Johnson, 1989). Other studies advocate action research (Burnaford & Hobson, 1995; Cornett, 1990; Johnson & Button, 2000) and narrative inquiry (Conle, 2000) where teachers' stories are used as both research tools and a medium for professional development.

These small-scale qualitative studies suggest that "non-traditional" graduate education may serve as an effective form of in-service education by linking academic content with teachers' professional lives. This linkage happened in an unplanned way in the case study presented here.

The nature of the graduate program may not be the sole factor in determining its value as professional in-service. Others suggest that the differences between university and school cultures undermine the effects of graduate programs on teacher performance. For example, DiPardo (1993) argues that the workplace culture of schools may have an impact. In interviews with teachers who had completed conventional academic graduate programs, she heard stories of personal conflicts around issues of power and status, membership and isolation in relation to teachers' return to schools and classrooms. Upon returning to their workplaces these teachers were "bereft of time and opportunity to explore questions collaboratively, these teachers [watched] as the vitality of their understandings...slowly ebbed...conceptual foundations withered...before contentious school boards, into ways to shut down conversation, not stir it up" (p. 210). In other words, the norms and practices operating within their schools were at odds with the values and ideas supported in their graduate programs. This lack of "cultural support" may explain the lack of positive effects reported by researchers—a topic that I take up in Chapter Six.

Many contributors to the school improvement literature (Little, 1982; Hargreaves & Hopkins, 1991; Wideen, 1998) argue for a school or group focus to provide the necessary cultural support. As an example, Wideen found that a cohesive group within a school, such as the group studied here, provides a type of "capacity" that shelters teachers against such difficulties. Such shelter enables practitioners to monitor, assess, and apply in-service activity in ways that appear to allow for improvements in practice (Darling-Hammond, 1997).

As I argue throughout this case study, explanations for the effects of graduate programs on teacher performance must go beyond narrow considerations of academic instruction, practice related problem solving, meaningful sources of personal growth, or the role of cohesive school groups. These may largely be symptoms of a more fundamental disjunction arising out of the interplay "between" distinct academic and practitioner cultures of work.

Culture and Professional Development

Cultures develop in certain environments and shape aspects of those environments. Hargreaves (1992) argues that the culture of a school or program is the most important determinant of a teacher's work and how she or he will approach it. DiPardo (1993) raises the issue of culture in her study, contending that acquired knowledge and understanding requires social activity and cultural practice, such as mediation, negotiation, and ongoing communication. Taking culture seriously requires that we view individuals and the social context in which they work as being fully inter-connected. Holly *et al*. (1987) define school culture as the "shared understanding and ideas which shape norms, structures and procedures which have influence in different ways on the daily life of a school...and give meaning to what [teachers] do." Denning and Dargan (1996) refer to culture as a "domain of action" and they draw attention to the interplay among aspects of a culture. They suggest that attending to the ways a culture deals with its "ongoing concerns" and breakdowns in "standard practices," helps to understand how a culture may change. This cultural view provides a

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framework for considering the experience of the group of teachers as they struggle to find a fit between their graduate programs related new knowledge and understanding, and the problems surfacing at the Innovative School.

Taken from this perspective, intentional cultural change is the agenda of in-service education. As illustrated in the literature reviewed earlier, the strictly cognitive focus of much in-service fails to account for the considerable role that practitioners' culture plays in such change. Once formed, most cultures are very resilient to change (Argyris & Schön, 1996), preventing individuals within them from learning new practices or from introducing new practices learned in such places as graduate programs. Organizations, such as schools and faculties of education, need to be able to modify their cultures to meet the changing conditions that exemplify post-traditional society (Giddens, 1996).

Argyris and Schön (1996) help us understand how some groups are able to intentionally change their ways of operating. These groups tend to seek valid information, are committed to free and informed choice, and continually monitor implementation and change. As seen in the case below, the Mathematics and Science group at the school was able to effectively deal with its problems in these ways over a five-year period. Their success was helped, in part, by concurrent participation in school-based reform and graduate school.

The Case

The context for the case is a newly constructed, 1000 student secondary school claiming to be a "different sort of high school." The Innovative School operates without a timetable and is designed around three curricular "pillars" intended to support an individualized learning structure. First, is a Teacher Advisor Program where teachers provide personal assistance to students and help them self-monitor their progress. The second pillar involves a computer supported Information Management System intended to help administer the school, monitor student progress, and provide reports to parents.

Learning Guides provide the organization and delivery system and are the third pillar. These guides offer a roadmap for students to learn segments of the curriculum and support the self-paced delivery model. Students use these guides to work towards the completion of their courses at a rate compatible with their intellectual resources, stated goals, and available time. The school program involves substantial role changes for students and teachers, as well as an "open" architectural design including large learning centres requiring a team approach to teaching.

This story also unfolds within a university setting where a faculty of education offers a Masters' program taught in the evening. The program is comprised of six courses and a thesis requirement. Different professors teach the courses which range in focus from the history of educational ideas to qualitative research methods and involve a variety of educational perspectives.

The teachers involved in the story work together within the same department where they develop the new Mathematics and Science program. All of the teachers involved in the study enrolled in the graduate program described above.

Learning to Work Together

From the very beginning, the group found the experience of developing the Innovative School interesting, thought provoking, and very difficult. As head of the Mathematics and Science Department, my main role was helping the group come to a common sense of purpose and direction. At the same time, I was struggling to gain a clear sense of direction for myself and often relied on Dan's (the principal) quiet confidence and apparent clear vision. Early on, Dan established a forward-looking stance as he organized staff development exercises and general discussions to help the staff develop a vision for the school.

The Mathematics and Science group included nine teachers, five of whom (including me) are participants in this study. These five include Brenda who was beginning the sixth year of her practice as a secondary Mathematics teacher and Aveet

who was in the fifth year of her practice as a junior Science teacher. Tim was a physics teacher beginning his fourth year and Nick was beginning his ninth year after having taught both intermediate and secondary Science.

During my interviews, Brenda recalls our early planning meetings "as the first time that [she] had ever engaged with a staff talking about philosophical issues and it ... inspired a confidence." Brenda remembers an event from this time when we were "together for Chinese food...and after a great deal of discussion agreeing to imagine what a day at the Innovative School might be like. I felt like, oh my gosh, I can't imagine, I don't know what its going to be like, and that's when I started to get a little panicky feeling. That is when I felt that we were starting to break away a little as the Mathematics and Science group...before that we had the security of the whole school group."

This process of beginning to construct a culture that Brenda spoke of took on several forms over the following months and years. As we opened the school and launched the program, our conversations took place in different ways. Conversations about shared practice occurred spontaneously "on-the-floor" as we engaged in team teaching and in a common "preparation area." These informal conversations became standard practices and provided the focus for more formal discussions at department meetings, retreats, and the Mathematics and Science department's contributions at staff meetings. In addition, members of the group who were doing graduate work and others who eventually enrolled in graduate programs edited and discussed each other's coursework and often discussed their studies in relation to their practice. What follows is a condensed version of five members' thoughts about our work together. I have organized these under the headings of conversations from the floor, in the preparation area, and other conversations. These three headings identify the settings where our deliberations about the relationship between graduate studies and teaching practice took place.

"On-the-floor" Conversations

These conversations occur in one of two physical spaces—in an irregularly shaped Science lab the size of three conventional teaching labs and in a Mathematics work area located in an even larger space called "The Great Hall." Upon entering these settings, you would find grade nine through grade twelve students working on either Science or Mathematics courses. There might be as many as one hundred and thirty or as few as twenty students in either area at any given time. These numbers depend on the activities that students have planned for their day's work and on other scheduled activities in the school.

The teachers' experiences in these areas are complex and ever changing. They work with a team of three or four others to manage the area, meet with assigned students, and generally support all students in their area. These primary roles blend during conversations with students, colleagues, and many visitors. During the ebb and flow of these activities teachers somehow find time to talk about their work. We call these periodic interactions "on-the-floor" conversations. They afford non-threatening opportunities to discuss things that are not working well and to imagine possibilities. As a result, teaching and other practices are open and contingent in a way that is not common in most secondary school cultures. Out of these deliberations, emerged new practices and representations of practice such as the revised learning guides.

During the interviews, the teachers noted the many conversations about practice that arose from the floor. One common recollection centred around the distinction between what I referred to in Chapter Two as the "store-front" and "door-to-door" delivery modes. These were represented by teachers who wanted to work from a fixed spot having students come to them, versus those who wanted to move to the students.

Deliberations about the principles underlying these two approaches led to discussion of transmissive and constructivist approaches to teaching. These distinctions immerged from Brenda and Aveet graduate studies and their individual research on student learning within the school context. The storefront metaphor came to represent

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the transmissive approach and the "door-to-door" the constructivist metaphor. After several years, all of the Science and Mathematics teachers agreed that some form of door-to-door delivery was the best method for reaching most students. The tension between these approaches and the underpinning pedagogy remains as an active source of debate within the department and the school as a whole.

Aveet identifies this tension when she recalls that:

at first I didn't realize the importance of [leaving the desk] and then I realized it a bit more, it came to me gradually. I think it was a combination of thinking about it through my Master's work and through my journal forcing me to think about 'what am I doing here?'

Brenda recalls that in the Mathematics area "at first we were always behind the kiosk teaching the curriculum. When we came out into the work space more students would come to us, and gradually we realized that we needed to be out there answering students' questions." In support of this practice, we arranged to have open shelves constructed at the kiosks so students could get their own materials, as needed. This allowed teachers to "give themselves permission" to spend more time working "on-the-floor" with students. Brenda suggests that a consequences of this change is that all teachers now see "the whole area as 'ours,' whereas before it was more 'potted." In the beginning, everyone just worked with 'their' individual students at the kiosk in attempts to teach the content associated with individual learning guides. Later we learned to circulate around the floor and to work with individual and small groups of students as questions surfaced in their work.

Brenda made this "on-the-floor" work the focus of her inquiry into constructivist approaches in Mathematics. She changed her approach from showing students the correct way to do things, holding "the" answers and marking students' work at the kiosk; to one where addressing students' questions and prior understandings were the starting points for her work. Aveet developed her thesis around the role of "learning conversations" fostering students' construction of knowledge and understandings about

Science. This approach involved sitting with small groups of students and engaging in dialogue about their questions about their completion of learning guides, representing their understandings, and assessing their outcomes.

The group as a whole identified the Learning Guides, one of the original pillars of the program, as a major ongoing subject of on-the-floor conversations. Many guides had to be re-written as soon as the school opened, because of the incorrect preconceptions about how things would work at the Innovative School. Other sets of guides became ongoing projects for writing teams or the focus of major revisions at the end of the first year. Individual guides also needed partial revisions as teachers and students identified minor problems or decided on improvements. Aveet remembers an early conversation as she worked with Tim, saying she told him "I don't even know what the Guides are. We never really defined them, and as a late addition to the staff, I was not part of the whole conversation about...how the format for the guides was established."

The format and content of the guides was prescribed by District Administrators, consequently many teachers who had not been part of the writing process had no sense of their intended use. Aveet recalls that as time passed these conversations about learning guides led to questions like "what's really important here, how are kids really learning with these, and how are we motivating students by using these guides?" She went on to say that she was "just scratching the surface in answering these kinds of questions until she started researching and writing about her interviews" that she had with students about their work with the learning guides. Tim also considered the utility of the guides within his research about teachers' advisory role. Here, teachers help students develop individual learning plans about how to complete work outlined in the learning guides. Like Aveet, through his research Tim identified problems within the guides and informed the ongoing process of improving this part of their practice.

Preparation Area Conversations

The setting for these informal conversations is an area where each member of the department has a desk and a computer. Early on, the desks faced the walls or were in close clusters of four to provide easy connection to computer jacks (this was seen as a priority by administration). Over time teachers found ways to stretch these electronic umbilical cords by changing the seating plan to facilitate general "face-to-face" conversations. During a recent visit to the school, I found that all fourteen desks are facing one another, with a table, some plants, and several comfortable chairs arranged in the middle to support "sit-down" conversations. Department members have displayed several journals on a table including work produced by members of the group. This sort of "changing the environment" to better enable themselves to understand each other, was not typical of these teachers previous practice nor, in my experience, is it common in most secondary schools.

Each member of the group expressed strong positive feelings about the informal conversations that go on in this area. They see this discourse as building from other conversations on-the-floor, in staff meetings, on-line, or within graduate classes. They see it as a place where they converse about substantial issues. When talking with Tim about these preparation area conversations, he suggested, "here everything has been 'chucked out of the window' and all of a sudden everything's left dangling. We have so many...rich and deep and meaningful things to talk about—as opposed to my previous school where we would talk about mundane things such as whether kids should be allowed to wear hats or not."

The group feels that they learned a lot in the preparation area. Brenda pointed out that one of the most important things "we've always done is to say, well, what do you mean by that, forcing reflection again and again." When speaking about these conversations, Aveet remembers, "I often felt that the clarity came from talking with somebody in the preparation area." Tim recalls, "that the working group became kind of like the proverbial wall that you bounce your ideas off of and it comes back to you

and it's more defined in many ways." I feel we had imported practices for framing conversation found in our individual graduate course work, in particular, dispositions to listening attentively to others and to make substantive contribution. In addition, participants infused ideas surfacing from their individual research.

Tim identified another significant benefit of these conversations when addressing his reason for applying to graduate school. He suggested "...that the wonderful thing that we had going on there...in terms of the graduate work...everyone was working on things in the area. That was so valuable, and it's been tough being outside of that." (Tim has since moved-on to an administrative position elsewhere.) He then remarked, as had Nick, and Aveet, "...these conversations we had...profoundly affected me...I remember valuing them...because we were always talking about philosophy and things. So that's when I applied to graduate school." This perceived relationship between practice and theory gave Tim, like Nick, a reason and perhaps the confidence to apply to graduate school. These conversations affected our collective practice by inviting others into the inquiry and added new substance to the group's conversations.

Graduate Studies related Conversations

Conversations related to graduate studies did not take place in one physical setting. They were distributed within the work place, while car-pooling to-and-from the University, during lengthy talks on the phone, on e-mail, and (much to the distraction of significant others) even during our many social events. The remarks below relate the groups' sense of the relationship between their individual graduate programs and "their" practice.

All of the teachers in this group attended the same local University where, for the most part, the approach is the conventional "academic" one described earlier in this chapter. An idiosyncratic approach to course content (based on the interests of the instructors) is the norm within the faculty. Faculty members have their own repertoire of ideas that forms the basis of the courses, usually embodied in common readings. In

some cases, they encourage students to engage in new practices (representing work through multi-media formats), although almost all courses require the standard term paper or, less frequently, an action research project, evaluated in light of academic norms.

Teachers generally attend classes in the evenings and during their summer holidays, although there are some full time students in the Masters' Program. Within the program, there are different "required" courses depending on the concentration one chooses and other elective course offerings. All of these teachers enrolled in a Curriculum Studies stream where students take a minimum of five courses including a research methods course and two other required courses. There is little or no planning with students about the focus for most courses. Information about courses is available on handouts in the hall outside the Graduate Programs office. There is an informal student network focused on "what" students should take, "who" they should take courses from, and "when "they should take their courses. These what, who, and when conversations are for the most part based on "the fastest way of getting through the program" as opposed to getting the most out of it.

When the school first opened, only two members of the Mathematics and Science group were doing graduate studies. I was finishing my Master's work on the origins of the program while Brenda was taking courses about Mathematics teaching in general. Our conversations were most often about our shared practice and gradually they evolved, as Brenda began writing her proposal, to talk about research methodology. By the end of the year, two other department members started considering graduate school and later a third joined the graduate student group.

When asked why he had decided to go to graduate school, Tim thought for a bit and said, "let's put this on the record, there's no way I would have done graduate work if I hadn't been [at the Innovative School]." Tim remembers that what "motivates [kids], always being [his] interest...but that [he] could never clearly define what [he] meant," inferring that he could not put his research interest into words. He went on to say that

when he raised this question other members of the group were "always coming back with, well what do you mean?" He came to the conclusion that "...actually formalizing this process as part of working together, as a group working together...forcing you to reflect on what you're asking and why you're asking it, [is the] bottom line." He decided that "...learning to use the right language or how to tell a story" would help. He concluded that going to graduate school was the way to "formalize" his inquiry.

Tim also recollects that he "...didn't talk a lot about [the Innovative School] within the courses, but that they got me thinking about what we were doing, what I was individually doing with students." One of his courses was on teaching models with a "...really neat group and again nothing was connected with what we were doing at [the Innovative School], but my paper ended-up being quite connected." Tim remembers the "...interviewing each other about our practice" as the event that moved him from "informal" considerations of teaching to "formal" ones. He found this to be "...one of the most powerful things we do" to learn about and change the group's practice. This conversation-based methodology became a standard practice within the group's culture. In both Aveet and Brenda's cases, their interviews led to changes in their on-the-floor conversations and to new conceptions of their work.

Tim highlights the unique identity of the Mathematics and Science group culture when he was careful to note that "...one of the important things about our work together is just being around another person you care about and who cares about you intellectually." He suggests that "...our setting, allows us to be thoughtful about our practice, partly through our graduate work...it forces us to ask the questions and question the things that we're doing...and the thoughtfulness that happens [is] because you feel comfortable talking about real issues."

Aveet remembers that she and Tim "...would drive up [to the University] together and talk a lot, and I think we did a lot of learning in the car on the way up and on the way back." She said that practice and theory—her ideas and Tim' ideas from work and graduate studies—would always blend. She says, "we would start out talking

about the courses, people, perspectives, how we couldn't do this or that...but we would always relate it to what we were doing at work." Through this process, the school culture and the graduate school culture seemed to fuse and inform each other. Throughout, teaching practice seemed to dominate these conversations.

In talking with Aveet about her courses, she recalls that some instructors were non-dogmatic "saying that these 'are' some answers to some of the big questions like what is learning and what is education." She pointed out that it was within "side discussions with Tim, Phil and a few [of these] instructors that we would often talk about our practice." During other courses, she realized in order to get a good grade "...it was important to think about what some instructor thought about...gifted education, or whatever, but it was far less relevant than thinking about our practice."

Aveet's big concern was finding relevance within her practice for the theory she learned within her graduate courses. Her self-declared "turning point" was "...getting down to research, to data collection, to writing, to thinking, and engaging fully in the research process" within the context of her methods course. It was here that her "...ideas were borne not only of my theoretical framework...but also my practical ideas. Because of this, I began to practice in a different way." Aveet's linking of theory and practice as she developed her notion of "learning conversations" in her thesis allows her to transform her practice.

Brenda's experience was unique in that she had already completed her coursework when the school opened, but she had not yet chosen a thesis topic. Her thesis questions arose from her practice as a Mathematics teacher at the Innovative School. She examined students' construction of Mathematical understanding. She observed that because of this work "I've changed my practice." She said that now she behaves "...differently because I had to think about what I do and believe through doing my Master's. I was constantly trying to work out where I stood and then I also was looking at my practice." She feels that she had to ask "...how can I make my practice better reflect what I believe."

All three teachers suggested that "their intellectual conversation" tapered off during the last year of our work together. One teacher said that suddenly we had "...fewer conversations in the prep area and we talked less on-the-floor." We were having "less communication...about issues around work, around students." One of the teachers observed, "...suddenly there was zero conversation happening between some of the people in our group." Partly this change was attributed to three new teachers joining the group. No doubt this change in personnel had some impact, but the fact that everyone had finished their coursework by this time was likely a major contributing factor. Somehow, the group changed from being a culture engaged in inquiry — the spirit of collaborative inquiry faded from the landscape.[22]

Key Factors

The literature on graduate study suggests that such work normally has little or no impact on the work of teachers in their classrooms. I undertook this study because it appeared that the situation at the Innovative School was different in that teachers made significant changes to their practice, resulting in part from the interplay between the culture of the graduate program and this group's workplace culture. My analysis suggests four factors that enabled the group to use their studies as a means to change their practice. These are the existence of physical settings supporting interaction, a clear need for change in practice, a capacity for negotiation and change; and a graduate school culture that encourages the problematization of practice.

Physical Setting

The most simple and perhaps obvious factor that makes a difference in this story is the physical setting. In this open school, we worked in close proximity to each other in large setting such as the "great hall" that naturally encouraged interaction. Wideen

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[22] It is worth noting that two member a of the group had completed their graduate programs and one of the three teachers made the decision to transfer to another school. As a consequence he began to withdraw from his practice. The two remaining teachers were preoccupied putting the finishing touches on their thesis.

(1994) cites this factor as important in "capacity building" from his inquiry into the development of local cultures capable of changing their practices. In addition, we shared a preparation space where "face-to-face" conversations were commonplace and where we could listen in on each other's conversations. Carpooling to-and-from the university provided a natural opportunity to discuss both the concerns of the workplace and graduate program course content. Our physical proximity on an ongoing basis, within these various settings, provided us with opportunities to support each other as we identified and addressed problems in our individual and collective practice.

Need for Change

Both the architecture and uniqueness of the Innovative School provide sources of problems that invoke new approaches to teaching. The unconventional teaching areas and the self-paced program required a radically different way of teaching which lead to numerous breakdowns in practice and exposed tensions in our work. As suggested by Turner (1990), Regan-Smith (1994) and Drake (1994), such problems stemming from our experience compelled us to "go beyond armchair theorizing to action." We used our workplace situation to find relevance in the academic language and practices while at the same time we used the language, understanding, and practices from our graduate studies to examine our practice-related questions.

This symbiotic relationship is in stark contrast with the situation reported in the literature. Typically, teachers come to graduate programs hoping to address their practice-related questions, yet, many instructors ignore or trivialize these concerns. Even when teachers encounter academic ideas that speak to their practical problems and concerns, rarely does their University or school provide the encouragement and opportunity needed to translate these insights into professional change. In our case, the school culture and supported such changes and the university program was sufficiently flexible to allow us to focus on our practice related questions.

A Capacity for Negotiation and Change

The literature on school change (Wideen, 1994; Fullan, 1998) points to the value of what has been termed "a capacity for change." This capacity involves a group who has developed social norms which allow tasks to be jointly controlled, where supporting individuals is an enterprise shared by the group, and that is oriented toward growth. The group described in this case temporarily developed such a capacity enabling us to intentionally change our practices. We made sense of the content from the university courses by openly seeking clearer understanding of what we were collectively and individually doing.

Our capacity for change began with Dan, during the principal's first meetings as he encouraged teachers to become the origin of action. However, because of the complex nature of the problems in our novel school, it is likely that the group's capacity could not have continued without appropriating aspects of what we were learning in graduate school. As seen by the gradual tailing off of this culture of change and as suggested by Argyris and Schon (1996), this capacity has to be deliberately nurtured if it is to survive.

Graduate School Culture

There is little evidence that our graduate program is substantively different from those discussed in the literature review. However, this case illustrates that my colleagues' concurrent participation in graduate studies, while engaging in a school reform project, provided in-service for this group. While the larger school culture was already conducive to changing practice, I doubt that the group would have collectively recognized its problems and created new practices without our participation in the graduate program.

The potentially fertile culture involving the Mathematics and Science Department provided a situation where addressing problems and concerns resulted in the creation of new standard practices. Others within the small group culture used these

practices such as "prep area conversation" to support each other in their learning. The result was a situation where, as Dipardo (1996) suggests, teacher in-service was neither in "the university nor the public school classroom...but [in] a free zone, where anything could happen. [A place] wherein 'theory' and 'practice' became intertwined threads" (p. 211). The graduate program's flexibility allowed these teachers to focus their term papers and theses on aspects of their practice. This is in sharp contrast to the culture that dominates many schools and graduate programs and that frustrates teachers like those in DiPardo's research.

Another aspect of the graduate school culture was those courses that problematized practice. These courses prompted the group to think about practice in theoretical ways. The qualitative research methods course in particular appeared to be of considerable value because it both encouraged us to examine practice and gave us the tools to do so.

This study suggests that graduate work can lead to professional development and support school change. However, certain cultural conditions appear necessary to support such professional development.

Chapter Four:
Recollections and Impressions
of a First Year Faculty Associate:
Finding A Place "Between" Workplace Cultures

Prologue

The case presented in the previous chapter tells of my emerging understanding

of factors supporting successful bridging of academic and practitioner cultures. During

the time frame considered in this chapter, I was a faculty associate (a seconded teacher,

working on a temporary contract, also referred to as an FA) in a pre-service teacher

education program (hereafter referred to as the PDP).[23] In preparation for a conference

presentation during my second year of this work, I wrote a narrative about my early

experience as a means of both representing and learning from the experience. In writing

and re-writing the story, I came to two main understandings. First, I came to view this

experience as an example of a distinct hybrid workplace culture nested between

academic and practitioner cultures. This insight eventually informed my

conceptualization of *nexus culture* presented in Chapter Six. Second, I came to

understand that this kind of "between" cultures experience provides a powerful

opportunity to learn about one's own culture as well as those that border on it. This

"betweeness" is distinct from the bridging metaphor often used in discussions about

linking practitioner and academic cultures.

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[23]Beynon (1996); Dawson (1996); Warsh (1996); and Wideen (1996) document the unique dimensions of this "clinical" role including many of the cultural tensions illustrated in this narrative. The term "clinical professor" used by these researchers indicates the uniqueness of this work and points towards the hybrid nature of the faculty associate culture.

Introduction

As I later came to appreciate, the metaphor for this in-between state was suspended above my desk in the form of a small, plastic, clown-like bear riding a unicycle along a tight rope. As colleagues pass by they often poke or push the bear causing it to swing tentatively back and fourth or to move forward or backward along the rope, while saying something like "that is the way I feel most of the time." I also feel this way in my day-to-day negotiations along the narrow and convoluted path between the culture of the faculty on one side, and that of practitioners on the other.

In my case, the side-to-side pressures stem from the different expectations of the university program on one side and the schools where pre-service students are placed for their practicum on the other. The pushes and pulls come from the daily pragmatic demands of practice causing me to adjust my position from time-to-time. The tentative feeling of being suspended like the bear results from the pressure to move (change) or sway from side-to-side in response to the different norms of the bordering cultures. Often, I feel compelled to move forward or backward along the thin line between the two cultures just as the bear moves, back-and-forth along the tightrope.

Before telling of the experiences during the first semester in my new role, I provide a brief outline of the PDP structure. The story is both a chronological and thematic representation of my experience punctuated with *italicized* interpretive commentary along the way. I conclude with a brief analysis of the experience viewed through the lens on the concept of "workplace cultural" presented in Chapter Five.

Getting Started

In September, I returned to my work as a Science and Mathematics teacher and department head with the feeling that I needed something more challenging in my work-related world. At the time, I was beginning my fifth year at the Innovative Secondary School and my eighteenth year as a teacher. I had recently completed an

M.A. in Curriculum Studies and was beginning work on a Ph.D. Despite the learning opportunities associated with ongoing graduate studies, I felt that I would benefit from a position in the PDP advertised on my school's bulletin board. The position identified possible secondment to a local teacher education program for qualified teachers. This opportunity offered what I was looking for, while at the same time providing for ongoing work in schools.

The Professional Development Program (PDP) is a three-semester program for pre-service teachers holding undergraduate degrees. Typically, the first semester is comprised of six weeks on campus where students are taught by a module team comprised of two faculty associates and a tenure track faculty member. This on-campus time is complimented by six weeks of practical experience where faculty associates and school-based mentors (hereafter referred to as school associates) supervise them. In the first semester students undertake an integrated consideration of theory and practice.

The second semester usually involves an extended practicum supervised by faculty associates and school associates. Finally, the students spend time in an "academic" semester where they take a potpourri of courses based on needs identified during their practicum and certification-related requirements established by the BC College of Teachers. These methods and other special topics courses are taught by faculty members, sessional instructors, and occasionally by faculty associates. The program invites practicing schoolteachers to work in collaboration with a faculty member and a fellow seconded teacher within "modules" of thirty-two pre-service teachers over a nine-month period. The program offered me the opportunity to learn along side of experienced pre-service teacher educators. I completed the required application portfolio and anxiously awaited a reply. Several months later, I was invited to an interview where faculty members, the Director of the program, and two program coordinators asked a broad range of specific questions about my practice and more general ones about my beliefs about teaching and learning.

Looking back, both this formal scrutiny of my practice and the need to justify my work for others were foreign to my public school practice and caused me a fair amount of professional anxiety. These new practices marked my entry into a very different workplace culture. Throughout my time in the PDP, I was expected to report on my practice each term and to re-apply for my position each year. While school-based practitioners are accustomed to automatic tenure in their profession, this kind of review is commonplace within academic culture as professors must apply for tenure and promotion. Consequently, teachers like myself, experienced this as a foreign practice, while academics regard it as normal. This periodic review of our performance was often a source of tension between these groups. The tension was primarily based on the shift from a teacher culture where judgement of peers is seen as "unethical" conduct to one where judgement is normal. Secondarily, these tensions arise from the lack of clear and explicit criteria for judgement and a perception that most tenured faculty did not really understand school practice and as such were not in a position to judge our efficacy.

A short time after my interview, the Director offered me a one-year renewable contract. While feeling disconcerted by the temporary nature of the appointment, I applied for a leave of absence from my district and informed my school colleagues that I would be working on the University campus for the following two years. Although my colleagues congratulated me on "my good fortune," I was perplexed by some colleague's quiet withdrawal from our working relationships. Others were not so subtle, making comments such as, "so your off to the good life on the hill."

This sense of separation from colleagues was a joint construction. It was created partly by my gradual disengagement from certain aspects of my practice and partly by some of my colleagues' expressed sense that I was now "one of those lucky people from the University." They inferred that I no longer had the responsibilities of a "real teacher" and of belonging to their workplace community. This sense of being seen as "the other" by some teacher-colleagues, persisted throughout my time as an FA and emerges as an important part of this story. I believe that this rejection by colleagues is in

part explained by the views held by the community at large that academic work is easy and that academics are disconnected from "the real world." It could be explained by many teachers' belief that the significant part of teacher education happens in the schools during the practicum and not though on-campus instruction.

Before joining the faculty, the PDP invited me to spend one day "shadowing" an experienced faculty associate as part of my orientation to the work.[24] She picked me up at 6:30 AM on the appointed day, and we proceeded to dash from school-to-school on her supervision route involving 14 students spread between nine schools in four school districts. Between school visits, she spoke about the students in her care, the politics of the program, her future aspirations to begin a doctoral program, her apprehension about returning to the classroom the following September, and her realization that she felt different about teaching than she had three years earlier. She suggested that after three years of her new practice "she felt almost schizophrenic" (part teacher, part faculty member). This comment was prophetic in relation to my growing sense about the "between cultures" nature of this work.

Looking back, this conversation, like many I had during this first year, was not at all like the day-to-day conversations that are typical of colleagues in secondary school staff rooms or hallways. Our between-schools conversations on that day focused, for the most part, on substantive issues such as questioning the discipline approach to organizing secondary curriculum, and considering how competence as a teacher develops. She observed that like many teachers, she often worked on her own, however, the difference was that she was not accepted as a member of the public school community during her visits. Another difference between her work and typical teachers' work was that she conducted her practice from her car, which involved much time "on the road" travelling between schools, whereas teachers spend most of their time in classrooms. In fact, we visited five schools that day and each time she was

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[24] This meant taking a one-day leave from my teaching duties and accompanying a clinical worker on her supervision rounds.

required to check-in as a visitor, a practice that contributed to her general sense of not being seen either as a "real colleague" and or even as part of the public school institution. Also setting her apart from her teacher colleagues was the fact that she worked with adults most of the time—pre-service teachers, school associates, school administrators—while teachers spend most of their time with children or teenagers. My journal entry indicates that by the end of the day, I was beginning to wonder what I had gotten myself into.

My next experience with the program was a mid-June lunch meeting on the University campus organized to introduce new faculty associates to their future partners. As I drove to the campus, I was looking forward to meeting my new partner and to learning more about the program. I was hopeful that I could learn from my partner's previous experiences as she had worked in the program several years earlier. As it turned out, she was not able to attend the lunch and I ended up sitting at a table enjoying my lunch, and just observing the situation and listening to the many conversations around me.

What immediately struck me was the small number of other men in the group. There were 4 male and 24 female faculty associates, and six female coordinators in attendance. I wondered about this imbalance in contrast to the relatively gender-balanced representation in my previous workplaces. I continued to attend to this observation over time and am still unsure about the reasons for this situation noting that other identifiable groups such as Indo-Canadians, Chinese-Canadians, and Indigenous people were also dramatically under represented. I suspect that this largely female and white group significantly affects the culture of the program although I am not sure what the effects might be.

I also noticed that there was a complete absence of faculty members with the exception of the Director. When I left the luncheon that day, I met a faculty member that I had taken a graduate course with several years earlier. As we passed in the corridor he joked, "so Phil, you have gone over to the other side," referring to my appointment to

the PDP. This comment, intended as a bit of humour, offered a measure of the implicit understanding within the faculty that this "professional" work is seen as separate from his "academic" work. This tension between those tenured faculty members who saw their academic work as research and graduate programs teaching as opposed to the "non-academic" work within the PDP was present throughout my time in the program. I see this as a reflection of the different interpretations of what academic work is within the context of school-university collaboration.

The conversations during lunch and throughout my early days in the program involved what seemed like a foreign language as experienced faculty associates told stories about the previous term's contracts, withdrawals, interrupts, the PPC (Program Policy Committee), as well as the hierarchy within the program. *Over time, I have come to see the use of this language and the "storied" representational form used within the program as further indicators of a unique and separate workplace culture because these served to differentiate this work from that of both academics and practicing teachers. The narrative representational form separated these faculty associates from many of their academic colleagues who valued "academic writing" while the language and associated practices separated them from other practitioners.*

Back in my school district, I was asked to meet with the personnel officer to justify why I should be given a leave of absence as this teacher education work was "not seen as providing a benefit to the district." During the meeting, I argued that there would be some in-service opportunity for me and that it was possible that I might bring back to the district new expertise and understanding about teaching and learning. While the district granted me a leave, I left feeling that they saw my new work as something that happened at the University and that practicing teachers and school districts should not be involved. As I drove home, I felt that from the personnel officer's point-of-view, my new role was something other than that of a teacher, something that was outside of the workplace framing of what is important to schools and school districts—perhaps something outside of the personnel officer's control.

I began my summer holidays feeling a sense of loss over leaving the school community and at the same time apprehensive about what my new work would be like. Like the bear on the tightrope, I felt suspended in mid air, struggling to keep my balance and looking forward to a more solid footing.

August Program

Sometime during July, I received a letter reminding me that my new work started on August 15, and that I should plan to be away at a retreat during the fourth week of August. To my surprise, my contractual two-month-long summer holiday was being cut-short by two weeks. Eventually, I realized that I would recover the time at the end of the work year. In fact, I found that I was working during times of the year when I had traditionally been on holidays and, conversely, on holidays when my teacher colleagues were still be working. This perhaps subtle difference is a life-style shift further separating me from my teacher colleagues and past experience.

Every August, new faculty associates are cloistered with returning faculty associates, and a few faculty members, to "build community" and to begin the annual ritual of reconstructing the program. It is also a time when those working in off-campus or "satellite" locations meet with those working at the main campus. The agenda includes special topic workshops such as addressing first nations dropout rates in public schools, planning for instruction within modules, program information sessions, and playtime. *From a cultural perspective, these experiences begin to establish a new workplace "frame of reference" by informing new faculty associates about the institutional aspects of the PDP and the new language used to communicate about the work.*

I arrived on campus at 7:30 AM on my first morning and was met by the smell of frying bacon and fresh coffee perking. The sound of live harp music wafted along the hallway leading to our designated meeting area. Other tentative-looking people were also being drawn toward the room by both the music and the promise of breakfast. As I entered the room, I was struck by the welcoming tone as the program support staff

prepared breakfast and experienced FAs and coordinators engaged each new-comer in conversation. Unlike my experience in public schools, these warm and nurturing occasions are commonplace in the program. These practices are important in developing a "sense of community" within the program. This cooking for, and entertaining of, each other continued throughout the week as each "Instructional Team" (one coordinator and four module teams) prepared lunch for the rest of the community on different days. *These occasions help differentiate this group from both the culture of schools and that of the rest of the faculty—and to help establish the hybrid culture.*

After a protracted breakfast, the Dean who invited us "to be 'full' participating members of the faculty," addressed the entire professional community. Then the Director of the program introduced the theme of "inquiry" as the focus for the year. Eventually, both of these messages became somewhat contentious for me. I came to understand my work as something other than that of faculty members and I experienced a sense of indoctrination into the program that ran contrary to the "inquiry" disposition developed within my graduate program.

My difficulties about "being part of the faculty" had to do with my one-year renewable appointment status, and the fact that as a group of over 40 people, we had only two voices in faculty meetings. Although I understand this policy from the University's point-of-view, this limited representation, together with a temporary contract status contrasted with the secure "permanent employee" and individual voice and vote status within my school community. In addition, this status is unique within a faculty made up of tenured and tenure-track workers who seemingly felt free to express their views and who each had a voice within faculty. I felt voiceless and vulnerable. This felt particularly odd since both faculty members and teachers each have job security and free expression within their workplaces. This situation heightened my sense of working apart from the two bordering cultures and reinforced the feeling of being like the bear suspended on a tightrope.

The inquiry-related difficulty gradually emerged during the remainder of August program and as the term progressed. During that first year, I felt "pressed" to accept the norms that seemed to define this workplace and to adopt the commonplace practices without question. It was also clear to me that the norms that were commonplace down the hall in graduate programs—an inquiry stance, seeing much of teaching and learning as being problematic, engaging in research about practice, formal writing as a representational form—were not the same as those found in the PDP. I was expecting the same kind of critical stance to be the norm within the PDP and was frustrated by what I saw as a contradiction—an expressed public interest in inquiry but an apparent lack of interest in making practice problematic. While my new workplace was not framed like my school-based practice, it was not what I had thought the Dean suggested—it was not "faculty-like."

Despite this early disappointment, a culture of inquiry surfaced as a major goal during subsequent terms. This change came about as a consequence of the Director's efforts to encourage an inquiry agenda within the PDP. He did this by raising the profile of FA's efforts in this area, organizing local conferences, funding participation in both national and international conferences where their work could be presented and by personally modelling an inquiry stance in his discussions with small groups and presentations to the group as a whole. Those coordinating the program also made plans to bring faculty members and faculty associates together in dialogue about shared problems.[25]

The Retreat

On the second week of August Program, I remember being apprehensive as I travelled to my first PDP retreat approximately 100 km out of the city. I worried that I might not be able to live up to an unknown set of expectations. I found myself revisiting

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[25] See Smith (2004) *The Bearing of Inquiry in Teacher Education: The SFU Experience* for his understanding of this process of gradually building a community where "inquiry" played a more prominent role. During our discussions about this time, he too expressed frustration about the lack of faculty support for an inquiry disposition within the PDP.

an afternoon staff meeting that took place 18 years earlier during the week before starting my first year of teaching. In both cases, I felt like an impostor wondering just what justified my presence.

My anxiety soon dissipated thanks to the gracious and supportive disposition of my new colleagues. When I arrived at the retreat, there was a welcoming committee who showed me to my sleeping quarters and then to the cafeteria. Here, experienced faculty associates and my coordinator greeted me, then I was treated to a delightful meal. After lunch, we all participated in a "getting to know you" activity where we were asked to talk about an exceptional experience from our lives. These activities served to lower the anxiety we felt as newcomers and to model activities that we might want to use in welcoming our own students.

After three years of attending these events, I see them as part of an induction process into the culture of the PDP. Program times in general, and the retreat in particular, introduce new faculty associates to the language of PDP (e.g. module, SA, PPC, withdrawal), the standard practices within the program (e.g. the supervision cycle, reflective practice, the use of the program goals), and the hierarchy within the program (e.g., Dean, Director, coordinators, faculty, third year FAs, second year FAs, and first year FAs). New recruits are told stories of memorable incidents such as withdrawing students from their practica and the occasional difficulties of working with school associates and school administrators. *During my three years of this work, I gradually moved from the audience to a position of storyteller — this progression is a cultural expectation as part of this annual re-creation of the PDP. These "program" times, the retreat, and the stories communicate to new FAs the norms associated with their program roles and a general frame of reference for their work.*

Ironically, while these times frame FAs' new work, they may stifle an inquiry orientation. This is because the many stories about successful approaches to work with pre-service teachers are typically offered in a transmissive fashion as solutions rather than as possibilities to consider.

Team Work Begins

My experienced partner was a young, energetic, elementary teacher who specialized in physical education. I was pleased about this as her background would complement my lack of elementary teaching experience. Our module included a balanced mix of 32 elementary and secondary pre-service teachers. The faculty member of our team had previous experience as a teacher and administrator in public schools as well as much recent experience in both pre- and in-service teacher education. I felt that our mix of different perspectives and varied experiences held much promise for a lively and constructive conversation as well as providing a wealth of expertise from which our students could draw.

Like every module team, we started by getting to know a little about each other, including our strengths, weaknesses, and intentions. We then started the process of negotiating our curriculum. This work continued over a week including intermittent meetings with our faculty partner. In reviewing my journal and our module timetable, I identified three defining themes: (1) use of standard PDP practices and activities to fill out our timetable; (2) inclusion of graduate students on our module team; and (3) participation of other faculty members as "special topic" presenters.

Standard Practices in the Timetable

As part of our planning package, we were given a blank timetable for the term and were asked to arrange our six weeks on campus and students' six weeks in schools. At first glance, this task appeared to be a simple administrative one. From my perspective as an experienced school-based mentor, it seemed best for students to spend substantial blocks of time in schools with a minimum number of interruptions by bringing students back to campus. This perspective privileged time in schools as the most important part of students' work. Our academic colleague argued that it would be advantageous for students to spend a little time in schools and then return to campus to consider their experiences and to raise questions. After a spirited discussion, my FA colleague and I deferred to our academic partner's experience and theoretical

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perspective. We planned a program involving short visits in schools where students conducted focused inquiries, followed by short periods on campus where we (students and instructors) could consider their questions. This "cycle of inquiry," based on questions arising out of students' practical experience did not reflect my perception, based on my experience as a pre-service teacher twenty years earlier, of teacher education as a "transfer" of knowledge through modelling of expert practice. However, this new approach was strongly resonant with my ways of working with high school students.

One of the commonplace expectations within the PDP culture is the notion of reflection, or the "R" word, as our students referred to it. In our module, as in most other modules, students are asked to represent their "reflections" on the program in weekly journal submissions. Reflections were to address recent visits to schools and our sessions on campus.

Like others in the PDP, on several occasions my colleague and I considered the value of reflective practice with our students by having them read articles or discuss reflection in relation to their emerging practices. In addition, we had them do weekly reflective writing as a means of informing us about what was going on with each student—we called it "keeping up to speed." Over the semester, I recall many conversations with my partner about students who were not seen to write reflectively, although we never explored what we thought reflective writing looked-like or what its real purpose was. Reflective writing is one of the "taken-for-granted" practices that define the PDP. However, like so many other practices, it deserves ongoing study within the community. Despite the importance that "reflective practice" appeared to play in our plans, I have yet to participate in a program-wide discussion about its nature and rationale. It is worthy of note that faculty associates enter the program after leaving a workplace culture that is "action-oriented," and where reflection is not seen as a

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standard practice.[26] I wonder if new faculty associates can come to understand the importance of this practice without being given the opportunity to consider its implications.[27]

Our program timetable contained other standard practices such as mid-term and final evaluation procedures, a required child-abuse workshop, and a school associate orientation. Initially, we simply inserted these practices and events into our calendar. We placed mid-term evaluations about halfway through the term, final evaluations during the last week, and the school associate orientation the week after students' first school visit.

Each of these events raised substantive questions about teaching in general and about my practice in particular. The evaluation of students, serves as a case in point. This "gate keeping" practice makes teacher education distinctly different from other teaching as our evaluation of students usually determines whether they will enter the profession or not. This puts faculty associates in a particularly difficult position, because as teachers they typically do not evaluate other teachers' work. Like many of my colleagues, I experienced a constant undercurrent of tension between my role as a member of a teacher culture where teaching evaluation is not "part of the work" and the "gate keeper" role of faculty associates. This subject was often hotly debated among faculty associates.

Still other commonplace practices such as the "pathways" project also found their way into our plans that first term. "Pathways" is a strategy where students' represent "their personal journeys to teacher education." During that first year, students' "pathways," in the form of a diagram or picture were posted on most walls. Some FAs believed that this activity helped pre-service teachers to understand how their personal histories and experiences influence their roles as teachers. Our use of this

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[26] See Chapter Five for the research supporting this claim and Chapter Six for the collaboration-related literature supporting the role of reflective practice within Nexus culture.
[27] In my discussions with the Director of the PDP, after he read this narrative, this is an areas where he agreed that considerably more effort should be directed.

standard practice extended over a protracted period, and informed my partner and I about our students' backgrounds while giving students a sense of the diverse backgrounds of others in the module. This "storied" approach to understanding what it means to be a teacher has some merit, but I wonder if it warrants the time we used to complete this activity. We had not taken the time to assess its purpose and use—like so much else we did, it was simply "taken-for-granted."

Like other standard practices, the "pathways" activity found its way into our program through a practice known as "binder diving." This practice is a way for new FAs to find support when they feel overwhelmed by the sense that they do not know how to proceed. They search the records and artefacts left behind by departing FAs or those in use by other modules (teaching teams) looking for resources and activities. In our case, although we had agreed as a team that we would question any practice that did not seem to fit our intentions, without adequate scrutiny, these common practices were included.

Taken together, these standard practices extended the workplace frame of reference initiated by my participation in the August program and the retreat. The program-related experiences involved the transmission of new language and norms of behaviour that framed the workplace and at the same time allowed me to differentiate it from my practice as a public school teacher. At the same time, the uncritical approach to adoption of activities and materials was typical of teacher culture and served to differentiate the FA from academic culture.

Inclusion of Graduate Students

Early on, our academic partner asked if two of his graduate students might conduct research about our work in the module. As a graduate student myself, I was all for this although I did not give the implications much initial thought. I include this part of the story because the situation illustrates the general tension between the conventional intents of academic culture—research and the production of knowledge—

and the practical focus of teaching. It also highlights the specific distinctions between the academic culture within the faculty and faculty associates' work within the PDP.

Several days into our work with the pre-service teachers, our faculty colleague introduced the notion that two research assistants would conduct research in the module. He added that they would provide students with a written explanation of the intended research and "release forms" giving the researchers permission to approach individual students as prospective participants.

Although participation of graduate students is unusual in the PDP, my FA partner and I agreed to allow the two researchers to undertake an inquiry into the nature of our work with pre-service students. I felt comfortable with the notion at first, as I knew both students from graduate courses. I held both students in high esteem and trusted that they would undertake their work in the best possible way. In the beginning, I naively assumed that this would be a straightforward working relationship.

From the beginning, I was distracted by the presence of the graduate students in our new classroom. My reaction had to do with several things. First, I was reminded of recent experiences from my high school practice where academics had "conducted research" then misrepresented the situation to serve their own interests. In addition, I was feeling very vulnerable to potential criticism, although, I had no reason to believe that these researchers would abuse their privileged information. Upon reflection, this feeling had to do with newness of the situation as such close observation is not typical in the classroom. I was also uncomfortable with the image of researcher projected by two people sitting quietly in the back of the room collecting field notes.

In thinking about my own research intentions, I had rejected the notion of social researchers as "objective observers" and come to feel that deep understanding of any such social situations should involve the active participation of researchers. My faculty associate partner shared my discomfort with the situation. I was also concerned about the possible impact on our student teachers. Did they feel coerced into participating?

Would students who participated in the research or those who chose not to participate see themselves as advantaged or disadvantaged in some way?

Both my partner and I expressed our discomfort to the graduate students and to our academic partner. At the meeting arranged to resolve the issues, I raised my concern about students feeling coerced into participating and was reminded by my academic partner "that these were mature adult students who had paid fees, and who could make choices for themselves." My faculty associate partner and I reluctantly accepted this explanation and the project continued for a short time longer.

Part of the research protocol involved one of the graduate students sitting-in on daily planning sessions where my partner and I would debrief the day's work and plan up-coming work in the module. I bristled at time spent explaining and justifying decisions we were making about our practice for the benefit of the graduate researcher. Ironically, I was stressed and challenged by this researcher's attempts to participate in our work while at the same time believing that she should participate in this way. At the end of one particularly taxing day-end conversation, I became quite agitated and spoke bluntly about not having the time to include the graduate student in our deliberations. My remarks resulted in further deterioration of the working relationship.

At another level, both my partner and I were concerned about the impact of the ongoing research project on some of the pre-service teachers. I felt that they were caught in a situation where they could not refuse to participate in the research. After all, from their point-of-view, the faculty person who was asking them to participate was someone with power over their eventual success or failure. This situation put students in a vulnerable position. As a teacher responsible for the quality of their experience in the program, I felt conflicted. I know that teacher education needs to be better understood if it is to improve while at the same time, I believed that I had to protect my students' interests. What was I to do?

I am not certain how or why the decision was made, but the research project was suspended part way through the term and was not mentioned to us again that year.

Since that time, my academic partner and the graduate students have agreed to sit down and talk over what happened.

In looking back, I believe that my own story in relation to qualitative research played a significant role in my reaction. My gradual shift from a strong quantitative view of research, rooted in my training in Science, to an emerging qualitative view in relation to "social" studies supported my negative reaction to the apparent "objective" stance taken by the two graduate students. In addition, the situation invoked prior negative feelings about questionable ethical behaviour on the part of a course instructor I worked with earlier in my graduate studies and the experiences with "researchers" from my teaching practice. Further, I was a novice FA in a "new" practice and although it is hard to admit, I felt vulnerable to criticism by these observers. I was not confident in my new practice, and felt very uncomfortable being observed and even worse about having my practice recorded. Ironically, at the same time that I was conducting my own research involving others, I was having a very hard time being on the "observed" side of things.

Several years later, all five members of the team met to discuss this time. I outlined this conversation within Chapter One but note here that we all agreed that such a conversation during the research project would have ameliorated the differences that surfaced. Such conversations are foundational to the "dialogic" practice argued for later in the thesis.

This experience served to emphasize that although I was working in a university environment my workplace role was primarily practical in nature—that of teacher. In contrast, my academic partner and his graduate students had quite a different focus, that of researcher. While I was no longer accepted as a member of the public school culture, I rejected membership in the academic culture represented by my academic colleague and his grad student researchers. I found myself uncomfortably straddling an invisible boundary between the two, while not being a member of either group. On other occasions, a variety of faculty members worked with our students, often further emphasizing the distinctions and tensions between academic and FA work.

Participation by Other Faculty Members

Early on in the term, in response to student requests to learn about "The Curriculum," we planned a series of sessions around the question "What is curriculum?" As part of our plan, we invited faculty specialists from core content area including Social Studies, Science, Language Arts and Mathematics, to work with the pre-service students for several hours. We asked these "special topic" presenters to focus on making their particular curriculum area problematic in some way and to raise questions about conventional practices associated with these areas.

I recall feeling a little perplexed as we planned these events because I had 20 years of teaching Science and Mathematics and yet I was deferring work in these areas to faculty members as "experts." I felt uncertain about what I might contribute and unqualified and unacknowledged as someone who could teach about Mathematics and Science curriculum. Two outcomes surface in my journals covering this period. First, each of these sessions pushed me to raise new questions about my own practice. For example, one of the faculty presenters worked with the students to consider a "critical thinking" approach to teaching and learning—including taking a critical stance with respect to the Ministry's official curriculum. Although I had previously been introduced to these notions, I had not considered framing my work with pre-service teachers from this critical perspective. Second, I came to realize that I had much to contribute to students' understanding about teaching. This came about because students asked questions that had to do with "the look and feel" of working in the public school classroom and my faculty colleagues were often hard pressed to answer such questions. I found that I could bring my practical experience to bear on the theoretical notions under consideration in a way that was more credible with students. I gradually developed confidence and started to see myself as competent in my new practice while at the same time acknowledging that my role was complementary to faculty members' roles.

This cultural difference was emphasized when faculty members brought along their various publications in support of their work. I sometimes referred to curriculum materials that I had developed for my Science and Mathematics practice but could not support my claims with "formal" publications and research conclusions. This "published" representational form that academic guests used to support their practice contrasted with my stories of practice and served to further distinguish between our workplace cultures. While FAs and faculty often collaborated to support student teachers, our differences were ever present.

December Program

By the end of the semester, I felt more like the tightrope walking bear then ever. During December the community of faculty associates met over several days to reflect on the term's work and to begin planning for the spring semester. At the same time, two significant events further distinguish my FA work from public school practice. These were the requirement that I reapply for my position and students providing written critical feed back about my work. Neither of these practices is standard within the teaching profession. However, it was not the lack of job security that was so perturbing but rather the requirement that I had to reflect on my work and write a letter justifying my reappointment to the position. The application was to be "based on contributions that I thought I had made to the PDP and suggestions about future contributions that I hoped to make." This requirement further emphasized the absence of a reflective practice within teacher culture and differentiated between teacher and academic culture.

Students' feedback, another practice not widely found in teacher culture, provided some help with this task while at the same time pushing me to reconsider aspects of my approach. Several students assured me that I had made positive contributions to their experience during their first term and these provided the moral support I needed to reapply. On the other hand, a few students criticized my particular approach to supervision and demanded much more in the way of "practical

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information that would help them be successful." The tone of these criticisms was sometimes hard to accept but did lead to positive changes in my future work.

These new experiences of having students critique my practice and of having to justify my work through the reapplication process truly supported my sense that I was like the bear on a high wire performing for all to observe. I felt exposed, on display, and quite stressed by the ordeal of having my practice opened to criticism by students and by those deciding about the following year's appointments. At the same time, I felt inspired by this new way of viewing teaching and learning in general and by the opportunities they provide me to examine and re-examine my own practice. I decided to reapply.

Epilogue

As suggested in the prologue, the preceding narrative chronicles my "developing" theoretical considerations of "workplace culture." This understanding of culture is based on the notion that we can view social structures as a "multiplicity of cultural places"—or that individuals can belong to many small cultures such as those sharing a common interest in gardening or our having a shared workplace (de Certeau, 1997; Hartman, 1997).

As I argue in Chapter Five, the notions of a cultural frame of reference, practices, and networks-of-representations help both to characterize and differentiate specific workplaces. Throughout the proceeding narrative, my role as a faculty associate involves a unique workplace frame of reference. It is framed by work "between" two institutions—the public school and the university—primarily involves work with other adults, the appointment is short term, the work is typically action and inquiry oriented, and the "perceived" workplace status is different than that of a teacher.

The network-of-representations helping to characterize this FA work includes the oral transmission of the PDP culture and the use of new language. This work also involves practices that are not commonplace for teachers including writing formal

evaluations for pre-service teachers, facilitating "withdrawal" from the program, and writing papers and presenting at conferences.

In contrast, work as a high school teacher is framed by working exclusively within individual schools and classrooms, primarily with children and young adults, in a routine fashion, within a union-defined years of service reward system, and at the bottom of the hierarchical power and status systems. The representational network associated with such teaching practice includes unpublished curriculum materials, report cards and other written communications with both students and parents, and perhaps contributions to practice-related bulletins and occasional presentations at teacher conferences.

The above narrative not only serves as an example of a unique workplace culture, but it provides a distinctive vantage point from which to view the bordering cultures. This view comes about because the work involves regular collaboration with representatives from both groups. On the one side, FAs must work with academics, as the program is part of, and supported by, the faculty of education. On the other side, FAs supervise and observe students in public school classrooms requiring close work with practicing teachers and administrators.

Consequently, and as illustrated by the narrative, this "in between culture" provides an opportunity to study and to learn from each of these other cultures while at the same time providing an opportunity for self-study. The significance of this kind of "at the boundaries" opportunity is reflected in McNeil's (cited in Goodlad, 1988) observation that "when different cultures are impinging on one another…it is rare for members of a given culture not to become introspective about their [own] customs after exposure—even abrasive exposure—to [those] of another culture" (p. 52).

Here, McNeil suggests that exposure to the practices of other cultures lead to improved understanding of those other cultures, and that such cross-cultural exposure often leads to reflection about one's own culture. In educational terms, this means that working within this cultural space provides an opportunity to learn about and critique

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what the academy has to offer, to develop a new understanding about what it means to be a teacher, and because of the constant exposure to these other cultural groups, to examine and re-examine what it means to be an FA.

The precarious position of the bear symbolizes being vulnerable and subject to demands from different forces, it also symbolizes being in a position that is conducive to learning—being open, tentative, and responsive to what others have to offer. Beynon, Grout, and Wideen (2004) conclude in their inquiry into this "third culture" that it can "open windows to new ideas…produc[ing] benefits for faculty associates' learning" (p. 64). The dilemma is that while the opportunity is present within such cross-cultural spaces it is not always true that understanding of the other, self-reflection, or learning occur. Beynon, Grout, and Wideen (2004) point out that at times, the threat of clashing cultures "unseats confidence or interferes with the flow" (p. 64).

In the following chapter, I take up this notion of working between workplace cultures from the perspective of school-university collaboration.

Chapter Five:
Cultures in Conflict:
Reviewing School-University Collaboration

Introduction

Educators have long proposed various forms of collaboration as a strategy for reforming schools in North America. For the most part, early attempts were motivated by anticipated financial benefits by attempting to gain economies of scale for regional educational services (Pounder, 1998a). More recently, many large- and small-scale forms of collaboration have focused on the reform of schools (e.g., Goodlad, 1988; Lieberman, 1988; the Holmes Group, 1990; Ruddock, 1994; Levine, 1992). In their review, Watson and Fullan (1992) point out that universities and schools are not designed to plan or implement collaborative programs involving several stakeholders, whereas, "hybrid organizations" such as school-university partnerships offer a particularly exciting possibility for filling this gap.

A common theme emerging from both those extolling the virtues of collaboration and those taking a more sceptical view is recognition of culturally based tensions. For example, Clark (1988) points out that "one of the most commonly mentioned impediments [to collaboration] is the notion that the two institutions are just plain incompatible" (p. 52). Lieberman (1988) identifies this culture conflict when she observes that during her work with schools "she was living professionally between two worlds ... I was in a word, bi-cultural" (p. 70). In her review, Smedley (2001) observes that many articles commenced with opening paragraphs welcoming opportunities for collaboration, while concluding "with a litany of barriers to genuine partnership" (p. 193). Looking back, this bi-cultural tension is identified by several researchers including Sarason (1971), Haberman (1971), and Ruddock (1992). While recognizing potential

benefits associated with school-university collaboration, I want to contribute to our understanding of these relationships viewed from this culture-conflict perspective. In the literature, many references to these conflicts are simplistic and the cultural dimensions are poorly defined (Gray, 1988).

My understanding of the cultural basis of discord between academics and practitioners is founded in the experience detailed in Chapters Two, Three and Four and is informed by the literature. For example, in Chapter One as a teacher working within a between school-university effort, I searched for very specific solutions to pragmatic questions about my practice. During this time, I was often at odds with academics acting either in consulting or research-related roles whose focus was generalizable understanding about the Innovative School program. Within the case study presented in Chapter Three, the teachers continually experienced tension between their practice world and the agenda within the academy. This tension is exemplified by Aveet's comment that in some courses "it was important to think about what some professor thought about ...gifted education, or whatever, but it was far less relevant then thinking about our own practice." In Chapter Four, the most explicit recognition of this conflict comes from the professor who suggested that by working with professional programs within the faculty, I had "gone over to the other side." Throughout this study, my understanding of these events broadened and deepened through my conversations with others and review of the relevant literature.

My explication of the culture conflict present in academic-practitioner partnerships begins with a review of the literature on the anticipated benefits and problems associated with collaboration. Then, I offer definitions of the two cultures and in the process identify areas of potential conflict. The definition is derived from the notion of workplace cultures developed by Morris (in Frow & Morris, 1993) and informed by both de Certeau (1997), and Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999). Finally, I analyze and compare key dimensions of teacher and academic workplace cultures.

Anticipated Benefits and Problems in Collaboration

Collaboration is often described as an important strategy for educational reform. More recent analysis indicates that it is often hampered by cultural tensions between participants. According to Di Sibio and Gamble (1997), school-university collaborative efforts were documented in the US as early as 1892 when Teacher's College at Harvard joined with Cambridge elementary schools "to improve teacher preparation." They also report that during the early part of the century the Progressive Education Movement explored strategies for better school-college relationships. During the 1930s, the Community School Movement attempted to coordinate services and empower the community through interagency collaboration (Ripley, 1939).

Pounder (1998a) reports that during the late 1940s, early notions of collaboration surfaced again as part of the New York State Board of Education's attempt to organize consolidated regional educational services. These regional agencies intended to coordinate the activities of multiple schools and gain "efficiencies of scale." Within a decade, every state in the US had similarly structured collaborative agreements but predicted efficiencies did not materialized (Pounder, 1988a). Lieberman (1986a) reports that during the early 1950s, a different approach surfaced when some considered university-school collaboration as a means for university professors to help teachers better conceptualize their problems. Like earlier attempts at collaboration, Lieberman reports that this approach did not attain expected outcomes. Generally speaking, early examples of collaboration assumed one of two possible benefits: a financial advantage or improved teachers' practices. The literature indicates that neither anticipated benefits materialized and, as a consequence, these kinds of collaborative relationships faded from the landscape.

Anticipated Benefits

Renewed calls for greater collaborative efforts between schools and universities arose in the mid-1980s as part of the general reform agenda (Nur, 1981; Beder, 1984; Wilbur, 1985; Trubowitz, 1986; Lieberman, 1986b). Since that time, the notion has

become even more common and has taken on an increasingly complex set of meanings within the broad education community. Advocates promise a greater range of benefits. For example, Gehrke and Parker (1983) suggest that collaboration can function to flatten hierarchies, which some see as impeding efforts to reform education.

From his review of the literature, Clark (1988) reports that these arrangements were seen as opportunities to strengthen innate reciprocal relationships between universities and schools; offer strategies for survival in the face of external oppositional forces; provide ways of strengthening schools and universities as institutions; provide psychological advantages in that participants feel a sense of shared purpose; and, in some cases, provide financial gains or increased resources.

Hord (1986) defined collaboration as a model "of joint planning, joint implementation, and joint evaluation between individuals or organizations" (p. 22). Hord, sees collaboration as a strategy for change—as a way of coming together to jointly plan, implement, and evaluate improvements to parts of the school system. Unlike the implementation paradigm of the past, this view acknowledges practitioners as active participants in the process. Trubowitz (1983) focuses on "inquiry" by defining collaboration as a joint problem solving orientation between two or more parties.

Gray (1989), like many others (Clark, 1988; Allexsaht-Snider *et al.*, 1995; Jonston & Thomas, 1997; Johnson, 1998), suggests that collaboration brings individuals together to "explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible" (p.5). Carriulo characterizes collaboration as an "enabling opportunity for a wide range of activities honouring the skills, knowledge, and talents of individuals from universities and schools to operate in complementary ways" (cited in Allexsaht-Snider *et al.*, 1995, p. 519). Others emphasize that collaboration unites people and organizations to produce something no one person or organization could achieve alone (Kagan 1991; Swan & Morgan, 1992; Freeman 1993).

More recently, Johnston & Kirschner (1996) report that educators claim collaboration will not only help to redesign schooling but will counter the isolation,

hierarchies, and competitive aspects of schools. They observe that the growing body of literature "extols the potential of school-university collaboration to reform teacher education, promote professional development, change the climate of schools and universities, and bring relevance to educational research" (p. 146). In their review, Johnston & Kirschner (1996), illustrate the pervasive "silver bullet" characterization of collaboration when they observe that "educators...claim collaboration will not only provide the means to redesign schooling but will counter the isolation, hierarchies, and competitive aspects of schools and society." They suggest that, "a burgeoning literature further extols the potential of the school-university collaboration to reform teacher education, promote professional development, change the climate of schools and universities, and bring relevance to educational research" (p. 146). Head (2003) sees collaboration as a social constructivist approach to problem solving and as an opportunity to learn about one another.

Potential Problems

Others question collaboration's ability to solve a perceived malaise in education (Kincheloe, 1996; Kersh & Masztal, 1998; Galvin, 1998; Crow, 1998; Evans, 1998, Hart, 1998; Erickson & Chrismon, 1996; Allexsaht-Snider, 1988; Clark, 1988; Johnston & Thomas, 1997; Johnson, 1998). For example Parker (1998) claims that school-university collaboration is simply "decision making by committee" and that these "cradles of mediocrity" are typically highly inefficient.

Many of these critics identify tensions undermining this work and suggest that without attention paid to these areas, such relationships will be unable to meet their various expectations (Kincheloe, 1996; Kersh and Masztal, 1998; Galvin, 1998; Crow, 1998; Evans-Stout, 1998, Hart, 1998; Erickson & Chrismon, 1996; Allexsaht-Snider, 1988; Clark, 1988; Johnston & Thomas, 1997; Johnson, 1998, Baldwin, 1999; Smedley, 2001). The sources of conflict surface in such areas as the time and resources required for collaborative work (Galvin, 1998; Johnson, 1998; Baldwin, 1999; Wideen & Lemma, 1999), leadership-related difficulties (Kersh and Masztal, 1996), power and control in

relation to decision-making (Goodlad and Sirotnik, 1988), and the impact of competing bureaucratic procedures on the working relationships (Kincheloe, 1996). I unpack the details of these and other sources of tension within the discussion of academic and practitioner cultures later in this chapter, and again in the next chapter where I consider factors that contribute to successful collaboration.

In his review, Clark (1988) suggests that the differences between schools and universities must be adequately recognized by participants to avoid serious conflict. Allexsaht-Snider *et al.* (1995) assert that understanding the contradictory demands, needs, abilities and capacities that exist between schools and universities is paramount when considering the success of school-university collaboration. Yarger (in Baldwin, 1999) writes, "I agree that [cultural difference] is often an unrecognized obstacle to school-university partnership that deserves more attention than it has received" (p. 92). Jonston and Thomas (1997) note that most conventional organizational arrangements keep practitioners and academics in their separate institutional cultures, where they seldom experience firsthand the tensions noted above. My point here is that, rather than accepting the differences as insurmountable barriers, the challenge is to acknowledge them, and then build on them to create a culture of creative potential where differences fuel inquiry and learning. I do this by first characterizing academic and practitioner workplace cultures and then characterizing the alternative — *nexus culture*.

Workplace Culture

Williams (1976) in his inquiry into "culture and society" considers culture to be one of the two or three most complex words in the English language, a position supported by Hartman (1997) in his work considering "the fateful question of culture." Historically, the concept of culture is used in many different ways.[28] Early anthropologists understood culture as the way of life of a particular people living together in one place. According to anthropologists, this "high" culture becomes visible

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[28] For an in depth consideration of the many ways that "culture" has been defined see Hartman, G. (1997). *The Fateful Question of Culture.* New York: Columbia University Press.

in peoples' "arts, in their social system, in their habits and customs, [and] in their religion" (Elliot, 1948, p. 122). Conventionally, the Western World has seen this anthropological notion of culture as something that "trickles down from the [parents] to children, from professors to [their] students, from the administrative offices to those being administered" (de Certeau, 1997, p. 87).

Contemporary scholars offer more diverse notions of culture addressing the many possibilities for small-scale cultures such as those found within universities or schools. For example, in his years of studying micro-cultures within the French and American contexts, de Certeau observes that we are "witnessing a multiplicity of cultural places...[that] represent a triangular construction that gives everyone the site of a cultural autonomy, a space of creativity" (p. 66). Based on their empirical studies of unionized workers in Australia, Frow and Morris (1993) argue that workplaces are such micro cultures and that participants in these cultures share a common sense-of-self[29] that distinguishes cultures from another. Here, cultures are not seen in "high cultural" terms, but as more situated sets of relationships where individuals share a common sense-of-self and where individuals may participate in more than one such culture.

This "workplace" way of viewing academic and teacher cultures and the categories used to characterize such cultures provide a useful framework for understanding these groups and the conflicts and tensions that arise during their work together.

Academic and Practitioner "Workplace Cultures"

As we have seen, the literature suggests that it is helpful to view school-based practitioners and education academics as different cultures. Even the term 'university-school collaboration' acknowledges that these two groups differ in institution-related

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[29] Sense-of-Self is defined in the OED as "an opinion, view or judgment held or formed by a group or individual; (self) a person's ... individuality or essence at a particular time or in a particular aspect or relation." Fore the purpose of this work, "sense-of-self," means *the view held by academics and practitioners about themselves and each other in relation to-their work.*

ways. This sense of difference is underscored by educators' references to the "Ivory Tower" versus the "Real World" or the "world of theory" versus "the world of practice." In addition, we often distinguish between "teacher" and "professor" in ways that infer both difference and a hierarchical relationship. Based on his inquiry into school culture and its relationship with the academy, Sarason (1971) writes: "the classroom teacher, who so often is viewed [by academics] as if he or she is a mechanical transmitter of change, can frequently be heard to say about the [academic] that he has 'good' ideas but 'bad' or impractical methods of implementation" (p. 21).

The differences between the workplace cultures of school-based practitioners (hereafter referred to simply as 'practitioners') and education academics' (hereafter referred to simply as 'academics') can be analyzed in terms of four categories: cultural frames-of-reference, representational forms, operating practices, and epistemological orientations. I will define each term and then unpack their implications for understanding academic-practitioner cultures.

The OED defines frame of reference as "a set of standards governing perceptual or logical evaluation or social behaviour." Frow and Morris (1993) posit that workplace frames-of-reference are determined by different institutions, ideologies, and myths. Practitioners' and academics' frame of reference are defined here as *the institutions, ideologies, and myths establishing the standards governing social behaviour in relation to their work.*

The OED defines representation as the "action or fact of exhibiting or producing in some visible form" or "the act of presenting a fact... before another or other; an account especially one intended to convey particulars used to influence opinions or actions." According to Morris (in Frow & Morris, 1993) forms of representation include texts, talk, codes of behaviour, and narrative structures. For the purposes of this work, practitioners' and academics' representational forms are the *actions or facts of exhibiting or producing in some form texts, talk, narrative structures and codes of behaviour that exhibit or*

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convey dimensions of their cultures for the purpose of influencing actions or opinions both within and between these groups.

The <u>operating practices</u> exhibited by academics and practitioners are the most observable characteristics of these cultures. Practices are "the habitual doing or carrying out of something; a usual or customary action or performance" (OED). For the purpose of this work, practitioners' and academics' operating practices are *the customary and observable patterns or ways of doing things and/or performing as they go about their work.* As the entire collection of academic workplace practices is too extensive to consider here, I limit the discussion to academics' instruction-related activities, class preparation and grading, participation in committee work, and research and publication activities. For practitioners, I include instruction-related activities, grading and reporting, counselling students, and activities supporting their "professional" status.

<u>Epistemological orientations are</u> the different *varieties, grounds, and ways of validating knowledge* or the *ways we claim to know what we know* (OED). Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) provide a set of constructs that are helpful in distinguishing between academic and practitioner epistemological orientations. The first of these is "knowledge-<u>for</u>-practice" where academics are seen as producing and possessing formal knowledge or theory for teachers' use during efforts to improve their practice. This knowledge is developed and warranted using forms of inquiry sanctioned by members of academic culture. A second orientation is "knowledge-<u>in</u>-practice," where practitioners are seen as possessing practical knowledge that is "not" considered to be generalizable. This practice-related knowledge is what practitioners come to know when they probe the knowledge embedded in the work of expert practitioners. Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (1999) third epistemological orientation is "knowledge-<u>of</u>-practice." This orientation assumes that the knowledge practitioners need to teach well, "is generated when [practitioners] treat their own classrooms and schools as sites for intentional investigation at the same time that they treat knowledge and theory produced by others as generative material for interrogation and

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interpretation" (p. 2). Rudduck (1992) supports this orientation when she encourages academics to "move into the pragmatic world of classroom knowledge-building, but bringing into it a perspective that strengthens the practitioner's framework for analysis" (p. 139).

Together, these four categories provide a means to both describe and differentiate the workplace worlds that practitioners and academics occupy. These are, as de Certeau (1997) asserts, different cultural spaces. Before I elaborate on these differences, I want to be clear that I do not see my account as "the" definitive characterization of these two cultures. No doubt, there are many other lenses through which these cultures could be analyzed. Next, I do not intend these cultural identities to be stereotypic; there are many exceptions to the general descriptions offered here. Further, I do not offer them as implied value judgments about the superiority of one culture over the other. My intention in providing general constructs that inform the analysis of school-university collaboration is to foster a deeper understanding of what members of these relationships might bring to their work as partners. I hope that my analysis leads to the kind of "deepening of understanding" and appreciation referred to by Fullan, as a possible by-product of school-university collaboration.

Academic Culture

In his considerations of the current state of universities, Readings (1996) suggest that academics' work, is partly framed by the historical context provided by the Western University as an institution-Goodlad (1988) agrees with this position for the education context. Within this section, I focus on "education" academics as a workplace group and consider key characteristics of their work in the field of education in light of the four categories discussed above. I include examples of the characteristics from the narratives and case study as a means of contextualizing the interface between cultures and as a means of beginning the process of identifying possible areas of tension.

Frame of Reference

From an institutional perspective, the Modern University developed as an establishment involving academics charged with the responsibility of being constructively critical of the culture at large and, through inquiry, of warranting opinions as to how human affairs might be conducted (Goodlad, 1988). This conventional view is founded on the German Idealists' notion that academic work involves a process of reworking all knowledge through philosophical study, with the ultimate aim of contributing to "cultural" development. Readings (1996) points out that this Modern framing of an academic's sense-of self involves both the processes of research and teaching, noting that the original idea was that the two are inseparable.

In his work *The Academic Ethic*, Shils (1983) acknowledges this standard sense of identity in his account of the contemporary academic's work being " the methodological discovery and the teaching of truths about serious and important things" (p. 3). He points out that the teaching role is not so much about the transmission of knowledge as it is about enhancing students' understanding and "training them in the attitudes and methods of critical assessment and testing of their beliefs" (p. 3). Here, Shils agrees with Readings while maintaining the caveat that teaching, for academics, is not just about content but as much about methods associated with inquiry. A contemporary and education-specific example of this institutional framing of academic work is "The Tenure Track Faculty Workload Policy" at the university where I used to work. The policy elaborates on the meaning of "cultural development" when it describes the University's expectations of academic work as research, teaching, and service.

This responsibility to conduct research is the role most often associated with academic culture. As researchers, academics typically generate formal knowledge and theory and this role, for the most part, sets academics apart from other groups within the broad education community. Academics' distinguishing claim to research is suggested by de Certeau's (1997) observation that they defer to a "system of references [and ways] of reasoning, in short, to something unsaid that belongs to the group, and by

virtue of this fact, is prohibited to others" (p. 41). The academic preoccupation with research surfaces in several ways in Chapter Two and is a source of tension throughout the narrative. The most striking example is the visiting sociologist examining the role of choice within the Innovative School. Here, the pursuit of her research agenda took precedence over the "perceived" needs of the school community.

As suggested above, the underlying "institutional" responsibility in the academic world is cultural development. The university policy referred to earlier describes teaching as "...contributions to, and sharing of, responsibilities within departments and programs" and later as a practice "...foster[ing] their students' critical and creative abilities." Here, teaching is seen first, as sharing the faculty's workload and second as supporting inquiry.

The determination of the direction of this cultural development is often seen to be largely up to the academic to determine under the guise of "academic freedom" which is sometimes at odds with the globalization agenda. In his reflections on "the intellectual refuge of the academy" Sassower (2000) rightly identifies "academic freedom" as an institutionally sanctioned source of difference. Academics are seen as having the privilege of spending their time being preoccupied about whatever strikes their fancy, regardless of its practical merit. While this perception is unwarranted, the notion of privilege associated with such freedom does inform practitioners' sense of how worthwhile academics' work is to the practice community.

The workload policy referred to above, explains service as "contributions to the faculty, and the teaching profession" and "furthering good relations between the university and the local community" (SFU policy, A30.03, p. 1). Within the policy, service is seen partly as "furthering good relations" and this is evident in several different ways. Within the broader education community, these services include consulting, providing "in-service," and in some cases conducting research. Within the narrative presented in Chapter Two, this consulting role surfaces in various ways. For example, those representing the "Model Schools Consortium" developed the framework

for the initial design of the Innovative School program. Later, this group provided feedback about the success of the program and recommended possible improvements. This service role often results in tension because of differences between the academics' research interests and the pragmatic professional interests of practitioners. For example, the "learning styles expert" who visited the school suggested that surveying students' learning styles was required for success, and he provided the in-service about learning styles. However, the staff did not see this service as being relevant to their practice. Consequently, the ideas were not implemented. In my experience, teachers often refer to this kind of in-service as "one-shot wonders" and generally view these experiences as a waste of time. Based on the many instances of the mismatch between the perceived value of the in-service topics provided to secondary schoolteachers and the lack of substantive change in secondary school practice it is not difficult to see why service–related activities are often of little benefit. This critique is one of the reasons for more collaborative approaches to service.

The image of the academic is that of being detached and preoccupied with issues that are not part of "the real world" and that academics are sometimes "unusually absent minded" also contributes to the framing of their culture. This view of academics being unable to focus on the task at hand is represented by such movies as "Back to the Future" or "The Absent Minded Professor." Taken individually or together, these myths and images conjure up a sense of remote and possibly eccentric characters, not taken too seriously by the typically "conservative" and "pragmatic" public school practitioner. While myths and images such as these remain in the cultural background, they may serve to inform practitioners' views of academic identity and lead to tension.

Representational Forms

Academics' representational forms are closely associated with the other aspects of their work-in particular the research role. This role typically results in the publication of findings in refereed journals, a book, or conference presentations where others have the opportunity to learn from and critique the work. Each of these forms has unique

criteria and procedures, including peer review, attached to them. These "academic writings" differ from fiction, popular publications, or the various practice-related articles or curriculum materials used by practitioners or administrators.

This focus on representation and the associated review process are identified and criticized as sources of tension by those outside of the academy. This is evident by comments such as: "at times it almost seems as if [researchers] believe they can learn more about schools and schooling, by reading what one of their peers has written about schools than by studying schools themselves" (in Clark, 1988, p. 55).

The difference between academic and practitioner ways of representing their work surfaces in Chapter Four when I point out that I was able to inform pre-service teacher's understandings about Science teaching by telling stories of my experience as a teacher, while visiting academics referred to their "published research" as the authority backing their claims about teaching and learning. I do not mean to infer here that academics do not "tell stories" but rather that there is a difference in emphasis within these two cultures. Some have made efforts to bridge the gap by using language and presentation forms that are more accessible to professional audiences (e.g., Beattie, 1995). These attempts remain contentious within the academy as exemplified by the ongoing debate over the use of narrative inquiry.

Along with the various approaches to representation, comes a range of codes of practice (methods) as well as a more general "code of ethics." The first relates to the researcher's methods of inquiry within a particular discourse sometimes referred to as "meta-narratives." For example, at an overarching level there is a longstanding debate about quantitative versus qualitative approaches to educational research wherein very different methods are employed. Within qualitative methods, there are distinctions such as action, ethnographic, or case research each having a variety of methods sanctioned within the particular discourse. A case in point is Carspecken's (1996) work, *Critical Ethnography*, which offers one-way of representing this approach to research.

A second kind of code is intended to protect the rights and interests of subjects who are often schoolteachers and their students. These "codes of ethics" generally cover gaining access, informed consent, deception, privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity. Each institution develops its own approach to ethics review and devotes much time and energy to this ongoing process. This form of representation governs practices associated with research, discussed below, and to some extent predetermines the content of the "academic writing" addressed above.

Operating Practices

While frame of reference and representational forms may structure academic work, the details of this workplace culture are found in their day-to-day practices. For illustration purposes, I focus on instruction-related activities, committee work, and research and publication practices.

Academics' instruction-related practices identified by Sassower (2000) include class preparation, class discussions, and office hours. Although these teaching responsibilities do not at first glance distinguish academics from practitioners, significant differences exist between them. Academics' time in the classroom varies greatly over the course of a year and between years. In the institution where I work, most instructors teach as much as 10 hours per week for a maximum of 24 weeks of the year. Whereas, practitioners in the local public school system, average about 21 hours per week in the classroom for 40 weeks of the year. This makes academic teaching experience very different from that of practitioners while providing time for academics to fulfil their other roles.

This difference often leads to problems when they attempt to work with practitioners who do not have time during the working day. This difference in flexibility of scheduling or "available time" was identified as a major source of tension by (Nur, 1981; Hord, 1986; Lieberamn, 1988; Hackman & Schmitt, 1995; Hogue *et al.*, 1995; Smedeley, 2001) as teachers and academics attempt to collaborate with one another. Both Sarason (1973) and Lortie (1975) find that an important area of difference

related to "total time spent teaching," is that academics' work involves other adults, while practitioners "spend their days with children" adding to the isolation that teachers feel. This results in one group typically feeling isolated and the other normally spending time with other adults. This difference surfaces in an explicit way within the literature reviewed for Chapter Three. Here, many practitioners who have completed graduate programs express concern about the isolation and resulting lack of opportunities to talk with other adults about their work and to collaborate with colleagues (Dipardo, 1993).

The use of office hours also differentiates these cultures. Like other professionals, academics have assigned times during their working day to engage one-on-one with students. These times resemble other private consultations such as those that medical doctors or lawyers arrange with their clients. During these sessions, professors provide individualized help with students' learning related problems through conversation, by raising questions, and by recommending literature. It strikes me that this practice is very much like the kind of consultation one might seek with a general practitioner in relation to a specific health-related problem.

One significant preparation-related distinction between the two cultures is the source of the curriculum. In the case of local university courses, academics as autonomous professionals, decide what to teach and how to teach without much interference from external agents. This contrasts with teachers' work where the "what and how" of teaching are communicated to them from others such as Ministries of Education or elected school boards—part of the historical institutional framing documented by Lortie. This different source of the substance of their respective practices, plays a role in reinforcing the professional versus non-professional distinctions and is significant when these two groups attempt to work together. For academics (at least in theory), everything about teaching is open to critique and change while for practitioners, content is seen as being "mandated or prescribed" and is not open to this kind of scrutiny.

For example, within the Innovative School story the practitioners were open to considering new ways of practicing, the content was mandated and not considered subject to change. In my experience, professors raising questions about the "what" of teaching within the context of their graduate courses are often not taken seriously because these questions are often not seen as relevant. As Clarke (1988) points out, the inquiry orientation of academics and their notion that, in principle, everything is open to scrutiny is a major source of cultural-conflict. Within academic culture he suggests, there is a high degree of consensus that successful collaboration, in relation to reform, must involve "teachers and principals...in inquiry about the nature, quality, and relevance of the educational enterprise in which they are engaged" (p. 16). For many practitioners, this perspective is foreign to their experience and at odds with their views.

Other practices identified by Sassower (2000) include committee work, preparation for, and participation in conferences, and research and publication related activities. Within the academy, committee work typically happens within the workday, and is often focused on the various "self-governance" functions of the profession. As an example, committees involving promotion or tenure granting for academics are common and ongoing in faculties of education. The applications considered by these committees represent an extensive reflective process involving self-evaluation and then evaluation by peers.

A related area is the set of practices associated with research including publication and participation in conferences introduced above under frame of reference and representational forms. Academics' observable performances as they engage in research begin with the various requirements associated with ethics review. These include gaining access, obtaining informed consent, and negotiating various approaches to data collection. All of these practices are foreign to practitioners' patterns of work. Practices associated with data collection, particularly those involving "rich" forms such as taking field notes, are particularly new to many practitioners. In addition, the practices associated with the production of various research-related representational

forms are also culturally foreign. Here, I refer to such practices as teacher participants reading and critiquing text intended to represent some aspect of their work or interpretations of data collected within school environments. The teachers as graduate students involved in the case presented in Chapter Three comment on this difference as they begin to practice as researchers. While they find this process foreign, they saw it as providing a new way to view questions about shared practice.

The set of practices associated with academic conference presentations is also an area that is foreign to most practitioners. This normally involves writing about some aspect of one's research and then preparing a presentation for public display and critique. The narrative found in Chapter Four provides an example of this difference, as I prepare to represent my teacher education practice at a conference. As a seconded practitioner, this was anxiety-invoking process as this "writing about my work" was so foreign to my normal work as a teacher. In addition to the act of presenting at a conference, the writing associated with this is also foreign to practitioners while this is foundational to work as an academic. A case in point associated with collaboration between academics and practitioners, is the set of skills needed to write funding proposals or a report associated with a research project when these groups work together. Kersh and Masztal (1998) suggest that this often leads to tension because suddenly within a project an exclusive group of "efficient wordsmiths" must communicate goals, objectives, processes, personnel, and budgets succinctly while time is limited. This group feels the need to "get on with it" while practitioners feel excluded.

Service-related practices also contribute to the academic's unique cultural identity. In addition to "furthering good relations," these efforts often involve consulting and in some instances contract research projects in support of various community initiatives. These "related activities," as they are referred to within the local policy document, set academics apart from school-based educators in two ways. First, they involve practices (research, in- service presentations, consulting, report writing) that are not commonplace within practitioner culture. Second, they set academics up as those

possessing and delivering the formal knowledge needed for teaching. This leads to a hierarchical relationship where practitioners see academics as those who know what to do, and they are put in the position of needing to find out from academics how to teach. Based on his work, Goodlad (1988) observes that this "two-tiered status" sometimes prevents working in collaboration. He adds that for practitioners, academics working in this service role, are often seen as professors who "lecture at" practitioners and later rework teachers' problems so that they are no longer recognizable. As noted below, this "reworking" often leads to knowledge forms that are foreign to most practitioners.

Epistemological Orientation

Normally, academic work involves producing and disseminating theory _for_ teachers and administrators in their practice. The OED defines theory as "knowledge or exposition of the general principles or methods of an art or Science, especially as distinguished from the practice of it."

As outlined earlier, Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) identify academic ways of knowing as theoretical knowledge described as knowledge-_for_-practice. This theoretical focus contrasts with practitioners' knowledge-_of_-practice orientation. Schlecky and Whitford (1988) recognize this source of difference when they observe that academics have a "value preference for norms that are based in generalizations about schools and about teaching, whereas the preference of the practitioner is for norms that have specific applications in the real world of a particular school" (p. 196). This situation arises because teachers and administrators require that knowledge is coherent with "their" sense-_of_-practice while academics conventionally require that knowledge claims are generalizable and that the limits of the generalizability are explicit.

The preceding chapters provide many examples of this area of difference being a source of tension. The most significant is the controversy surrounding the sociologist considering the notion of "choice" within public schools. Here, there was extraordinary ill-feeling directed at this academic pursing the production of generalizable knowledge. Many at the school were perplexed that these efforts were not focused on local benefits.

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Within Chapter Two, the "conversations" exemplify the pragmatic focus of practitioners on their of practice orientation and their somewhat irreverent disposition towards the perceived "irrelevant" focus of the academics facilitating their graduate courses. In Chapter Four, I noted that faculty members often defer to their research and published knowledge for practice as the authority for their advice to student teachers.

Academics' culture as reviewed above offers a view of their work defined both historically and within contemporary descriptions as researchers, teachers, and providers of service. This general view includes the notions that academics may be detached, knowledgeable, and preoccupied with theorizing, and the creation of formal knowledge. Their work often involves special practices such as academic writing, conducting research, in-service presentations, consulting, and report writing. As service providers academics are seen as a special group "who know" and who sometimes provide service for those who "don't know," in this case, school-based educators.

Practitioners' Workplace Culture

Many researchers have written about teacher's workplaces (Sarason, 1971; Lortie, 1975, Lortie, 1998; Lieberamn1988; Rosenholtz, 1989; Kohn & Kottkamp, 1994; Goodson & Hargreaves, 1996; Bruner, 1996; Piddocke, Magsino, and Manley-Casimir, 1997; Wideen, 1999; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001). Lortie's original work, while dated and open to methodological critique, identifies factors that are helpful in discussing the various dimensions of culture, especially the frame of reference category. It is worthy of note that Lortie's work was revised and reprinted in 1998 in response to requests from the field and because of the ongoing sociological relevance of his work. I supplement Lortie's work with McLaughlin & Talbert's (2001) inquiry into US secondary school teachers' professional communities through extensive empirical study and literature review.

Frame of Reference

In contrast to the Western University's framing of academic culture, Lortie (1975, 1998) uses the factory-worker metaphor to describe how "the hand of history" has framed teachers' sense-of-self. He emphasizes how teachers, unlike the professoriate and other professionals, have had their relationships with students (clients) mediated by a third party. This institutionally framed structure has led to a situation where others (government bodies, school boards members, and administrators) exercise authority over teachers' practice. During the 1920s and 30s, this employee-employer relationship, together with the move to "scientifically manage" schools, led to an image of teachers as factory workers on an education production line. This "employee" sense-of-self remains as a problem and surfaces most significantly within collaborative work in relation to tensions associated with leadership inside of collaborative structures (Clark, 1988; Erickson & Chrisman, 1996; Johnson, 1998).

This institutional framing as factory worker, as opposed to that of the autonomous professional's sense-of-self enjoyed by academics, laid the foundation for the unionization of teachers-a second dominant factor in contemporary teachers' workplace experience. During the 1960s and 70s this "associative factor" led to the formation of unions and eventually to a form of tenure for teachers providing job security and limited control over working conditions. Despite these bargaining related successes, Kliebard (1986) suggests that a subordinate sense-of-self associated with a "blue collar" image remains. While this image was somewhat accurate during the 1970s and 80s, teachers in the jurisdiction where I work claim pseudo-professional status based on level of financial rewards and autonomy. However, the annual income of a fully tenured practitioner remains at about seventy-five percent that of a university professor contributing to practitioner' status within society at large being significantly lower than that of a university professor. This difference contributes to Lortie's observation that, practitioners are middle class citizens and that academics have an

elevated social standing.[30] He also observed that practitioners are "dedicated servants" but that they are often lampooned as doing "easy work" by comparison to those working in the learned professions, occupying high government service, or demonstrating success in business. In my experience, whether at a cocktail party, a community meeting or while negotiating with a bank, this observation remains true today. As governments move to balance budgets by limiting the rights and financial rewards of unionized workers, the limited moves towards professional status for practitioners are threatened.[31] The "pecking order" associated with perceived social differences are the kinds of factors contributing to the hierarchy evident in many collaborative efforts.

A third factor framing practitioner's workplace culture is the "cellularization" of teaching." Lortie argues that from the onset, the role of schoolteacher developed as an individualistic, detached experience. Beginning early on in the one-room schoolhouse and perpetuated in "egg crate" schools, teachers work in isolation from one-another. School building architecture, grade or content distinctions, curriculum structures, and timetables all support this separation. For example, McLaughlin and Talbert (2001) identify "curriculum area" as the major factor separating practitioners in contemporary high schools. Some experiences differ but the majority of teachers still work under these conditions. The middle-school movement, for example, allows teachers to work within "pods" of students and to "team teach." The Innovative School deviates from this generality, but such institutions are the exception rather than the rule.

This cellularization is significant during attempts at collaboration because practitioners view their work as spending time with children or young adults within a narrowly defined space, while academics do not. The tension associated with this difference is evident in the discussion below regarding epistemological orientation as

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[30] Use of the term "middle class" here is that teachers are not particularly affluent; have income predictability; are respectable and have a stable life-style; and a presumed necessity of future employment (Lortie, 1975).

[31] See Hargreaves and Goodson's (1996) review of the tension between practitioners' dilemma over "pursuing middle class status in 'acceptable" ways, or use of collective strategies of union bargaining to defend their interests" (p. 1).

practitioners see knowledge about what goes on within their particular classroom as important, while academics are concerned about classrooms in general. The narrowness of practitioners' experience and focus is antagonistic to the notion of collaboration while the academics' interests require it.

McLaughlin and Talbert (2001) found that secondary teachers' "relationship with students" was a key factor defining high school practice. Lortie notes that typically, children "must" attend school and that administrators assign them a particular setting and teacher. Although some districts now offer "open boundaries" among secondary schools, the majority of students are assigned to designated schools. The private school system provides more choice for the wealthy minority. So too, practitioners are assigned a school by the board and a classroom by the building administrator—in some cases this is negotiable, depending on the status of the teacher within the institution (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001). While this situation has been tempered through contract negotiations with unionized teachers, it is strikingly different from the academic setting where students are not captive participants. Unlike public schools where "all" must attend and students have little choice about their instructors, self-selected university students have much greater choice in their institutions, their courses, and in many instances their instructors. As noted above, professors often negotiate their work-related situation within their peer governance structures, while practitioners are "assigned" to these positions by managers hired to make these decisions for them.

Ease of entry into teaching and educational requirements are additional factors that frame teachers' sense-of-self (Lortie, 1998). Thirty years ago, admission to the teaching profession required modest educational qualifications. Currently, in most North American contexts, new practitioners require an undergraduate degree, one or two years of coursework in education, and a relatively short practicum. Additional coursework and training are not "required" although most jurisdictions offer financial incentives for additional study (Knapp, McNergney, & Herbert, 1989). Entry into the academy, on the other hand, typically requires a PhD and ongoing study to keep up

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with research. Lortie viewed these differences in entry requirements and required ongoing study, as "softening" the possibility that practitioners would be accepted as professionals with equivalent status to academics—an observation still having currency.

The defining image of teacher is that of "role model." Lortie suggests an image of practitioner as "secular priest" surfaced in his work and that this image is probably rooted in the early historical framing of teachers' work. From my experience, this "priest-like" image rather over states the situation, while Piddocke *et al.* (1997) provide support for the "role model" image by asserting that practitioners serve as "exemplars of the values which the community, state, or society officially promulgates" (p. 213). While this image is highly idealized for legal reasons, it does help characterize the culture and to differentiate it from academic culture. The image of "care giver" also applies as practitioners take on an ever-expanding spectrum of roles, such as general counselling, "career preparation," and personal counselling. This is in stark contrast with the image of academics as those living in "the ivory tower" where as Said (1994) suggests, they are "figures whose public performances can neither be predicted nor compelled into some slogan, orthodox party line, or fixed dogma" (p. xii).

These contrasting images of the other, one very conservative and the other more liberal minded are potential sources of tension as these groups work together. Within the collaborative approach to teacher education outlined in Chapter Four, the pre-service teachers typically viewed seconded practitioners as representing accepted practice in schools while academics were often viewed as representing less conventional practice.

Representational Forms

Practitioners' ways of representing themselves are usually limited to their classrooms and schools. Here, they represent themselves to students through a broad variety of texts including curriculum, assessment, and evaluation materials that compliment various teaching strategies. An example of this kind of local practical work is the creation of the individualized instruction materials discussed in Chapter Two.

Here, the "learning guides" present the curriculum structure, behaviour expectations, and standards for assessment in use at the school. In more general ways, some teachers present practice-related texts at in-service days where the agenda is typically show-and-telling about such practical matters as the use of algebra tiles.

From my experience, practitioners' more public textual representations include union newsletters, and descriptive practice focused journals that are usually locally distributed and do not involve critical analysis. These forms of communication tend to be informative rather than deliberative in nature and are produced by a small minority of practitioners.

As noted in the Innovative School story reported in Chapters Two and Three, differing forms of textual representation is a source of tension between these cultures. We saw that practitioners focussed on developing useable texts for their students were frustrated with the academics' focus on preparing reports about the program and research related publications activities seemingly detached from the needs of the school.

Practitioners also engage in a variety of forms of "talk and narrative structures" that support the construction of their understandings of their practice (Beattie, 1995; McEwan & Egan, 1995). Chapter Three described teachers constructing their practice through "on-the floor" and "preparation area" conversations. While these teachers' opportunities are unusual, this sort of talk sometimes occurs during teachers' preparation periods, after and before school in their preparation areas or offices, and periodically during "pub class," the social gatherings sometimes held on Fridays after work.

These narratives contrast with academics' more formalized opportunities to engage in practice-related talk while attending conferences. Academics regularly attend such conferences and participate in local faculty forums or colloquia where they discuss their work. While practitioners' informal talk is undoubtedly a part of academic culture, the formal talk common in academic culture is foreign to most practitioners. When

attempting to collaborate, the more formal means of representing academic practice may be in tension with the informal means used by teachers.

Teacher culture is also shaped by codes of behaviour such as union-developed ethics and professional practice guidelines, provincial or state "School Acts" governing teaching practice, teachers' professional colleges where they exist, collective agreements with local employers such a s school districts, and in federal, state, or provincial legislation. While too voluminous to address here, these codes reinforce the institutional framing outlined above, the "worker" image of teachers and determine the representational forms used by practitioners. Piddocke, Magsino, and Manley-Casimir (1997) argue that these representations also help define norms within teacher culture because exceptional practices, not sanctioned by these documents, tend to "land teachers in trouble."

Operating Practices

While considerations of the culture of individual classrooms and schools involves a much broader array of factors such as architecture, students, parents, and teaching materials, the focus here is a set of shared practice that allow us to differentiate practitioner and academic workplace cultures. Piddocke, Magsino, and Manley-Casimir's (1997), dimensions of teacher practice(s) offer three categories of relationships for dealing with the large number of individual practices one might consider. These categories are teacher-students, employee-employer, and professional relationships with colleagues.

Practitioner- Student Relationships

The first dimension, teachers' relationships with students, involves areas of practice within individual teacher's classrooms. These areas are management, instruction, evaluation and their "fiduciary duty" of care. The researchers conclude that teachers must demonstrate that they can manage a class by creating and maintaining an environment conducive to learning. Further, practitioners must demonstrate mastery of

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subject matter and effective pedagogical expertise. In addition, classroom teachers are expected to assess and evaluate students in ways that are fair and that involve "acceptable" standards.

All four areas set public school teachers apart from university-based teachers. First, due to the "captive" and immature nature of public school students, particular management practices are unique to public school teachers' work with k-12 students. (See, for example, Glasser's (1992) set of management practices or Martin and Sugarman's (1993) review of management approaches.) These practices are not as germane for academics working with "mature" adults who are attending classes "by choice" in comparison with practitioners who work with "captive adolescence," but do serve to differentiate between the workplace experience of these two teaching cultures.

The area of instructional practices, sometimes referred to as teaching methods, is a collection of practices used by practitioners in their attempts to engage students in learning. Although some conventional practices such as lectures, tutorials, and labs are commonplace in both school and university classes, the very diverse and socially immature nature of public schools students means that practitioners require a more extensive set of strategies. A look at the Table of Contents in a typical teaching methods text supports this claim. These works offer extensive lists of strategies for teaching the diversity of students, differentiated by labels such as English as a Second Language, learning or mentally disabled, socially or culturally unique, and gifted and talented. While contemporary universities offer special programs addressing some of these differences, public school practitioners have a responsibility to attend to "all" students with these differences to a degree not evident in university classrooms. A similar argument could be made about the volume and range of published materials on school assessment. This fact underscores the diversity of assessment needs required by classroom teachers because of greater institutional demands for accountability and the greater diversity of the student population.

Piddocke, Magsino, and Manley-Casimir identify additional "fiduciary duty" of care for students as an area of practice relating to practitioners relationships with students. This involves being "trusted" with the responsibility for students while parents or others are not present. The responsibility or "duty to care for students," is different from "caring for" although the two are connected because having the duty requires practices that support that duty. McCluaughn and Talbert (2001) observe that above all else, secondary school practitioners' relationships with students are the critical factor framing their practices (p. 6). Noddings (1984) refers to the caring part of these relationships in terms of the "one-caring" and the "cared-for" and notes that no act in [the cared-for's] behalf is quite as important or influential as the attitude of the [practitioner] (pp. 19-20). From experience, the practices supporting this "caring" occur mostly in non-instructional times such as homeroom or more sophisticated situations such as teacher-advisory. Here, teachers listen, counsel, and advise students about things other than the prescribed curriculum—the images of "caregiver" is more appropriate than that of teacher.

As we have seen, the primacy of student relationships in practitioners' culture may be a source of conflict with the overriding importance of research in the academic world. At least the perception of this difference, establishes a source of tension as practitioners and academics come together to discuss teaching practice. This sense of difference was evident when I left my teaching practice to join colleagues at the local university when my school-based practitioners spoke of me enjoying the "easy life on the hill."

Practitioner-Employer Relationships

According to Piddocke, Magsino, and Manley-Casimir (1997), teachers' identity associated with their roles as public school employees are connected to the historical roots and the various contracts and pieces of legislation framing their practice. This area of teachers' work reinforces their sense-of-self as unionized workers. The employee-employer relationship leads to specific practices such as contract negotiations and

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periodic strikes associated with the union status of most North American practitioners. Their contracts in turn lead to very specific dos and don'ts, which sometimes interfere when academics and practitioners attempt to work collaboratively. For example, practitioners are on call all day long and expected to undertake a litany of assigned tasks many of which are outlined in legislation. This involves practices such as bus supervision to assure student safety, home room supervision as the "buzzer" goes, taking attendance, and effective planning to provide students with the "prescribed" curriculum. As the literature shows, these time-demanding practices and the "worker" sense-of-self associated with them are a major source of tension between practitioners and academics.

Relationships with Colleagues

The criticizing of colleagues' practices, differs between practitioner and academic cultures. While practitioners do on occasion, act to publicly criticize extraordinary transgression of "codes of ethics" as indicated by publications of disciplinary action, this practice is not normal within practitioner culture. There is a tension within teacher culture between unwarranted criticizing of colleagues' practices, which "land teachers in trouble" and critiquing practice (Piddocke et al., 1997). As I have learned from my work with pre- and in-service teachers, there is broad confusion between the criticizing referred to above and critiquing practice, programs, or education as a whole—as both practices are often considered as "criticizing." Practitioners are generally wary of critiquing much within their workplaces. Although, academics are similarly dissuaded from unwarranted "criticizing" of colleagues' work, they regularly critique their colleague's work through peer reviews, tenure and promotion review, and conference presentations.

Epistemological Orientation

Many have written in differing language about practitioners' epistemiological orientation towards "practical" knowledge. In a review of curriculum-related debates, Pinar et. al.(1995) identifies Polanyi's "tacit" knowledge, Schubert's notion of "teacher's

lore," Munby's "practical" knowledge, autobiographical praxis, Connelly and Clandinin's considerations of "personal practical" knowledge, and Beattie's (1995) "professional" knowledge. Each in some way considers the in-practice orientation of practitioners described by Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999). These researchers generally characterize such forms of knowing as "knowledge-in-practice" where teachers possess knowledge of their practice (what they come to know from their ongoing work) that may not be generalizable.

Much of Chapter Two and the case study presented in Chapter Three provide evidence of teachers developing this kind of knowledge. For example, I record in Chapter Two that "our work involved refinements of the program by making many small adjustments such as getting rid of teachers' desks from our work areas." This seemingly insignificant change reflects a pivotal shift in our knowledge about how to interact with students in this situation. As Lortie (1975) points out, these kinds of changes based on what seems to work at the time are typical of teachers' work as they develop knowledge about their practice.

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999), Schlecky and Whitford (1988) recognize this difference between academics' theoretical and practitioners' pragmatic orientation as a source of difference and tension.

Summary

Like members of any culture, practitioners share a common sense-of -self. Their culture is framed as a group of specialized workers imbued with images of union worker, "real world" resident, care-giver, and mentor. This culture is represented through a broad variety of texts including curriculum, assessment, and evaluation materials that compliment the use of various teaching strategies, narrative structures, codes of conduct, and legislation. Their work involves special practices in the areas of supporting relationships with students, their position as public school employees, and those contributing to their relationships with colleagues. Practitioners' work is underpinned by an of-practice epistemological orientation where experience within a

specific situation is the main basis for their professional knowledge. These are summarized together with information from the aforementioned description of academic culture found in Table 1.

Within the chapter, I have articulated a bi-cultural view of collaborative relationships involving academics and school-based practitioners and identified the cross-cultural tensions between these groups. The notion of "workplace cultures" derived from Frow and Morris (1993) and informed by de Certeau (1997) and Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) provides a way of comparing these two cultures and identifying possible sources of tension between them.

What emerges from the comparison is a sense of two very different cultures, despite their common interest in education. Academic culture is historically rooted in the tradition of the Western University leading to the contemporary notion of a detached professoriate engaged in research, teaching and service within the ivory tower; while practitioner culture is rooted in modern public school where management-worker relations, isolation, and work with children frame their "real world" work. Academics typically represent themselves through a complex array of inquiry-related practices involving "academic writing" resulting in journal articles, books, and conference presentations where colleagues engage in critique of each other's work. Practitioners represent themselves through a collection of local curriculum, assessment, and evaluation materials as well as through more public forms. These include union newsletters, and descriptive practice focused journals that do not involve critical analysis and feedback. Academics engage in a broad range of practices generally falling under the areas of instruction-related activities, class preparation and grading of students' work, participation in committee work, and research and publication related activities. Practitioners' ways of doing things tend to be pragmatic in nature and fall under such areas as supporting student relationships, teachers' position as public school employees, and those contributing to their limited professional status. Academics' predominant epistemic orientation is that of knowledge for practice as a formal, or

generalizable form of knowledge, while practitioners' emphases is on knowledge-of-practice involving a more pragmatic or situated way of knowing.

While these two groups share much as a consequence of their common interest in education, there are many possible areas of tension that surface during their attempts to collaborate with one another. Often, these can be traced to their cultural differences as defined by the notion of workplace culture. Their different roots result in academics being autonomous professionals whose primary interest in inquiry and whose role as service providers for school-based educators leads to a general orientation, practices and representational forms that are often foreign to their school-based partners. This framing of academics' work contrasts with practitioners' roots founded in "modern" labour traditions where they are sometimes viewed as pseudo-professionals and other times as unionized workers whose primary focus is the immediacy of their work with children or young adults. As Sarason (1971) points out, this difference in hierarchical status often leads to tension in their relationships.

University-based educators' ways of representing their work often puts them at odds with their school-based counterparts. To begin with, the image of the detached professor residing in a special "ivory tower" contrasts dramatically with that of sometimes-union worker and other times "care giver" image attached to practitioners. These different images lead to a class distinction where as Lortie (1975) points out, practitioners are seen as "middle class" citizens, whereas academics are seen as being "professionals" adding to the underpinning hierarchical relationship. The various forms of "academic writing" contrast with practitioners' less formal writing and often oral tradition. Finely, the related methods of inquiry and codes of ethics framing academics work are foreign to practitioners resulting in tension as they collaborate with each other. Similarly, teachers' codes of conduct sometimes limit their ability to participate in work with their academic partners particularly as this relates to engaging in the critical aspects of inquiry.

While too numerous to address here, the normal practices associated with university and school-based educators work, are similarly a source of tension. The primary areas of difference involve the "captivity" and "cellularized" nature of practitioners work in contrast with the "autonomy" associated with academics' practices. While professors have both time and opportunity, provided by the flexible framing of their work, practitioners are legally anchored to a specific school and classroom and have little time or opportunity to engage in other activities. This difference leads, for the most part, to tensions associated with the lack of time and the skills (practices) involved in various collaborative enterprises.

The epistemological orientations of practitioners (practical knowledge) and academics (formal or theoretical knowledge) is well documented. The tension arising from these differing epistemologies relates to questions of "what is important?" and "who knows what is important?" Underlying the first question is conflict between the academic concern for generalizability associated with _for_-practice knowledge and practitioners' focus on situated _of_-practice view about what is important.

Together, the cultural differences described here help explain the often-made claim that these two solitudes are culturally at odds with one another. It also helps explain the difficulties associated with their various attempts to collaborate. What is missing is a concrete suggestion about how to ameliorate the differences. Lieberman (1988) suggests seeing collaborative relationships as an entity that stands between two cultures, and propose that participants create a culture of their own, one that is important to both groups, but one that stands independently as something unique and different. In the next chapter, I take up this challenge by exploring the notion of an "in-between" or nexus culture.

Chapter Six:
Nexus Culture: Reconceptualizing School-University Collaboration

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I argue that collaboration between academics and practitioners is often limited by culturally framed tensions between these groups. Within her work, *Peripheral Visions*, Bateson (1994) a noted cultural anthropologist, provides a compelling and optimistic argument for such cross-cultural experience. She observes that conflict between different sets of assumptions crop up everywhere and that participants need to invent forms of interaction that allow for mutual learning and accommodation. While Bateson's work is with small groups of women from different cultures, her conclusions are germane to "small scale" school-university collaborative efforts involving educators (Atkinson, 1999; Christenson *et al.*, 1996; Clark *et al.*, 1996; Johnston, 1997, Walshok, 1996). For example, Atkinson (1999) observes that, "collaboration can be a rich context for learning—about ourselves as growing professional as well as how to do education in new ways" (p. 147). This alternative view of collaborative relationships as a third culture—what I present here as a *nexus culture*—builds on cross-cultural opportunities similar to those described by Bateson.

Bateson notes the common concern that comparing two cultures most often leads to regarding one as superior. She adds that introducing a third culture often leads to "peripheral vision"—a broadened and deepened understanding of the other and oneself as well as the problem under consideration. She suggests that the goal is building a complex structure in which sets of ideas are intelligible and where a "double helix" or an intertwining of traditions can develop and individual growth occur. Bateson recognizes that the deliberate use of practices such as conversation, the intentional focus on ideas of

concern to participants, and the deliberate recognition of cultural differences can lead to a sense of community and learning. Similarly, Lieberman's (1992) work in the education context recognizes that collaborating academics and practitioners who create a third culture have a better chance of educating their respective students, expanding their relationships with one another, and, in doing so, increasing their knowledge and effectiveness.

In this chapter, I conceptualize the elements of such a "complex structure" as an ideal and raise questions about the implications. I do this by first explaining my use of the term "nexus." Then, I review the literature for recommendations about what supports successful collaboration. Next, I use the notion of workplace culture and the identified tensions between schools and universities described in the previous chapter, together with the characteristics of "successful" collaborative work to propose a reconceptualization of university-school collaboration as a particular form of workplace culture, hereafter referred to as *nexus culture*. Finally, I identify several themes arising from the thesis and raise several questions in relation to them.

Working in the Nexus

Throughout this thesis, I argue for an alternative view of school-university collaboration conceptualized as *nexus culture*. I chose the term *nexus* because of its layers of meaning (OED). First, *nexus* means *a bond or link; a means of connection between* groups. Academic and practitioner working together can be viewed in just this way as faculties of education and schools are "reciprocally interdependent" in such areas as curriculum development and pre- and in-service teacher education. At a second level, *nexus culture* can play *a mediating role between* the two work places. As noted in the section on dialogue, practitioners and academics need to view and reflect on hidden assumptions about the "other" and to ameliorate and learn from differences. Finally, *nexus* means *interposed, intervening in a spatial position situated in the middle place, or between two things or places*, referring to *nexus culture's* physical and temporal locations between academics' and practitioners' normal workplaces. The importance of "being in another place"

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became clear during my work within the teacher education program, and was underscored during my interviews with in-service teachers in the case study, and my ongoing conversations with pre-service teachers. Both of these groups often spoke about the freedom, the creativity, and the learning that emerged from being outside the institutional constraints of school and the university. The most common site of these conversations was in the cars that both pre- and in-service teachers travelled in while car-pooling. Similarly, Bateson writes of the neutral space that household kitchens played during her inter-cultural dialogues. What is not acknowledged in the definitions, however, is the notion that successful work in the *nexus* space involves tolerance for ambiguity, open-mindedness, and a fair-minded disposition towards others.

The notion of *culture* used throughout the thesis is that of *workplace culture* as developed in Chapter Five. These situations involve participants developing a common sense-of-self involving the institutional framing of their work, situated representations of that work, supporting practices and an epistemological orientation whose totality distinguishes one culture from another. While both academics and practitioners would inhabit *nexus*, this proposed "in-between" culture has a unique combination of characteristics that sets it apart from academic and practitioner workplace cultures.

This temporary work space would involve bringing together the two separate notions of "nexus" and "culture" resulting in a theoretical workplace spatially and temporally situated between academics' and practitioners' institutions, playing a mediating role, and where participants would agree to share a common sense-of-self in relation to their work to improve schooling in some way.

Essential Qualities of Successful Collaboration

There are diverse opinions about the ideal requirements for successful work between academics and practitioners. Various researchers (identified below) propose lists of such essential ingredients or key qualities that support their particular

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conceptualization of collaboration. Many of these researchers conclude that collaborative work is supported by factors such as shared goals and needs, available time and resources, responsive leadership, specialized roles within the collaboration, conscious consideration of power and control, and ongoing dialogue. While I recognize and build on these conclusions, I raise questions about their limitations below. In addition to the qualities, reflection in one form or another often surfaces as an important practice within these relationships. I take up each of these areas in the literature review that follows and address each of them to inform my conceptualization of work in the *nexus* following the review.

Shared Goals and Needs

The importance of shared goals and needs are identified by most researchers as essential characteristics of successful collaborative work and are seen by participants as the primary reason for working together. (Clark, 1988; Wilbur, 1995; Hord, 1986; Hogue *et al.*, 1995; Young & Copenhaver, 1996; Osguthorpe, 2000) At an overarching level, Clark (1988) identifies the "universal need" for such collaborative efforts. He observes that schools and universities are reciprocally interdependent in that they cover a wide range of human learning and share responsibility for education. A possible limitation of his view is that participants do not see this shared need, leading to a lack of investment in collaborative relationships. Clark also argues that by joining forces, they produce a more substantial organization and that such a collaboration, has the potential to strengthen both organizations in relation to their respective political and social environments. In so doing, they ideally improve their chances of success in their common goal of providing education.

Aside from common institutional problems, shared problems emerge within individual collaborations. These situated problems or needs also require close attention if these efforts are to succeed. Osguthorpe (2000) recognizes the importance of these situated problems and that the need to review and revise goals as issues surface from within individual collaborative relationships. Lieberman (1988) asserts that any given

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collaboration builds an agenda where the problem being considered and the situation become "mutually informing" and "mutually influential." Here, she recognizes that the problem agreed to as the focus for collaborative work may be generative and that new problems emerge which in turn inform the inquiry. This is of course the ideal scenario and is limited by participants being open to both seeing and working with such problems. Goodlad and Sirotnik (1988) claim that the struggle in this kind of situation is finding an agenda specific enough to bind participants in a common enterprise but general enough to allow individual and creative problem solving in response.

The common themes among these researchers are the need for careful attention to identifying a general problem that is of interest to the entire group and then involving participants in explicit plans to address important problems emerging from their work together. I address these two challenges separately below.

Although academics or school district administrators will often outline collaborative goals in agreements or contracts between their groups, this is no assurance that the level of care suggested above has been achieved. The case considered in Chapters Two and Three provides an example of this shortfall. Here, the district contracted with academics to support the implementation of "their" version of a new approach to secondary education. The result is a school that, as Eisner has observed of such projects, is "old wine in a new bottle." That is, the program and facility look a little different but do not represent a substantial change. Greater success would have been more likely if they had included both academic and practitioner participants in identifying a shared problem, developing the solution, or planning to address problems as they surface.

Within Chapter Four, I document my experience within a teacher education program built around supposed collaboration between seconded practitioners and academics. During my five years of work in this program, the typical result was that either the academic member of an individual team dominated the agenda or that practitioners dominated the agenda marginalizing the academic's participation. The

result is a program where students are most often exposed to one perspective or the other rather than benefiting from the shared richness of both cultural groups.

What is missing in both cases and within many of the collaborative projects I have reviewed, is a culture framed by the spirit of inquiry[32] where all participants are viewed as active participants and where all share an interest in defining the problems being considered. As a means of establishing and nourishing such a spirit, I wonder whether *nexus culture* would benefit by a commitment to inquiry supported by ongoing dialogue about the pursuit of a legitimate general problem. By legitimate, I mean that the problem is one that is meaningful to the group, worth pursuing, and where possible solutions are the outcome of the inquiry as opposed to being decided in advance.

The specific problems emerging from a truly collaborative inquiry might fall within three possible categories: problems that inform the general inquiry, those focused on the organization and functioning of the culture, and those addressing what Buber would call the *I and Thou* of collaboration. While the case study presented in Chapter Three is not a formally established collaboration it offers examples of these three kinds of problems. In this case, practitioners identify questions surfacing from within their ongoing work to implement the Innovative School program and consider these in relation to their work within graduate courses. Similarly, they consider the knowledge offered within these courses through the lens of their work-related problems within the school program. These specific problems illustrate the kinds of emerging problems that foster new understandings. In addition, this situation illustrates how examination of situated problems can be mutually influential and informing. In this circumstance, academics were accidental collaborators, while the practitioners worked on their own within the *nexus*-like space.

The second category of problems emerging from collaborative inquiry involves group functioning and organization. Here, I imagine among other things, problems

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[32] See Smith, S (2004), *The Bearing of Inquiry in Teacher Education*, for his perspective of this situation.

associated with leadership, power and control in relation to decision-making, and time and resource concerns. (Each of these is addressed below.) The key here is that these issues may be addressed within the group and that participants may be involved in decision-making or in the delegation of authority where necessary.

The final category involves problems associated with each individual's sense of himself or herself and of other members of the group. My work within the teacher education program, reported in Chapter Four, illustrates the importance of attending to this kind of question as a group builds relationships of trust and full participation. Approximately twenty percent of work time in the program is dedicated to getting to know about one another and to reflecting on one's place within the program culture. Participants in the program refer to this as "community building" and while I see this building process as a difficult one, this could be an important dimension of the understanding of dialogue outlined below.

Time and Resources

Although they disagree about the implications, many authors identify time and resources as specific requirements for collaboration (Nur, 1991; Goodlad & Sirotnik, 1988; Hogue et al., 1995; Hord, 1986; Hackman & Schmitt, 1995; Lieberman, 1988).A question that these researchers do no address, however, is whether faculties of education are willing to provide such support in the interests of improving education? Nur (1991) represents the most common position when he suggests that collaboration requires extra time and other resources such as support staff. In contrast, Hackman and Schmitt (1995) take the least common and unproven position when they echo the 1940s assumption referred to in Chapter Five, that collaboration adds fresh resources because of economies of scale. While Lieberman (1988) maintains that both universities and schools have to make significant extra financial commitments to collaborative efforts, Goodlad and Sirotnik (1988) suggest that the extra time and resources required for collaboration be considered "within" the regular budgets of both institutions.

Oakes, *et al.* (1986), in one of the few studies that directly addresses the "failure" of several collaborative efforts, identify "time" as the greatest impediment to these relationships. This study highlights the tension mentioned earlier associated with the fact that professors' job descriptions stipulate time for inquiry, reflection, and research, while practitioners who want to inquire, research or simply think about how to create effective schools, work in a system that considers these activities as "extracurricular." Kersh and Masztal (1996) agree with Oakes *et al.* that this difference generally undermines school-university collaboration. Johnson (1998) adds that "stimulus overload" and schools' "labour intensive" environment make time scarce, paperwork abundant and frustration levels high.

While I accept the common position that available time and other resources must be accounted for in any successful collaboration, I disagree that the school system cannot provide the time and that universities already do. The conditions for effective collaborative work can be addressed by reconceptualizing what counts as both practitioners' and academics' work. In this way, it is possible to provide time. For example, in the local context, there are many examples of practitioners being "released" from their typical duties to provide professional services such as developing curriculum or assessment tools, marking exams, participating in accreditation procedures, or, as illustrated in Chapters Two and Three, designing new facilities and programs. From the practitioner's side, their willing participation in collaboration requires that this work is seen as a priority and that their administration recognize it as such by providing funding and other resources. This would mean including such activities within practitioners' job descriptions and within annual budgets.

Contrary to the prevailing view, my brief experiences within the academy, reveals that collaborative work is not built into academics' work as service providers and researchers. Academics' participation is constrained by the priorities used to determine tenure and promotion, which do not typically encourage collaborative efforts. Support for academic participation in collaboration should make this role a priority

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during hiring of education academics by rewarding participation and honouring alternative representational forms within the tenure and promotion process, and by explicitly acknowledging such participation as valuable. This acknowledgement could be accomplished within individual faculties, at conferences as well as by allocating "research-related" resources to this kind of work. These kinds of institutional changes are needed if time for collaboration is truly a part of academics' job description

Leadership

Leadership within school-university collaboration is problematic and considered in two somewhat conflicting ways within the literature. Some researchers argue that support by institutionally defined leaders such as school district superintendents, school principals, deans or university administrators increases the likelihood of successful collaborative projects (Hord, 1986; Hogue *et al.*, 1995; Young & Copenhaver, 1996; Maloy *et al.*, 1999). Those holding this view generally agree that for success, institutional leaders should be "cheerleaders" for the collaboration and be active participants. Their direct participation is seen as leading to quick and "authoritative" decisions as these leaders are in positions to capitalize on individual, group, and organizational strengths. While true, this position is somewhat naïve about the politics such as that illustrated in Chapter Two and that often surrounds such situations.

Goodlad and Sirotnik (1988), McNiece (1992), and Osguthorpe (2000) see leadership within a collaborative relationship somewhat differently. Goodlad and Sirotnik (1988) suggest that collaboration requires broad participation in leadership. Here, leadership is not a role played by institutionally appointed administrators, but rather one played by different members of the group, at different times. According to McNiece (1992) and Osguthorpe (2000), take a position that contests the institutional hierarchy within both schools and universities. They posit that successful collaboration may involve any or all persons in important leadership roles, as there must be a clear understanding that leadership and formal position are not synonymous. McNiece

believes that successful collaboration requires individual participants to take on special leadership roles that are often unique to the culture of collaboration.

This notion of special leadership roles pervades much of the literature. For example, Heckman (1988) notes that some participants need to be "tenacious organizers" and others need to be "alternative drummers" by raising questions and working to see things from a variety of points-of-view. Lieberman (1988) recognizes the need for a "brokerage" function to organize the expertise of the university and of schools. Goodlad and Sirotnik (1988) identify the "executive director" role as someone who can quickly capitalize on emerging common interests. Heckman (1988) identifies the "broker of ideas" role as someone who puts members with common concerns in touch with one-another. Clark (1988) adds the role of "boundary spanner" to bridge the culture gap between school and university participants.

While support by those in key institutional leadership roles is essential to providing policy, funding, resource allocation, and formal recognition; I see this leadership role operating outside of the collaboration. Within *nexus culture*, the specialized, distributed, and emergent form of leadership would be more compatible with other cultural dimensions such as the distribution of power and control and a dialogic approach. I believe that the tensions attributed to such hierarchical relationships (outlined in Chapter Five) seem to interfere with participation in collaborative work. While it is impossible to eliminate hierarchical relationships, moves toward a flattened hierarchy appear to support an atmosphere of leaning and mutual accommodation.

This shift from institutionally appointed leaders to the possibility that all participants may play leadership roles is problematic from the practitioner's side. First, practitioners are not typically trained or encouraged to lead other practitioners—this work is seen as the school-based administrators role. Second, school principals may be uncomfortable because they may feel that they must meet the "administrative expectations" of the principal as a strong leader. This may be difficult to accomplish

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while simultaneously releasing power to teachers who are decision makers within a collaborative structure.

The more compelling argument in support of the distributed model of leadership is that successful work within *nexus culture* involves active participation within a structure where power and control are shared within the group. However, this situation might serve to undermine the power structure within participating institutions and as a consequence, not be accepted.

Power and Control

Hord (1986), Goodlad and Sirotnik (1988), Clark (1988), Erickson and Chrisman (1996), and Johnson (1998) see the conscious consideration of power and control issues as critical considerations for successful collaboration. The unanswered question associated with their perspectives is: will participants be prepared to take on the responsibilities that come with such shared power?

Although stated in different ways, these authors agree that power and control over the agenda and products of such efforts should be shared. Goodlad and Sirotnik (1988) suggest that power is not limited and that sharing power creates more to spread around. Clark (1988), Erickson & Chrisman (1996), and Johnson (1998) maintain that the joint effort in a social group always involves the distribution, redistribution and exercise of power resulting in a less hierarchical structure. They posit that collaboration in inquiry among researchers and practitioners involves sharing power across lines of institutional turf, professional status, and personal identity. Erickson and Chrisman (1996) characterize such interdependence as "...align[ing] one's own purpose with those of diverse others and to negotiate mutually acceptable compromises rather than always trying to coerce and dominate in order to get one's own way" (p. 272). Hord (1986) asserts that effective collaboration is possible only when participants create a flexible environment by relinquishing personal ownership and assuming more risk. These researchers see these negotiated and interdependent power-related shifts toward less

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hierarchical structures and greater individual ownership of the problems, goals, and outcomes as essential ingredients for successful collaboration.

I agree that effective participation involves a depth of participation and commitment beyond mere "problem solving." As I argue later in this chapter, a *nexus culture* would require paying attention to the relationships among participants, supporting the distribution of leadership, active participation and ongoing dialogue. While these working relationships are not always achievable, they are worthy ideals. The relationship between the five practitioners presented in Chapter Three as well as much of the work within the teacher education program presented in Chapter Four indicate that collaborative relationships can approach this ideal at times.

Ongoing Dialogue

Effective dialogue is one of the most problematic areas associated with successful collaboration but is seen by Hallingsworth, (1994); Clark *et. al.*, (1996); Johnston *et. al.*, (1996); and Walshok, (1996) as key to successful collaboration. Whether such dialogue is possible within the kinds of collaborative work described here remains an unanswered question.

Clark (1996) refers to Buber's notion that dialogue allows participants to be "coequal collaborators...who develop a shared understanding of their common experience" (p. 3). Hallingsworth (1994) reports that their collaborative community developed over time because they had sustained dialogue (cited in Johnston *et. al.*, 1996). Clark notes that dialogue facilitates mutual reflection, growth, and change and argues that "by talking through the hidden assumptions which teachers and researchers bring about the 'other'" helps resolve their differences (p. 228). According to Walshok (1996), productive collaboration is more likely if "...unexpected ideas and solutions grow out of genuine conversations between groups of otherwise distinct and highly specialized individuals" (p. 84). He suggests that such conversations require a commitment to each other as part of a dialogic process.

Bateson's (1994) work between cultures, Buber's extensive philosophical inquiry in this area, and the contemporary work of Cissna and Anderson (2002), support the positions taken by the above-mentioned researchers. Each of these theorists conclude in their own ways that ongoing dialogue supports coequal relationships (the flattening of hierarchical relationships), provides opportunities to address assumptions about the other, helps resolve differences, and encourages the production of unexpected ideas and solutions.

The notion of dialogue emerging from the ideals presented in works cited above and elaborated later in this chapter is not, in my experience, representative of typical deliberations among practitioners and academics nor is it evident within many of the studies reviewed. The studies reported in Chapters Two, Three and Four, however, provide some insight into the importance of such dialogue in several ways. First, within the Innovative School project, the conversations between colleagues became much more than mere discussions as the project proceeded. Over time, these conversations took on dimensions of coming to know one-another, caring for one another. This dialogic relationship is documented throughout these chapters and is elaborated on in "Practicing Conversation," Balcaen (1998). Similarly, the ongoing work to build a community within the teacher education program discussed in Chapter Four illustrates the importance of the other-directed nature of the dialogic relationship. The time provided during the various programs, at retreats, and individual planning periods is much more about building relationships than it is about challenging each other and one's self intellectually.

I worry at this point that I have reduced the notion of dialogue to a simple practice where groups engage in conversation that is both caring and challenging. I defer to Buber's words during his Washington Lectures, to emphasize the complexity of a dialogic relationship:

> The Chief presupposition for the rise of genuine dialogue is that each should regard his partner as the one he is. I become aware of him, aware that he is different, essentially different from myself, in the definite,

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unique way which is peculiar to him, and I accept whom I thus see, so that in full earnestness I can direct what I say to him as the person he is. Perhaps from time to time I must offer strict opposition to his view about the subject of conversation. But I accept this person, the personal bearer of conviction has grown---even though I must try to show, bit by bit, the wrongness of this very conviction. I affirm the person I struggle with: I struggle with him as his partner, I confirm him as creature and creation, I confirm him who is opposed to me as him who is ever against me. It is true that it now depends on the other whether genuine dialogue, mutuality in speech arises between us. But if I thus give to the other who confronts me his legitimate standing as a man with whom I am ready to enter into dialogue, then I may trust him and suppose him to be also ready to deal with me as his partner. (Buber, 1965, pp. 79-80)

In this quote, Buber emphasizes working hard to recognize and accept "the other," the necessity to trust each other, and the commitment to challenging one another while separating the subject of conversation from the person. Building on Buber's work and a chorus of others, Cissna and Anderson (2002) describe this more complex understanding of effective dialogue for bringing "disparate groups and cultures together" and "where projects are undertaken to invigorate complex organizations."

Reflection

Reflection, as defined below under *nexus*, plays an important role within many of the collaborative projects reviewed. From her work within an intercultural space, Bateson (1994) notes the importance of reflection when she observers, "men and woman confronting change are never fully prepared for the demands of the moment, but they are strengthened to meet uncertainty if they can claim a history of improvisation and reflection" (p. 6). As in Bateson's work, the literature on school-university collaboration reveals that reflection plays a conflict resolution role by supporting openness to alternative points of view.

Reflection also seems to play an important role in resolving the culture conflicts between academics and practitioners. For example, Bruffee (1993) found that members of both groups engaged in self-reflection and learned "to think productively in new

ways about their partners" (p. 23). Johnston (1997) observes that, "we initially thought about our differences as a source of conflict and later came to understand how these differences were a firm foundation for continued learning" (p. 7). Atkinson (1999) reports that self-reflection plays a major role in resolving conflicts that arise during collaborative work. Rather than personal or individual reflection, Osguthorpe (2000) refers to the importance of "pondering" which he defines as the quiet, thoughtful, weighing of alternatives that is supported by participating in retreats and inquiry groups with others. The difficulty is that adequate resources such as time as well as the disposition towards reflective practice must be in place for an individual collaboration to benefit from this aspect of the work.

While ongoing dialogue is the central practice within *nexus culture*, reflection appears to play an important complementary role as individuals ponder the general problems under consideration, reflect productively about the relationships within the group, and consider lesser problems emerging from the group's work together.

Summary

The literature suggests several essential features of successful collaborative work. Prominent among them are the identification of both general and situated needs; making policy or other changes to provide the time and other resources supporting the project; developing leadership that is broadly distributed and differentiated; deliberating about the power and control issues associated with the project; making ongoing dialogue a central practice throughout the process; and using reflection to resolve conflict and solve problems.

Jonston and Thomas (1997) note that many conventional organizational arrangements separate professionals in their institutional cultures, where they seldom experience firsthand the kind of cross-cultural tensions noted in Chapter Five. Like Bateson's experience within other cultures, the collaborative relationships reviewed here require that participants directly confront differences and their inherent tensions. Bateson (1994) observes that "working across cultures can provide a depth of

understanding that comes by setting experiences, yours and mine, familiar and exotic, new and old, side-by-side, learning by letting them speak to one another" (p. 8). Such opportunities allow participants to expose their differences and to deal with both inner and outer change (p. 168).

Below, I propose a general understanding and raise questions about the theoretical *nexus culture* while recognizing Lieberman's (1988) caution that each individual culture will be unique reflecting the situated nature of each project. First, I clarify the meaning of the term *nexus* and the particular understandings of *culture* used in this work. Next, I describe my vision of *nexus* culture using the categories of workplace culture provided in Chapter Five. Finally, I raise questions about the implications of this new view of school-university collaboration.

Nexus Culture

Nexus culture, like academic and practitioner workplaces, is a construction involving its own characteristics, specifically its frames of reference, representational forms, operating practices, and epistemological orientation. Unlike either participant culture, it does not have its own deep historical roots or social institutions to serve as an underpinning structure. The physical and social framing of this new workplace requires that academics and practitioners challenge and adapt the structures that frame their work, practices, and epistemological orientations. The construct of *nexus culture* presented here provides a focus for such dialogue.

Frame of Reference

Nexus work would involve the deliberate framing of an independently standing workplace, where participants nurture forms of interaction that allow for learning and the production of creative solutions to local problems. As explained earlier, the institutions, ideologies, and myths and images shape the frames of reference establishing the standards governing a culture.

Institution

In the absence of an historical institutional frame of reference, this approach to collaboration would involve policy recognizing that working arrangement between the two linked groups be focused on problem solving, provide opportunities to mediate differences, and provisions for its own physical and temporal space. The conceptualization proposed here recognizes three institution-like factors helping frame the work. First, are the "natural links" based on participants' common interest in improving education. This includes the specific question(s) that are the initial focus of collaboration, and the group's common interest in unanticipated needs that emerge within each relationship. Second, the *nexus* could provide an intermediate position between the two institutions through a "contract" that frames the working relationship including the allocation of time and other resources.[33] This means contractually assuring adequate funds to provide release time for participating academics and practitioners. Third, policies within the respective cultures, which inhibit collaboration, should be re-evaluated. These policies would include such as those defining what counts in tenure and promotion evaluations for academics and expanding what counts as practitioners' work. This work should be valued through both funding and policy changes within each of the dominant cultures and be reflected in the contractual agreement that frames any collaboration (Clark, 1988; Watson & Fullan, 1992).

This institutional framing of collaborative work would likely provide an intervening space where representatives from either culture could, as Bateson suggests, "...view the other and learn to accept the presence of diversity," internally as well as externally, observing that this kind of opportunity sometimes leads to "...the liberation of unimagined potentials" (178). This opportunity to think imaginatively about problems under consideration is critical to the success of such work, while being dependent on the will of participants.

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[33] See Sirotnik (1988, p. 178 or Fullan,1992, p. 220) for suggestions about what might be included in these framing contacts.

Ideology

I suggested earlier that the dominant ideology framing academics' work is the production of generalizable knowledge and the paramount ideology framing practitioners' work the protector, caregiver and teacher of the young. The predominant ideology framing *nexus* culture should be one of inquiry and would likely be in direct tension with the common "administrator managed" approach to identifying and solving problems.

Within this alternative context, participants would come together to work on some shared goal or need outlined as a problem and it is this problem that initially frames the work together. The particulars of this joint work would vary from situation to situation: the problem and the nature of the group will determine just what is required and what is possible. It is important to reiterate that the literature recognizes the need to attend to emerging problems, whether they are process-related (e.g. about differences surfacing within the group) or substantive problems that surface in relation to the original goal or problem. What is desired then is a commitment to a version of inquiry that is focused on a clearly identified shared problem, attends to the problems of working together, and takes account of unanticipated problems emerging from the work—recognizing that these emergent problems may determine the final focus.

Framing Myths and Images

The notion of framing-myths is less germane as individual situations will likely not have a history of their own. However, it is important that participants reflect on the possible preconceptions they hold about others involved in the particular project as well as the preconceptions others may hold about them.[34] Identifying misconceptions about the subject under consideration would also be a benefit as work progresses.

The predominant image of *nexus* work presented here and emerging from the literature on collaboration is that of energetic and inquiring problem solver. A shared problem, whether it requires large or small-scale solutions, should be the driving force

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[34] See the framing myths sections under academic and practitioner cultures in Chapter Five.

behind any collaborative effort. A particular research agenda or changes to an individual's practice do not provide the necessary degree of shared ownership. The power of a collaborative problem-based orientation is emphasized in Chapter Three, when this group of teachers explored problems emerging from their practices and in light of possible solutions emerging from their graduate studies. It is this spirit of joint inquiry about a relevant problem that is the dominant feature of the *nexus* view. However, as I point out in Chapter Three, the problem is creating the conditions or capacity for such an inquiry-based relationship.

Representational Forms

Representational forms, refers to the <u>texts</u> and <u>codes of behaviour</u>, that exhibit or convey dimensions of *nexus* culture. While participants bring their respective representational forms to their work together new ways of representing their collaborative work may be desirable. While this ideal appears as important to the success of some collaborative efforts, changing our ways of representing work presents its own set of problems.

Tierney (1998) notes that texts must be accessible and employ compelling language if all involved are to have access to, and participate in, representations of the work. This is not typically the case in collaborative efforts where as the "word-smiths," academics often assume the role of representing the work using their culturally-rooted practices. Tierney suggests that accepting "academic writing" as the norm in collaborative projects results in practitioners feeling that the work is neither accessible nor representative of their participation and understanding.

Problems of this kind were evident in the Innovative School. In the one case, a group of consultants created an "accreditation" document based on selected parts of the program that seemed to be working in order to give the school an "A" grade. This did not satisfy practitioners' need for a more complete examination of the program as a whole. In a second case, an academic published a paper espousing the virtues of his

approach to learning styles and claiming that the Innovative School program used his work extensively. This paper did not represent the practitioners' experience.

In his forward to Beattie's (1995) work about collaboration with practitioners, Eisner agrees that new forms of texts are the key to access by all, with the caveat that high quality work is essential. Also, the forms of representation need to be accepted by academics not just by practitioners. This suggests that alternative forms of representation would be left open to the group for negotiation. These alternative representations might include documents such as plans for change, progress or assessment reports, curriculum documents, video, or the many new forms offered by the www. Related to the form or forms is the question of genuine participation by a full range of participants—something that cannot be controlled by those managing or leading the project.

A local case that does take account of the need to be accessible and employ compelling language while addressing a particular problem is the collection of teaching materials provided by The Critical Thinking Consortium (www.sd38.bc.ca.TC2). In this case, academics have worked in collaboration with groups of practitioners to produce curriculum documents representing a jointly developed understanding of the concept of critical thinking together with practitioners' experience in implementing these ideas in their classrooms. It appears that through their genuine participation, participants have created a set of materials (representations) acceptable within the academy and in many schools.

However, there is a dilemma in trying to involve all parties in representing their work. This "inclusive" approach is vulnerable to the "decision by committee" critique cited earlier. Clearly a negotiated approach does not guarantee a competent product. However, neither does a unilateral representation by the academic participants. A commitment to dialogue and the disposition towards critical mindedness may help to ameliorate this danger.

Codes of Behaviour

Practitioners' codes of ethical conduct and academics' research-related ethics codes will likely be imported into any *Nexus*. These existing norms would likely need to be modified in various ways. For example, the tendency within practitioner culture to view "any criticism" as a breach of ethics will initially limit critical conversations. Within both the spirit of inquiry and dialogue framing *nexus* work, certain forms of criticism are essential to the success of such work. Efforts would be required to support practitioners in critical conversation and to learn to separate the subject under consideration from the people holding differing points of view. On another front, if formal research is part of the agenda, mechanisms would be needed to educate participants about the implications of this part of the work and to address questions and emergent concerns. The tensions between academics' role as researcher and that of *nexus* participant would then be subject to negotiation within the group.

Operating Practices

Four operating practices or *customary and observable patterns or ways of doing things and performing* that are especially important for successful collaboration are ongoing inquiry, dialogue, flexible leadership, and reflection.

Ongoing Inquiry

The pivotal practice, argued for throughout this work, is that of inquiry into an agreed upon problem as the focus for the particular group.[35]

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[35] For a substantive review of contemporary approaches to curriculum inquiry see Short (1991). The notion of inquiry considered here is influenced by Festenstein's (2001) reconstruction of Dewey's Theory of Social Inquiry. Festenstein views inquiry as a form of action or practice, involving inquirers as agents working within "objectively precarious but improvable environments." According to Ferenstein, Dewey's notion of social inquiry is a process beginning in doubt about some aspect of a situation and proceeding toward "warranted assertability," a form of knowledge not truth about possible resolution. He notes that the assertions are not viewed as being unquestionable but are open to ongoing inquiry.
There are two required ends associated with such warranted assertions. First, is a change in the beliefs of the inquirers and second is the development of a proposed resolution of the problematic situation. This proposal is then evaluated on its ability to resolve the problem under investigation. Festerstein notes that Dewey "eschews" *a priori* prescriptions about either the criteria for success or the methods employed. What counts as knowledge is defined only as "the product of competent inquiries" (Dewey, 1938, p.16).

The notion of inquiry considered here is founded on the commonly held "spirit of inquiry" which I see as a shared disposition towards making all aspects of the subject under consideration problematic and, as such, open to review. This view requires that participants be active participants in critical dialogue as part of their ongoing work. Consequently, all members of the group should nurture this through their openness to critique and willingness to contribute to the dialogue.

The general question motivating the collaborative effort as well as the supporting questions should then, be worthy of consideration. *Nexus* work involves intellectual commitment, time, energy, and financial resources. Participants should see the problem(s) as worthy of their commitment and the allocation of resources. This kind of commitment was particularly evident at the "Innovative School Program" where participants believed that they were dramatically improving the secondary school experience of their students. Also, the allocation of otherwise scarce resources by the school district was predicated on their belief that the project would improve secondary education. It is less obvious that academic participants judged this work worthy of attention and this kind of negotiation would likely be problematic within *nexus* work.[36]

Finally, the fit between the proposed solution(s) and the problem should be the central criterion when considering the knowledge generated by the group's inquiry. This kind of knowledge is "knowledge-of" something where the situation being considered is the site for inquiry and where data generated by practitioner and academic are used as generative material for interrogation and interpretation. In the spirit of "ongoing inquiry" all solutions would s be subjected to continuous review as solutions were developed, implemented, and modified.

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[36] For example, Sirotnik (1988) provides an understanding of "collaborative inquiry" in his discussions of school-university partnership.

Dialogue

Conversation emerged very early in my investigations as an important practice associated with collaborative work (Balcaen, 1998). My initial understanding identified the disposition towards listening to the other, making substantive contributions, and the positive affects on relationships as desirable dimensions of conversation. As I pursued my inquiry, Buber's extensive conceptual work with this notion subsumed my early understanding. While understanding the importance of this practice, the problems of facilitating such a practice and willingness of participants cannot be ignored.

- Cissna and Anderson (2002) provide a summary of Buber's work informed by their review of reports by practitioners and academics from several disciplines on the characteristics of "successful" dialogue within public domains. I offer their "suggested principles" as possible ideals guiding dialogue within a *nexus* culture: Immediacy of presence *where dialogue partners speak and listen from a common-place or space where they experience access to each other. Nexus work as described throughout this chapter provides just such a space, although I imagine that electronic conversation at times.*

- Emergent unanticipated consequences *where participants "presume a certain spontaneity and improvisation linking communicators." They posit that this dimension of dialogue often repairs attempts at manipulation because all parties enter without full knowledge of the directions that may be taken within the conversation allowing them to sacrifice strategy at times.*

- Recognition of strange otherness *where partners assume not only that the other person is different but is different in unpredictable ways. Like the literature on collaboration and Bateson's work, they observe that this other directedness often leads to learning about oneself and the other.*

- Vulnerability *involving participants being open to change. Nexus partners are encouraged to speak from a ground that is important to them but do not defend that ground at all costs.*

- Mutual application *where speakers anticipate listeners and incorporate them into messages. In a dialogic process, speaker and listener are interdependent, each constructing self, other and their talk simultaneously.*

- Temporal flow *involving understanding the past out of which it flows and the future that it unfolds so persistently. Nexus participants are encouraged to include a sense of their partners past as academics or practitioners and bring this knowledge to bare within the dialogue.*

- Genuineness and authenticity *underpin the relationship of dialogue partners. Within nexus, participants are encouraged to speak and act in ways that match their worlds of experience. Where such trust breaks down, the potential for dialogue dissolves.*

As argued earlier in the chapter, successful collaboration involves ongoing dialogue focused on the general inquiry and on the inevitable emerging questions about the problem to be solved or about the group process. Johnston (1999), speaking of her collaborative work with practitioners, observes, "we generally avoided talking about our differences, we talked endlessly about what to do about our differences" (p. 104). Later, she notes that eventually talking about the tensions sourced in their cultural differences lead to learning. Johnson's lesson together with the experiences reported earlier in the chapter underscore the importance of such dialogue explicitly focused on these tensions.

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Reflection

Reflection is identified as an important, although often vaguely defined, practice throughout the literature on collaboration. In its various forms, reflection supports the underpinning spirit of inquiry and the ongoing dialogue where participants share their reflections on the problems at hand. While logistically problematic, ideally, participants would negotiate how to support opportunities for reflection through the allocation of resources such as time. The problem might be convincing those in authority of the value derived from such practice.

In general, reflection refers to, *casting eyes or thought back on something.* (OED) Schön (1983, 1987) and Grimmett (1988) contest the traditional notion of reflection as turning back by suggest that for practitioners there is a form of reflection that is more immediate. This "reflection-in-action" is seen as turning the eye or thought upon practice while in the act, not after the fact. Schön notes that these reflective acts occur in a messy and complex space and involve on-the-spot surfacing, criticizing, restructuring, and testing of intuitive understandings of currently experienced phenomenon often, in the form of a "reflective conversation." He observes that practitioners bring such reflection to situations of uncertainty, uniqueness, and conflict. Schön (1983) identifies a second notion of "reflection-on-action" where a description of intuitive knowing feeds a new level of reflection, "enabling the inquirer to criticize, test, and restructure his understandings" (p. 277).

Both of these forms of reflection could be important within the *nexus*. Participants would need to cast their thoughts on the general problem under consideration if they are to contribute to the dialogue and ultimately to the solution. This reflective process would likely be coupled to the formal inquiry. Similarly, as practitioners within the *nexus*, participants would typically "reflect-in-action" as they participate in dialogue. For example, as participants learn about themselves and others during the conversation, they will likely examine their intuitive understandings and modify their participation within the dialogue. Finally, the learning process associated

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with dialogue and discussed throughout this work would ideally involve the kind of "reflection-on-action" where critique, testing, and restructuring of one's understandings occurs before new understandings are developed or arrived at.

Leadership

As pointed out by those studying collaboration, leadership ideally functions at two levels. First, leadership by administrators and bureaucrats from within the participating institutions is crucial. These individuals should coordinate the relationship, arrange for funding, articulate with the various governance bodies, construct the contract helping frame the work, and negotiate for the funds and other support required for the work. Their general disposition as "cheerleaders" of the project is deemed as being essential and, when absent, is seen as a major impediment to success. The second form of leadership occurs "within" *nexus culture* and is not necessarily performed by those in institutional leadership roles. As argued earlier in the chapter, leadership from within the group can take many different forms. It may include being "tenacious organizers;" or "alternative drummers" by raising questions and working to see things from a variety of points-of-view. Some may act as "cultural brokers" by organizing the expertise within both the University and the schools. Some may act as "executive directors" or someone who can capitalize on common interests as they emerge in the collaboration. Still others may act as "brokers of ideas" to put members in touch with one-another in relation to issues of common concern; or others as "boundary spanners" who help to bridge differences surfacing within the group. The underpinning question is: will participants play these various leadership roles in support of the project? While someone would likely play an initial facilitating role by bringing the group together, *nexus* assumes that the group will capitalize on the talents and interests of participants regardless of their identity outside of the group. Within the *nexus*, the practices of dialogue and reflection become critical as individuals work to deconstruct assumed identities and reconstruct themselves within the work. While I am not naïve about the overwhelming tendency to adopt a previously constructed hierarchy, the

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literature indicates that deliberate efforts "to do things differently" increase the likelihood of success (Sergiovanni, 1991; Williams, 1998).

Epistemological Orientation

As noted in Chapter Five, the area of epistemological orientation surfaces as a particular source of tension when education academics and practitioners work together. Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (1999) categories are helpful in distinguishing the kinds of knowledge claims that preoccupy the two groups. While this source of tension should be explicitly addressed, a task that could prove to be very difficult, both of these knowledge forms could contribute to effective problem solving within the *nexus*, and, as such, deserve consideration. However, it is Cochran-Smith and Lytles's third orientation that best complements the collaborative vision within this thesis. I have adapted their definition to include both academics and practitioners as *nexus* workers who treat both practical knowledge and formal knowledge and theory as generative material for interrogation and interpretation within the context of their inquiry. The outcomes of these efforts might be viewed as knowledge-in-practice and such knowledge would be presented in the manner agreed to by the group.

These different knowledge forms as well as the other dimensions of academic, practitioner and *nexus* culture are summarized below in the form of a table. As within the text, they are organized by the categories of frame of reference, representational forms, operational practices, epistemological orientation.

Table 1: Characterization of Academic, Practitioner, and Nexus Workplace Cultures

Categories used to describe and compare cultural groups	Dimensions of each Cultural Group		
	Academic	Practitioner	Nexus
Frame of reference	• Modern University • Self Governance • Professional status • Image of "Ivory Tower resident	• Modern School • Governed by others • Union worker status • Image of "Real world resident"	• Inquiry orientation • Common Interest • A Contract • Institutional Policies
Representational Forms	• Academic Writing • Research methods • Research Ethics	• Informal Writing • Oral narratives, various forms of representation • Behaviour codes	• Accessible and compelling language • Research Ethics • Research methods
Operational Practices	• Class preparation and instruction • Community work • Research & pub. • Conference related	• Relationships with students • Employee • pseudo-professional	• Inquiry • Dialogue • Reflection • Leadership
Epistemological Orientation	• Knowledge-for-practice	• Knowledge-of-practice	• Knowledge-in-practice • -for-practice • -of-practice

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Conclusion

While I am not naïve about how idealistic the view represented above as *nexus culture* is, I believe that such work offers constructive alternatives and raises questions about collaboration. Several themes provide a focus for the questions. These are the *respect, commitment, "win-win"* opportunities, and constructive *tension* that emerge as being intrinsic to the *nexus* view.

Respect

Respect is essential to the success of *nexus* work but recognition of this, raises the question: are both academics and practitioners disposed to engaging in the kind of respectful relationship that seems essential to such collaboration?.

As used here, the notion of respect does not refer to normal polite interactions but rather, it refers to the attitude inherent to reflection and dialogue as outlined earlier where participants are *present*—listen to, learn from, and contribute to others; are *free* to be spontaneous; disposed to recognize *otherness*; willing to *stand their ground*; open to *change* and to *temporal facets* of other work; and invested in building *trust*. This involves a deliberate focus on leaning about other participants and their workplaces—including their hopes, aspirations, and concerns. In addition, respect means being amenable to what others offer as leaders or to what special knowledge and understandings they offer

Commitment

As outlined above, commitment within the *nexus* is important at both institutional and individual levels. At the institutional level, it involves providing the unique set of resources supporting such an approach to collaboration. These are the allocation of time to engage in reflection and dialogue, as well as leadership activities. This time may involve restructuring participants' normal workplace roles and testing the boundaries of what some would call "unrealistic" changes. In their conclusions about the way ahead, Milburey and Talbert (2001) argue for such changes naming them the "reculturing" of practitioners' work. They argue that such changes are fundamental

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to the development of "a culture of innovation." Such "reculturing" of academic work could also contribute to innovation within faculties of education. While there is evidence that such reculturing supports change, it is not clear whether both academics and practitioners are ready for such changes.

"Win-Win"

Unlike many situations where academics and practitioners are looking to meet "their" individual goals by linking with others, *nexus* work offers what Covey (1989) calls a "win-win" arrangement or meeting "our" goals. This implies negotiating a focus for inquiry that is in the interest of both groups where all participants are explicit about their goals and how they hope to meet them. For example, an academic participant might be specific about the need to write a paper in support of tenure or promotion, and a practitioner may recognize the need to better understand the role that computer technology plays in their workplace as a means of improving communications with students and parents. Such a "win-win" situation would require a way of serving both participants' needs through some common representation. The unanswered question is whether both groups can be open and fair-minded enough to construct such a "win-win" situation.

Tension

Tension also runs throughout this thesis as an important theme associated with collaboration. I identify sources of tension as the major reason for limited success and sometimes for failure of conventional approaches to collaboration. I also identify tension as a possible source of opportunities to learn and problem solve. Within my proposed *nexus* culture, tension continues to play these dual roles of Achilles heel and source of promise. Unacknowledged tensions between participants have the potential to undermine and even destroy these working relationships because such work is so dependant on the commitments outlined above. At the same time, it is these tensions that provide the focus for dialogue and reflection leading to the kinds of normative-re-

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educative change and creative solutions identified as possible outcomes when practitioners and academics choose to work in tension with one-another. However, this involves a deliberate choice to work within the ambiguity that characterizes such an environment in the interests of some greater good—a situation that is not much in evidence in the literature.

In conclusion, what I offer is a vision of how it "could" be in the belief that as Alexander, Gerofsky, and Wideen (1999) argue, a vision provides a group with an opportunity to coalesce energies and encourages people to move beyond self-interest and focus on higher goals for themselves and others—and I believe that this is the promise of *nexus* work. At the same time, I am acutely aware of Fullan's (1992) caution that "visions may blind" resulting in a dilemma about whether such visions are constructive or inhibit the ability to move forward. While I cannot predict how individuals might enact such visions, I hope that the frameworks and questions I raise here, help establish the kind of creative environment that I envision.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Application for Ethics Review and Approval For "Innovative High" Project

Background

The proposed study is an autobiographical narrative account covering seven years of experience during the construction and implementation of a new secondary school program (hereafter referred to as Innovative High). The focus of the study is the author's reflections about the interplay between practitioners (administrators and teachers) and representatives from the academy as these academics provided consulting services and/or engaged in research during the planning and implementation of the new school program. As an early chapter of a doctoral thesis focused on university-public school collaboration, the intention of this study is to provide a context for the subsequent chapters and to identify questions about school-university collaboration as it relates to the school reform agenda. The work will be included as one of three research-based chapters in the author's thesis and may form the basis of future publications.

What follows is a consideration of the proposed study from the points of view of methods, epistemological concerns, and ethics-related concerns.

Method

The proposed inquiry is narrative in form, as it will be written as a story and an autobiography because it is a "re-presentation" of the author's experience (Molloy, 1991). The method of narrative inquiry conceptualized by Clandinin and Connelly (2000), building from Dewey's notion of experience involving situation, continuity, and interaction was chosen because it provides a well articulated method that fits this kind of story. Generally, their theoretical 3-dimensional narrative space includes

considerations of the *personal* and *social* (interaction) on one axis; *past, present and future* (continuity) on a second axis; and *place* (situation) on a third axis.

This conceptualization works well for such a consideration of school program construction because the piece involves an ongoing story-line focused on the interaction between the author's personal experience and the social context provided by others involved in the construction of the new program. The school facility and the program provide the situation for the inquiry and the continuity is provided through the author's temporal considerations as he brings together past experience and understandings, present experience and understandings, and speculations about the future (described briefly below).

The proposed work is an "autobiographical narrative inquiry" on two counts. First, it is autobiographical because this study uses autobiographical (family life, religious background, personal attitudes towards dimensions of education, community and family background) details to illuminate and inform the author's personal context of the story. More importantly, it is autobiographical because it uses personal experience as the primary experience (empirical data) being considered in the inquiry.

The narrative will involve three interwoven texts. The central or core text will be the story of the author's experience during the seven years under consideration. The field texts or "rough data" informing the story are the author's journals documenting his practice-related experience and public documents used to validate historical claims included in the narrative. These "public" documents include such artifacts as public research reports presented to the local school district and local news paper reports. The journals document the author's daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly observations; experiences; and interpretations of his school life supported by artefacts collected over the years (e.g. a note asking for the author to meet with a group of researchers to discuss an up-coming project).

In addition to this central story, the work will include a series of interpretive inserts informed by the author's current theorizing about the cultural tensions between

academics and school-based practitioners during a variety of reform-related attempts at collaboration (Goodlad, 1988; Lieberman, 1988; the Holmes Group, 1990; Ruddock, 1992; Levine, 1992, Wideen, & Andrews, 1997). This theoretical perspective involves the author's conceptualization of practitioner and academic "workplace cultures" as these groups attempt to work together during the construction of the new school program (Frow & Morris, 1993; Hartman, 1997; de Certeau, 1997). This part of the narrative is categorized as "interim" by Clandinin and Connelley—those texts where interpretation of field texts are represented and vary according to the narrative inquiry, the research and the scholarly life of the inquirer. In general then, these inserts are the author's analysis of the culturally framed relationships as informed by his professional experience, literature reviewed, and theorizing about collaboration between academics and practitioners. In addition, the narrative will include footnotes defining, qualifying, and providing examples for terms that are used in a way that is likely to be unfamiliar to the reader.

Before wring the piece, I will seek permission from the District Superintendent of Schools to write the piece (see comments below and attached letters). In addition, I will seek his feedback as well as feedback from the two school-based administrators of record, about claims made in relation to my work with the "Innovative School" project (see details below). I will also seek ongoing input from my program supervisors regarding the form and content of the piece (see details below).

Epistemological Considerations

It is the position of the author that while Clandinin and Connelly provide a well conceptualized representational form for narrative inquiry, they do not provide a sufficiently rigorous approach to the kinds of epistemological questions conventionally associated with a doctoral thesis. As a means of addressing this concern, the author will employ the approach to such questions provided by Carspecken (1996), in his work *Critical Ethnography in Educational Research: a theoretical and practical guide.*

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This epistemological framework—set of assumptions about knowledge and how it may be validly obtained—will be used by the author as a guide during his examination of the variety of truth claims associated with the work. Carspecken provides three ontological categories of research-related truth claims forming the basis of epistemological considerations associated with the study (outlined below) and with the analysis of the work planned for concluding chapters of the thesis.

The first of these is the category of <u>objective claims</u> or claims about "The" world. Carspecken argues that these claims are presupposed by all statements that can be understood and then judged as true or false according to the principle of "multiple access." By this he means that objective-referenced truth claims are claims where others would agree with one's observations and thus depend upon a presupposed ontological category to which all humans in principle have access through their senses. An example of such a claim stemming from classroom observations is: "Events are occurring in one of my student's homes that many children would report as upsetting." Carspecken notes that this category is not suggesting that there "is" an objective reality, but rather that this ontological presupposition is necessary for certain kinds of human communication within a given cultural context.

Anticipated examples of these kinds of claims stemming from the proposed work include those about the chronology and outcomes of particular studies undertaken by others, the sequence of events associated with the design and implementation of the program, and relevant statistical data. Lincoln and Guba's (1985) *Naturalistic Inquiry* provides several techniques for validating these kinds of objective claims including *triangulation* by using several sources of information to validate the claims, *peer debriefing* to check for possible bias and limited focus or too much focus on certain areas, and *member checks* by sharing notes with people who were part of the study to see whether or note they agree with the record. Intended use of these methods is detailed under each category below.

The underlined subjective category or the "my", "her", "your" world is presupposed when statements that can be understood only with the concomitant understanding that "privileged access" to a certain form of experience are in play. These kinds of claims make honesty or veracity of the actor in question central and are validated when that person whose subjectivity is referred to confirms the statement about her/his subjective state. Because this category is structured fundamentally according to the principle of privileged access, it involves a notion of my world, her world, and your world. An example of this kind of claim is: "I want to help you with your problems." Carspecken recognizes that under certain conditions the privileged person may not be aware of certain subjective conditions (e.g. repressed anger) but that if all evidence points to this condition then it is reasonable to claim that if the person was self aware they would have privileged subjective access to this knowledge.

In the case of autobiographical work, this category is particularly germane as the core of the piece is based on the "subjective" claims made by the author. From a research perspective then, autobiographical narrative inquiry of the sort described above involves a researcher representing her/his subjectivity through cultural symbols—in this case text. As the researcher, the author has the same responsibilities as non-autobiographical researchers to maintain a "wakeful" disposition as she/he constructs the narrative by attending to responses from others (Clandinin and Connelley, 2000, 184). From Carspecken's point-of-view, this means using "peer debriefings" (other researchers) to provide feed back about such things as consistency or an apparent lack of veracity. In addition, he recommends the use of "member feedback" to question/consider claims made by the author about his/her experience.

The normative evaluative category or "realm is an ontological category presupposed by all "meaningful action" or awareness of how others might take a certain act or event. It consists of truth claims about what behavior is "proper, appropriate, and conventional" within a certain cultural context. These kinds of claims are usually articulated as *should claims*; suggesting that people should act in such and such ways at

such and such times. Normative-evaluative claims thus concern a sense of the nature of "our" world rather than "the" world or "my" world" (p.83).

It is important to distinguish between these normative-evaluative claims and existing norms—the objectified modes of acting in certain situations. The underlying claim associated with norms being that, members of a particular cultural community regard particular norms to be "in place" and that members of a group adhere to them. Carspecken suggests that there is an ongoing tension between what the norms are within cultural groups and the claims that individuals or groups make about what the norms should be and that these are normative-evaluative claims. An example of such a claim is "your mother's behavior is bad." Rather than being dependent on multiple or privileged access, these claims are dependent on "non-disputed" value claims. This category is important because awareness of these claims allows the researcher to describe and explain social regularities within a particular groups in comparison to a large established cultural group.

Ethics-Related Concerns

There are four possible ethics-related concerns associated with this proposal as well as the epistemological considerations detailed above. First, is the concern of gaining access to the subject of the study, the Innovative School project. This is addressed through the attached letter signed by the District Superintendent as the "gatekeeper" of schools under his jurisdiction. Without his signature of approval and participation by providing member feedback, the research will not go forward.

Second, is the possibility that someone might connect the author with the project because of his work at the school, thereby compromising the "anonymity" of the project under consideration. The third related concern involves the possibility that individuals associated with the project and referred to within the story may be identifiable. These two anonymity-related concerns will be addressed by using pseudonyms for the district, school, and individuals referred to within the text.

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The final concern is that of confidentiality in relation to feedback from the Superintendent and school-based administrators about the narrative. As a means of addressing this concern, I will seek "informed consent" from the Superintendent, principal and vice-principal of the school for the period being considered, as those who I will ask to provide feedback and whose comments could inform the final version of the story. The comments made by these individuals will remain confidential both in discussions with others and within the telling of the story.

As part of the related validation of claims process, I propose the following. First, that I provide the District Superintendent, Principal, and Vice Principal with a copy of the work and ask for their feed back regarding the various claims made within the work. This process would provide *member feedback* regarding objective, subjective and normative-evaluative claims. As well, I will document the several sources used to triangulate on objective date included in the work. For example, I might include comments from my journals about the work of a particular program review group as well as corroborating information from a local newspaper or a public presentation to the school board. In addition, I will obtain *peer* feed back from members of my committee as a means of critiquing claims made within the work. Both the alternative sources of information and the feedback provided by members and by peers will be addressed within the methodology section of the thesis.

SFU Ethics Committee Approval

Dr. H. Weinberg
Acting Director. Office of Research Ethics

B. Ralph, Ethics Officer

Voice:

Fax: email:

Mobile:

email:

Reference Ethics Policy 20.02:   http://www.sfu.ca/policies/research/r20-01revised.htm

Notification of Application Status

Code   34168

Investigator Name Last

Balcaen

Investigator Department

Education

Investigator Name First

Philip

Invesitgator Position

Graduate

Date Created	Date Modified	Code
12/2/2002	12/5/2002	34168

E-Mail Investigator

pbalcaen@sfu.ca

Faculty Supervisor email

wideen@sfu.ca

Investigator Supervisor

Wideen   Marvin

Experiment Title

Innovative high project: finding my question

Co-Investigator

N/A

Medical Review

Grant Funded

No

Risk

Minimal

Approval Status

Approved

DORE Approval Date

12/5/02

Letter Requesting Access

Mr. Superintendent of Schools
Maple-Ridge Pitt Meadows School District
22225 Brown Ave.
Maple ridge, BC
V2X 8N6

Re: Approval of Research Proposal

Mr.

I am writing to obtain your permission to write about my seven years of work with the Thomas Haney Secondary School project.

The piece being considered is my reflections about the project from the point-of-view of the interplay between practitioners (administrators and teachers) and representatives from the academy (visiting academics and those who were invited partners) during the two-year planning period and then the first five years of operation of the new school. As an early chapter of my doctoral thesis focused on university-public school collaboration, the intention of this work is to provide a context for the subsequent chapters and to identify questions about school-university collaboration from the perspective of a participating teacher. With your permission, the work will be included as one of three research-based chapters in my thesis.

Upon completion of the work, I will forward it to you for comment and will take account of your feed back in the final draft. Please note that your comments and the comments of others, will remain confidential. If the proposal is acceptable to you, I will also contact the Principal (at the time) and Vice-Principal (at the time) to ask for their permission and participation by way of providing similar feedback about the draft. I have attached the more detailed research proposal in the event that it might provide details of interest or concern to you.

I anticipate a minor ethics-related risk in relation to maintaining "anonymity" of both the school and those characters described or referred to within the work. This concern arises because of my ongoing relationship with the "The Thomas Haney Project" and the possibility that readers might make this connection. I will make every effort to maintain anonymity by using pseudonyms for the district, school, and any individual characters referred to throughout the piece, as well as by disguising individuals through fictitious description.

The potential benefits associated with the work include feedback to the district about this dimension of program planning and implementation, as well as by providing generalizable notions about school-university collaboration (the roles of graduate work, consulting, research) to the education community at large.

If you agree to this proposal please sign and return the **"Informed Consent Form"** and/or contact me if you have any questions at pbalcaen@sfu.ca, pbalcaen@ouc.bc.ca or by phone (250) 762-5445 local 7312.

Note: If you have any concerns about the project or my conduct in regards to the proposed research please contact my thesis supervisor Professor Marvin Wideen (604.461.0376); the Dean of the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University, (Dr.) Ian Andrews at (604.291.3953); or Dr. H. Weinberg, Director of Research Ethics, 8888 University Way, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC, V5A 1S6, Canada.

Signed Informed Consent Form

Simon Fraser University and those conducting this project subscribe to the ethical conduct of research and to the protection at all times of the interests, comfort, and safety of subjects.

This research is being conducted under permission of the Simon Fraser Research Ethics Board. The chief concern of the Board is for the health, safety and psychological wellbeing of research participants. Should you wish to obtain information about your rights as a participant in research, or about the responsibilities of researchers, or if you have any questions, concerns or complaints about the manner in which you were treated in this study, please contact the Director, Office of Research Ethics by email at hweinber@sfu.ca or phone at 604-268-6593.

Your signature on this form will signify that you have received a document which describes the procedures, possible risks, and benefits of this research project, that you have received an adequate opportunity to consider the information in the documents describing inquiry, and that you voluntarily agree to participate.

Any information that is obtained during this study will be kept confidential to the full extent permitted by the law. Knowledge of your identity is not required. You will not be required to write your name on any other identifying information or research materials. Materials will be maintained in a secure location

Name of Inquiry: "Innovative High" Project: Finding My Questions
Investigator Name: Philip Balcaen

Investigator Department: Faculty of Education (Graduate Programs)

Having been asked for permission to proceed with this project, I certify that I have read the procedures specified in the attached letter. I understand the procedures to be used and the personal risks, and benefits to me in taking part in the project, as stated below.

Risks and Benefits:

I anticipate a minor ethics-related risk in relation to maintaining "anonymity" of both the school and those characters described or referred to within the work. This concern arises because of my ongoing relationship with the "The Thomas Haney Project" and the possibility that readers might make this connection. I will make every effort to maintain anonymity by using pseudonyms for the district, school, and any individual characters referred to throughout the piece, as well as by disguising individuals through fictitious description.

The potential benefits associated with the work include feedback to the district about this dimension of program planning and implementation, as well as by providing generalizable notions about school-university collaboration (the roles of graduate work, consulting, research) to the education community at large.

I may obtain copies of the results of this study, upon its completion by contacting:

Philip Balcaen
Faculty of Education
Okanagan University College
3333 College WAY
Kelowna, BC
Canada V1V 1V7
pbalcaen@ouc.bc.ca
250.762.5445

I have been informed that the research will be confidential to the full extent permitted by the law.
I understand that my supervisor or employer may require me to obtain his or her permission prior
to my participation in a study of this kind.

The subject is expected to:

Upon completion of the case, I will forward it to you for comment and will take account of your
feedback in the final draft. I am willing to terminate the study at any time, if in your judgment the work is
not seen as being in the interests of the school district. If the proposal is acceptable to you, I will contact the
four teachers (Trevor Connor, Awneet Sivia, Beth Meressah, and Norm Ellis) to ask for their participation
by way of an interview and providing feedback about my findings. Both the interviews and the feedback
sessions will be conducted away from the school and as such should not interfere in any way with practice.
I have attached the more detailed research proposal in the event that it might provide details of interest to
you.

**Please fill In the Information below and *return by mail* to Philip Balcaen at the address
identified above:**

Subject Last Name   Subject First Name(s)

SCHOOL DISTRICT 42
Place of work if relevant

22225 BROWN AVE.
Street address

MAPLE RIDGE, BC
City and Province

CANADA   V2X 8N6
Country and Postal Code

604-463-0573   604-463-4200

Subject Signature   Witness signature

11/29/02
Date (MM/DD/YYYY)

Letter Requesting Participation and Signature

Mr,
Director and Principal
Thomas Haney Secondary School
23000 116th Ave
Maple Ridge, BC
V2X 0T8

Mr

I am writing to you as both a Vice Principal and later the Principal of record, to ask for your participation in a "member's" review of an autobiographical account of my seven years of work with the Thomas Haney Secondary School project.

The piece being considered is my reflections about the project from the point-of-view of the interplay between practitioners (administrators and teachers) and representatives from the academy (visiting academics and those who were invited partners) during the two-year planning period and then the first five years of operation of the new school. As an early chapter of my doctoral thesis focused on university-public school collaboration, the intention of this work is to provide a context for the subsequent chapters and to identify questions about school-university collaboration from the perspective of a participating teacher. The work will be included as one of three research-based chapters in my thesis.

Upon completion of a first draft, I will forward it to you for comment and will take account of your feed back in the final version. Please note that your comments and the comments of others will remain confidential. In addition, I will provide you with a copy of the final version. I have attached the more detailed research proposal in the event that it might provide details of interest or concern to you.

I anticipate a minor ethics-related risk in relation to maintaining "anonymity" of both the school and those characters described or referred to within the work. This concern arises because of my ongoing relationship with the "The Thomas Haney Project" and the possibility that readers might make this connection. I will make every effort to maintain anonymity by using pseudonyms for the district, school, and any individual characters referred to throughout the piece as well as by disguising individuals through fictitious description.

The potential benefits associated with the work include feedback to the district about this dimension of program planning and implementation, as well as by providing generalizable notions about school-university collaboration (the roles of graduate work, consulting, research) to the education community at large.

If you agree to participate in this work, please sign and return the attached "**Informed Consent Form**" and/or contact me if you have any questions at pbalcaen@sfu.ca, pbalcaen@ouc.bc.ca or by phone (250) 762-5445 local 7312.

Note: If you have any concerns about the project or my conduct in regards to the proposed research please contact my thesis supervisor Professor Marvin Wideen (604.461.0376); the Dean of the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University, (Dr.) Ian Andrews at (604.291.3953); or Dr. H. Weinberg, Director of Research Ethics, 8888 University Way, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC, V5A 1S6, Canada.

Regards,

- Keleen Toohey, Director of Graduate Programs, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University:
  Email: kelleen_toohey@sfu.ca; or phone 604-291-4787

I may obtain copies of the results of this study, upon its completion by contacting:

Philip Balcaen
Faculty of Education
Okanagan University College
3333 College WAY
Kelowna, BC
Canada V1V 1V7
pbalcaen@ouc.bc.ca
250.762.5445

I have been informed that the research will be confidential to the full extent permitted by the law. I understand that my supervisor or employer may require me to obtain his or her permission prior to my participation in a study of this kind.

The subject is expected to:

Upon completion of a first draft, I will forward it to you for comment and will take account of your feed back in the final rendition. Please note that your comments and the comments of others will remain confidential. In addition, I will provide you with a copy of the final version. I have attached the more detailed research proposal in the event that it might provide details of interest or concern to you.

Please fill in the information below and *return by mail* to Philip Balcaen at the address identified above:

Subject Last Name   Subject First Name(s)

T H S S
Place of work if relevant

23000 116 th AVE
Street address

MAPLE RIDGE BC
City and Province

V2X 0T8
Country and Postal Code

604-467-9081 (F) 604-463-2001 (P)

Subject Signature   Witness Signature

12/06/02
Date (MM/DD/YYYY)

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Appendix B

Application for Ethics Review and Approval For "School Reform and Graduate Programs as In-service: A Cultural Perspective"

The proposed inquiry is a case study into the relationship between participation in graduate studies and changes in teaching practice. The specific situation involves five secondary school teachers' concurrent involvement in a graduate program and implementation of a new school program.

Background

The literature considering the role of graduate programs on school reform reveals that most educational jurisdictions in North America offer teachers financial incentives to participate in graduate programs seemingly on the assumption that it will improve professional practice (Knapp *et al.*, 1989). However, the literature also suggests that graduate work is not a viable form of in-service education or that it changes school practice (Creamer and Shelton, 1988; Knapp *et al.*, 1989; Turner, 1990; Drake 1994). The proposed case will consider one situation where a graduate program appears to have positively affected the practice of a group of secondary school Mathematics and Science teachers.

While much of the literature reviewed suggests no positive effects, I believe that research has not fully explored the potential for graduate programs as a form of effective in-service education in a broader cultural context. Most studies focus on individuals pursuing courses that deliver knowledge and understanding about things such as rationalizing budget constraints, management tools, learning styles, wellness programs, and teacher competencies (Creamer & Shelton, 1988). This conventional approach is founded on the epistemological view that (a) knowledge and understanding are transferable, and (b) such knowledge and understanding are applied by individual teachers to improve practice. Viewing graduate coursework in this way bypasses cultural dimensions of learning and possible alternative views of graduate work.

DiPardo (1993) raises this "cultural" view, following Vygotsky, Bruner and others when she contends that acquiring knowledge and understanding requires social activity and cultural

practices such as mediation, negotiation, and ongoing communication. This position also requires that we view the individual and the social context in which he or she works as being fully interconnected. The proposed analysis of graduate experience is framed by this kind of cultural perspective.

To understand the socio-cultural conditions in which graduate programs can be effective, I propose to examine the work and study patterns of five graduate students (including myself) working within the same school department, where the group reported having significantly improved their practice as a result of graduate coursework. In order to understand the conditions in which this reported success occurs, I propose to interview my colleagues about our work together as part of the case study. It is my hope that this study will provide a way of understanding the impact that graduate studies had on our work together as well as some in-site into the culturally framed practices that may have contributed to the apparent success.

As suggested by Knapp *et al.*, like most other programs the assumption underpinning participation in this program seems to be that the program will somehow lead to improvements in professional practice.

What follows is a consideration of the context, methods, epistemological questions, and the ethics related concerns for the study.

The Context

The five teachers involved in the proposed study worked together within the same department where they constructed the Mathematics and Science programs for a new school. All of the teachers involved in the study enrolled in the graduate program described briefly below. Their work together is set in a newly constructed, 1000 student secondary school claiming to be a "different sort of high school." The new school operates without a timetable and is structured around three curricular "pillars" intended to support an individualized learning structure. First is a "Teacher Advisor Program" where teachers provide personal assistance to students and helps them self-monitor their progress. The second pillar involves a computer supported Information Management System intended to help administer the school, monitor student progress, and provide reports to parents.

The curriculum organization and delivery system, known as the Learning Guides, provides the third pillar. These guides support the self-paced curriculum delivery model that

involves students working towards the completion of their courses at a rate compatible with their intellectual resources, stated goals, and available time. The school program involves substantial role changes for students and teachers, as well as an "open" architectural design including large learning centres requiring a team approach to support students as they work.

While implementing the program, the five teachers participated in a Master's program that can be completed by taking courses one evening a week during the school year and full-time during the summer. The program is comprised of six courses along with the writing of a thesis based on a research project. Each course is taught by different professors and has a range in focus from the history of educational ideas to qualitative research methods. Those teaching the courses provide a wide spectrum of perspectives in education.

Method

The data for the case will be derived from three source categories as described by Yin, 1989. First, the journal records of the author as "archival" pieces will play a role in the development of questions, establishing the chronology of events, and documenting the author's understandings/position at the time. In addition, public documents such as newspaper articles, minutes from school board meeting, and publications about the program will provide data as part of the efforts to triangulate on various issues or themes that emerge from the study. Finally, interviews with four participants in addition to the journal entries of the author will form the core data used in the study (described below).

The first task associated with this project is that of gaining access by contacting the Superintendent of schools for the district. As the gatekeeper of the school, his permission is required before beginning any research about the school program (please see attached letter).

Following approval by the Superintendent, I will contact the four other teachers and ask them to sign the attached letter agreeing to be interviewed under the conditions outlined in the letter. After receiving their agreements, I will arrange to conduct face-to-face interviews in a mutually agreed to place. (As a participant observer having a relationship with each of these teachers, I feel that these individual face-to-face interviews best support the open-ended, conversational style of the interview protocol.) In the event that any of the teachers decides not to participate I will, of course, not interview him or her.

I will conduct the interviews using "open-ended" (van Maanen, 1988) techniques, where I ask the others to talk about their graduate programs in relation to our work together at the new school. Following each interview, I will transcribe the conversations and return the transcripts to each respondent and ask for any corrections or additions that they would like to make. In addition, I will delete anything that the respondents do not want included as part of the study. As noted in the letter, the information from these interviews will be destroyed upon completion of the study. The case will be represented as part of my doctoral thesis and possibly in a subsequent publication. Participants will be provided with copies of any proposed publication for comment.

I will then review the transcripts looking for any possible relationships between emerging new or altered practices at the school and the teachers respective graduate courses in the hope of gaining some understanding about the program has or had not played in their professional growth. Following from Stake, (1999), the data analysis will involve "categorical aggregation" or the coding and collection of instances from the data as I search for "issue-relevant meanings" that will inform my understandings about the case. It is hoped that the stories will allow me to identify dimensions of these students' graduate experience that have in some way led to changes in practice and that might inform other situations (e.g. research methods such as "active research, or new approaches to assessment and evaluation).

As mentioned above, before bringing together the analysis of the transcripts, the literature considering graduate programs as in-service, and my theoretical work focused on academic and teacher cultures in a case, I will provide the respondents with the draft and ask for their responses. During this reading, I will ask for two kinds of responses. First, I will ask for any ways that I might have misrepresented each respondent and what changes they would recommend and accept. After writing a first version of the case, I will again ask the respondents to provide member feedback about the claims being made regarding their collective experience within the school program (see comments under epistemology below). This feedback will be addressed in the methodology section of the methodology section of the work.

During the development of the case, I will engage in ongoing peer review of the work by consulting with members of my committee as a way of checking for possible bias and limited focus, too much focus on certain areas or other germane concerns that may arise (Lincolin and Guba, 1985).

Upon completing a draft that is acceptable to the respondents, I will submit the work to the District Superintendent for approval and feedback. Any parts of the work that are deemed to be unacceptable will be removed from the work and his comments will be addressed in the methodology section of the thesis. The Superintendent will be provided with a copy of the final and any subsequent versions of the case.

Epistemological Considerations

While taking account of the many methodological recommendations offered by qualitative researchers (Lincolin and Guba, 1985; Miles and Huberman, 1995; Stake, 1995) the overall epistemological framework for the thesis is underpinned by the work of Carspecken, (1996), and as such, also frames the epistemological considerations for this case.

Carspecken provides three ontological categories of research-related claims forming the basis of epistemological considerations associated with the study (outlined below) and with the analysis of the work planned for concluding chapters of the thesis.

The first of these is the category of objective claims or claims about "The" world. Carspecken argues that these claims are presupposed by all statements that can be understood and then judged as true or false according to the principle of *multiple access*. By this he means that objective-referenced truth claims are claims where others would agree with one's observations and thus depend upon a presupposed ontological category to which all humans in principle have access through their senses. An example of such a claim stemming from classroom observations is: "Events are occurring in one of my student's homes that many children would report as upsetting." Carspecken notes that this category is not suggesting that there "is" an objective reality, but rather that this ontological presupposition is necessary for certain kinds of human communication within a given cultural context.

Anticipated examples of these kinds of claims stemming from the proposed work include those about the impact participation in graduate studies had on work at the new school. Perhaps even agreement between respondents about specific changes in particular teaching practices that were affected by participation in graduate work. Lincolin and Guba's (1985) *Naturalistic Inquiry*, provides several techniques for validating these kinds of "objective" claims including *triangulation* by using several sources of information to validate the claims, *peer debriefing* to check for possible bias and limited focus or too much focus on certain areas, and *member checks* by

sharing notes with people who were part of the study to see whether or note they agree with the record.

As noted earlier, the opportunity for triangulation or as Stake (1995) defines it— searching for the convergence of information—plays a key role in relation to claims associated with data particularly where there is "dubious and contested description." Multiple respondents together with multiple sources of information (public documents from the context) will provide such an opportunity as the case is developed.

Member checks are proposed at two levels. First, when participants are asked to validate the raw data (transcripts) and at a second level when respondents are asked provide feedback to the interpretation of the data offered in the final draft. In addition, a member check from the district superintendent is included as a way of validating claims from the administrative perspective.

Peer debriefing occurs throughout the development of the case during discussions with members of my graduate committee and finally during a defense of the thesis.

The subjective category is presupposed when statements that can be understood only with the concomitant understanding that *privileged access* to a certain form of experience are in play. These kinds of claims make honesty or veracity of the actor in question central and are validated when that person whose subjectivity is referred to confirms the statement about her/his subjective state. Because this category is structured fundamentally according to the principle of *privileged access*, it involves a notion of my world, her world, and your world. An example of this kind of claim is: "I want to help you with your problems." Carspecken recognizes that under certain conditions the privileged person may not be aware of certain subjective conditions (e.g. repressed anger) but that if all evidence points to this condition then it is reasonable to claim that if the person was self aware, they would have privileged subjective access to this knowledge.

In the instance of a case study, this category is particularly germane within the context of each interview. As the researcher, the author must maintain a "wakeful" disposition as she/he constructs an interpretation of the respondents' remarks. From Carspecken's point-of-view, this means using "peer debriefings" (other researchers) to provide feed back about such things as consistency or an apparent lack of veracity within a transcript. In addition, he recommends the

use of "member feedback" to question/consider claims made by the author about his/her experience.

Within the proposed case, subjective claims surface in two ways. First, are the claims made by respondents as they answer questions about their experience within the school. These subjective claims can be considered through researcher review and *peer review* in situations where there is an apparent lack of consistency or veracity. Concerns that surface can be followed up during secondary interviews with respondents as they provide member feedback about the respective transcripts.

A second category, are the subjective claims made by the researcher himself as a participant observer within the study. Here, the role of the *peer review* is critical as committee members review and critique claims made about experience within the new school program. This feedback will be provided as committee members read and reread successive drafts of the case and of the final representation in the thesis. In addition, the triangulation process associated with the "objective" claims outlined above could raise questions for the researcher about his subjective claims.

The final category of <u>normative evaluative</u> claims or "realm" is an ontological category presupposed by all "meaningful action" or awareness of how others might understand a certain act or event. It consists of truth claims about what behavior is "proper, appropriate, and conventional" within a certain cultural context. These kinds of claims are usually articulated as *should claims;* suggesting that people should act in such and such ways at such and such times. Normative-evaluative claims thus concern a sense of the nature of "our" world rather than "the" world or "my" world (p.83).

It is important to distinguish between these normative-evaluative claims and existing norms—the objectified modes of acting in certain situations. The underlying claim associated with norms being that members of a particular cultural community regard particular norms to be "in place" and that members of a group adhere to them. Carspecken suggests that there is an ongoing tension between what the norms "are" within cultural groups and the claims that individuals or groups make about what the norms "should be" and that these are normative-evaluative claims. An example of such a claim is "your mother's behavior is bad." This claim infers that your mother's behavior is not what it "should" be in the circumstances. Rather than being dependent on multiple or privileged access, these claims are dependent on "non-disputed"

value claims. This category is important here because awareness of these claims allows the researcher to describe and explain social regularities within a group and make inferences about what "should be" the case in other circumstances.

It is anticipated that within the proposed study, normative-evaluative claims will likely surface during the analysis and conclusions drawn from the case. For example, this category will include speculations about the way graduate programs "should" be designed are anticipated as the author brings together objective claims from the empirical work (e.g. interviews) and a review of the literature focused on teacher in-service, school-university collaboration, and graduate programs for teachers. Carspecken posits that "consensus to values and norms will occur most deeply when a set of normative evaluative claims wins the recognition of all parties involved, without influence or coercion, because each member 'finds herself' as a valid human being through them" (p. 143). Here, both *member* and *peer* feedback are required in support of these claims. This will require a specific focus on these claims during feedback from respondents, the superintendent, committee members, and those participating in the defense of the thesis as a whole. This dimension of the work will be reported in the methods section of the case and in the thesis. Participants will have an opportunity to respond to these claims when they read both working and finale versions of the case.

Anticipated Ethics related concerns and solutions

Ethics related concerns surface in several ways. First, is the gaining of access to the context for the study (the experience of the teachers) and providing the information required for his "informed consent" of the District Superintendent as the gatekeeper. The attached letter provides him with the reason the situation (context) was chosen, how the research will be conducted, and points out that the researcher's presence will not be disruptive to a school or to the teachers' practice. In addition, he is made aware of the ways that the results will be reported and what might be gained from the study. The Superintendent is also provided with the opportunity to provide feedback and to terminate the study at any time.

Second, confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained throughout by using pseudonyms for the district, school, and individual names of the participants. Transcripts will only be reviewed by the primary researcher and will be destroyed upon completion of the study. Any request to remove or refrain from using any part of the interviews will be respected and the participants will be made aware that they can withdraw from the study at any time.

Respondents will also have an opportunity to comment on an advance draft of the case as well as the final version of the study. Finally, their comments and concerns will be taken account of in the conclusions drawn and the methodology sections of the work.

Interview Protocol

Introduction

After greeting the respondent, the following items will be reviewed:

i. *The intent of the inquiry being a case study of the relationship between the five teachers' new practice and their participation in graduate programs.*

ii. *That the interviewer has gained permission from the employer to proceed with the inquiry.*

iii. *That the respondent can withdraw from the interview and study at any time.*

iv. *That the respondent will have the opportunity to review, change, or add to the transcription of the interview.*

v. *That the transcript and audiotapes of the interview will be destroyed upon completion of the study.*

vi. *That every effort will be made to maintain anonymity for the school district, school, and participants.*

vii. *That un-coded responses and feedback provided by respondents will remain confidential.*

viii. *That the respondent will have several opportunities to review and comment on the case study and that their comments will be taken account of.*

ix. *That the respondent will be provided with a copy of the case and will be made aware of any future publications of the study.*

Key Questions:

The questions outlined below provide the focus for the interview, but will be supplemented by other questions as the conversation proceeds.

i. *Could you provide some background regarding your education and teaching experience prior to the time being considered within the study (1990-1995)?*

ii. *What do you feel the hallmarks of your practice where up to that point in time?*

iii. *Why did you decide to join the staff developing and implementing the "innovative school" program?*

iv. *When and why did you decide to participate in the graduate program as part of the group?*

v. *Describe what was different about your practice at the innovative school by comparison to your previous practice. Can you provide examples?*

vi. *Do you feel that your participation in graduate studies affected these changes in any way? If so, can you provide examples?*

vii. *What dimensions of the your graduate studies seemed to influence your new practice most?*

viii. *Do you feel that your participation in the new school program influenced your participation in graduate programs in any way? If so, provide examples.*

ix. *What are the hallmarks of your current practice? If you feel that your practice has changed in significant ways, what influenced these changes?*

x. *In considering this relationship between participation in graduate programs and developing the new program, is there anything that we have not touched on that you feel is important?*

xi. *Do you have any concerns about the interview that you would like to raise at this time?*

Termination of interview:

Explain that it will take some time to transcribe the interview, but that I will make every effort to provide a copy within one month. Establish how to return the transcript and how and when we will meet to review the transcription.

SFU Ethics Committee Approval

Dr. H. Weinberg
Acting Director, Office of Research Ethics

B. Ralph, Ethics Officer

Voice:
Fax: email:
Mobile:
email:

Reference Ethics Policy 20.02:   http://www.sfu.ca/policies/research/r20-01revised.htm

Notification of Application Status

Code [34170]

Investigator Name Last

[Balcaen]

Investigator Name First

[Philip]

E-Mail Investigator

[pbalcaen@sfu.ca]

Faculty Supervisor email

[wideen@sfu.ca]

Investigator Supervisor

[Wideen]   [Marvin]

Investigator Department

[Education]

Invesitgator Position

[Graduate]

Date Created	Date Modified	Code
12/2/2002	12/5/2002	34170

Experiment Title

[School reform and graduate programs as in-service: a cultural perspective]

Co-Investigator

[N/A]

Medical Review

[none]

Grant Funded

[No]

Risk

[Minimal]

Approval Status

[Approved]

DORE Approval Date

[12/5/02]

Letter Requesting Access

Mr.,
Superintendent of Schools
Maple-Ridge Pitt Meadows School District
Maple ridge, BC

Mr.

I am writing to obtain your permission to research and write a case study considering five teachers' work together within the same department at Thomas Haney Centre while concurrently participating in a graduate program between 1990 and 1995.

The literature considering the role of graduate programs on school reform reveals that most educational jurisdictions in North America offer teachers financial incentives to participate in graduate programs seemingly on the assumption that it will improve professional practice (Knapp *et al.*, 1989). However, the literature also suggests that graduate work is *not* a viable form of in-service education or that it changes school practice (Creamer and Shelton, 1988; Knapp *et al.*, 1989; Turner, 1990; Drake 1994). The group being considered here appears to contradict this conclusion and as such is of interest to the education community at large. With your permission, the work will be included as one of three research-based chapters in my thesis.

Upon completion of the case, I will forward it to you for comment and will take account of your feedback in the final draft. I am willing to terminate the study at any time, if in your judgment the work is not seen as being in the interests of the school district. If the proposal is acceptable to you, I will contact the four teachers (Trevor Connor, Awneet Sivia, Beth Meressah, and Norm Ellis) to ask for their participation by way of an interview and providing feedback about my findings. Both the interviews and the feedback sessions will be conducted away from the school and as such should not interfere in any way with practice. I have attached the more detailed research proposal in the event that it might provide details of interest to you.

I anticipate a minor risk that readers might connect the proposed work to "The Thomas Haney Project" and will maintain strict confidentiality by using pseudonyms for the district, school, and any individual characters referred to throughout the piece. In addition, the participants may withdraw from the study at any time and I will delete any or all reference to their interview if requested to do so. The Transcripts of individual interviews will be destroyed upon completion of the case. The potential benefits associated with the work include feedback to the district about the role that graduate programs might provide as in-service as well as providing generalizable notions about the design of graduate programs to the education community at large.

If you agree to this proposal please sign and return the attached **"Informed Consent Form"** and/or contact me if you have any questions at pbalcaen@ouc.bc.ca, pbalcaen@sfu.ca, or by phone at (250) 869-6004.

Note: If you have any concerns about the project or my conduct in regards to the proposed research please contact my thesis supervisor Professor Marvin Wideen (604.461.0376); the Dean of the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University, (Dr.) Ian Andrews at (604.291.3953); or Dr. H. Weinberg, Director of Research Ethics, 8888 University Way, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC, V5A 1S6, Canada.

Regards,

Signed Access Form

For "School Reform and Graduate Programs as In-service: A Cultural Perspective"

        Simon Fraser University and those conducting this project subscribe to the ethical conduct of research and to the protection at all times of the interests, comfort, and safety of subjects.

        This research is being conducted under permission of the Simon Fraser Research Ethics Board. The chief concern of the Board is for the health, safety and psychological wellbeing of research participants. Should you wish to obtain information about your rights as a participant in research, or about the responsibilities of researchers, or if you have any questions, concerns or complaints about the manner in which you were treated in this study, please contact the Director, Office of Research Ethics by email at hweinber@sfu.ca or phone at 604-268-6593.

        Your signature on this form will signify that you have received a document which describes the procedures, possible risks, and benefits of this research project, that you have received an adequate opportunity to consider the information in the documents describing inquiry, and that you voluntarily agree to participate.

Any information that is obtained during this study will be kept confidential to the full extent permitted by the law. Knowledge of your identity is not required. You will not be required to write your name on any other identifying information or research materials. Materials will be maintained in a secure location. <u>Name of Inquiry</u>: **School Reform and Graduate Programs as In-service: A Cultural Perspective**

<u>Investigator Name</u>: Philip Balcaen

<u>Investigator Department</u>: Faculty of Education (Graduate Programs)

Having been asked for permission to proceed with this project, I certify that I have read the procedures specified in the attached letter. I understand the procedures to be used and the personal risks, and benefits to me in taking part in the project, as stated below.

Risks and Benefits:

I anticipate a minor risk that readers might connect the proposed work to "The Thomas Haney Project" and will maintain strict confidentiality by using pseudonyms for the district, school, and any individual characters referred to throughout the piece. In addition, the participants may withdraw from the study at any time and I will delete any or all reference to their interview if requested to do so. The Transcripts of individual interviews will be destroyed upon completion of the case. The potential benefits associated with the work include feedback to the district about the role that graduate programs might provide as in-service as well as providing generalizable notions about the design of graduate programs to the education community at large.

        I understand that I may withdraw my participation at any time. I also understand that I may register any complaint with:

Email: kelleen_toohey@sfu.ca; or phone 604-291-4787

I may obtain copies of the results of this study, upon its completion by contacting:

Philip Balcaen
Faculty of Education
Okanagan University College
3333 College WAY
Kelowna, BC
Canada V1V 1V7
pbalcaen@ouc.bc.ca
250.762.5445

I have been informed that the research will be confidential to the full extent permitted by the law. I understand that my supervisor or employer may require me to obtain his or her permission prior to my participation in a study of this kind.

The subject is expected to:

Upon completion of the case, I will forward it to you for comment and will take account of your feedback in the final draft. I am willing to terminate the study at any time, if in your judgment the work is not seen as being in the interests of the school district. If the proposal is acceptable to you, I will contact the four teachers (Trevor Connor, Awneet Sivia, Beth Meressah, and Norm Ellis) to ask for their participation by way of an interview and providing feedback about my findings. Both the interviews and the feedback sessions will be conducted away from the school and as such should not interfere in any way with practice. I have attached the more detailed research proposal in the event that it might provide details of interest to you.

Please fill in the information below and *return by mail* to Philip Balcaen at the address identified above:

███████████████████████████████████████

Subject Last Name   Subject First Name(s)

SCHOOL DISTRICT 42
Place of work if relevant

22225 BROWN AVE
Street address

MAPLE RIDGE BC
City and Province

CANADA   V2X 8N6
Country and Postal Code

604·463·0573   604·463·4200
Fax and Phone Numbers

███████████████████████████████████

___/ 11/29/02
Date (MM/DD/YYYY

Sample Participant's Letter

Ms. -,
Thomas Haney Secondary School
23000 116th Ave
Maple Ridge, BC
V2X 0T8

Beth,

I am writing to ask you to participate in a case study focused on your work with four colleague teachers at Thomas Haney Centre and your concurrent participation in graduate programs between 1989 and 1995.

As it turns out, the literature considering the role of graduate programs on school reform reveals that most educational jurisdictions in North America offer teachers financial incentives to participate in graduate programs seemingly on the assumption that it will improve professional practice (Knapp *et al.*, 1989). However, the literature also suggests that graduate work is *not* a viable form of in-service education or that it changes school practice (Creamer and Shelton, 1988; Knapp *et al.*, 1989; Turner, 1990; Drake 1994). Your group appears to contradict this conclusion and as such is of interest to the education community at large. With your permission and participation, I would like to include a study of our work together as one of three research-based chapters in my thesis. (I have attached the more detailed research proposal in the event that it might provide details of interest to you.)

If you agree to participate I will make arrangements to meet with you outside of school-time for an interview. I will then prepare a transcript of the interview and provide it to you for comment. At that time, I will remove or alter to your satisfaction, any part of the transcript that is not acceptable to you and the transcripts of all interviews will be destroyed upon completion of the case. (**Note that at any time during the interview or subsequent work with the transcript or case, I will accept your withdrawal from the study.**)

Upon completion of a draft of the case, I will forward it to you for comment and will take account of your feedback in the final draft. In addition, I will provide you with a copy of the final version of the study and any subsequent representations of the work (e.g. a publication or conference presentation).

You should know that, I anticipate a minor risk that readers might connect the proposed work to "The Thomas Haney Project" and will work to maintain strict confidentiality by using pseudonyms for the district, school, and any individual characters referred to throughout the piece. The potential benefits associated with the work include feedback to the district about the role that graduate programs might provide as in-service as well as providing generalizable notions about the design of graduate programs to the education community at large.

If you agree to this proposal please sign and return the attached "**Informed Consent Form**" and/or contact me if you have any questions at pbalcaen@ouc.bc.ca or by phone (250) 869-6004.

Note: If you have any concerns about the project or my conduct in regards to the proposed research please contact my thesis supervisor Professor Marvin Wideen (604.461.0376); the Dean of the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University, (Dr.) Ian Andrews at (604.291.3953); or Dr. H. Weinberg, Director of Research Ethics, 8888 University Way, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC, V5A 1S6, Canada.

Sample Informed Consent Form

School Reform and Graduate Programs as In-service: A Cultural Perspective

       Simon Fraser University and those conducting this project subscribe to the ethical conduct of research and to the protection at all times of the interests, comfort, and safety of subjects.

       This research is being conducted under permission of the Simon Fraser Research Ethics Board. The chief concern of the Board is for the health, safety and psychological wellbeing of research participants. Should you wish to obtain information about your rights as a participant in research, or about the responsibilities of researchers, or if you have any questions, concerns or complaints about the manner in which you were treated in this study, please contact the Director, Office of Research Ethics by email at hweinber@sfu.ca or phone at 604-268-6593.

       Your signature on this form will signify that you have received a document which describes the procedures, possible risks, and benefits of this research project, that you have received an adequate opportunity to consider the information in the documents describing inquiry, and that you voluntarily agree to participate.

       Any information that is obtained during this study will be kept confidential to the full extent permitted by the law. Knowledge of your identity is not required. You will not be required to write your name on any other identifying information or research materials. Materials will be maintained in a secure location.

Name of Inquiry: School Reform and Graduate Programs as In-service: A Cultural Perspective

Investigator Name: Philip Balcaen

Investigator Department: Faculty of Education (Graduate Programs)

Having been asked to participate in this project, I certify that I have read the procedures specified in the attached letter. I understand the procedures to be used and the personal risks, and benefits to me in taking part in the project, as stated below.

Risks and Benefits:

I anticipate a minor risk that readers might connect the proposed work to "The Thomas Haney Project" and will maintain strict confidentiality by using pseudonyms for the district, school, and any individual characters referred to throughout the piece. In addition, the participants may withdraw from the study at any time and I will delete any or all reference to their interview if requested to do so. The Transcripts of individual interviews will be destroyed upon completion of the case. The potential benefits associated with the work include feedback to the district about the role that graduate programs might provide as in-service as well as providing generalizable notions about the design of graduate programs to the education community at large.

       I understand that I may withdraw my participation at any time. I also understand that I may register any complaint with:

- H. Weinberg, The Director of Research Ethics: at hweinber@sfu.ca or phone at 604.268.6593.

- Philip Balcaen, The researcher: at pbalcaen@ouc.bc.ca or phone 250.762.5445
- Keleen Toohey, Director of Graduate Programs, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University: Email: kelleen_toohey@sfu.ca; or phone 604-291-4787

I may obtain copies of the results of this study, upon its completion by contacting:

Philip Balcaen
Faculty of Education
Okanagan University College
3333 College WAY
Kelowna, BC
Canada V1V 1V7
pbalcaen@ouc.bc.ca

I have been informed that the research will be confidential to the full extent permitted by the law. I understand that my supervisor or employer may require me to obtain his or her permission prior to my participation in a study of this kind.
The subject is expected to:

If you agree to participate I will make arrangements to meet with you outside of school-time for an interview. I will then prepare a transcript of the interview and provide it to you for comment. At that time, I will remove or alter to your satisfaction, any part of the transcript that is not acceptable to you and the transcripts of all interviews will be destroyed upon completion of the case. (**Note that at any time during the interview or subsequent work with the transcript or case, I will accept your withdrawal from the study.**)

Upon completion of a draft of the case, I will forward it to you for comment and will take account of your feedback in the final draft. In addition, I will provide you with a copy of the final version of the study and any subsequent representations of the work (e.g. a publication or conference presentation).

Please fill in the information below and *return by mail* to Philip Balcaen at the address identified above:

Subject Last Name   Subject First Name(s)

Place of work if relevant

Street address

City and Province

Country and Postal Code

Fax and Phone Numbers

Email

Subject Signature   *Witness signature*

Date (MM/DD/YYYY

Appendix C: "Recollections and Impressions of a First Year Faculty Associate: Finding A Place Between Workplace Cultures"

Application for Ethics Review and Approval

Background

The proposed study is an autobiographical narrative account covering the author's first year of experience as a faculty associate (seconded school teacher) working within a teacher education program. The specific focus is experience as a member of a collaborative teaching group (module team) involving another faculty associate, a faculty member, and two participating graduate students as they work with a cohort of thirty-two student teachers. The account will highlight the author's learning experience as he works with the teaching group and not on the specific actions, behaviors or practices of the pre-service teachers.

As a seconded position, the work of faculty associate provides a unique opportunity from which to view both the *workplace cultures* of the professoriate and of schoolteachers as it resides, in a cultural sense, between the two.[37] The proposed study is important because this unique vantage point provides an occasion to observe and characterize these two cultures, to study the often cited conflict between the two groups, and to reflect on the experience of working in the "nexus " space between the two. (Here the author's use of the term *nexus* refers to his notion of a temporary culture of inquiry residing between academic and teacher workplace cultures.)

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[37] de Certeau (1997) points out that we are "witnessing a multiplicity of....different cultural places [that] represent a triangular construction that gives everyone the site of a cultural autonomy, a space of creativity" (p. 66). One of these cultural spaces, *workplace culture,* is defined by Morris (in Frow and Morris, 1993) as something characterized by being:

> ...directly bound up with *work and its organization*; with the *relations of power* and gender in the workplace and home; with pleasures and the pressures of consumption; with the complex relations of the class and kith and kin *through which a sense-of-self is formed*; and with the fantasies and desires through which Social relations are carried out and actively shaped....It is not a detached domain for playing games of Social distinction and "good" taste. It is a *network of representations*—texts, images, talk, codes of behavior, and narrative structures organizing these—which shapes every aspect of social life. (in the Introduction, my emphasis)

This cultural space is the construct that will inform the author as he considers his work with the module team.

As an early chapter of a doctoral thesis considering university-public school collaboration, this study is intended to provide a firsthand account of the kinds of tensions that surface between academics and teachers as they collaborate with one another and to contextualize the author's developing conceptualization of "nexus culture." Within the thesis, the study will play the additional role of informing the author's claims about the possible educative value of work within this intercultural space. The piece will be included as one of three research-based chapters in the author's thesis and may form the basis of future publications.

Included below, is a brief description of the method, epistemological considerations, and the anticipate ethics related concerns.

Method

The proposed inquiry is narrative in form, as it will be written as a story, and an autobiography because it is a "re-presentation" of the author's experience (Molloy, 1991). The method of narrative inquiry conceptualized by Clandinin and Connelly (2000), building from Dewey's notion of experience involving situation, continuity, and interaction was chosen because it provides a well-articulated method for narrative inquiry. Generally, their approach involves a theoretical 3-dimensional narrative space including considerations of the *personal* and *social* (interaction) on one axis; *past, present and future* (continuity) on a second axis; and *place* (situation) on a third axis.

This method works well for the proposed study because the piece involves an ongoing story-line focused on the interaction between the author's personal experience and the social context provided for the most part, by the others involved in the collaborative construction of their work together. The teacher education program as a whole provides the situation for the study, and the continuity is provided through the author's temporal considerations as he brings together past experience and understandings from public school teaching, present experience and understandings emerging form work with those from the academy, and speculations about the future (described briefly below).

The proposed work is an "autobiographical narrative inquiry" on two counts. First, it is autobiographical because this study uses autobiographical (family life, religious background, personal attitudes towards dimensions of education, community and family background) details to illuminate and inform the author's personal context of the story. More importantly, it is

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autobiographical because it uses personal experience as the primary focus (empirical data) for the inquiry.

The narrative will involve three interwoven texts. The central or core text will be the story of the author's experience during the year of work. The field texts or "rough data" informing the story are the author's journals documenting this time and public documents used to validate "objective" claims included in the narrative (see explanation of "objective claims in the following section). These "public" documents include such artifacts as the program book, the agenda and minutes from meetings or in-service work, and other information circulated by those managing the program. The journals document the author's observations, experiences, and interpretations of this first year in a new position as a faculty associate.

In addition to this central story, the work will include a series of interpretive inserts informed by the author's current theorizing about the cultural tensions between academics and school-based practitioners during a variety of attempts at collaboration (Goodlad, 1988; Lieberman, 1988; the Holmes Group, 1990; Ruddock, 1992; Levine, 1992;). This theoretical perspective involves the author's conceptualization of practitioner and academic "workplace cultures" as these groups attempt to work together (Frow & Morris, 1993; Hartman, 1997; de Certeau, 1997). This part of the narrative is categorized as "interim" by Clandinin and Connelley—those texts where interpretation of field texts are represented and vary according to the narrative inquiry, the research, and the scholarly life of the inquirer. In general then, these inserts are the author's analysis of the culturally framed relationships as informed by his professional experience, literature reviewed, and theorizing about collaboration between academics and practitioners. In addition, the narrative will include footnotes defining, qualifying, and providing examples for terms that are used in a way that is likely to be unfamiliar to the reader.

As an initial step, I will seek access from the director of the professional program by asking for permission to write the piece (see comments below and the attached letter). In addition, I will seek his feedback as well as feedback from the members of the collaborating team including one faculty member, another faculty associate and two participating graduate students about claims made about our work together (see details below). I will also seek ongoing input from my program supervisors regarding the form and content of the piece (see details below).

Epistemological Considerations

It is the position of the author, that, while Clandinin and Connelly provide a well-conceptualized representational form for narrative inquiry, they do not provide a sufficiently rigorous approach to the kinds of epistemological questions conventionally associated with a doctoral thesis. As a means of addressing this concern, the author will employ the methodology provided by Carspecken (1996), in his work *Critical Ethnography in Educational Research: a theoretical and practical guide.*

This epistemological framework—set of assumptions about knowledge and how it may be validly obtained—will be used by the author as a guide during his examination of the variety of truth claims associated with the work. Carspecken provides three ontological categories of research-related truth claims forming the basis of epistemological considerations associated with the study (outlined below) and with the analysis of the work planned for concluding chapters of the thesis.

The first of these is the category of <u>objective claims</u> or claims about "The" world. Carspecken argues that these claims are presupposed by all statements that can be understood and then judged as true or false according to the principle of "multiple access." By this he means that objective-referenced truth claims are claims where others would agree with one's observations and thus depend upon a presupposed ontological category to which all humans in principle have access through their senses. An example of such a claim stemming from classroom observations is: "Events are occurring in one of my student's homes that many children would report as upsetting." Carspecken notes that this category is not suggesting that there "is" an objective reality, but rather that this ontological presupposition is necessary for certain kinds of human communication within a given cultural context.

Anticipated examples of these kinds of claims stemming from the proposed work include those about the chronology of events and the substance of conversations during planning. Lincolin and Guba's (1985) *Naturalistic Inquiry* provides several techniques for validating these kinds of objective claims including *triangulation* by using several sources of information to validate the claims, *peer debriefing* (other researchers; in this case committee members) to check for possible bias and limited focus or too much focus on certain areas; and *member checks* (those being referred to in the study; in this case the teaching group) by sharing drafts with those who

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were part of the study to see whether or note they agree with the record. Intended use of these methods is detailed under the "ethics-related concerns" addressed in the next section.

The subjective category or the "my", "her", "your" world is presupposed when statements that can be understood only with the concomitant understanding that "privileged access" to a certain form of experience are in play. These kinds of claims make honesty or veracity of the actor in question central and are validated when that person whose subjectivity is referred to confirms the statement about her/his subjective state. Because this category is structured fundamentally according to the principle of privileged access, it involves a notion of my world, her world, and your world. An example of this kind of claim is: "I want to help you with your problems." Carspecken recognizes that under certain conditions the privileged person may not be aware of certain subjective conditions (e.g. repressed anger) but that if all evidence points to this condition then it is reasonable to claim that if the person was self aware they would have privileged subjective access to this knowledge.

In the case of autobiographical work, this category is particularly germane as the core of the piece is based on the "subjective" claims made by the author. From a research perspective then, autobiographical narrative inquiry of the sort described above involves a researcher representing her/his subjectivity through cultural symbols — in this case, text. As the researcher, the author has the same responsibilities as non-autobiographical researchers to maintain a "wakeful" disposition as she/he constructs the narrative by attending to responses from others (Clandinin and Connelley, 2000, p. 184). From Carspecken's point-of-view, this means using "peer debriefings" to provide feed back about such things as consistency or an apparent lack of veracity. In addition, he recommends the use of "member feedback" to question/consider claims made by the author about his/her experience.

Anticipated examples of this hind of claim include such things as the author's reaction to the approach taken by others as the group planned and implemented their work together. An example of this might be the "inquiry stance" taken by participating academics as the group began planning for instruction.

The normative evaluative category or "realm is an ontological category presupposed by all "meaningful action" or awareness of how others might take a certain act or event. It consists of truth claims about what behavior is "proper, appropriate, and conventional" within a certain cultural context. These kinds of claims are usually articulated as *should claims*; suggesting that

people should act in such and such ways at such and such times. Normative-evaluative claims thus concern a sense of the nature of "our" world rather than "the" world or "my" world (p.83).

It is important to distinguish between these normative-evaluative claims and existing norms—the objectified modes of acting in certain situations. The underlying claims associated with norms being that, members of a particular cultural community regard particular norms to be "in place" and that members of the group adhere to them. Carspecken suggests that there is an ongoing tension between what the norms are within cultural groups and the claims that individuals or groups make about what the norms should be and that these are normative-evaluative claims. An example of such a claim is "your mother's behavior is bad." Rather than being dependent on multiple or privileged access, these claims are dependent on "non-disputed" value claims.

For the study under review here, it is likely that normative-evaluative claims will surface as the author speculates about changes in the approach to this collaborative work, in response to his interpretations of events described and characterized within the narrative. For example, his reflections on the use of particular practices as the group works together could lead to speculations about what should happen under similar circumstances in the future.

As part of the related validation of claims process, I propose the following. First, that I provide the Program Director, faculty member, faculty associate, and two graduate students with a draft copy and final copies of the work and ask for their feedback regarding the various claims made within the work. This process would provide *member feedback* regarding objective, subjective and normative-evaluative claims as well as having these others add helpful information to the narrative. In addition, I will document the several sources used to triangulate on objective data included in the work. For example, I might include comments from my journals about some dimension of our work together as well as corroborating this information by referring to information provided by the program. Finally, I will obtain *peer feedback* from members of my committee as a means of critiquing claims made within the work. Both the alternative sources of information and the feedback provided by members and peers will be addressed within the methodology chapter of the thesis.

Ethics-Related Concerns

There are four possible ethics-related concerns associated with this proposal. First, is the concern of gaining permission (access) to conduct the study. This concern is addressed through the attached letter signed by the Program Director as the person with authority to provide the required permission. Without his signature of approval the research will not go forward (see the attached letter).

Next, is the question of gaining informed consent from the colleagues involved in the collaborative work described and interpreted in the narrative. This "member" consent is a concern because I will be referring to our work together and because I will be asking group members to comment on the narrative. This concern is addressed through the attached letter asking each member of the group (a professor, a faculty associate, and two participating graduate students) for permission to write about the work and to provide feedback after reading a daft. The letter provides basic details of the study (this version is also attached), addresses the ethics related concerns identified here, and provides information about who to contact if they have concerns about the study.

Third, is the question of maintaining anonymity of the program and of members of the group. These two related concerns are addressed by using pseudonyms for the program, the work group (module), and the individuals that might be referred to within the text. There is, however, the possibility that someone might connect the author with the context (specific teacher education program), thereby compromising the "anonymity" of the program as a whole, and by association, the other members of the group. It is hoped that the intervening time (the narrative relates to events five years in the past) mitigates against this happening. In the event that someone does identify the program being referred to or is able to identify specific members of the group, it is not anticipated that any part of the study could be potentially damaging to either the program or members of the group.

The final concern is that of confidentiality in relation to feedback from the program director and the member group about the proposed narrative. As a means of addressing this concern, the source of specific comments made by these individuals will remain confidential both in discussions with others and in any methods-related documentation.

SFU Ethics Committee Approval

Dr. H. Weinberg
Acting Director. Office of Research Ethics

Voice: (604) 454 6593
Fax: (604) 291 4860
Mobile: (604) 454 4833

email: hweinberg@sfu.ca

B. Ralph, Ethics Officer

(604) 291 3447

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Reference Ethics Policy 20.02:   http://www.sfu.ca/policies/research/r20-01 revised.htm

Notification of Application Status

Code [34169]

Investigator Name Last

Balcaen

Investigator Name First

Philip

E-Mail Investigator

pbalcaen@sfu.ca

Faculty Supervisor email
wideen@sfu.ca

Investigator Supervisor

Wideen   Marvin

Investigator Department

Education

Investigator Position

Graduate

Date Created	Date Modified	Code
12/2/2002	12/5/2002	34169

Experiment Title

Recollections and Impressions of a First Year Faculty Associate: finding a place between workplace cultures

Co-Investigator

N/A

Medical Review

Grant Funded

No

Risk	Approval Status	DORE Approval Date
Minimal	Approved	12/5/02

Letter Requesting Access

Director of Professional Programs
Faculty of Education
Simon Fraser University
8888 University Drive
Burnaby, BC
V5A 1S6

Dr. Smith,

As Director, I am writing to ask for your permission to write an autobiographical narrative account of my first year in the position of Faculty Associate in the Professional Development Program at Simon Fraser University.

In general, the proposed piece is a storied approach to representing my observations, characterizations, reflections, interpretations, and speculations about particular cultural dimensions of work that involves practicing teachers and academics working side-by-side. Specifically, the narrative tells of my work as a member of a collaborative group while planning and facilitating learning opportunities for thirty-two of your pre-service teachers in the fall of 1997. The narrative is of particular interest because of the planning groups unique make-up involving two graduate students in addition to the usual individual faculty member and two faculty associates.

As an early chapter of my doctoral thesis, more generally focused on the discourse about university-public school collaboration, this situation affords an opportunity to characterize these kinds of relationships from the inside. The proposed narrative will tell the story of my experience as a way of illustrating the tensions between these two *workplace cultures* while at the same time providing an opportunity to introduce the concept of *nexus culture* that emerged in part, because of this experience (please see the attached proposal for a short explanation of terms).

With your permission, I will contact my four colleagues to ask for their participation and support by providing "member feedback" in response to a draft of the inquiry. Upon completion, the work will be included as one of three research-based chapters in my thesis.

In addition to your permission, I invite you to comment on a draft of the piece. Please note that your comments and the comments of other's will remain confidential.

You should know that I anticipate an ethics-related risk in relation to maintaining "anonymity" of both the program's identity and that of my colleagues. This concern arises because of my past affiliation with the program and the possibility that readers could make this connection. I will make every effort to maintain anonymity by using pseudonyms for the university, the program, and for any individual characters referred to throughout the piece. I will discontinue my work, if at any time you decide that it is not in the best interests of your program.

The potential benefits associated with the work include feedback to the program about this dimension of your work, as well as possible generalizable notions about school-university collaboration of interest to the education community at large.

If you agree to this proposal please sign and return the attached **"Informed Consent Form"** and/or contact me if you have any questions at pbalcaen@sfu.ca, pbalcaen@ouc.bc.ca or by phone (250) 762-5445 local 7312.

Recollections and Impressions of a First Year Faculty Associate: Finding A Place Between Workplace Cultures

Simon Fraser University and those conducting this project subscribe to the ethical conduct of research and to the protection at all times of the interests, comfort, and safety of subjects.

This research is being conducted under permission of the Simon Fraser Research Ethics Board. The chief concern of the Board is for the health, safety and psychological wellbeing of research participants. Should you wish to obtain information about your rights as a participant in research, or about the responsibilities of researchers, or if you have any questions, concerns or complaints about the manner in which you were treated in this study, please contact the Director, Office of Research Ethics by email at hweinber@sfu.ca or phone at 604-268-6593.

Your signature on this form will signify that you have received a document which describes the procedures, possible risks, and benefits of this research project, that you have received an adequate opportunity to consider the information in the documents describing inquiry, and that you voluntarily agree to participate.

Any information that is obtained during this study will be kept confidential to the full extent permitted by the law. Knowledge of your identity is not required. You will not be required to write your name on any other identifying information or research materials. Materials will be maintained in a secure location

Name of Inquiry: Recollections and Impressions of a First Year Faculty Associate: Finding A Place Between Workplace Cultures
Investigator Name: Philip Balcaen

Investigator Department: Faculty of Education (Graduate Programs)

Having been asked for permission to proceed with this project, I certify that I have read the procedures specified in the attached letter. I understand the procedures to be used and the personal risks, and benefits to me in taking part in the project, as stated below.

Risks and Benefits:

You should know that I anticipate an ethics-related risk in relation to maintaining "anonymity" of both the program's identity and that of my colleagues. This concern arises because of my past affiliation with the program and the possibility that readers could make this connection. I will make every effort to maintain anonymity by using pseudonyms for the university, the program, and for any individual characters referred to throughout the piece. I will discontinue my work, if at any time you decide that it is not in the best interests of your program.

The potential benefits associated with the work include feedback to the program about this dimension of your work, as well as possible generalizable notions about school-university collaboration of interest to the education community at large.

I understand that I may withdraw my participation at any time. I also understand that I may register any complaint with:

- H. Weinberg, The Director of Research Ethics: at hweinber@sfu.ca or phone at 604.268.6593.

- Philip Balcaen, The researcher: at pbalcaen@ouc.bc.ca or phone 250.762.5445
- Keleen Toohey, Director of Graduate Programs, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University: Email: kelleen_toohey@sfu.ca; or phone 604-291-4787

I may obtain copies of the results of this study, upon its completion by contacting:

Philip Balcaen
Faculty of Education
Okanagan University College
3333 College WAY
Kelowna, BC
Canada V1V 1V7
pbalcaen@ouc.bc.ca
250.762.5445

I have been informed that the research will be confidential to the full extent permitted by the law. I understand that my supervisor or employer may require me to obtain his or her permission prior to my participation in a study of this kind.

The subject is expected to:

With your permission, I will contact my four colleagues to ask for their participation and support by providing "member feedback" in response to a draft of the inquiry. Upon completion, the work will be included as one of three research-based chapters in my thesis.

In addition to your permission, I invite you to comment on a draft of the piece. Please note that your comments and the comments of other's will remain confidential.

Please fill in the information below and *return by mail* to Philip Balcaen at the address identified above or fax to 250.470.6084:

▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮
Subject Last Name   Subject First Name(s)

Simon Fraser University
Place of work if relevant

Street address

Burnaby , BC
City and Province

V5A 1S6
Country and Postal Code

(604) 291-3203 (Fax); 291-4768 (Ph)
Fax and Phone Numbers

▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮
Subject Signature   Witness signature

6/12/02
Date (MM/DD/YYYY)

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Letter Requesting Faculty Member Participation

Professor --------------
Faculty of Education
Simon Fraser University
8888 University Drive
Burnaby, BC
V5A 1S6

Professor --------------

I am writing to ask for your permission to write an autobiographical narrative account of our work together during my first year in the position of Faculty Associate in the Professional Development Program at Simon Fraser University. In addition, I would like you to provide "member feedback" to a draft of the narrative in aide of my work to validate claims made within the piece (see the attached proposal for a more complete explanation). Please note that any comments you make will remain strictly confidential.

In general, the proposed work is a storied approach to representing my observations, characterizations, reflections, interpretations, and speculations about particular cultural dimensions of work that involves practicing teachers and academics working side-by-side. Specifically, the narrative will tell of my work as a member of our collaborative group while planning and facilitating learning opportunities for thirty-two pre-service teachers in the fall of 1997. The narrative is of particular interest because of the planning groups unique make-up involving two graduate students in addition to the usual individual faculty member and two faculty associates.

As an early chapter of my doctoral thesis, more generally focused on the discourse about university-public school collaboration, I believe that our work affords a special opportunity to characterize these kinds of relationships from the inside. The proposed narrative will tell the story of my experience as a way of illustrating the tensions between the two *workplace cultures* while at the same time providing an opportunity to introduce the concept of *nexus culture* that emerged in part, because of our work together (please see the attached proposal for a short explanation of *workplace* and *nexus* cultures).

You should know that I anticipate an ethics-related risk in relation to maintaining "anonymity" of both the program's identity and that of our colleagues. This concern arises because of my past affiliation with the program and the possibility that readers could make this connection. I will make every effort to maintain anonymity by using pseudonyms for the university, the program, and for any individual characters referred to throughout the piece. Please note that I will respect your withdrawal from participation at any time.

The potential benefits associated with the work include feedback to the program about this dimension of teachers' and academics' work together, as well as possible generalizable notions about school-university collaboration of interest to the education community at large.

If you agree to this proposal, please sign and return the attached **"Informed Consent Form"** and/or contact me if you have any questions at pbalcaen@sfu.ca, pbalcaen@ouc.bc.ca or by phone (250) 762-5445 local 7312.

Letter Requesting Graduate Student Participation

Faculty of Education
Simon Fraser University

Ms-------------,

I am writing to ask for your permission to write an autobiographical narrative account about our work together during my first year in the position of Faculty Associate in the Professional Development Program at Simon Fraser University. In addition, I would like you to provide "member feedback" to a draft of the narrative in aide of my work to validate claims made within the piece (please see the attached proposal for a more complete explanation). Please note that any comments you make will remain strictly confidential.

In general, the proposed piece is a storied approach to representing my observations, characterizations, reflections, interpretations, and speculations about particular cultural dimensions of work that involves practicing teachers and academics working side-by-side. Specifically, the narrative tells of my work as a member of our collaborative group while planning and facilitating learning opportunities for our thirty-two pre-service teachers in the fall of 1997. The narrative is of particular interest because of the planning groups unique make-up involving two graduate students in addition to the usual individual faculty member and two faculty associates.

As an early chapter of my doctoral thesis, more generally focused on the discourse about university-public school collaboration, I believe that our work affords a special opportunity to characterize these kinds of relationships from the inside. The proposed narrative will tell the story of my experience as a way of illustrating the tensions between the two *workplace cultures* while at the same time providing an opportunity to introduce the concept of nexus culture that emerged in part, because of our work together (please see the attached proposal for a short explanation of workplace and nexus cultures).

You should know that I anticipate an ethics-related risk in relation to maintaining "anonymity" of both the program's identity and that of our colleagues. This concern arises because of my past affiliation with the program and the possibility that readers could make this connection. I will make every effort to maintain anonymity by using pseudonyms for the university, the program, and for any individual characters referred to throughout the piece. Please note that I will respect your withdrawal from participation at any time.

The potential benefits associated with the work include feedback to the program about this dimension of teachers' and academics' work together, as well as possible generalizable notions about school-university collaboration of interest to the education community at large.

If you agree to this proposal please sign and return the attached **"Informed Consent Form"** and/or contact me if you have any questions at pbalcaen@sfu.ca, pbalcaen@ouc.bc.ca or by phone (250) 762-5445 local 7312.

Note: If you have any concerns about this inquiry or my conduct in regards to the proposed research please contact my thesis supervisor Professor Marvin Wideen (604.461.0376); the Dean of the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University, (Dr.) Ian Andrews at (604.291.3953); or Dr. H. Weinberg, Director of Research Ethics, 8888 University Way, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC, V5A 1S6, Canada.

Regards,

Letter Requesting Faculty Associate Participation

Faculty Associate

Faculty of Education
Simon Fraser University

Ms. -----------

      I am writing to ask for your permission to write an autobiographical narrative account about our work together during my first year in the position of Faculty Associate in the Professional Development Program at Simon Fraser University. In addition, I would like you to provide "member feedback" to a draft of the narrative in aide of my work to validate claims made within the piece (please see the attached proposal for a more complete explanation). Please note that any comments you make will remain strictly confidential.

      In general, the proposed piece is a storied approach to representing my observations, characterizations, reflections, interpretations, and speculations about particular cultural dimensions of work that involves practicing teachers and academics working side-by-side. Specifically, the narrative tells of my work as a member of our collaborative group while planning and facilitating learning opportunities for our thirty-two pre-service teachers in the fall of 1997. The narrative is of particular interest because of the planning groups unique make-up involving two graduate students in addition to the usual individual faculty member and two faculty associates.

      As an early chapter of my doctoral thesis, more generally focused on the discourse about university-public school collaboration, I believe that our work affords a special opportunity to characterize these kinds of relationships from the inside. The proposed narrative will tell the story of my experience as a way of illustrating the tensions between the two *workplace cultures* while at the same time providing an opportunity to introduce the concept of nexus culture that emerged in part, because of our work together (please see the attached proposal for a short explanation of workplace and nexus cultures).

      You should know that I anticipate an ethics-related risk in relation to maintaining "anonymity" of both the program's identity and that of our colleagues. This concern arises because of my past affiliation with the program and the possibility that readers could make this connection. I will make every effort to maintain anonymity by using pseudonyms for the university, the program, and for any individual characters referred to throughout the piece. Please note that I will respect your withdrawal from participation at any time.

      The potential benefits associated with the work include feedback to the program about this dimension of teachers' and academics' work together, as well as possible generalizable notions about school-university collaboration of interest to the education community at large.

      If you agree to this proposal please sign and return the attached **"Informed Consent Form"** and/or contact me if you have any questions at <u>pbalcaen@sfu.ca</u>, <u>pbalcaen@ouc.bc.ca</u> or by phone (250) 762-5445 local 7312.

      Note: If you have any concerns about this inquiry or my conduct in regards to the proposed research please contact my thesis supervisor Professor Marvin Wideen (604.461.0376); the Dean of the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University, (Dr.) Ian Andrews at (604.291.3953); or Dr. H. Weinberg, Director of Research Ethics, 8888 University Way, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC, V5A 1S6, Canada.