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THE MORAL DILEMMA OF THE BYSTANDER:
USING THE ARTS TO THEORIZE
WITH AND FOR CHILDREN

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the
Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By
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2001

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School of Teaching and Learning
Language, Literacy, Culture
This qualitative study asserts that children can learn to care deeply for others and develop a sophisticated sense of morality given the opportunities to do so. As a teacher, I shared three pieces of literature with my fourth grade students. The first was the book, *The Hundred Dresses* by Eleanor Estes (1944). The second was *Shiloh* by Phyllis Naylor, (1991) and finally *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry (1989). All three books have the common theme of a bystander, someone who witness a wrong doing but is neither the victim nor perpetrator of the abuse. After we read the books the students responded with many art forms including drawings, drama, and poetry. The results of the art was posted on documentation panels in the classroom. This art served as data that was interpreted as a full class research project. The results were seven theories on the relationship among the bystander, the perpetrator, the victim, and the hero. A hero was defined as
someone who acted in order to end the suffering. Surprisingly, one could gain a heroic status from any one of the three remaining roles.

As the students investigated the relationships of the four roles they were able to realize that power is influential in both causing harm and in ending it. The study took most of the school year. It was important to build a sense of community through daily sharing of news and ideas. The theory building took place during the month of May.
Dedication

I dedicate this research project to my beloved parents, my father, Carlos Córdova, who taught me to think critically and my mother, Constance Zachman Córdova, who taught me to teach with care.
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I am indebted to my advisors Barbara Seidl, Cynthia Dillard, and Theresa Rogers for fostering my work both carefully and critically. The time and energy they spent with me in conversation and dialogue has made this work possible. As you read this dissertation, their voices are present. I wish to thank Rudine Sims Bishop who so graciously agreed to become my third reader at the last hour. I want to thank my friends Daa’iyah Abdur-Rashid, Angie Johnson, Trisha Long, and Müge Galin for their enduring support.

I will be forever grateful to my fourth grade Dissertation Class. They have been my inspiration throughout. I have deep respect and love for each and every child.

This dissertation would not be possible without the love, patience, and care I received daily from my husband, Michael Daly, and my sons, Dushko and Urosh Petrovich.
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Studies in: Children’s Literature
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This dissertation is written in two voices. One voice represents my school culture. It is often in the first person. The second voice is my academic voice, representing a more academic culture. I have spent my life traversing my Ecuadorian and Ohioan cultures. I do the same in this dissertation. Since language represent culture I feel it is most appropriate to write in this duality. I hope it does not distract the reader but instead informs.
CHAPTER 1
FROM SILENCE TO VOICES

The greatest sin of our time is not the few who have destroyed but the vast majority who've sat idly by.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Silences

In the public school district where I teach in Central Ohio, teachers have a curriculum night about two weeks into the school year. When I arrived as a new teacher, my two fourth-grade teammates conducted the curriculum night in a very different way than I do. When they explained how they did it, they prefaced every step with, "It's really cute, you'll love it." They explained that for the first few weeks of school they took photos of the kids arriving, unpacking their book bags, doing their spelling workbooks, in art class, in the cafeteria, and on until the end of the day. Then
the three classes held one grand curriculum night. The teachers merged their slides and illustrated the day. The slide show took up the full hour. I asked what about questions? They said, that’s the point. There is no time for questions. I said, thanks but I’ll just do my own, but that was just not acceptable to them. So after a few days of unpleasant negotiations, we compromised. I’d join them for their slide show and then I’d take my group of parents to my room for a more interactive format.

After the slide show I went into my classroom. It was packed with parents. Every small chair was stuffed with mothers and fathers sitting with their knees up to their chins. Since I was new, nobody really had a handle on me. They wanted to figure out who I was, so I gave my regular spiel about the curriculum and how I’d communicate with them as parents. I always put my home phone on the board and they started to eye each other like, What’s this? I sensed I was an odd duck to them, but they were all attentive and polite. I asked them about a few things, like if they’d rather papers come home every day or if it would be better to send the week’s worth on Fridays. I knew from my own boys that it was easier to navigate my way through their book bags just one day a week. We had a little chat and agreed that Fridays would be great.
I could tell they were still eying each other. When I asked if anyone had any questions, there was silence. I waited. Silence. In my old school, the parents were so empowered that they would just bombard me with questions. They came in armed with little spiral notebooks filled with them. Sometimes, I would even dread that part of the night.

But these parents were absolutely silent. Not a word. So I cued them again saying, “I can’t believe this is the fourth-grade proficiency year and nobody has any questions! I’m just not used to this.” Now, slowly, some questions started to come. When would the tests be held, how long would they have? Nothing too interesting. Nothing too hard. Then, this one woman timidly raised her hand and said in accented English, “Well, I actually do have a question about my daughter. Well, maybe it’s a problem. I feel like she’s being teased and left out. I’m not sure if it’s because she is Asian American or because she is overweight. I don’t know. Maybe could we just talk about that? This is my biggest concern. It’s not the proficiency test, it’s about Rose being safe and feeling comfortable here.”

The room was again silent, but it was a different kind of silence. We’d stopped eying each other. We were awed by this woman’s courage and touched by the love she had for her Rose.
This mother’s question about her daughter’s well being, rather than her academic achievement, had exposed my own assumption, that the parents’ priority during our meeting would be the proficiency tests.

But we cannot assume that we as teachers can understand or prioritize the needs of our students without first acknowledging or valuing who they are. Our focus needs to include "whom" we teach as much as "what" we teach. Not until I, as Rose’s teacher, can set aside my agenda of preparing the proficiency tests, and instead focus on Rose’s overall comfort and sense of belonging, can Rose fully participate in our learning community.

Faceless, Voiceless, Generic Children

Figure 1: Chase’s faceless victim
This is a faceless generic victim done by Chase, age nine, in response to three novels, *The Hundred Dresses*, *Shiloh*, and *Number the Stars*. Chase said, "It's easier to hurt people you don't know."

Figure 2: Lou's voiceless Wanda

This drawing was done by Lou. She copied from a book at home because it reminded her of Wanda, "She had no voice."

As an elementary school teacher for almost twenty years in schools in the United States and Ecuador, I have become acutely aware of how children are marginalized. This is reflected in and outside the classroom in the ways that children are regarded by their teachers, administrators, and the institution. The authoritative voice dominates, silencing the voices of millions of children like
Rose. I could have ignored her mother’s plea to look after her safety and merely impose Rose’s face into the empty space on Chase’s faceless child even though her plump Asian face would have been a misfit, grotesque even. This dissertation asserts the need for a nurturing and caring morality in place of the existing framework of control. As an elementary school teacher, I believe that children can develop a sophisticated sense of morality and care for others, given the opportunities to do so. With a curriculum of care that is built on real children’s lived experiences, rather than a curriculum designed for phantom generic students, schools may stand a chance of resolving the moral crisis that our children face.

I cannot begin to build a curriculum of care until I know who my students are: their sociopolitical, cultured, gendered lives. This is when students like Rose move from being a phantom, faceless, voiceless generic child to becoming a real child with her own unique context that she brings with her into the classroom. Learning these factors about Rose and all my other students is the first step toward building a caring curriculum. I cannot know who my students are until I value the whole child, not just their academic facet. It was not until after curriculum night that I began to know Rose and her family more fully.
The existing system of control within which we run our schools renders our students faceless and voiceless. The existing curricula are designed for this uniform mass of children, which may or may not serve their academic needs, but they can alienate them from their families, homes, and lives. The programs that we tend to use to remedy the alienation that children experience worsens the situation. We install metal detectors, surveillance cameras, lock doors, do random drug test and locker searches, close lunch periods, all in the name of safety and for the well being of the students. In this dissertation, I propose a caring classroom community, where all children, including Rose, feel safe, without alienation. A place where they can feel a sense of security that comes from belonging so that Rose and Lou and Chase and everyone can take the risks necessary in order to thrive.

The Silenced Dialogue

We rarely speak about the subordinate position of children in schools. And although many of us call ourselves “child-centered” teachers, we still tend to value the curriculum above the children. A prime example is the one night we make special early in the school year, the night when all the parents are encouraged to come in and we call it curriculum night. Families are invited in to listen
to us go on about the curriculum. It is not about teachers listening to families talk about their concerns about their children. We teachers, as transmitters of the generic information, are there to tell and the generic parents, to listen. Freire (1970) calls this syndrome "narration sickness." He talks about it in the context of the student-teacher relationships, but it can be easily transferred to teacher-family relationships, as well. He says:

A careful analysis of the teacher-student relationship at any level, inside or outside school, reveals its fundamentally narrative character. This relationship involves a narrating Subject (the teacher) and patient, listening objects (the student)... Education is suffering from narration sickness (p. 53).

We teachers decide what to teach primarily by looking to curriculum guides, textbooks, and/or the discrete skills presented on standardized tests. Our focus is on what we teach, not whom we teach. The example of Rose's mother is a case in point. The teachers showed slides of the students "doing" the various parts of the curriculum. Every year the slides are the same with new faces. The fact that these teachers had a brand new set of students did not alter their yearly plan in any way. It is like the wooden facades used at theme parks with the face cut out to show different faces with the same body and context. It did not matter that Rose did not fit the facade.
The subordinate position of children in schools is further manifested in the crusade toward a national curriculum. This is a mission with a single epistemological stance, a transmission model of knowledge that emerges from and serves the dominant culture of white middle-class. It is this dominant voice that gets heard in the classroom via textbooks, the canon, the curriculum, and the institutional policies (King, 1991, Nieto, 1992). This "hegemonic desire for control" (van Manen, 1984, p. 164) assumes that there is a vacant generic student to be filled with knowledge from the mandated curriculum. Children in schools in the United States are viewed as not having theories, experiences, authority, or personal power (Banks, 1977, 1993). In fact, in this system, the more passive the student, the better (Freire, 1970/93). The curriculum is created for generic students and teachers. And it becomes the generic teacher's responsibility to transmit the standard curriculum, the more cleverly; the better. Student failure is presented as genetic or as cultural deprivation without looking at the institution for signs of pathology (West, 1994, Nieto, 1992).

In this model, we teachers are not unlike the Spaniards Ventura (1988) describes, when their "greedy, vicious, frenzied" lust for gold blinded them to the "ancient cultural marvels before their eyes" (p. 176). Their obsession for gold, drove them to destroy
the entire Aztec civilization. In a similar way, teachers, as part of a larger institution, are so blinded by an obsession with the standard curriculum, standard English, standard tests, that they are blind to and eventually destroy the “cultural marvels” the children present before their eyes.

Over the years I have come to understand, that “knowledge is neither neutral nor apolitical, yet it is generally treated by teachers and schools as if it were” (Nieto, 1992, p. 219). We do not notice the identity of the powerful, omnipresent, faceless authoritative voice that speaks through the curriculum (King, 1991). But none the less, this voice overpowers the voices of the children as it fails to recognize the importance of the children’s sociocultural status and the cultural identity of the curriculum (Nieto, 1992; Giroux, 1993).

According to Nieto (1992):

> We need to understand the important role power plays in institutional racism. It is primarily through the power of the people who control these institutions that racist policies and practices are reinforced and legitimized (p.22).

Much of the institutionalized racism and classism and sexism resides in textbooks, the canon, the epistemology, and the curriculum. Nieto (1992) explains that “racism and other forms of
discrimination are generally hushed up or avoided in the curriculum...” (p. 288).

We teachers never seem to ask whose interests are served by cutting some students and teachers form their sociohistorical roots, and not others (Delpit, 1995, Ladson-Billings, 1994). In short, we educators need to take heed of bell hooks’s (1994) warning, “no education is politically neutral” (p. 37). There is always a unique face and a voice for every child. It can only be heard if we can turn down the volume of the omnipresent, omnipotent voice of the institution and use the voices of children to raise their critical consciousness.

In my practice when teaching literature with fourth graders I first adjust my selection of books each year to include stories that affirm the various ethnic identities represented in the classroom. As we read the multicultural literature I begin to use the children’s responses a starting points for critical dialogue that in turn leads to on going community and theory building in the classroom. For instance, when I learned that several of my students were Jewish, I included a book about the Holocaust, Number the Stars by Lois Lowry (1989). This occasioned the following communication from one of my students to the novelist:
Dear Ms. Lowry,

Your book *Number the Stars* took my breath away. It was wonderful. I was especially interested in it because I am Jewish and love to learn about the Holocaust and other historic events in Judaism. I was introduced to what the Holocaust was at a younger age than most children. That is mostly true because my father is a rabbi and my grandmother is a Holocaust survivor. Both of her parents were murdered in Auschwitz shortly after Hitler's army invaded Austria. My grandmother was only thirteen when this horrible tragedy occurred. I was completely horrified that only one man could carry so much power and the fact that people actually believed that by exterminating all of the Jews, the world would be a better place. I think that the diversity that we have is very important and that we should treasure it.

This letter from Julie demonstrates that she is willing to explore the moral dilemma of the Holocaust and begin to look at diversity in her current community. Too few talk about how knowing and knowledge is socially, culturally, and historically situated in teachers, learners, epistemologies, and curricula (Banks, 1977, 1993, King, 1991, Delpit, 1995). The arrogance of the transmissive model with its presumption that all children are eager to earn membership into the dominant culture is not part of the public discourse, but the children are talking about it. I had introduced *Number the Stars*
not even knowing that Chris, too, was Jewish. Until he read the book, Chris had been intentionally hiding his religious identity, in his desire to assimilate. The following letter from Chris reflects the benefits of a contextualized curriculum that affirms his individuality.

Chris’s letter to Lois Lowry, Pilot study, 1999

Dear Lois Lowry,

After reading *Number the Stars* it made me STOP and say whoa, wait a minute. It’s really okay to be Jewish. All the boys and girls around the world should just be themselves.

I just wanted to go give a speech heard all around the world and say, “Hey it’s okay to be Jewish, Catholic, Christian and just open your eyes.” I’m half Jewish and I used to hate who I was, along with everyone else until I read *Number the Stars*.

I just wanted you to know you have a big fan.

Thanks for your time,
Chris

The members of the dominant culture act dysconsciously. They are able to exist uncritical of the injustices in the existing social order (King, 1991). The dominance of their sociocultural environment is invisible to them. They see themselves as “normal” because they have the power “to name the world” (Freire,
1970/1993, p. 69). However, those, including Rose, outside the mainsteam culture know differently. She asks:

Who defines normal?
Is anybody normal?
Everyone’s normal!

Pilot study, 1999

The Moral Crisis

Few can deny the moral crisis in the United States with the string of schoolyard shootings where kids as young as ten are wounding and killing each other. It is all over the media. With the days and weeks of prime-time coverage of the Columbine tragedy, even my fourth graders have become part of the national discourse.

Morning sharing May 19, 1999

Morning sharing May 19, 1999

Jason: My mom, she says the parents don't take care of their children and that's why like in Columbine the [killings happen]. My mom says their parents probably didn't even know what their children did. That's probably why it happened.

Morning sharing May 19, 1999

Bart: I am positive the shooters will go to hell because of their crime and the victims will go to heaven because they are not the ones who shot
people. They are not the ones who put bombs around and killed everybody.

Although we cannot seem to reach a national consensus about what we should teach our children in response to the crisis, schools and communities have developed various interventions to prevent further suffering. Communities openly share the many steps they have taken to reduce violence in schools. Very popular are the "zero tolerance" policies that mandate predetermined punishments for specific offenses such as bringing a weapon to school, assault, gang activity, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and violence (Schwartz, 1996). Schools showcase an array of strategies used to monitor student behavior. The United States Justice Department proudly reports that it has placed nearly 3,000 “COPS in School” in over a thousand communities (Gittelsohn, 1999). Other policing practices include parents and other adults as security guards, surveillance cameras, metal detectors, and random locker, book bag, and body searches (Schwartz, 1996).

Character Education has gained popularity as a way to teach virtues like honesty, obedience, integrity, responsibility, and fairness. To reinforce compliance, teachers award tokens. Often, school wide “pep talks” inspire and reinforce the virtuous behavior featured that month.
The staff and curriculum policy changes that promise to improve student discipline are popular with teachers (Schwartz, 1996). One strategy increases students' positive adult interaction through mentoring programs. Other districts have reduced teacher and counselors' loads in order to better meet the needs of at-risk students. Peer mediation and conflict management programs allow students to work through their disputes in positive ways. Student-run courts and classes on legal processes attempt to help youth become better citizens. Some schools have implemented stricter dress codes; others require students to wear school uniforms.

The Research Problem: What We Don't Like to Talk About

The existing paradigms of control, as outlined above, do not address children's needs as children. Although filled with good intentions, they all devalue children in their state of childhood. These paradigms only value the children as what they will become, rather than honoring who they presently are. Consequently, they only teach the information that they believe the children must acquire in order to become the moral citizens that their educators project onto them. The existing curriculum of control is one that has been constructed for a phantom generic child, with whom the
designers of the curriculum and school policies have never nor will ever actually interact.

For instance, the Character Education curriculum, which at first glance appears benign, is problematic because it views the student as deficient and void of morality. Its basic premise is that the teacher fills children with notions of virtue. However, in this paradigm, students are not motivated to care for each other but by tokens. Critics of this method assert that in addition to rewarding compliance, the Character Education model often tacitly promotes student passivity and conformity (Kohn, 1997).

Blind conformity to social moral codes in schools and society has its limitations. If we look at moral heroes throughout history, there is evidence that some ethical principles are excluded from the official codes of conduct whether they are national laws, local codes, school policies, or classroom rules. Only in retrospect can some proponents of Jim Crow laws see their immorality. The same was true for Nazi soldiers whose defense was that they were enforcing "the laws."

The success of school policy often relies on how and by whom the problem is framed. Unfortunately, the suggestions from the Governors' Best Practice meeting, including the "zero tolerance" policies, metal detectors, dress codes, surveillance cameras, police in
halls, and character education, are doomed to failure. Although the situation of children being killed by children is horrendous, and the authors of the new initiative that promise to keep students safe are filled with good intentions, their initiatives often serve to further alienate students. Freire (1970) reminds us that "there are well intentioned teachers who do not realize they are serving only to dehumanize" (p. 212).

The institutional voice dominates, silencing the voices of Rose, Lou, Julie, Jason, Bart, Chase, Chris, and millions of other children who are marginalized in schools daily. It is because of this silencing that the Governor's Association's policies dehumanize children. The designation of children as incompetent and deficient is especially unfortunate because it excludes students from active participation in the construction of their own lives. Children have important insights about their day to day reality in and out of schools. Their perceptions, experiences, solutions, and voices need to be heard, valued, and nurtured toward grounded theories of social justice. Without the perspective of the students, the problem is framed in such a way that students are glibly labeled "pathological" without any acknowledgement of any pathology in the dominant culture (West, 1994, Nieto, 1992).
We do not like to admit that we are neglecting and silencing our children, but the statistics do not reveal that we are a country that loves our children. One in five are living in families that have been investigated for child abuse or neglect with over one million substantiated victims of maltreatment. There are over 1,000 abuse-and neglect-related fatalities annually (Varner, 1999). As reported by Peter Jennings on ABC News, "The number of children needing psychiatric care [in the United States] rose by 65% in the last five years" (September 19, 2000). Given these social conditions, is it any wonder that violence in and out of schools is a pressing concern? The U.S. Department of Education's National School Safety Center reports that there were 255,000 incidents of non-fatal serious violence in schools and 671,000 incidents outside of school in 1996 (Gittelsohn, 1999).

There is also a violence our children experience other than that inflicted by weapons. Each year, more and more children are victims of systemic structural violence in the form of inadequate diet or medical care (Gilligan, 1996). Despite the booming economy during the 1990's, the U.S. Census Bureau reports that approximately one in three children live without adequate income to afford necessities. Recently, the Clinton Administration asked Congress for $2.7 billion to help two of the eleven million children
in this country who do not have health care coverage (Meckler, 2000). The Columbine shootings have taught us that the moral crisis that children face in the United States is not restricted to pockets of urban poverty or ethnic minorities. Children of privilege are equally troubled and alienated.

While we adults are not talking about these issues, the children are. The following is from morning sharing, May 19, 1999.

Morning sharing May 19, 1999

Nana: My mom says, well, we have people going to jail on our street for having a gun and shooting and um like mom said they don't even care about their kids and stuff. And we like have like a friend, like a really best friend on our street and he is like his mom doesn't care about him and so we care about him. His mom doesn't feed him or anything so my mom takes care of him.

From actual vs. ideal behavior June 1, 1999

Deborah: One time when I was, well, my dad was working at his business and my dad's family. My uncle was trying to save somebody. The perpetrator was trying to kill the one who was the victim and it ended up my uncle being the victim. The perpetrator shot him and he just died.

People above the law. April 15, 1999

Chase: There is a boy in our neighborhood. I think he is 11 or 12 years old maybe in 5th or 6th
grade. One time my friends and I were at my park and he was hitting everybody and pulling their hair. He was also doing this to me. I felt really mad. The reason I think he's mean and bad is because maybe his parents treat him wrong and he gets hit a lot.

A Nurturing and Caring Morality

The moral challenges schools face daily defy an easy answer but, nonetheless, we need to search for a systemic solution to address the crisis. There is a need for a nurturing and caring morality to replace past responses that serve to control. I believe that children can learn to make sophisticated moral judgments and learn to care for themselves and others, but not within the framework of control.

The development of a caring morality requires that we first of all learn about the existing conditions in the classroom and the greater community, and begin to relate it to something we are trying to bring into existence, some form of social justice. Creating such a classroom is possible, but as Maxine Greene (1995) states, the critique and the vision must happen inside the classroom, from within the learning community. A caring morality in the classroom must be grounded in the lived experiences of the children and it must begin by valuing children's voices, creating a web of
relationships and an ethic of care, a caring not based on a fixed rule, but a caring out of affection and regard for each child (Noddings, 1984).

As Martin Luther King has said, love and care are intrinsically tied to justice. The liberal white feminist (Gilligan 1982, Noddings, 1984) theories of care fail to take into account the fact that the kind of care practiced in white middle class families has served in part to perpetuate racism, classism, and sexism. Thompson (1998) refers to this style of caring as “innocent,” because, in fact, these theories of care fail to recognize or deconstruct issues of racism and classism and so these oppressive constructs will continue. As Thompson asserts, there can be no innocence for those outside the privileged class. “Love and caring do not step back from the world in order to return to innocence, but step out into the world in order to change [racism and classism]” (Thompson, 1998).

The kind of care we need in our classrooms today is one that is principled by justice. It notices and challenges the workings of the power structures that silence some, while giving voice to others. Together, students and teachers need to look critically at the curriculum and school policies. Only then can they begin to imagine “and search for a social vision of a more human, more fully pluralist, more just and more joyful community” (Greene, 1995, p. 61).
The Current Inquiry Project

My teaching experience with children for the last two decades has led me to believe that children are capable of developing a sophisticated sense of morality when given the opportunity to do so. This sense of morality can be integrated with most of the subjects that we teach, from the sciences to sports, to literature, and art. In my language arts classes, I create an atmosphere in which the children can share their experiences and theorize about their sense of what is “moral.” I find that, since literature often deals with finding our place in the moral world, it is a natural setting within which to examine the roles that we all play as “perpetrator,” “victim,” “bystander,” and “hero.” I therefore create a curriculum that allows students to examine these four roles in their own lives as well as in the fictional lives of the characters in the books we read.

To discover and appreciate the complexities of these four roles, I use three Newberry Award winning novels. The first is The Hundred Dresses by Eleanor Estes published in 1944 and although this book is didactic by today’s standard, the theme of cruelty by children and the dilemma of the role of the bystander resonates with children of today. It is the story of a poor immigrant Polish girl, Wanda, who is taunted by Peggy for wearing the same faded
blue dress to school every day while claiming to have a hundred dresses. The second book is *Shiloh*, by Phyllis Naylor (1991). In this story, an eleven-year-old protagonist saves Shiloh from his abusive owner, Judd Travers. The third book is *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry (1989), a story about the Danish resistance during World War II. The Johansen family helps their Jewish neighbors, the Rosens escape to Sweden.

After doing a number of reader response activities using various modes of art including literature, drama, paintings, photos, poetry, and drawings, the students begin to view each character's dilemma from multiple perspectives. The art deepens their understanding and releases the imagination (Greene, 1995) to create more caring and just ways of being.

The Voices of the Children

When teachers and administrators conduct the "business" of teaching and learning without noticing the sociopolitical contexts of the students, the institution, and the parents, they are, in essence, treating students as mere objects that are easily controlled or even manipulated by a set up such as the one I witnessed surrounding curriculum night. Maxine Greene (1995) advises educators to resist treating students as chess pawns and instead, to value their
uniqueness and honor their integrity. In an atmosphere of control and dominance, the lived experiences of children are silenced, reducing the children from curious, energetic learners into an apathetic somnolence. Within the institutions of social control, there are "languages of domination, entitlement, and power; and there are terrible silences where ordinary human speech ought to be audible, silences our pedagogies ought somehow to repair" (Greene, 1995, p. 47).

During the curriculum night that I describe at the beginning of this chapter, I was surprised to learn that not only are teachers and administrators caught up in the curriculum of control, but that parents, as well, were hesitant to voice any other concerns that they may have had, outside of those questions "permitted" or invited by the institution. Had it not been for the courage that Rose's mother demonstrated by speaking up, I too was easily succumbing to the existing school culture's dominant pattern. Once dialogue was encouraged, and particular standpoints were acknowledged, the whole tone of that night's meeting changed from passive obedience on the part of the parents to an active and empowered participation in their children's education. Now, the meeting was not measured by the clock but by making sure that everybody's concerns were voiced and affirmed.
My agenda and focus for the year was thus established that first curriculum night through my interactions with the parents. That night, the parents helped me to co-construct the curriculum and set the moral tone, ones that promised to attend to the alienation that children feel. Together, we were creating a vision of a transformative pedagogy that would relate both to the existing conditions within the institution and the classroom, and to the ideal learning community where every student is affirmed. While I still maintained the same academic curricular goals for the year, I was able to gear those goals toward meeting the particular needs of my students. As teachers orient children to aspects of their own lived experiences, and ground the curriculum goals in those experiences, they can best create an atmosphere of care. Only then can children explore their sense of right and wrong, and further mold their moral identity through telling their stories from their unique perspectives. Only when children become privy to each other's hopes, plans, uncertainties, fears, and dilemmas, can they begin to truly create a classroom community founded on care. In such an environment, children are able to express their full humanity, engage in critical thinking, and shape a social vision that affirms their hopes and dreams.
CHAPTER 2
CENTERING CHILDREN,
THE ARTS, AND ETHICS

Dear Teacher,
I am a survivor of a concentration camp.
My eyes saw what no man should witness:
Gas chambers built by learned engineers.
Children poisoned by educated physicians.
Infants killed by trained nurses.
Women and babies shot and burned by high school and college graduates.
So I am suspicious of education. My request 
is: Help your students become more humane. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmanns. Reading, writing, arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more humane.

Dr. Haim Ginott, Teacher and Child

I formally began this research project after two decades of informal study on moral education in my elementary classroom. Issues of power, good, and evil have intrigued me since my early childhood memories of the Holocaust, the post World War II era, and the Civil Rights movement. My interest in morality is carried

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over into the classroom. I have learned that there are many paths to achieve the goal of teaching children to care deeply for others as they develop a sophisticated sense of morality. I choose to travel via a language arts curriculum, one that supports personal, ethical, and creative responses to literature, responses that connect texts to the rich experiences of children through a curriculum that engages them in critical reading and thinking, while inviting them to experience multiple ways of knowing. Such a curriculum is built on a foundation of the children's richly textured lives. But in order to weave a curriculum of care with the children, I must first learn about the existing conditions in the classroom before I can begin to relate it to something I am trying to bring into existence, some form of social justice (Greene, 1995).

In this research project I am informed by moral education theory (Piaget, 1965, 1971, Kohlberg, 1969, 1972, 1984,) and the critiques of it (Gilligan, 1982, Noddings, 1986, 1996, Thompson, 1998, Kohn, 1988, 1997). I believe there is a need for formal moral education, one that embraces both care and some form of social justice. I draw on my own background and the background experiences of the children in order to turn to the classroom community into a site for theory building. In order to create a classroom community that is “guided by principles and informed by
care” (Greene, 1995, p. 42), I must give voice to the children, carefully listening to them and giving them opportunities to influence and shape a caring community and curriculum. But in order to hear and affirm the voices in the classroom, even those that are often carelessly and cruelly marginalized, I must first turn down the volume of the omnipresent, omnipotent, disembodied voice of white male dominance that perpetuates a status quo of racism, classism, and sexism. This god-like voice transmits its influence throughout the educational institution. The curriculum and community I aim to create is transformative (Freire, 1970, hooks, 1994, Nieto, 1992), ones that reject and challenge the status quo. Creating a transformative curriculum and community requires the centering of three components that are currently located in the margins of school culture: children, ethics, and the arts.

Imagination: Essays on Education, the Arts, and Social Change. As the title implies, she writes about the ideas that are important to me both as a teacher and as a researcher.

Two Stories

The day was typical. At the first bell, the kids streamed down the halls, book bags fat with completed projects, bouncing with every step. Noisily, the room filled with greetings, news, and activity as the children put homework in baskets, lunch bags in the tub, and coats on hooks. By the time the second bell rang ten minutes later, all were seated ready for the day to officially begin. I walked around the room, pads and pen in hand, checking attendance and taking the lunch count. As the messenger for the week delivered the slips to the office, I asked as I do every day, "Does anyone have anything to share?"

Typically, kids share about a variety of topics, their soccer games, sleep overs, movies they've seen, or their dreams. Most narratives are innocent, but others are complicated by moral dilemmas. I've heard stories about abusive coaches, referees, or parents who demean others from the sidelines, all of which are disturbing to the children. At times the children talk about how they really want to quit soccer, baseball, piano, or dance lessons, but they don't want to disappoint their parents. Some express the
tension they experience going from one parent's house to the other's. They have even asked the class for advice on where they should spend Christmas, their mother's or father's.

Often media news is part of the conversation and so it was that day. Someone, I don't remember who now, shared a controversial story about a man in prison who had received a heart transplant. The media debate was of course about the prisoner's right to an organ transplant or any medical treatment for that matter, while law-abiding citizens are going without. Sharing on most days is the favorite time of the day, but on this day even those avid readers who read from a book on their lap as they listen with one ear, put their books down and became fully engaged. This dilemma, I sensed, piqued their interest so I invited the students into a process drama, an imaginary place they could think more, say more, and be more than on a typical fourth-grade school day. In the drama, the students became "The Organ Recipient Committee for Central Ohio" who would decide which of three candidates would receive a newly available heart. I asked the children to take on decision-making roles that would lead them to explore on ethical terrain.

First, I introduced them to the candidates, all three were a medical match for the available heart. Candidate number one was
in prison for armed robbery, the second, a smoker all her life and overweight, while the third was a law-abiding citizen who took good care of her health.

An energized, yet solemn discussion began. Some protested strongly that the prisoner should be excluded, "Why should they have a chance for a new heart when they didn't even respect the property or lives of others?"

Some were certain that the smoker should be out of the running. "What? Smoking! They know it damages the heart. There are warnings on every pack!" one protester shared.

But in the end, after much deliberation, the committee coalesced around one quiet proposal: they should have a lottery. A soft-spoken child asserted her theory, "We all make mistakes. All three should have an equal opportunity for a second chance to live."

And so it was decided by "The Organ Recipient Committee for Central Ohio" to have a random drawing, allowing all an equal chance.

The topic of transplants and prisoners was not part of the mandated curriculum but emerged from our daily sharing. Deciding the right thing to do in this life and death matter was a topic that provoked and animated the children. By improvising a drama where the children become the experts, they could use their
imaginations and moral sense to explore and debate the dilemma and in the end create a just situation.

This second story which shows how children, the arts, and ethics can be centered happened a few years ago when I read *Shiloh* with a class. It had a deep impact on the group, deeper than I realized at the time we read it. Later that year, the school counselor, in an effort to improve the moral climate in the school, made up a list of Nobel Peace Prize winners and asked different members of the staff to take on the roles of these winners and present their story to the students. The janitor became Lech Walesa, a fifth-grade teacher played Mother Teresa, while I portrayed Rigoberta Menchú, just to name a few. Our classroom, like the others, had many Peace Prize winners stream through sharing their inspiring stories of moral courage.

Near the end of the project, the counselor made visits to each classroom, talking about the characteristics the Peace Prize winners possessed: moral courage, willingness to stand alone against powerful forces, a personal conviction to social justice. Afterwards, he asked the students to nominate one person in each class who demonstrated those traits most closely.

My students had a lengthy discussion after the counselor left. In the end, I was surprised at what the children wanted to do.
Halfway into the discussion, they unanimously decided to nominate Marty, the protagonist from *Shiloh*, as the person who should represent our class. They were convinced that he possessed all the requisite qualities and really no one else in the class came in close. Marty, they claimed, had the qualities needed; he stood up against his parents and the town bully, Judd Travers, to defend a helpless and abused dog.

I share both stories as just two possibilities of the many ways children, the arts, and ethics can be centered in a classroom practice.

The following sections explore the theories I draw on in order to create a critical and caring learning environment for our classroom. Morning sharing and personal responses to literature become necessary tools to use in the classroom in order to be able to center the children, the arts, and ethics.

Centering the Children

I cannot remember how or just when I started the ritualistic morning sharing to begin our day. I think it may have its roots in something I read about a democratic classroom or it may have started as show-and-tell when I taught first and second grade, and it evolved into sharing in fourth grade. It is more of a tell, than a
show-and-tell type activity, which launches each day by centering
the lives of children and focusing on what is important to them on
any given morning.

Gallas (1994) talks about sharing in her classroom as one of
the few places where children can bring their culture to the
classroom discourse. This is also true in my classroom. Each strand
of culture gets woven into and with others, eventually creating a
colorful classroom tapestry. Vivian Paley (1993) says that it is
through narratives that children get to know each other. So, as we
begin to know each other through the contexts of the narratives,
then all of us in the classroom, not just I as teacher, can begin to
care for each other. We can position ourselves to scaffold and
support each other's progress in customized, particular ways.
Morning sharing provides the time and place for students to
actively share and listen as they participate as caring members in a
community. Gallas says that over time, both the power of the
stories and the community of listeners that the stories create
become a part of the classroom fabric (1994). In his book, Life in a
Crowded Place, Peterson (1992) states that the opening ceremony of
sharing is not merely a way to get the day started but it is where
the relationships of a caring community begin to form and
strengthen. By way of public narrative, the students can begin to
know one another, which in turn fosters caring. The kind of talk that goes on in morning sharing is usually what Peterson (1992) describes as "caring talk." The friendly, casual aspect of this talk helps a sense of belonging to a community develop as it begins to form a sense of a shared reality. Through "sharing," we begin to know what is important to the other person and respond with genuine care. It is during our sharing time that our lives first intertwine.

Greene (1995) takes this sharing time one step further. She asserts that if we are going to relate our lives to some idea of what is good then we must first understand our lives in narrative form. And I add that we must also know the storied lives of others, both real and fictional. When we went into the process drama about the heart transplant we intertwined the stories of both real and fictional characters in order to discover a good solution to the moral dilemma. Greene (1995) asserts that it is important for our "children to share their stories, not only so that we may hear them but so that they can make meaningful the birth of their own rationality" (p. 54). This reminds us that we need to affirm multiple experiences even those, or maybe especially those that are outside our world. We can not afford to alienate any more children in schools.
The morning sharing stories are critical to the community building process and they have academic benefit, as well. Often, the children's shared stories become the first draft for writing personal narratives. As they relate their bit, the children begin to understand audience and as questions are asked, or children laugh or gasp in response to their tales, the students mentally begin the first draft of their stories. Many language arts skills, including speaking and listening, are authenticated during morning sharing. In addition to the language arts benefits, we often reference stories to build context for other lessons. For example, I can use a story about a thunderstorm interrupting a soccer game to talk about how cold fronts travel quickly. But more importantly, the morning sharing narratives allow the children to co-construct the curriculum and to feel that what is important to them matters.

There are few terms to describe what I mean by co-construct the curriculum. First of all, "authentic curriculum" is a term that has come from the work at the Antioch New England Graduate School Department of Education (Sobel, 1994). Sobel defines it as "the process of movement from the inside out, taking curriculum impulses from the inside of the child and bringing them out to the light of day, into the classroom" (p. 35). He believes that the authentic curriculum is a way to make education vital, while at the
same time honoring the specific ecology manifest in children and classrooms.

Another term for a similar epistemology is "negotiated learning," often used in the Italian Reggio Emilia schools, where the teachers are not just paying attention to the children's interests, but more importantly, the reasons behind the interests. Forman and Fyfe (1998) assert that in Reggio Emilia schools, "the curriculum is not child centered or teacher directed. The curriculum is child originated and teacher framed" (p. 240). Later in this chapter, I will discuss the influence of the Reggio Emilia schools on my research.

Centering the Arts

In the hierarchy of school curricula, the arts are ranked near the bottom. This is evidenced in part by the lack of time and money allocated to them. For example, all but a few gifted programs serve those gifted in language and mathematics (Eisner, 1988, Gardner, 1992). When budgets are cut, music and art are among the first considered for removal. When overcrowding occurs, art and music teachers are the first to be asked to give up their classroom space.

This insufficient consideration given to the arts is chiefly due to two misconceived dichotomies, argues Eisner (1988). The first is
that art deals with the affective, while traditional curricula deal with cognition. The other is that talent and intelligence are regarded as separate. Eisner (1988) rejects both dichotomies: "...the arts are cognitive activities, guided by human intelligence, that make unique forms of meaning possible" (p. 48).

Art enables us to look at the familiar and make it strange (Greene, 1988). This is an important function if we are to help children use their art experiences to "disclose aspects of experience ordinarily never seen. Critical awareness may somehow be enhanced, as new possibilities open for reflection... it enables us to know in new ways" (p. 131). Art, Greene continues, can make the subtle, seductive, and invisible nature of hegemonic policies visible. Art forces us to externalize our interpretations, bringing them to the public forum, empowering children "to mediate between the object world and their own consciousness, to locate themselves so that freedom can appear" (p. 122).

The arts are not usually welcomed at the core of the transmissive learning theory model of education because of their subjectivity. In this model, Powell (1997) states that:

Schools tend to be organized around not making mistakes, but that is exactly what the arts build a tolerance for. Creating in the arts asks teachers [and students] to try out this solution, then that one...The arts asks them to let processes take time to unfold and to tolerate being without the right
answer for a while, trusting that a good way will emerge. (p. 452)

Because of its subjectivity, art is less rule-governed than other scholastic disciplines. In more conventional forms of expression, i.e., math, spelling or grammar, the student learns to obey the conventions. Right and wrong are easily scored with little call for judgment. In expressive forms of representation, creativity and exploration are encouraged, making it difficult to establish criteria for evaluation (Eisner, 1981).

One exception to arts located outside of the mainstream curriculum is literature, although many teachers still fail to view it for its aesthetic qualities. Rather, they see it "as social documents" (Rosenblatt, 1938/1993) limiting the range of complex elements contained in literary experiences to a narrow function. Literature is important Greene (1995) believes because it helps us "realize the enormous variety of human lives" (p. 21). Children can reinterpret their earlier experiences and make this experience conscious and make it self aware. For example, before reading Shiloh, the students were not as aware of the ideas like moral courage. This concept is important if we are teaching for critical consciousness. Without arts in the curriculum, schools are in danger of creating students who are passive, rule-bound, and blindly obedient, risking
that these students could become adults who do "not act on their freedom; they do not risk becoming different; they accede; often, they submit" (Greene, 1988, p.117).

Imagination and creativity play prominent roles in developing morality. "Imagination is what, above all, makes empathy possible" (Greene, 1995, p. 3) Without empathy, Marty would not have risked saving Shiloh or Maddie in The Hundred Dresses could not have felt Wanda's alienation. Children need opportunities to create and imagine hypothetical worlds where they can theorize about how their lives might be (Johnson, 1993). If students are to become autonomous thinkers, willing to challenge conventions, they need to engage in activities that promote critical dialogue about their world, ones that "enable them to imagine conditions other than those that exist or have existed" (Egan, 1992, p. 46).

Art often is not considered part of our daily lives at home or at school. It is seen as belonging to some elite group of talented artists who get their poetry published, their paintings in museums, or their dramas on stage. Dewey (1934) describes the location of art:

On one hand, it is assumed that there is in existence, at least in some gifted persons, an emotion that is aboriginally esthetic, and that artistic production and appreciation are the manifestations of this emotion. Such a conception is the inevitable logical counterpart
of all attitudes that make art something esoteric and that relegate fine art to a realm separated by a gulf from everyday experiences. (p. 78)

Until the arts are legitimized as a way of knowing, as important tools for multiple interpretations, they will remain at the periphery of educational institutions. Gardner (1992) argues that any topic worth studying should be approached in many ways. Art allows many metaphors for understanding the same topic. Each of these three children, Oscar, Peter, and Emma, found a different way to represent Wanda's sense of alienation. Oscar wrote a haiku, Peter made a chalk drawing on construction paper, while Emma is responding dramatically to Wanda's experience.

Voices say ha ha.  
They make life miserable  
Everyday, all year.  

by Oscar
Because of our display panels, they were shared collectively. Each response inspires new texts and art. With each, understanding
is deepened. This novel by Estes is the first metaphor for the sense of alienation experienced in schools. Gardner argues that many, including experts, often privilege one form over others, usually math and language at the expense of other legitimate forms. The more metaphors used, the deeper the understanding and the more children we are able to reach.

Centering Ethics

The responsibility of social and moral development of children is shared between schools and families. Both want children to become decent human beings. The norms and rules of culture are reflected in all classrooms, including those that oppress. Consciously or unconsciously, teachers advocate moral behavior. Often, they have not thought carefully about what that means or how to achieve it. They are mainly interested in issues of classroom management and daily coping (Goodlad, 1992).

There are only a few schools in the United States that formally include moral education in their curricula. The literature that includes moral education as a significant part of curriculum development has two schools of thought: (1) Character Education and (2) Moral Education.
Character Education

Character Education programs typically teach virtues like honesty, obedience, and fairness that are considered "universal." To reinforce compliance, teachers award tokens that buy privileges. School wide "pep talks" inspire and reinforce the virtuous behaviors featured that month (Ryan, 1989).

Most schools do not have formal programs, but what they do in terms of behavior is closely aligned with the character education model. Commonly, standards for behavior are defined and enforced through school rules and discipline policies. Teachers rely on the many behaviorist strategies presented in educational psychology classes to insure that their students comply with guidelines for deportment. It is through positive reinforcement, peer recognition, time outs, and loss of privileges that behavior is managed. These methods are based on a stimulus response reward system that uses extrinsic tokens, such as stickers or smiley faces, to modify the actions of an individual, a handful of students, or the entire class. The behavior modification program targets one or two actions that interrupt learning. Through this system, children are rewarded for obedience and compliance. Critics of this method (Grusec, 1991, Fabes, 1989, Kohn, 1997) assert that in addition to rewarding compliance, the character education model often tacitly promotes
student passivity and conformity. Blind conformity to social moral codes in schools and society has limitations. If we look at moral heroes throughout history, there is evidence that some ethical principles are excluded from the official codes of conduct, whether they are national laws, local codes, school policies, or classroom rules.

Grusec (1991) and Fabes (1989) both report research that reveals that children in this Skinnerian reward system begin to see the point of doing good as a way to get extrinsic rewards. When the rewards stop, they are less likely than their non-rewarded peers to share, care, and help others. Other critics (Kohn, 1997, Kohlberg, 1984, Lickona, 1990) argue that character education focuses on moral behavior while failing to engage children in deep, critical reflection about their actions.

Moral Education

Piaget's and Kohlberg's theories, even though these have come under much criticism in Postmodern times. Piaget's and Kohlberg's works can be regarded as Modernist endeavors, ones that seek "universal" truths (Winston, 1998). One of the first to challenge Kohlberg was Gilligan (1982), calling his developmental theory gender biased, linear, and hierarchical in nature. She claims it disregards the way women, more often than men, view moral issues from an "ethic of care" rather than from an "ethic of justice".

Piaget (as cited in Davidson & Youniss, 1995) recognized peer interaction as a means to stimulate cognitive and moral behavior in children. He contended that a state of cognitive disequilibrium occurs frequently when peers challenge each other on issues of fairness while at play. As the children negotiate rules to games, they express their interpretations of justice, engaging in a process of critique and compromise that results in a new understanding of fairness for both children. Unlike teacher/student or parent/child negotiations, peer interaction involves two equals exchanging viewpoints in a cooperative relationship that will not be dominated by one or the other parties. However, Hoffman (1988) warns that hierarchies can develop in peer interactions and that children, left on their own, may not always look at differing perspectives unless an adult encourages them to do so.
In his 1958 dissertation, Kohlberg focused on moral cognition rather than behavior. He presented undergraduates with the now famous Heinz dilemma. From the results, Kohlberg (1969) refined Piaget's three "phases" into three, two tiered stages. He renamed them "preconventional, conventional, and post conventional".

Over the years, Kohlberg and colleagues (Powers, Higgins, Kohlberg, 1989) developed a questionnaire to locate children in one of the six stages. They used this information to develop moral education programs that would promote moral cognition. The two programs for which Kohlberg gained renown, the plus-one program which exposes students to a level one stage above their current moral reasoning through role playing activities, followed by peer- and adult-directed discussions. The just communities approach (Powers, Higgins, Kohlberg, 1989), are based on and extend Piaget's notion that peer interaction stimulates moral thinking. This approach is a forum where teachers and students attend weekly meetings to discuss issues of justice, fairness, and morality that emerge from their communal daily lives.

Piaget and Kohlberg (as cited in Davidson & Youniss, 1995) focused their work on the development of moral cognition through peer interaction. The moral education process differs from the character education model, a pedagogy that transmits moral values,
adopts preexisting moral standards, and stresses moral behavior. Lickona (1990) extended Piaget and Kohlberg by integrating activities that promote prosocial skills throughout the school day. This views morality as primarily cognitive, understating the emotional aspects.

In this research I draw on the work of both Kohlberg and Piaget that uses peer interaction to stimulate cognitive and moral behavior in children. I am inspired by Kohlberg’s commitment to make moral education part of every child’s schooling so that we may never endure another Holocaust and as a means to deconstruct the many moral infractions that occur because of the dominant culture’s hold on our schools.

We live in a society divided and segregated by race, class, and age while at the same time connected across these boundaries by all kinds of technologies including books, TV, movies, radio, music, and the Internet. More and more children are able to acquire varying degrees in competence in various cultures (Wax, 1993). It is important to bring characters and issues to the classroom that may not be otherwise present in the lives of our students. The characters with their diverse stories allow children the possibilities to relive and rethink historical and current events and look at the ethical issues that surround them both in the role of a historical
figure and as themselves. Previous ways of thinking are challenged and often transformed as students connect diverse texts as they cross borders of place, time and culture (Rogers, 1997). Not only the piece of literature, but also the drama, art, and poetry responses of the literature stimulates “a live, aware reflective transaction if what presents itself to consciousness is to be realized” (Greene, 1995, p. 30).

Moral education is complex. It connects cultural norms, family values, and personal behaviors creating many possible actions (Gilligan, 1982). There is no one correct way to teach ethics in schools. Many moral education programs, in addition to Lickona's (1990, 1995) projects and Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg's (1989) just communities, report increases in moral thinking and behavior as a result of their intervention. *Facing History Facing Ourselves*, a program that uses critical reflection as a means to help high school students look at prejudice, stereotyping, intolerance and hate behavior as they study history and all its complexities, reports upward movement on Kohlberg's moral stage continuum (Selman, 1998).

The Child Development Project (CDP), a program that targets elementary aged students, has also improved moral behavior and cognition of students. Its goals are to develop prosocial behaviors
like kindness, helping, sharing, and perspective taking through community service and reflective discussions about rules. The CDP values altruism above competitive individualism. Children work together to decide how their school should be ordered and behavior problems resolved (Kohn, 1988).

In spite of the positive results, most schools do not have formal moral education programs. Selman (1998) and Kohlberg (Kohlberg & Mayer, 1972), encourage moral educators and researchers to look at ways to incorporate moral education into the schools's curricula. Kohlberg revised his thinking and recommended that teachers and students discuss real moral dilemmas, ones that emerged from their curricula and daily lives, not solely hypothetical ones. History, the sciences, sports, and art, including literature, all offer many possibilities for real moral dilemmas.

There are many ways to help children become decent human beings. Achieving this goal has been a critical endeavor throughout history. There is no one best way, but it is certain that children are capable and willing to actively engage in the process of constructing their moral identity. To do so, children need to work within and against the frameworks offered, so that they can discover and alter boundaries that allow them to create a classroom culture of care and justice.
Bystander Research

The work done by Short (1999) and the Oliners (cited in Short, 1999) on bystanders helps understand my work with students. Short (1999) argues that an ethic of care motivates the bystander to action. Similarly, Oliner and Oliner (cited in Short, 1999) in their research on rescuers during World War II found that what distinguished rescuers was their capacity for extensive relationships and their sense of responsibility for others, even those outside their immediate circles. Latane and Darley (1970) found in their work that bystanders are more likely to help those more like themselves and those with whom they have developed a bond. Chase with his drawing of a faceless victim knows that “It’s easier to hurt people you don’t know.” Finally, Hoffman (1976) states that with other things being equal, the greater the student's capacity for empathy, the less chance that student will remain a bystander.

The moral theorists have informed my work in several ways. First of all, I believe like Kohlberg that no education is complete without a moral aspect. Secondly, I believe that moral education should happen in the context of historical and current events, fictional events and the lived experiences of students. Peer interaction is important to the grounded theory process, as well. I do not however find it useful in my research to place students onto
one of the six hierarchical stages. Kohlberg's modernist endeavor to find a grand, all-embracing narrative has come under critique not only from feminist, but from minorities and other voices from the edge (Winston, 1998), as well. Gilligan's (1982) feminist critique moves the moral theory in the right direction by addressing issues of gender, but lacks an awareness about those exploited because of race, culture, or class Thompson (1998). Gilligan makes a distinction between an ethic of justice and an ethic of care that is useful in my quest for social justice. She says, "While an ethic of justice proceeds from the premise of equality — that everyone should be treated the same — an ethic of care rests on the premise of nonviolence — that no one should be hurt" (p. 174). I chose to approach morality from an ethic of care.

Learning Theories

This next section is a discussion of pedagogical approaches that allow for grounded theory building in my classroom.

At a lecture to graduate students in Education at The Ohio State University, Fred Erickson (1998) asserted that "classroom environments are sites of political struggle that are both local and global in nature. Classroom interaction is the medium of struggle in both hegemonic and counter-hegemonic ways. Classrooms are at
the same time reproducing and transforming. Both interactions happen in classrooms." In order to achieve the goal of developing a caring and transforming curriculum, I favor the constructivist model rather than the hegemonic transmission model that reproduces the status quo. To better understand how learning takes place, I contrast the constructivist model to the transmission model.

**Transmissive Learning Theory**

In the transmission model the learner is passive; the teacher is active. It is based on a behaviorist learning theory, where the individual is the unit of analysis. To assess learning, pre- and post-tests are applied to the learner. Knowledge resides in the institution and the teacher. A certain, unspecified amount is required for full cultural membership. The movement towards proficiency testing and a national curriculum attempts to make the requisite amount of knowledge public and measurable. The teacher, as a member in good standing, based on her ability to pass national teacher tests, transmits the information to the learners. This knowledge is broken down into discrete parts to facilitate learning, teaching, and assessing.
Learning the institutional curriculum is part of Talcott Parson's (1955, cf. Corsaro, 1997) functionalist model of socialization. The child is appropriated by the society and is viewed as a resource for the future. Children are marginalized in their present state, valued mainly for their potential as future citizens. Typically, students from lower socioeconomic classes receive an inferior education to that of students from the middle and upper classes, thus reproducing the existing social structure. This model values and insures the status quo. Traditional schools emerge from the dominant, politically powerful culture. The sociocultural environment is invisible for members of the dominant culture and at the same time embodies what is deemed "normal" (King, 1991). As Paulo Freire (1970/1993) states, the dominant culture has the power "to name the world": the culture of the marginalized is named "pathological" or "deficient" (West, 1994, Nieto, 1992). Both the dominant culture and cognition are reified in this model.

A medical metaphor is appropriate for the transmissive learning theory because it assumes that learning problems are located in the individual child and treats her with various remedies, depending on the diagnosis. Many of the epistemological assumptions in this model are problematic because they impede the learning for students who are disenfranchised by social class,
culture, non-standard language, or various learning styles. Learning does not transform, nor emancipate them.

Constructivist Learning Theory

Within the constructivist model are various branches and theories: a learner-centered pedagogy; emancipatory pedagogy; a sociocultural perspective; a social influence perspective; and a sociohistorical perspective. Constructivist historical roots go back to John Dewey, Lev Vygotsky, and Jean Piaget. Later, building on these theorists, are the works of James Wertsch, Barbara Rogoff, Leont'ev, and others. Paulo Freire (1970/1993), in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, describes the "banking notion" of education and contrasts it to an emancipatory pedagogy.

According to Vygotsky (1978), children construct meaning through activities embedded in this sociohistorical environment. In fact, much of their lives are acted out in the "Zone of Proximal Development, the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86, cf. Corsaro, p.16).
Reader Response Theory

This research project draws heavily on reader response theory, a constructivist pedagogical perspective that was first introduced by Rosenblatt in 1938 and further developed in 1978. Because Rosenblatt's (1938/1995) reader response theory has pulled art, ethics, and children toward the center of the curriculum it is germane to this research. Before I was privy to reader response theory, my practice of reading was more aligned with the transmissive learning theories of teaching reading (Barnes & Barnes, 1984) or what Freire (1970) calls the "banking notion" of education. As the teacher, I was guided by the instructions found in my teacher's manual for the basal readers. The publishing company was in control and held knowledge which was transmitted to me via the guides and I in turn transmitted that knowledge to my generic students. The method is grounded in behaviorist psychology where a set of facts are presented to a group of passive students. Instead of students "naming the world" (Freire, 1970), it is all named for them by the "experts". Lessons tend to be skill based with focus on vocabulary words, setting, characters, plot and theme. Interaction is mainly between teacher and student, rarely among students.

Rosenblatt (1938/1995), with her book, Literature as Exploration, is largely responsible for the shift in how I now think
about the teaching of literature and how it is shared with students at all levels. Previously, as the teacher, my point of focus was the piece of literature and the reader. Rosenblatt introduced a new focus, the transaction taking place between the reader and the text as readers actively make meaning, a meaning that neither resides in the text nor within the reader but in the transaction. This shift in focus dramatically changed my role. I went from being the authoritative owner of the single "correct" cultural interpretation to one who helps the child examine, share, and deepen their personal response to the work. I, like many other teachers, heed Rosenblatt in an effort to "lead each student to scrutinize his own sense of the literary work in the light of others' opinions" (p. 104).

There are three aspects of Rosenblatt's theory that are particularly central in developing this curriculum of care. First of all, and most importantly, reader response theory moves the focus of the teacher from the reader and the text to the transaction between reader and text. Second, Rosenblatt describes a continuum of writing that goes from the efferent to the aesthetic. She advises teachers to be clear in their purpose for choosing a piece of literature. And third, Rosenblatt promotes the use of literature to develop the concept of cultural pluralism.
If I am going to succeed in the quest of reflective students interacting with texts then I must first be clear with my purpose for reading. Rosenblatt (1938/1995) describes a continuum of purpose. At one end is what she calls "efferent" reading which means literally "to take away". An example at that end of the continuum would be reading the directions for using a fire extinguisher. At the other end is "aesthetic" reading, such as reading poetry. Rosenblatt believes that teachers have a responsibility to not confuse their students about the predominant stance for certain texts. If a reader's purpose is for pleasure and insight about the human experience, then one should read a text that way. For example, teachers may distort Charlotte's Web by making it into a science lesson about spiders or pigs, diminishing children's chance to experience the richness of a story about loyalty and friendship.

After Literature as Exploration was published, Rosenblatt (1938/1995) was committed "to promote an educational process aimed at developing a critically minded, socially productive individuals" (p. 288). She encouraged multiple responses realizing that each is deeply embedded in the children's culturally relevant experiences. The students bring their unique experiences including moral codes learned from family and community to the interpretation. Rosenblatt is "devoted to furthering the concept of
cultural pluralism" (p. 288) by allowing for multiple, culturally embodied responses.

In my classroom, the transactions between students and texts are recursive in nature. The child interprets and reinterprets the literature and their lived experiences, examining them both from new perspectives. By probing for personal responses we can begin to "educate for critical consciousness" (hooks, 1994). Inevitably, the culturally diverse voices come through the transactions with the stories as they merge with personal narratives. Even seemingly mundane classroom events can provide enormous sociocultural and political insight (Gallas, 1994). My goal is that my classrooms becomes a site where the silenced are given voice and visibility, bringing the local and global political struggles to the classroom (Erickson, 1998).

While practicing the reading response theory in my classroom, I must account for the sociopolitical aspects of the group as well. I cannot ignore the roles gender, ability, culture, class, and sexual orientation play as meaning and knowledge are constructed and negotiated among the students, teacher, and texts. As I expand the cannon so that many more students can find themselves in literature I know as Bizzell (1991) argues that merely providing multiculture literature is not enough to raise the students
consciousness about the issues surrounding oppression, exploitation, or alienation. There must be critical dialogue about the issues as well. The students need to be nurtured toward grounded theories of social justice.

According to Purves, Rogers, and Soter, (1995) historically literature was viewed as texts that reflected our world. Then they were regarded as "outpourings of their authors. Then we thought of them as isolated specimens to be examined....Today, texts are seen as situated in an intertextual world, and they have an indeterminacy of meaning dependent upon the varying experiences and natures of the readers" (p. 43). Reader response theory requires that students be given voice (Rosenblatt, Purves, Rogers, and Soter, 1995) and I agree, but not without a cautionary note. First of all, no matter how safe the classroom community feels, there are those who will not feel comfortable voicing their ideas. And is giving voice to all students, including those who feel alienated always wise? When Hynds (1997) did research with a middle school language arts teacher in an urban area she realized that both the psychological constructivism of Piaget or the social constructivism of Vygotsky did not address some of the sociopolitical issues of multiculturism, racism, classism, or sexual orientation. Hynds argues that it can unfairly become the burden of
a few students to voice the thoughts and feelings of the oppressed. And once voiced can we protect the children when they are outside the classroom from emotional or physical harm?

Booth (1988), in *The Company We Keep*, tells us that we people our lives with characters from books. He maintains that we "underestimate the extent to which we take in the values of what we read" (Booth, 1980, p. 291). He suggests, like Rosenblatt (1978, 1995), that teachers build communities where there are multiple interpretations, so that children can experience a range of responses. When alternative responses are shared and discussed, the students move from rote imitation to critical thinking. Booth asserts that questions such as "How can we tell who the good guys are?" need to be asked about the texts. Booth (1988) coined the term "coduction" for the participatory process of ethical reasoning. In order for children to act the best way they can, teachers need to provide opportunities for coduction, for creating new forms of relating to each other, to challenge racist and sexist institutions individually and collectively. If the purpose of education is to transform and not blindly reproduce society, then children "must try out various moral framings of situations" (Johnson, 1993, p. 212) in order to approximate adult behavior and to experiment with their understanding of how a moral world might be constructed.
Children are transformed from passive students being appropriated by society, to animated critics who can evaluate the good and the problematic of their sociomoral environment. Gardner (1992) asserts that at the end of their education children should "understand the world in ways that they couldn't have understood before their education" (p. 27). In this study I want children to do the same with their moral world, understand in new ways.

Classroom practices

Reggio Emilia Schools

The teachers in these early education Italian schools use three interactive components; design, documentation and discourse to create learning environments so "that academic skills are engaged within the context of meaningful problem solving and communication to others....Asking children to design their future work changes the way they talk about their work. Their talk becomes the discourse of prediction and explanation" (p. 240).

Forman and Fyfe (1998) describe a design as "any activity in which children make records of their plans or intended solutions" (p. 241). The design must be readable because it is followed in subsequent activities. It applies to many media not just drawings.
It is more than a representation of an event in time, it is a call to action.

Discourse in Reggio Emilia schools is more than talking (Forman and Fyfe, 1998); it is the language used when the speaker is reflecting and trying to communicate that reflection to others. It is a metalinguistics process (Gee, 1990; Petersen, 1992; Stubbs, 1983).

Documentation is the public display of designs on bulletin board-like panels or stored in portfolios to be later revisited. One purpose of documentation is to explain to the constituents of the school which typically include children, teachers, parents, and the public, "the depth of the children's learning and the educational rationale of activities" (Forman and Fyfe, 1998, p. 241).

All three components, design, discourse, and documentation are central to negotiated learning. As Forman and Fyfe (1998) describe them, the three are reciprocal, recursive, and related. Traffic flows from one to another in all directions. When students and teachers revisit the documentation, discourse is improved. The subsequent discourse is documented which is then used to revise designs.

How I used classroom discourse in my study is further influenced beyond the Reggio Emilia theorists. I also drew on the
work of Petersen (1992) and Freire (1970). First of all, Petersen (1992) makes a distinction between conversation and dialogue. Dialogue is more focused than conversation. People engage in dialogue when trying to make sense of something. Petersen argues that dialogue has two components that are key when constructing meaning: critique and inquiry. Not unlike our Organ Transplant Committee meeting, what will be said is not planned; the dialogue emerges spontaneously from careful listening. Knowledge and meaning are constructed during dialogue.

Both Petersen (1992) and Freire (1970) talk about the need for love and care of others to engage in dialogue. Petersen states that dialogue "has its best chance to flourish when it takes place between people (young and old) who care for one another" (p. 104). In dialogue not only are the person's ideas valued, but the person, too. Freire (1970) teaches that dialogue needs not only love of humanity but also faith in people because with out faith "dialogue is a farce which inevitably degenerates into paternalistic manipulation" (p. 72). The last attribute needed for dialogue is humility. One cannot enter into a dialogue, argues Freire, if one considers oneself to be a member of an elite in-group.

With all of this said, our daily classroom events are strongly influenced by many sociopolitical relationships and norms (Hynds,
1997) in spite of my conscious effort to confront and minimize those constraints that come from the white middle class institution. They are everywhere.

The following is an example of how I use the notions of design, discourse, and documentation from the Reggio Emilia schools in this project. After we read *The Hundred Dresses* (Estes, 1945), the students did tableaux, dramatic frozen scenes in response to the book. By using facial expressions, stance, and placement of characters on the "stage", the students capture emotion and ideas of the literature. As they stood frozen, I took photos of the tableaux. In one particular scene, the children portrayed the pain and humility Wanda felt when she was being ridiculed by her classmates. Later, the tableau is posted as a photograph on the documentation panel. The photos along with other designs get revisited often. Having the design there to reference and reflect upon enriches the discourse about Wanda and her relationship to the other fictional characters including Maddie, the bystander, and Peggy, the perpetrator. The moment of pain, humiliation, and guilt takes on a deeper meaning than merely a way to respond to the text; it becomes a call to action.

Later, in subsequent discussions, the students identify and share times from their lives when they felt like Wanda, or Peggy, or
Maddie. The designs lead them to new levels of discourse about how Wanda should be treated and how all three fictional characters could act to bring into existence a more caring school environment. At the same time, interwoven with the lives of the characters, they are talking about their own lives and how they should or could take care for each other.

In this research project the designs were the many activities we did in response to the three novels, *The 100 Dresses* (Estes, 1945), *Shiloh* (Naylor, 1991), and *Number the Stars* (Lowry, 1989). The artistic responses to the literature were useful as the students interacted with the text and made meaning. At the same time, they became designs in the sense of the Reggio Emilia schools. We would revisit the responses later to stimulate and mediate our thinking about the role of a bystander, hero, victim, and perpetrator. At the time the designs were created, the children did not understand the full extent of how they were to be used later.

As many response artifacts as possible were posted on our documentation panels which slowly were filled with drawings, poetry, photos of tableaux, and the transcriptions of dramas and classroom discourse.
After we finished reading *The 100 Dresses*, and *Shiloh*, I placed the designs from *The 100 Dresses* on a couple of panels and those from *Shiloh* on a couple next to the others. Later, when we finished *Number the Stars*, the same was done for those artifacts. As we began to revisit the designs posted now as documentation, children began to make suggestions for rearranging certain items. They first began to group drawings or photos with poetry with similar sentiment. Or they paired two ripped paper collages together. For example, they moved a rendering of Wanda standing alone, dwarfed against the red brick playground wall with another of Shiloh made small by the huge trees of a woods. The placement
of the documentation was fluid. Some one later suggested moving the ripped paper picture of Shiloh to be grouped with other portraits where he looked alone and vulnerable.

Figure 6: Peter Nielsen vulnerable in the town square

Figure 7: Shiloh vulnerable in the woods
Figure 8: Wanda vulnerable on the playground

Above are three examples that represent the vulnerability of three victims from three novels. The first shows Peter Nielsen from *Number the Stars* about to be shot by a Nazi in Copenhagen during the Nazi Resistance movement there. The second shows Shiloh from the novel *Shiloh*, small and alone and the third shows Wanda from *The Hundred Dresses* at recess alone in front of the brick school. One colored pencil drawing, one ripped paper creation, along with a dramatic representation are all metaphors for the same idea. Each one approaching the concept differently.

Later, at the suggestions of the students, I grouped the designs according to the role they represented in the novels, bystanders, victims, perpetrators, and heroes so that each role had its own section. Because some designs represented more than one role, they were grouped together as representing multiple roles.
The designs stayed in this arrangement until the end of the school year in June.

During the final stage of the project, when we placed characters on the chart, the panels were referenced and used as evidence for the particular placement of a character. Not unlike the children of the Reggio Emilia schools the children seemed to be more interested the ideas and emotions communicated by the art than by the graphic realism represented or aesthetics of their artifacts. Although the art showed various levels of artistic skills, more importantly, it revealed the children's ideas and worked to stimulate reflective discourse. Once in a while during our chart discussions, the children would have me read a poem from the documentation panels that was especially relevant or portrayed an idea well. After I read the poem all the kids would applaud spontaneously.

Although the notions of documentation, design, and discourse were important in this study, our use of them varied from the Reggio Emilia practice in several ways. First of all, the constituents were the students and me. The panels were placed inside our classroom and actually took up the entire width of one wall from floor to ceiling. Parents and other teachers rarely, if ever, came in to look at it. The project would have been made richer had the
constituency been extended to the parents and the school community, but it would have been too much for this research.

The second deviation was the limited printed explanation on the panels. For example, the photos of the tableaux were not captioned with the children's words, however the experience of reading the books were captured in poetry and the dramatizations were transcribed and posted. Nor did I print my commentary as suggested by the Reggio Emilia school of thought. I did not add my commentary because I wanted to keep my influence minimal.

Drama Role Playing

Role-taking experiences have been studied by moral educators (Kohlberg, 1984, Hogan, 1968) because perspective taking is influential in promoting prosocial behaviors like empathy and altruism, and in avoiding aggression. It mediates egocentric behavior because it allows children to imagine how it might feel in various roles. Part of the work done by Hoffman (1983) on inductive discipline includes informing the child about the effects of his or her behavior on the victim and looking at the inappropriate act from the point of view of the other. Because drama involves perspective taking, it promotes cognitive development by prompting ethical conversations and debates.
Nucci (1985) suggests that:

The function of counseling and schooling, then, is to create optimal conditions for the generation and resolution of such cognitive conflict [conflict generated from interactions with the social environment]. The main vehicle for generating such conflict in classrooms ... has been the use of moral discussion groups. (p. 277)

Csikszentmihalyi (1984) asserts that drama is effective when it educates in the original meaning of education, "to lead out". It should lead children out of their everyday world into a new place. To get there they must be able to use their moral imaginations to create a more just world, if only at first in the drama, their drawings, and poetry.

Role playing during drama helps stimulate metacognition. Abelman (1991) talks about the contributions Piaget made in understanding social interaction, role taking, and cognitive abilities: Piaget states that "the ability to role take is necessary to the development of a consciousness of self, for an egocentric mind cannot be conscious of its own processes" (Abelman, 1991, p. 56). During dramatizations of literature, students become an abusive dog owner, a Nazi soldier in Hitler's army, a runaway slave, or part of the courageous resistance movement who confront abuse and
fascism. Within the drama they can explore moral issues from various vantages and imagine how it feels to be in lots of different roles. They "..can imagine the worst--and the best-- of humanity" (Edmiston, 1997).

The child's understanding of the role is a synthesis of various literary texts and narratives, comments from classmates, and their own lived experiences. Through the drama, students begin to realize how multifaceted reality is. It affords them Greene's (1995) experience to be: "attentive to multiplicity, to perspectivism, to the importance of having enough courage to look through my own eyes-- and, yes, speak in my own faulty voice" (p. 16). They become relativists within the context of the drama. What was once a black and white ethical issue gains tones of gray. Egocentric views are expanded as they act from a new role and look at issues of justice through a new lens of hate or compassion, of power or vulnerability. Value is generated, argues Booth (1988), through the multivocal, multifaceted responses. He, like Rosenblatt (1938/1995), wants us to stop looking for the value in texts and learn to promote and articulate multiple ethical values.

Historically, teachers have used literature to influence their students' moral thinking, beginning with studying passages from the Bible in Colonial days. Fables, as a literary experience, have
served a similar purpose. They are intended to teach a moral lesson. "The teaching of literature inevitably involves the conscious or unconscious reinforcement of ethical attitudes" (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. 16).

I have never used overly prescriptive models of teaching. I consider the curriculum guides, just that, guides. I am dedicated to placing children, the arts, and ethics at the core of our classroom work. The centering is primarily accomplished through three major sources of narratives. The narratives from world events, literature, and the children's experiences shared at our daily morning sharing.

Richardson (1997) regards narrative as a way of understanding:

> When people are asked why they do what they do, they provide narrative explanations, not logico-scientific categorical ones. It is the way individuals understand their own lives and best understand the lives of others. Experiences are connected and are evaluated in relation to the larger whole (p. 30).

The children's stories help them to mediate their most primary experiences like birth and death: "we live more or less in stories..." (Booth, 1988, p. 14). It is through these narratives that we make and remake our identities, especially our ethical ones.
In my classroom, a combination of world events, literature, and the children's stories serve as pre-texts. The response activities include conversations, prose, poetry, drama, puppetry, paintings, and drawings. The art activities serve as a means to reframe what the students have begun to put together in their transactions with the oral and printed texts. The children use images, rhythm, and drama to interpret their lives and the lives of others. This enables them to view their experiences from new perspectives and to make connections between texts and subjects. In this recursive process the children find something they need, not as students, but as people (Powell, 1997). They begin to develop a sense of belonging not just in our classroom, "but to a larger whole" (Gablik, 1992).

At the beginning of the year, I introduce the children to *The Hundred Dresses*, a book about Wanda Petronski, a Polish immigrant who is alienated and ridiculed by her classmates. After much discussion about Maddie, a character who can be described as a moral bystander, the classroom conversation turns to their own experiences on the school bus. The children describe situations when they feel as vulnerable and powerless as Maddie or as humiliated as Wanda. They fear, as Maddie does, that if they challenge the bully, they will become the next target of ridicule.
The students brainstorm ways to stop inappropriate behavior. One suggestion is to have their parent come in and talk to the teacher about the situation. So we dramatize a parent teacher conference between Wanda's parent and her teacher. The students get in pairs, A or B. A's become the teacher. All B's are Wanda's parent. In these roles, they enact a conference where Wanda's parent talks to the teacher about the teasing. Next, they change partners and reverse roles. I recorded the dialogues. The transcriptions lose some of the richness of the actual conversations, but do allow a look at the children's understanding:

Mr. Petronski: My Wanda has been telling me that.... well, these two girls named Peggy and Maddie.

Miss Mason: Yes, I know them. They are in my class.

Mr. Petronski: Oh yes, well I don't know if maybe you can tell Peggy and Maddie to stop teasing my Wanda. Wanda has been coming home with a very, very sad face. Has she been crying a lot at school?

Miss Mason: No, I haven't seen any marks of sadness, she just never smiles.

Mr. Petronski: Well, I guess it's just because of Maddie and Peggy. Has Maddie done anything wrong?
Miss Mason: Maddie hasn't been that much trouble. I've seen Peggy tease her a little bit about her name and her shoes. Well, she thinks Wanda's a liar. You know Wanda's been saying she has a hundred dresses in her closet.

Mr. Petronski: A hundred dresses? Well Wanda, she has, yeah she does have a hundred dresses, but they're pictures.

In this short interview, both students portray the power relationship between Wanda's immigrant father and the teacher. The "teacher" is quick to believe that Wanda is a liar, defending Peggy's bulling behavior. The "father" takes a humble stance. His love and concern for his daughter are apparent. Both students are uncertain about Maddie's role in this as a bystander. Booth's (1988) question, "How can we tell who the good guys are?" becomes relevant. Did Maddie do anything wrong? Is knowing an injustice is occurring and not acting out against it wrong? Maddie knows Wanda's dignity is being destroyed, yet rationalizes by saying that they are just having fun.

The drama spawned one of many classroom discussions about moral courage and the role of the bystander. This point becomes a entry for conversations distinguishing individual from institutional racism.
Other dialogues, like the following, focused on problem solving:

Mr. Petronski: Poor Wanda has been teased by a lot of the girls. They are asking her questions about how many dresses she has and shoes. I want them to stop teasing her. Could you go outside and watch the girls at recess?

Miss Mason: Yes, I could ask the other teachers if there is some way we can trade on and off shifts. If we get a teacher outside that probably won't happen anymore. If that would be okay with you.

Mr. Petronski: Yes, that would be fine. They are also teasing her about her name because it's a different name from other people's. It would help a lot if you could do something about that.

Miss Mason: Yes, I could do something. Is there anyone or two girls in particular? Is there anyone who does it the most?

Many things are taking place in this drama, problem solving, perspective taking, imagining, and examining of power relations between teacher and parent, between new immigrant and mainstream culture, and between working and middle class cultures. These represent opportunities to analyze prosocial behaviors like empathy, helping, and compassion. The children can examine and imagine themselves in the many roles surrounding the
injustice: perpetrator, victim, bystander, and hero. The children are able to examine them in the novel, the drama, and in their own lives.

Through this drama and other writings the children begin to problem solve not just for Wanda, but for their own ethical dilemmas (Edmiston, 1997). It is not unusual for a child to say at our morning sharing, "I felt like Maddie on the bus today. Someone was being teased, I was afraid to stop it." Together, as a class, we brainstorm strategies to stop the bullying behaviors. It is easier for the children to talk about issues of power, racism, classism through the literature and the actions of the fictionalized characters. The drama creates a distance that allows children to talk without feeling threatened (O'Neill, 1990). But eventually we need to deal with the issues of power relations, alienation, exclusion, and tolerance in our classroom, in our communities. I use their stories because children's lives, like adults' are "flooded with narratives that raise ethical issues" (Booth, 1988, p. ix). Their artwork provides a place to explore their social worlds, theories, and form ethical identities. Like the children in Dyson's (1988) study:

Their imaginary worlds are increasingly embedded within their ongoing social world. Thus, there were two kinds of talk to attend to--talk involving others in one's own world, and talk involving oneself in others' worlds (p. 6).
As the children move about in the worlds, their stance shifts prompting revisions in their social moral theories.

Current Needs

Today, children spend less time playing with peers and more time in adult controlled settings via organized sports, music, and art activities. When children do have a chance to play in peer situations, they often choose structured electronic games. Both these trends result in fewer opportunities than children of past generations to negotiate rules to games or interact with their friends on issues of justice and fairness. The loss is dramatic. They lack conversations that deepen their understanding of care, justice, and fairness. The greatest loss is the lack of opportunity for children to develop and continually revise their moral identity. As Johnson (1993) said, "we come to be who we are in and through our thoughts and actions, morality is one of our primary forms of self-expression and self-definition" (p. 211).

Teaching needs to foster critical thinking in all areas including issues of moral cognition and behavior. Teachers are looking for help in order to create classroom environments where children develop what Nel Noddings (1984) calls an "ethical self", a person who is in an ongoing relationship between actual and ideal self, one
that has the capacity to give and receive care. Children need moral heroes from fictional and real narratives so that they can know how the exemplars would act in a given situation and be able to use them as models for their behavior. Children need to listen to the range of moral voices and explore how its nature differs in various sociohistorical contexts. The classroom needs an ethical dimension where interpretations of morality are communicated in multiple forms. My job is not to teach morals, but to create conditions where students develop skills to identify and name contradictions so that they can evaluate their choices and not blindly accept a solution to moral dilemmas.
CHAPTER 3

A MESTIZA METHODOLOGY

What I choose to write about, how I choose to write it, and for whom I write it say more about me than sociodemographics, personality inventories, or horoscopes. My sociological work has been the analysis of power inequalities; my activism, the challenge of those inequalities. To do my work, I have consciously chosen to use the liberation narrative. This narrative tells the collective story of the disempowered, not by judging, blaming, or advising them, but by placing their lives within the context of larger social and historical forces and by directing energy toward changing those social structures that perpetuate injustice (p. 19)

Laurel Richardson, 1997

The Research Design

The School Setting

The site for this study was Ravenswood Elementary, the largest of over ten elementary schools in a suburban school system in Central Ohio. Although the community at large is predominately
White-middle class, this elementary school has the largest ratio of children of color, one third. The non-white population is a mix of Asian students, Latinos, African Americans, and Native Americans. Some of the White students have roots in Appalachia. The socioeconomic status of the school spans from families receiving aide to families where both parents are professionals.

The school building is a single story brick building built in 1963 with an east wing addition added in 1969. About half of the classrooms are conventional with four walls and one door. The others have two rooms that open up to each other by means of folding panels. Most of the teachers in these adjoining classrooms open the wall in the afternoons for a joint read aloud and team-teaching of science and social studies.

The staff uses transmissive learning theories with few exceptions. Of the nearly thirty certified teachers, about half will be eligible for retirement within the next five years. The classrooms are arranged with desks in rows facing a blackboard, overhead screen, and teachers poised to lecture students into a deep sleep. Although many may describe themselves as “child centered” I would argue that they are curriculum-centered. As the population of the school changed from predominately White to one third non-white few if no changes have been made in the curriculum to reflect
any notion of this demographic change. Their White middle class
curriculum is not meant to engage but to "paternalistically
manipulate" the students (Freire, 1993). My classroom and another
fourth grade room were connected by a wall of panels that we
opened each afternoon. We were the only two of four fourth grade
classrooms housed in the East Wing addition along with three fifth
and three sixth grade rooms. The East Wing was the most
traditional part of the school; when I began teaching there I felt as
if I had walked into a fifties time warp.

When the fourth through sixth grade teachers were
confronted by the administration about Proficiency scores that were
below the the state average in some cases and in most cases below
the district's high mean score, teachers responded that a lack of
traditional methods being used in the lower grades and the
changing demographics of student population as reasons for the low
scores.

I joined the Ravenswood staff the year I collected data for this
study, 1998-1999 school year. Although I had worked for the
district for eight years, I was just coming back from a year's
sabbatical. One of the first things I did on my arrival at
Ravenswood was negotiate a livable set up for my teammate and
me. I would trade my desire to teach in a self-contained classroom
if she would eliminate the practice of grouping children for math and language arts into "high and low" classes based on a skills assessment. It was decided that I would teach language arts to both classes and she would teach math.

My Students

There were twenty-two students in August when the year started. In October Gary joined us from Georgia. After the New Year in January Billy and Missy moved away. Lisa moved to our school in February. Of the twenty-four students, eight had parents with jobs as professionals and sixteen had parents with blue collar jobs. Culturally, many of the students were from mixed families. Debbie's mother is Native American and step-father is White. Jared and his parents are African Americans, Carson's mother is White and his father is Mexican American, while Melanie's mother is White her father is Filipino American. Nana's mother is White and her father is African American. Stephanie's mother is White and her father is a displaced Palestinian with Jordanian citizenship. Deborah is proud of her Appalachian heritage. The rest of the class had roots in White Eurocentric traditions.

This class of students was unique. I had only one child who was pulled out of the classroom for special services. Jared went to
speech and language therapy twice a week for thirty minutes.
There was not one student in the gifted program, in English as a
Second Language, or received Special Education services for a
learning disability. In terms of the school bureaucracy, it was an
average class.

It is important to know these children not only as a group, but
individually as well.

Bart is in perpetual motion. He is a good student and loves to
read. Both parents have blue collar jobs and his father loves to
read, too. He is a good athlete; baseball is his sport.

Billy unfortunately moved mid-year. He was dramatic and
got into role well with the *Hundred Dresses* dramas. His father had
a working class job and his mother stayed at home and delivered
flyers once a week for ad companies. Her decision to stay home
with Billy and his younger brother took a toll on the family’s fragile
economy, but benefited the children in other ways. They shared
books together daily. Billy was well read and loved stories.

Brenden had trouble keeping his things straight and often
did not turn in his homework. This was all complicated by going
back and forth between his divorced parents’ houses daily. He was
very sweet, nurturing, and loved by all in the class. His parents
were college educated, and he looked like a model for GAP Kids
every day. He struggled with reading and writing. Both parents
blamed the other for not helping him properly.

Carson was remarkable. He was lively, bright, and took care
of anybody who needed him. He had been in the gifted program in
second grade but got out because he had too much homework. He
was the class leader. He lived with his mother and her boyfriend.
His father lived in his sister’s basement and had trouble keeping a
job.
Chase was perhaps the smallest in the class. He is soft spoken, gentle, and a conscientious student. He is the middle of three boys. Both parents are professionals although his mother is a stay at home mom for now. Everything about him is neat, his appearance, his work, his desk.

Crystal lived with her mother and her teenage brother and sister. Her brother was “permanently suspended” from high school and the sister was in trouble often at school. At the fall conference Crystal’s mother had just lost her job and was depressed. Crystal wants to become a singer and was really good. She had a stage presence and like Willy and Lou enjoyed attention.

Debbie moved to Ohio for third grade from Colorado where she lived with her grandparents until they deemed their daughter ready to raise Debbie. Proud of her Native heritage, she shared many things about her background, including her Indian name, Running Brook. She is a gentle and creative child. She would come in from recess with things she had made from nature. One day she made a kite out of a huge leaf, a piece of yarn and many little sticks woven into the leaf. Her academic skills were low. The traditional curriculum was not engaging to her. She became animated for our responses to the three books and the conversations surrounding them.

Deborah’s family has roots in Appalachia. She is a wonderful story teller. The protagonist of most of her stories was her cat, Butterfly. Deborah is huge. At ten she was about five feet two and close to two hundred pounds. She loves sports and plays goalie for her ice hockey team. She is an only child to adoring parents. Her parents were older when they had her making her even more precious to them.

Emma is a devout Christian. Her grandfather is a preacher and she often added a Christian dimension to our work. Her father is a lawyer and her mother babysits at home. Emma loved the babies and aspired to work with babies herself one day. Often she would proudly share baby stories with me.
Gary came to us mid-year from Georgia. He is the youngest of five brothers. His father is a mechanical engineer and his mother, a trained nurse, is a stay at home mom. He struggled both socially and academically. He complained that kids made fun of his accent at recess and called him “Hillbilly.” He got in trouble once on the playground for calling someone a Negro. He said he meant no harm, that’s just what they called them in Georgia. I think the kids thought it was the same epithet as “Nigger”.

Everyone was a little afraid of Hamilton. He was big and strong and known for his short temper. His desk was carefully organized and everything was put away systematically. He rarely shared during our discussions and at times asked for an alternative assignment. He was the only student to do so. His mother was a secretary and his father had a handy man business. In spite of his reputation as a bully, Hamilton has a caring side. He knew his best and only friend Bart wanted to be on the traveling baseball team along with Hamilton, yet his family could not afford the high fees, so Hamilton worked with Bart raking leaves and gave all his money to Bart.

Jared also is the middle child. His father has a computer business and his mother has a clerical job. His older sister and younger brother are much stronger academically than Jared. He was tested for a learning disability during the year, but none was diagnosed. He too is gentle and preferred Chase for a partner when he had a choice.

Jason is diligent about his school work. He took the conversations about the bystander seriously and would get into hot debate at times. He lives with his mother, father and younger sister. He is respected by his peers and rightfully so; he is kind and generous.

Jeannie also moved. She lived with her mother, her Hispanic boyfriend, and their young daughter. Her father was a published author and lived in another state. Jeannie longed to spend more time with him. She did detailed and colorful artwork and wrote well. She was happy to move because she would be near her father.
Oscar lived with his mother and step-father who Oscar described as strict. His father is an auto mechanic and his mother baby sat at home for several babies from the neighborhood. Oscar was funny and the other kids admired his willingness to make the class laugh even if it got him into trouble at times. His academic skills were above grade level. He loved to solve problems, especially social ones. He was a wiry but strong athlete. He spoke non-standard English when we shared orally but could easily switch to standard English for academic work.

Lisa was nearly silent. She came to Ravenswood during the winter. I never met her mother. She rarely left their house. Her father just quit the Army when they moved to Ohio. Lisa and her three sisters and one brother along with their parents lived in the basement of friend’s house. When they moved here, Debbie took Lisa under her wing, but whenever I had recess duty, Lisa would come and walk the playground with me. She was very engaged by our discussions about the books.

Lou was a tiny blue eyed towhead. She was continually trying to help everyone get along, especially the girls in the class. She was mothering in that way but could easily switch to the baby of the classroom. She would often join Willy in his cat dramas and would take the part of a dog. Her father was a long haul truck driver and she missed him when he was gone.

Melanie is worldly. She was born in California and travels back to visit her grandparents. She pays attention to world affairs partly because her father is Filipino American. Her mother is in graduate school and Melanie goes to class with her at times. Her last name is Dorado and she is sure she has some Hispanic heritage. I have tried to convince her that it is from the Spanish colonization of the Philippines.

Nana lives with her mother and younger brother and sister. She has no contact with her father who lives in Tennessee. She brought in a couple of photos of her with her father and her paternal grandparents taken when she was a toddler. She is sad that she has lost contact. Nana is affectionate. She greeted me with
a hug every morning and afternoon. She struggles with the academic aspects school work.

Peter is painfully shy. During our responses to the books he did not talk much but drew some expressive drawings that demonstrated the depth of his understanding. His father is a lawyer and his mother is a teacher. He is a strong student.

Ray was bright. He talked incessantly, something that annoyed many teachers, but he often shared his keen observations. He was taking an herbal remedy to help him focus. He was socially isolated at the beginning of the year; often his low impulse control got him into trouble with his peers. He would insult them verbally and occasionally strike out physically. At mid-year his father insisted he give up the herbal tonic and begin a doctor’s prescription for Adderol for his Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder. By the end of the year he had developed friends and his writing skills increased remarkably. He lived with both his parents.

What strikes me about Sabrina is her capacity for compassion. She is loving, gentle and always asking others, “How would you feel if that happened to you?” In spite of her insights about others, she struggled with school. Her mother and father were divorced and often put the two girls, Sabrina and her younger sister in the middle. Sabrina suffered nightmares about her parents divorce.

Stephanie was admired by all the girls. She had a sense of fashion that appealed to them. She was at the same time a source of sadness for them. She would choose one or two to play with at recess not realizing the others felt left out. Her father immigrated from Jordan along with his brother to go to college in Ohio. They run a business together. Her mother stayed at home with Stephanie and her two younger sisters. Stephanie is Moslem and fasted during Ramadan. She openly explained her beliefs to any one curious why she fasted. Her cousins also attend Ravenswood.

Willy is interesting. He has a vivid imagination and loves being center stage. He called himself a cat and acted like one
whenever he could. He would scamper on all fours behind my big desk if someone fake scared him. He delighted the entire class with his dramatics. The kids playfully introduced him as the classroom pet. His parents were both college educated and worked with computers programs. Although Willy was very creative and bright, it rarely showed in his formal school work.

The Classroom

I was assigned to Ravenswood the day before school started. When I arrived at my new classroom I was pleased with its size and the large windows that looked out onto the amphitheater surrounded by gardens. We had a room with a view and enough space on the stained, institutional green rug reserved for morning sharing. On the north wall we had a bank of seven computers. Since my teammate had not integrated computer technology into her pedagogy, we inherited hers. Near the window sat my overly big blonde wooden desk. The previous teacher had picked it up at a garage sale. I never worked from it, but it was a nice space for project work and display. At the east wall was the blackboard and my working desk was there facing the student desks. Our classroom library was shelved along that wall, too. The student desks were arranged in clusters of five or six. They faced together to facilitate group work. The clusters were fairly balanced by gender, academic skills, culture, leadership. The south wall was the
folding panels. Floor to ceiling bulletin boards covered neutral light gray were perfect for displaying our data. On the west wall was the sink and counter space. Above the counter was a large bulletin board perfect for out bystander/hero, perpetrator victim chart. We could sit in a circle at our morning sharing space and easily change to face the chart.

Time Line for Reading Books.

We began reading *The Hundred Dresses* on October 26, 1998 and finished on November 9, 1998. On November 10 we did the parent teacher conferences drama. We began reading *Shiloh* April 12 and finished on April 30, 1999. On May 10 we did *Shiloh* tableaux. On May 12 we did the *Shiloh* trial dramas in triads. On May 13, 1999 I began reading *Number the Stars* aloud and finished reading on May 24. We did tableaux on May 25.

A Description of the Theoretical Constructs Guiding This Inquiry

I am a teacher who believes that children can develop sophisticated ethical theories, that is theories about how the world should work in terms of what is right and what is wrong. I believe that they can learn to care for others given the opportunities to do
so. The epistemological stance I took to do this research is constructed, dialogic, and emancipatory.

How this Construct Influenced Methodology

In order for children to develop ethical theories and learn to care for others certain conditions need to be in place. First of all, the formation of a classroom community must be nurtured. In describing a model classroom community I draw heavily on the work of Peterson (1992). It is community where the curriculum is connected to students’ lives and supports students taking a critical stance, where knowledge is personal and the children’s knowledge and ways of knowing are valued. A community where not just the cognitive but social and emotional aspects are valued and integrated into the daily life. It is a place where children construct meaning together based on past experiences, memories, and critique. It is a community where children’s behaviors are not controlled by tokens or punishment but a place where they are given opportunities to develop skills for caring. Where the community does not “rely almost completely on external rules because to do so is to become detached from the heart of morality” (Noddings, 1984, p. 24) There is a overriding ethic of care because without it, justice can be hollow (Noddings, 1984). It is a classroom where knowing is not only
expressed verbally but via nonverbals forms as well including visual art and drama.

My Dual Role as a Teacher and as Moral Leader

I intentionally waited until the spring to do most of the data collection in this study with the exception of The Hundred Dresses work. We read the book in the fall and responded to it with tableaux, the parent teacher conferences, and the process drama where the students became Wanda's classmates and I was Miss Mason. It is with this book that I established my role as the moral leader in the classroom. I do not mean to say that I was the only one in that role and by early in the school year, most of the students were exhibiting caring and courageous behavior partly due to our work with The Hundred Dresses, a book about social alienation, social power, and social responsibility.

My role, of course, differed from that of my students, because as the teacher and the only adult, I had significant power. I used that heightened status to create a classroom climate where there was a caring response to the needs of others. All year I nurtured my students' capacity to develop caring relationships for others. I also worked to develop a culture that encouraged a connection to others in the classroom, school, and community. Because once we
begin to feel a connection to others, there follows a feeling of responsibility for the welfare of others, including those outside our cultural, social, and familial circles. Oliner & Oliner (1988, cited in Short, 1999), in their research on rescuers during the Holocaust, argue that it is this attachment to others and a sense of responsibility that motivates rescuers to action. It is not, they say, a lack of concern for self, approval from others, or a sense of achievement. It is our web of relationships that moves us to care and take responsibility for others (Noddings, 1984). The Oliners also found that those bystanders who chose to take action had parents who modeled caring behaviors. They helped friends and family in need. Not only did these parents model this altruistic behavior, they discussed their actions with their children and set high expectations for their children to do the same. As I work to establish a classroom culture where an ethic of care is the norm, I use many of the techniques listed by the Oliners. First of all, I develop caring relationships with my students and their families by keeping in tune with their social, emotional, and academic needs. Next, I arrange the school day so that the students and I may spend time together sharing about our lives, because it is through this daily sharing that we get to know each other and care about each other in everyday life. I suppose social and conversational sharing
goes on in every classroom to some extent, but in my classroom the
time spent is extensive, a guaranteed minimum of twenty minutes
each morning, often more. The kids arrive excited to share their
news. The sharing circle is a place for all to contribute, to belong. It
is not divided into small, often exclusive, social groups. In my role
as moral leader, I bring all to the center, including those who might
remain on the periphery otherwise, knowing they too, have
important insights to offer and a need to belong. During this time, I
too share like my students, from my personal life, from local or
school news, and from a global perspective. As we share, the norm
of care becomes established. Peterson (1992) talks about
establishing such a norm:

where norms are concerned, it's important to keep in mind that we can seldom if ever spell them out in so many words....As difficult as it is to clarify norms used in making judgments, that is exactly what teachers attempt to disclose. Teachers are interested in what makes up the should be, and they do their best to uncover what students use as a basis for their judgment. Growth is possible only with a shifting of norms, and teachers can subject existing norms to criticism (p. 98).

Much of what I do to establish a culture of care is carried out during
morning sharing and in our languages arts time. I work to help my
students understand the values that have guided their thinking. As
we engage in dialogue, our values are made visible and explicit. Once they are visible and voiced, we can begin to critique. As the moral leader in the classroom, it is my job to "help our students to become informed and perceptive critics who examine the norms that guide their thinking. As we share about the larger community and world, we can begin to examine and critique the norms and values reflected in larger institutions, as well.

I begin this process of looking at the values used for the basis of behavior with the novel, *The Hundred Dresses*. I use a piece of literature because the characters are not real and so we have enough distance to look at their culturally situated behavior, values, and judgment without feeling threatened ourselves. But slowly we begin to recognize times when we ourselves have felt the alienation of Wanda, the power of Peggy, and Maddie's guilt or imagined heroism.

Over the years I have noticed that my students come to the realization that their lives are connected to Wanda's, Peggy's and Maddie's through the use of drama. For example, when we enter into a process drama, that is when I become Miss Mason and the students become Wanda's classmates, we can collectively reflect on how we, from our dramatic roles, were complicit in the cruelty inflicted on Wanda. The students have to draw from their own
lived experiences to make meaning about the fictional lives and about their own lives. I ask the students why Wanda has been chosen as the target of ridicule and not Peggy or Maddie. Why is Peggy leading the group and not Maddie or Wanda? My students ask me why Miss Mason or any other teacher is not present.

Both the literature and the drama experiences, the act of becoming another in the middle of a moral dilemma, foster feelings of empathy, that is, the vicarious experience of another's feelings and perceptions. Fostering empathy is critical if I want to move my students to care, to take caring actions. Hoffman (1976) states that other things being equal, the greater a child's capacity for empathy, the less chance there is of that student remaining a passive bystander.

Although I chose to create a culture of care through literature and the arts, one could conceivably examine the issue of right and wrong, moral dilemmas many places in the curriculum. For example, the social studies would be a fruitful site. Pearl Oliner (1988, cited in Short, 1999) argues and I agree that lessons in civics that look at the machinery and workings of government without including lessons on prosocial behaviors that include a concern for others are hollow indeed. In other words, without an ethic of care, and ethic of justice can be heartless. Short (1999) in a similar vein,
suggests that a study of the Holocaust without regard to the role of the bystander and group conformity is missing an important opportunity to develop an antiracist curriculum. When working with *The Hundred Dresses*, we begin to look at how racism and classism looked in the lives of the characters. Soon I take the dialogue to their world. I ask then what oppression looks like on their playground, in their school bus, in their community, around the world, throughout history.

In the many literary and academic contexts, we can examine our role as "innocent" bystander. I ask if Maddie broke any school rules by witnessing her best friend taunt Wanda. Was Wanda doing anything wrong by trying to enter into the circle of friendship led by Peggy? And then how does it feel to be Wanda? How does it feel to be Maddie? Peggy? Noddings (1984) teaches us that "caring involves stepping out of one's personal frame of reference and into the other's" (p. 24). I believe it is important to look at not just how Wanda might feel, but what motivates Peggy to act the way she does. Why would she want to hurt Wanda? The drama allows them to put themselves in another's shoes as it invites them to see the situation from many perspectives. It allows them to feel as another might feel, act as another might act. Once again, Noddings argues that "when we enter a feeling mode we do not attempt to transform
the world, but we allow ourselves to be transformed" (p. 34). She believes that we are moved to care for others by three considerations: how we feel, what we think is expected of us, and what our situational relationship requires of us (Noddings, 1984). I focus my efforts all year on these three components: paying attention to what we feel, not just think, about the world, keeping expectations high for taking care with each other, and building relationships so that we may become more and more inclusive in our circle of care.

In this particular project, I went a step further than I usually do as a teacher. I invited my students to research with me, to theorize about the moral dilemma of the bystander. All the while, I stayed in my role as a moral leader. This means I continued to nurture a culture of care. Doing research always holds the potential of exploitation and the adult child relationship in this project intensified the potential. But by having young children research with me, interpret the documentation panels, I hoped to avoid exploitation. I did not regard my students as "subjects," ever, for I have a deep respect for their ideas and their integrity.
A Project is Conceived

This inquiry has its roots in years of practice. It began to take form in 1988 when I first came to Central Ohio to teach fourth grade. It began with my fascination with the novel *The Hundred Dresses* by Eleanor Estes. This story of Wanda, a young Polish American’s experience of social alienation was not unlike Rose’s or my own. The guilt her classmate, Maddie, felt for not befriending the out casted Wanda was a familiar sentiment, as well. But more importantly, when my fourth graders responded to this book with their own stories of social alienation, guilt, and confusion about what to do as a witness of an injustice, I knew this was a critical book. It is a book we reference all year.

The Pilot Study

I began the pilot study with two purposes. First of all, I hoped to better understand the heart of my students’ sense of morality. I define the term morality simply as knowing the good and doing the good as we relate to each other. Like Piaget I believe, “Apart from our relations to one another, there is no morality”. In spite of the simple definition, however relating to others is complex. Second, knowing that all meaning making involved in research is historically, culturally and politically situated, I sought a location for
my work within the expansive world of research methodology. I
tell the pilot study story as a way to understand the larger inquiry;
it is grounded in the pilot study.

An Overview of the Pilot Study
The Context

I returned to the suburban school where I taught the two
years prior to my year long sabbatical at the university. While
there I taught the same group of students for two years, fourth and
fifth grades. The school population was typical of Midwestern
suburban schools, predominately White middle-class with few
Asian, Black, and Hispanic children. I was the only minority staff
with the exception of an African American night custodian. The
school was just ten years old. From its inception, the staff met
weekly as grade level teams planned their lessons. All three
teachers at each grade level taught the same lessons, at the same
time, on the same day, hung up the same hall displays, and assigned
the same homework. They told me they did this in order to keep
things fair and to minimize problems with parents. I broke with
this tradition right away which caused friction with my fourth
grade teammates. None the less, I returned here to begin my study
because of the caring relationships I had formed with the children
and their families. My students were now split up among three sixth grade classes, so to make scheduling my focus groups easier I decided to work with just five students who were one class. It was a happy reunion. The five students and I were ready to enter back in to our rich discussions of books, our lives, and morality. As they walked from their classroom to the sacred territory of the teachers' lounge, they had a look on their faces similar to those who are playing hooky.

The students and I met at school on six occasions for a total of eight hours. On my first visit, I observed them in their new classroom during a reading activity. Then, a week later, I held the first two focus group interviews. During the meetings we talked about books they considered to be important, ones I should continue to use with future students. We also discussed written and dramatic responses to the books. Next, the five participants and I constructed a questionnaire to give to other twenty students from our fourth and fifth grade class to get their input about certain books and the responses. In addition to this, I collected letters the five students wrote to an author describing how the works of that author had changed their thinking. Then, for our final meeting, the five students interpreted the data.
Before I met with the children to interpret the data I had already analyzed them through the largely positivist and modern lens of the developmental psychologists, Kolhberg and Gilligan. Unsuccessfully, I used their ethic of care and ethic of justice as a theoretical lens. The developmental psychologist frame was not useful for my exploratory qualitative questions partly because its focus was too narrow leaving much of the data unanalyzed. Using the developmentalist frame for my representation of the data, the lived experiences of the children became objectified and categorized in a way that made me uncomfortable. It simplified the very complexity I intended to discover.

The Generic Child Versus the Contextualized Child

Since I was not satisfied with my interpretation, I went back to the students and shared most of raw data: transcriptions of the two focus group interviews; the letters to an author; and the results of the twenty questionnaires. But before we looked at the data, I explained to the children how I wanted them to represent their interpretations. Knowing that data interpretation can be political and artful, I hoped to capture both when I asked them to make a first make collage using magazines and an 8 x 5 note card. When the collage was finished, I asked them to write a haiku, a Japanese
form of poetry using seventeen syllables. Because of its parsimonious format I hoped to distill their interpretations from the collage even further. I wanted to see the structure of their ideas in this minimalist way, similarly to how one might see the structure of a tree with no leaves. The method was not totally unfamiliar to them, they have used collage and haiku in response to many novels, but they were a little puzzled by doing the activity with their own texts.

At this point I realize that I am breaking with long years of tradition by supposing that children are capable of generating valid theories, especially about something as complex as morality. hooks’ (1994) comments about how academic theory building is positioned, perpetuating “an intellectual class hierarchy where the only work deemed truly theoretical is work that is highly abstract, jargonistic, difficult to read, and containing obscure references... [which] seeks to create a gap between theory and practice so as to perpetuate class elitism”(p.64). This group of children was very comfortable interpreting the data, pleased to share their ideas.

What the Children Expressed

The children’s work was free from theoretical frames. They were not looking for “grand theories.” By having them create
knowledge through art, I was able to break from the sociocultural and political hegemony of dominant research with its notion that “the culture of the dominant is universalistic rather than particularistic” (Stanfield, 1994, p. 177). There are but a few models of anti-status quo representations. (Richardson, 1997, Medina, 1999, Blue, 1999). I was inspired by Richardson’s *Louisa May* and her plea to find new representational metaphors. And so the children’s work expressed morality as caring and experiential while embedding it in sociopolitical, familial, and historical contexts. They dealt with issues of power and culture. Their representations offer brilliant synthesis of morality and social justice even.

Rose

Who defines normal?  
Is anybody normal?  
Everyone’s normal!

Pilot study, 1999

Rose includes more words and phrases in her collage than the others. Her experience as a chubby Chinese American, in a middle class suburbia is expressed. Although she is bright and demonstrates many artistic, literary, and musical talents, she has always been on the outside socially. Her choice of words make audible her estranged experience of the White middle class

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hegemony of the school culture. Her choice of words are; "Why, Eat, Them, Light n’ Lively, Treasures, Stolen Childhood, Love, Children, Let, Cool ‘n Easy, Kind, Am, and Family.” An image of a woman’s half face peers out from behind the word “family” and the word “feelings” is partially covered by the phrase “stolen childhood”. For Rose, issues of morality are very personal and political. She understands that whoever defines normal holds much of the power in classrooms. She reveals her understanding of the social construction of normal. In her haiku, she is able to define normal. It encompasses everyone. No one in Rose’s world will be outsider. She refuses to be appropriated.

Julie

People aren’t alike
But diversity is good
Life depends on it.

Pilot study, 1999

Julie’s poem is accompanied by a collage with the words, “Loving, Family, Dreams, and Color”. She shows the smiling faces of an African American mother and son and a family of snowmen that could be used for Christmas decorations. She, because of her Judaism, has been marginalized in public schools, especially at
Christmas time. The plea in her poem is a lesson for all those who try to turn students into dominant culture clones.

Julie has an embodied knowledge of how life does depend on diversity; her grandmother is a Holocaust survivor. She is aware of how different she is from her Christian counterparts. She cannot separate how she views moral behavior from her family history and global politics.

Mary Ann

Mary Ann revealed little in her letter or in the interviews. At most, she agreed with what had been said by her peers. On the other hand her collage is very expressive. She explained that her black and white heart symbolizes the friendship between Pink and Say, two characters from Patricia Polacco's book of the same title, Pink and Say. It tells a story of two boys during the Civil War. The pieces of the broken map that frame the black and white heart create a powerful metaphor for the Civil War with chards of broken boundaries. What Mary Ann did not express in words, is expressed through her art.
Cora

Family and Love  
Are more important than race  
They rule over all.  

Pilot study, 1999

Like Julie, Cora’s Haiku is an echo of her letter to an author.  
She also chose to write to Lois Lowry. She writes;

You made me think about humans in general  
and how we can be so violent towards other  
people for no reason. It is so sad we are so racist  
that we kill people that are different.

Cora’s collage has the word family and a heart shape at the  
center. She explained to me that the ripped paper that surrounds  
the heart and family, represent all the possible ways of being. Cora,
like Rose, Mary Ann, and Julie are conscious of the hegemony that exists in our racialized lives. Her Haiku reinforces this.

Chris

Friendship is like love
We should all share friends and love
Love is like friendship

Pilot study, 1999

Chris's struggles to be socially accepted in school are present in his Haiku. His collage depicts a romanticized vision of friendship and love.

Opening Spaces for the Children's Voices

Stanfield (1994) states that: Only recently have people... been able to speak in different legitimated voices" (p. 180). By having the children interpret the data, the hierarchical relationship between me as researcher and them as subjects was diminished. The students' interpretations were distinct from my read of the data. When I could not, the children were able to break through the traditional male-centric interpretation and dissemination of knowledge. Their art, both poetic and visual, situates them in a
sociopolitical way that my realist tale missed. Their work was rich and relational making mine seem sterile rigid in comparison. Their art is inscribed with a hope to transform. Their interpretations made me aware that social moral issues can never be universal, apolitical, and value free, but instead always contextualized. I realized that to fit their ideas into an a priori frame without their input was to render them apolitical and value neutral. To do so was to violate the children and their ideas. I could not impose onto them my sense of reality without their input, despite my good intentions. This was an important lesson for me in terms of how I conducted the next inquiry.

My work with the five children in the pilot study shaped the next study in several ways. First of all, based on the first focus group meeting, I decided which novels to use. I would begin with *The Hundred Dresses* to honor Rose's experience and my own. Next, partly because of their enthusiasm when talking about the trial we held, I would use *Shiloh*. Finally, because four of the students choose to write to Lois Lowry about how *Number the Stars* changed their thinking, I would use it. I did not initially realize the common theme of bystander, but when I did, I was was pleased that *The Hundred Dresses* was school based dilemma, *Shiloh*, community based, and *Number the Stars* was about a global issue.
I valued the critical role the students played in interpreting the data. Their voices carried with them a personalized rich description of their realities filled with hope, anxieties, doubts, pain, love, and beauty, things that I would never be able to capture. The dialogical in nature of the focus groups helped us share our collective and individual memories with the purpose of coming to a “an awareness of our full humanity, as a condition and as an obligation, as a situation and as a project” (Furter, 1966, cited from Freire, 1970, p. 74). We would use art to deepen our understanding of the three texts and how they relate to our own lives, viewing the same experience from multiple perspectives. The students and I would come together in dialogue, to name their moral world, as Freire (1970) states this:

act of creation and re-creation is not possible if it is not infused with love. Love is at the same time the foundation of dialogue and dialogue itself.... Because love is an act of courage, not of fear, love is commitment to others (p.70).

We would come together like adult researchers to explore the role of the bystander “uncovering key themes and access points to consciousness and recompose them into unsettling critical investigations” (Shor, 1987, p. 115). Hopefully we would come to see our part of our moral world in a new way. The children would
help me see what was once invisible. I would not show them where to look, rather they would show me.

As I was looking through the students work I began putting the characters from the Hundred dresses on a chart I created to help me better understand the data. At the time I did not realize what a central role it would play in the next inquiry.

Ontological Assumptions

The twenty-four students in this study came to be in my class because they live in specific suburban neighborhoods and because they are of a similar age, usually nine or ten when the year began in August. We came together in August, 1998 with our multiple views of the world shaped over time "by social, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender factors and then crystallized (reified) into a series of structures that are now (inappropriately) taken as "real" that is natural and immutable" (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 111). We were joined into a collective of multiple and conflicting social realities, but our differences are important. By coming together and sharing them we get a more complete understanding of the whole. Our realities were changed as we interacted (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Our collective reality was not objective, but subjective.
A Mestiza Epistemology

I am a mestiza, a woman of mixed heritage, part indigenous, part European American. Not unlike the Chicana feminist researchers (Delgado Bernal, 1998, Delgado Gaitan, 1993, Flores Ortiz, 1991, Pardo, 1990, Dillard, 2000), I have learned to straddle cultures, languages, and values. I understand that reality has many faces. Like most feminists of color I also realize that the allocation of power is not dependent on gender alone, but includes race, class, and sexual orientation, as well (Collins, 1986, hooks 1989, Hurtado, 1989). This realization grew in me as I watched my father both suffer from and actively fight against class exploitation, white culture dominance, racism, and the scapegoating of immigrants. My teaching and research are both “grounded in a rich historical legacy of Chicana’s [mestiza] resistance [that] translates into a pursuit of social justice in both research and scholarship” (Hurtado, 1989, p.562). I not only pursue social justice but, as my father taught me, I teach my students to actively name and fight racism, classism, and sexism.

Delgado Bernal (1998) argues that these sociocultural and sociopolitical experiences give Chicana researchers a cultural intuition which “extends ones personal experience to include collective experience and community memory and points to the
importance of participants’ engaging in the analysis of data” (p. 563). This inquiry and the pilot study are both situated within this notion of cultural intuition; they are endeavors that honor all voices and are shaped by collective experience and memory. The data are generated from our experiences, our ways of being, our interpretations of reality and brought to the collective experience through narratives, drama, visual art, and poetry. We use critique and dialogue to give meaning to our experiences and our lives.

I am a mestiza of another sort as well, part elementary school, part university. I am most at home as I live and work among students and families, energized and inspired. I feel graceful and competent after years of practice. I have learned to adeptly navigate around or ignore the pressures and limitations the bureaucracy imposes so that I can work with the students and their families, not for the institution. At the same time I mix in the academic world through texts, committees, and classes. As I speak and write in the new language, I feel like young woman learning to walk in high heels, awkward and self conscious. Yet at the same time, the dialogue I encounter there intoxicates and seduces me.

So as you read this work, you may notice a schizophrenia, part indigenous, part teacher, part academic, part European American. Our findings surrounding the role of the bystander were not
something objectively found, but were constructed as we responded to the literature, interacted, and explored together.

The Researching Teacher

The role of researching teacher has some unique features. Strauss and Corbin (1990) in describing their construct "theoretical sensitivity" argue that researchers come to the inquiry having various "degrees of sensitivity" dependent on experiences relevant to the data. They list four factors contributing to the sensitivity: personal experience; existing literature; professional experience; and analytical research process. Only two are relevant to this inquiry, "personal experience and professional experience".

When they speak of "personal experience," Strauss and Corbin refer to the life experiences the researcher brings with her that influence the analysis of the data and give her insight that another researcher may not have. For example, my experience of marginalization in school by way of my biculturalism helps me look at the data through that experiential lens.

Similarly, "professional experience" affords the researcher an insider's perspective. For example, my years of experience in the classroom, giving voice to children, responding to the three novels, and creating dialogue, help me gain deeper insights than someone
who has not had the same professional experience with children. This classroom experience will afford me a different and richer reading of the same data by someone less experienced. As a teacher doing research I am deeply committed to respecting the multiple layers of intention needed while working with children.

The students also come to the inquiry with "personal experience". They are insiders in terms of classroom cultures after four or more years in schools. In order for them to gain "professional experience", we work through cycles of critique (Peterson, 1992). (This approach of teaching through a cycle of critique is more fully described in Chapter 2.) In fact, I purposely waited until near the end of the school year to do the major work with children in this inquiry for several reasons. First of all, I wanted the class to gel as a learning community, to know and respect each other, and to develop a genuine care for each other and each other's ideas. Second, I wanted them to become more fluent with using critique and dialogue to construct meaning.

Teacher Research

Simply defined, teacher research is a "systematic and intentional inquiry carried out by teachers" (Lyle & Cochran-Smith, 1993, p.1154). It has its roots in action research where the focus is
on one’s practice. It could be teachers, police, or nurses, all using reflection and dialogue to explore the underlying theories that support their work (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1982). This inquiry grows out of years of careful listening to students, dialogue, and reflection. Its purpose is to explore with children the complex moral dilemma of the bystander and in doing so develop a curriculum based on care.

Action Research as Critical Research

The transmissive pedagogy that is present in most classrooms does not honor all cultures but assumes the position of white middle class dominance. This pedagogy does not nurture critical thinkers nor has it been successful in teaching all students. By maintaining the status quo it perpetuates the imbalances in power that is has helped to produce. Those left behind are primarily children of color and children of poverty (Nieto, 1992, Freire, 1970, Delpit, 1995, Ladson-Billings, 1994). Therefore, teacher research should challenge the politically and historically embedded traditions that manifest themselves in the curriculum and pedagogy because they continue to reproduce and not transform.
Participatory Action Research

Participatory Action Research (PAR) is a branch of teacher research that aims to establish liberating dialogues with those who are typically voiceless. It is therefore concerned with issues of power and powerlessness (Reason, 1994). The knowledge and experiences of oppressed people, in this case elementary school children, is valued and honored. Because of this PAR has two objectives. First of all, through dialogue, it tries to produce knowledge that will benefit the group of people involved in the research. Second, it works toward what Freire (1970) refers to as conscientization or consciousness-raising through collective reflection and inquiry. The results are a deeper understanding of the situation which are produced primarily through dialogue.

The dialogical nature of this paradigm is important because it attempts to replace the subject-object relationship found in more traditional scientific inquiry. In honoring all of the children through dialogue, the relationship of subject-object is transformed into subject-subject.

Data in this paradigm includes verbal recordings of experiences and enthusiastically "embraces a whole range of expressive forms, including song, dance, and theater....This expressive activity in PAR not only enriches the inquiry, but
provides a means through which ordinary people may experience and validate the data being used" (Reason, 1994).

Critiques of participatory research (Stanfield, 1994) agree that PAR is useful in so far as it works to empower groups of people, but "rarely do researchers share career rewards with 'subjects' of color, such as coauthorships and access to authoritative credentializing processes" (p. 176). This is a legitimate critique. I did reward the children who worked with me. The class received colored pens for drawing and we had a pizza party and watched the movie version of *Shiloh* to celebrate the end of the inquiry. I rewarded the children in the pilot study with food as we worked in our small group. These seems small in return for what they have given me.

**Action Research as Autobiographical**

Smith (1994) argues "that a more powerful way of thinking about action research is to construe the activity as 'really' a piece of teacher autobiography. And if this be true, then action research should include more personal context, larger chunks of autobiography, in their research statements" (p. 301). This action research project is rooted in my own story. It begins with my miseducation as a child in the 1950's and 60's in northwest Ohio.
My family lived in Perrysburg, a small town populated with farmers, merchants, blue collar workers, executives, and the settled Mexican American migrant workers who picked tomatoes and cucumbers in the hot, humid fields. I went to school with them all.

We learned to read with the contrived, sterile, stories of *Dick and Jane* that valorized the crisp white lives in the suburbs. Theirs was the ideal family. I doubted they ate beans and rice or had relatives who lived in their basement. My personal stories had no place in school so they receded into the dark recesses of daydreams of life outside the classroom.

Much of what went on in schools was just as numbing and alienating as *Dick and Jane*. I learned remote lessons in a mechanical way about a world that I did not recognize as my own. My experience in school was not unlike Adrienne Rich’s description (As cited in Rosaldo, 1989):

> When someone with the authority of a teacher, say, describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and saw nothing (p. ix).

When I looked, I saw bits and pieces, a distorted face, many of us did. By trying to establish and share my identity, I was constantly embattled in school. Teachers knew me as part of the dominant
culture. I went to the same school my mother, grandmother, and
great-grandmother attended. I was part of that culture, but I was
more.

I also belonged to my father's family, a hybrid typical of
Ecuador, a mixture of indigenous and Spanish culture. My father
has my grandmother's Indian face and my grandfather's political
passion to empower all citizens. Both have caused him many
problems in our little town. He spent much of his legal career
counseling the Spanish speaking Mexican Americans and only
smiled when they proudly told him that they had enough money to
hire a "real" lawyer. He spent his political career fighting for low
income housing for senior citizens, running water, street lights, and
a library for the low income neighborhood, ironically called
Perrysburg Heights.

When the "Mexicans" (as they were referred to, even if they
were born in Perrysburg) were ostracized in school, I suffered. I
knew, even if no one else did, that they were part of who I was. By
not being more assertive in defending them, I felt guilty for
betraying them and my father and ashamed of my fears. I wanted
teachers to know I was part of who the "Mexicans" were, but I
dreaded the humiliation.
The classroom I yearned for was one “where the students were not alienated from their homes, their communities, and their cultures” (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 27). My teachers with their superiority, competence, and their adult understandings thought they were doing me a favor by accepting me as White. Unlike the “Mexicans,” I did not force them, not even momentarily, to examine their practice, their curriculum, or institution. I mastered the lessons. I did not threaten their “hegemonic desire for control” (van Maanen, 1984, p. 164). I obeyed the rules. They did not recognize me as an outsider, I spoke in standard English, the “language of conquest and domination” (hooks, 1994) and I was not too dark, but there was rarely a place for me or anyone to express our culture except in terms of failure or success.

In school, I learned that by blending in, I could survive, but survival was not always easy with my family. My father was publicly elated when Castro and his communist guerrillas overthrew Batista’s brutal regime. For me, it was an embarrassment. I suffered nightmares about Castro making an extended visit like many of my father’s family had done. My younger sister refused to stand up for the Star Spangled Banner at school functions exposing my cover. She understood better than I that to be White was at the expense of my father and his culture. But I was ashamed that my
father and my younger sister were not pursuing my goal to assimilate. My own cowardice filled me with shame.

My Methodology

My research methodology is rooted in autobiography, my epistemology, my beliefs about children and their ability to theorize, and my assumptions about fluid nature of reality. As a teacher and as a researcher I have worked continually to “make sense of and interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994 p. 2). I use qualitative research because it is a “multi method in focus, involving an interpretive, natural approach to its subject matter” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994 p. 2). This method enabled us to explore the morally complex role of the bystander. I was open to whatever unfolded in this naturalistic research (Patton, 1990).

Data Sources

There are two types of full group audio recordings. One set is of our morning sharing “talk story” session and the other is our dialogical discussions where moral theories were generated. Other audio recording are the tapes of the dramatizations. They are, Wanda’s parent teacher conferences, the Shiloh trial, the Shiloh

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tableaux, and a the hero, perpetrator, hero, victim journal readings. There are photographs of the tableaux for all three books. There is poetry, mainly haiku for all three books. For visual arts there are watercolors, chalk pencil, crayon and colored pens drawings. Beginning in May all the data was generated I hung it up on the entire south wall. It was covered with transcriptions of the dramas, the dialogue and morning sharing meetings. It had all the poetry, letters to Marty and Wanda, photos of the dramas, and visual arts. At first it was arranged by book title or by genre. For example, all the morning sharing was together, etc. As we worked, the children would rearrange it. At times they would decide a certain poem should be with a certain drawing or they would put pictures of Wanda and Shiloh together because they were both victims. Eventually the panels were rearranged. All the artwork, photos, and poetry moved from being arranged by book title to five new categories. They were arranged eventually under signs they asked me to make, victim, hero, perpetrator, bystander, and there was a place for multiple categories at the far right side of the wall.

Building a Caring Community

As we worked on this year long project, it was essential that every morning for thirty to forty-five minutes we sit face-to-face,
on the floor, in a circle, to share our lives through stories. The activity that takes place during our morning sharing is what Peterson (1993) calls "talk story". The intent is not necessarily to produce ideas, but

to experience the presence of one another, to listen and enter into the ordinary and extraordinary story worlds that are made. We come to know the other person, child or adult, through the stories he or she shares with us. There is a coming together when people in a learning community intertwine the events happening in their lives through story (p. 49).

In dialogue, on the other hand, the talk is directed to a specific problem or topic, usually where an uncertainty exists. Through dialogue we unite critique and inquiry with a purposeful focus intended to understand, disclose, and construct meaning Peterson's (1992). In order to do research with children, both "talk story" and dialogue are needed. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of developing the kind of caring, meaningful relationships that form from "story talk". During the inquiry process intellectual and personal conflict is bound to occur but if the caring relationships are in place then "one heeds, confirms, and affirms, the other first of all "as an existing other" (Buber, 1969, p. 27) and then the conflict is not apt to be personal.
The methodology and data collection in this project influenced by both my Hispanic cultural heritage and my experiences as a teacher. Through both, I have come to value the understandings and the relationship that come about from continued dialogue. The influence both the personal and professional experiences had on my inquiry became apparent as I worked on the pilot study.

Ethical Issues

In chapter one I have listed many ways in which children are marginalized in our society; in the field of research we have not fared much better. Just as a imposed standard curriculum views children as generic, much of research commits the same error. Children are reduced to measurable entities, are made to fit into universal laws and grand theories. Their “human sense” is ignored. (Donaldson, 1978). The children become little more than objects to measure outcomes (Graue & Walsh, 1998). As generic children they are denied the expression of their gendered, relational, cultured, lives.

Interpreting the lives of others is perilous in any research paradigm, but the practice of researching children presents unique and potentially damaging consequences. The potential to exploit subjects is present in any research but it becomes more salient
when one considers the disparity of power that exists between children and adults. Morrow and Richard (1996) contend that the imbalance of power is the biggest ethical issue when children are included in the inquiry. To redress the imbalance, they argue, children must be able to enter the research on their own terms. In Morrow and Richard’s research, children are regarded “as social actors with their own distinctive abilities to understand and explain their world” (p. 338).

When we include children in the inquiry we must not forget Freire’s warning that good intentions do not immunize us from dehumanization. Hood, Kelley, and Mayall (1996) contend that although the developmental psychologists have contributed to the understanding of how children develop, they at the same time value children more for who they will become as adults than who they are as children. The children are interpreted from an adult standard. In this positivist paradigm, the lives of children are measured against adult standards rather than giving value to children’s knowledge and experience during their childhood. Other research positions children as a threat to adults, as someone to be controlled.

If one regards children as a social group as Mayall, Kelley and Hood (1996) propose, then research should not be on children but
with and for them. Doing research with children they argue, “requires listening attentively to their agendas, and participating with them in the research process. Researchers should also be for children; in the end the justification for the research - for collecting the data is to help make children heard” (p. 119). We must begin our inquiry believing that children have valuable, relevant theories, experiences, points of view, and strategies (Waksler, 1991).

Including children in research requires giving them control over the process and using methods which are in sync with how children relate in their world (Thomas & O’Kane, 1998). The process must complement how children make meaning of their world naturally. We need to be able to capture and use the many forms they use to communicate. (Thomas & O’Kane, 1998)

This inquiry is situated within an epistemology which values the knowledge of children in their childhood. It is built on a foundation of care, love, and respect for children’s ways of knowing, relating, and sharing. One way my respect for children is demonstrated in the creation of time and space for the students to engage in a dialogue about issues that matter to them, allowing children to articulate their views, to clarify meaning, and to interpret the data, and by offering a variety of art forms to communicate meaning.
CHAPTER 4
GOING FROM THREE NOVELS TO SEVEN THEORIES

The one condition necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men [people] do nothing.
Edmond Burke

Morality often deals with the conflict experienced between individual and communal needs (Piaget, 1965, Kohlberg, 1969, 1984, Gilligan, 1982). This tension is exemplified in the role of the bystander in real and fictionalized events involving moral consequences. Should one speak out against an injustice at a risk to one’s well being? How the children perceived this role of bystander and its relationship to power became a critical point as we looked at the other roles, the data that had been generated and displayed. In order to explore and appreciate the complexities of this moral dilemma with my students, I use various modes of art including literature and drama along with paintings, poetry, and drawings. Through the artistic activities, the students begin to view moral
dilemmas from multiple perspectives. The art helps to deepen understanding and release the imagination (Greene, 1995) to imagine a better, more humane, and just ways of being. Along with the art activities, my students and I have on going reflection through dialogue about literature, our daily lives, and current events. We began our year long quest to better understand the complex dilemma of the bystander and the bystander’s relationship to victims, perpetrators, and heroes in various literary contexts at the beginning of the 1998-1999 school year with the book *The Hundred Dresses* (Estes, 1944).

The Introduction of *The Hundred Dresses*

Although *The Hundred Dresses* by Eleanor Estes was first published in 1944 and is likely to be considered didactic in comparison to current literary standards, the cruelty of children toward each other and the uncertain role of the bystander resonates with every class I have shared it with for the past ten years.

Every September I present my class with *The Hundred Dresses* and September, 1998 was no different. I always begin with this book because it helps to define a moral tone for the year. It is referenced all year long by me and the students. As Booth (1988) says, “We people our lives with characters from books.” This
is more true for this book than for any others I have shared with my students. Children come in from recess saying, “I felt just like Wanda today.” Or, “Ms. Córdova, we have some Peggys in here and a Wanda. We need to talk about it.”

The story opens with Peggy, the most popular girl in school, leading a group of girls in taunting a poor, motherless Polish immigrant, Wanda, who claims to have a hundred dresses in spite of wearing the same faded blue dress day after day. Maddie, poor herself, does not tell her best friend Peggy to stop “the dresses game” even though she feels its cruelty. She fears she will become the girls’ next target. Wanda’s attempt to gain acceptance in the social group is a failure until her exquisite drawings of hundred dresses win first place in an art contest. But before the winners of the drawing contest are announced, Wanda and her family move away because of the social alienation they experience. Maddie is haunted by her own cowardice. She had sensed all along the the dresses game was cruel, but had stood and watched in silence. She states that her inaction “was just as bad as what Peggy had done. Worse, she was a coward. At least Peggy hadn’t considered they were being mean, but she Maddie, had thought they were doing wrong” (Estes, 1944, p. 49).
Not unlike many adults, the fourth graders are unsure of Maddie’s culpability in the role of bystander. During an improvised dramatization of a parent teacher conference their uncertainty is revealed. In this drama, the students were paired and assigned the part of either Miss Mason, Wanda’s teacher, or Mr. Petronski, Wanda’s father, in each coupling. The pretext for the drama was that Mr. Petronski scheduled a conference to discuss “the 100 dresses game.” The children themselves thought that that was what their parents would do, have a conference with the teacher.

Figure 10: Mr. Petronski’s parent teacher conference


Miss Mason: Mr. Petronski, did Wanda say anything about the people that were making fun of her?
Mr. Petronski: She said something about Peggy and um I think she said her friend Maddie wouldn't say anything but she just stood there.

Miss Mason: Um, Maddie, she's a very shy girl. She doesn't talk that much. I think that Maddie might be standing around because she's afraid of what Peggy will do to her.

Mr. Petronski: I'm more mad at Peggy

Miss Mason: Yeah, me too.

Miss Mason: Well, I'm very disappointed in Peggy and Maddie. (Pause) Well, Maddie didn't want to get hurt by Peggy and I know Peggy. She'd do that kind of stuff. Peggy is a very attitudinish girl.

From the dramatization of a conference November 11, 1998

Mr. Petronski: My daughter is coming home crying everyday. She says kids are picking on her.

Miss Mason: Oh, (almost whispered.) I'm sorry. I did not know about it. Um, I'm terribly sorry. Did she give you any specific names?

Mr. Petronski: Yes, Maddie and Peggy.

Miss Mason: Okay, let me check.

Mr. Petronski: But she said Maddie wasn't doing much. Peggy was making all the fun with the other girls around her.

Miss Mason: Yes, Peggy, she'd usually probably would be that type of person. And Maddie, you know, quiet. Hmmhmm. (Miss Mason looks through her “grade book.”) Yeeeeesss, oh yes, Peggy is a trouble maker.
In both conferences Miss Mason and Mr. Petronski are unwilling to indict Maddie. Instead, they place the blame the “attitudinish” Peggy.

Near the end of the book, Maddie and Peggy write a friendly letter to Wanda telling her she has won the drawing contest. Following this section we had a class discussion on whether it would have been better for Maddie and Peggy to send a letter of apology rather than a friendly letter. There is more evidence of the students uncertainty of Maddie’s responsibility. But near the end of the discussion Ray begins to realize that Maddie was wrong in not speaking out against the hurt towards Wanda.

Nana: I have two things. My first one is I think like they should both write it. One does half of a friendly letter and one does half of an apology letter because they both did something to.... but Peggy, she did most of it. And Maddie, she just stands there and stuff. So they both should write something.

Billy: I think that they should both do the letter and like Peggy should do the apology half and Maddie should do the friendly half like say how is your new school doing and stuff.

Oscar: I agree with Billy. I think that um Peggy should write the apology letter because she was the one who hurt and Maddie should write the friendly letter because she was standing by doing nothing and she doesn’t really have to apologize for nothing.

Ray: Um, if I was Wanda I would really want Peggy to write a letter too because um I mean she did most of the hurt and Maddie also did something. She was just standing there which was wrong. Maddie was just standing there watching Peggy make fun of Wanda and I think that was wrong. She still should have done something.
Although it is mentioned by the author that Maddie may jeopardize her friendship with Peggy if she confronts her friend about her cruel treatment of Wanda, the fourth graders only mention this briefly. They are more focused on the power Peggy has over both Maddie and Wanda and if they were Maddie they would fear the cruelty Peggy could inflict on Maddie if she were no longer Peggy’s friend. The characters from *The Hundred Dresses* were referenced during morning sharing, much later in the school year, when we were discussing the tragedy at Columbine. The children are more afraid of being hurt by Peggy than betraying a friendship.

Carson: About the Wanda and Maddie thing, well Maddie was afraid that if she were to do something she was afraid she might end up like Wanda and get made fun of herself.

Nana: Well Wanda, she got made fun of. She thought that her and Peggy and Maddie like Peggy she was making fun of Wanda and then like Maddie she thought that she just couldn't say anything about Peggy making fun of Wanda. So she was sort of scared or something. She didn’t want to tell Peggy to stop.

Teacher: Why was she afraid to tell Peggy?

Debbie: Because she thought that she was going to get picked on and that Peggy wouldn’t be her best friend anymore.

Oscar: And she was probably would end up like Wanda and get made fun if, if she stood up for what she believed in.
Our work with *The Hundred Dresses* introduced the students to the concept of the four roles, bystander, victim, perpetrator and hero early in the year. I did not however, formally introduce the terms yet, but the children did understand that Peggy hurt Wanda while Maddie stood by and watched.

**The *Introduction* of *Shiloh***

In the spring we read *Shiloh*, by Phyllis Naylor, a book about an eleven year old protagonist named Marty who defends a dog in a case of animal abuse. One day a beagle follows Marty home and like all other children his age he asks his parents if he can keep the dog. But his father, a rural mail carrier in Friendly, West Virginia, recognizes the dog as Judd Traver’s, so after dinner he and Marty drive the dog over to Judd’s. When they turn Shiloh over, much to Marty’s horror, Judd kicks the dog hard in the gut for running away. So, the next time Shiloh appears half starved and obviously mistreated, Marty cannot betray the dog and take him back to Judd. Instead, he builds Shiloh a shelter and hides him there until he can figure out a way to own the dog. In order to keep Shiloh a secret Marty has to lie to his family and friends and, in the end, blackmail Judd Travers so that Judd will sell him the dog.
Previous to reading and discussing *Shiloh* in depth, most of the class views lying in black and white terms. Lying is wrong; honesty is good. With this book however, the grays begin to come out. While reading the book, the students wrote letters to Marty giving him advice about Shiloh. These letters document some of their thoughts about lying. Note the conflict within the advice the students give Marty.

**Dear Marty,**

I think you should work at a store. Then once you have enough money you could buy Shiloh. And also you should stop lying to people. But you can lie if it's to save something, but it's not a good idea to lie just to save yourself. Well, that's all the advice I got.

Love,

Chase

**Dear Marty,**

Sorry about what happened to Shiloh. You should not have told all those lies about Shiloh. Like when Judd Travers asked you if you'd seen Shiloh in the yard and you said no. You should say a prayer to God saying sorry for lying to Judd and your sister and all the other people you lied to. You should tell your mom that you lied to a lot of people, then do something nice for her.

Brenden

**Dear Marty,**

You shouldn't have told all those lies in the first place and you wouldn't be in this mess and you would feel a lot better inside you. But since it's for one of God's creatures I would do the same thing. And also you should not have told the store man that your mom
was sick. That was a huge lie. You should go back to the store man and tell him the truth and everything will be back to normal.

From,
Nana

These letters were written April 29, 1999. Soon after this date, the conversations about lying took a serious turn. With Shiloh, many of the children were willing to forgive Marty because the lies were told in order to save a dog. In our morning sharing on May 19 the issue of truth and lies was in the context of the Columbine shooting. Now the question was, is it right to lie to save your own life?

Carson: You'd have to be really brave if someone asked you if you believed in God and you knew that if you said yes you would die. And then say yes anyway.

For Emma, Melanie, and Debbie it was as much about standing up for what you believe as telling the truth.

Emma: About the gun shooting thing. If they put a gun to my head I'd probably say yes.

Teacher: If they asked you if you....

Emma: Do I believe in God.

Teacher: And why would you say yes?

Emma: Because you have to stand up for what you believe.
Melanie: I think that a consequence of you saying no [you don’t believe in God] is having that feeling that you’ve done wrong.
Teacher: And what is that feeling?

Melanie: I don't know but feels like kinda it's like a lie. Like you're a coward.

Debbie: I think it was kind of wrong that they [the kids at Columbine] said they didn't believe in God and stuff because like all these innocent people are saying they do and they are all dying. They are saving their lives but kind of lying to people. And all the other innocent people are standing up for what they believe in. And all these innocent people are dying. And they shouldn't. They asked them and you should stand up for what you believe in like all the other innocent people did.

Stephanie and Willy, like Nana in her letter to Marty, put the sanctity of life above honesty. Willy is talking about the Columbine tragedy when some athletes took off their baseball caps which revealed their athlete status. By taking off their hats, some students were able to avoid getting shot.

Willy: I think taking off your hat was a good thing because other athletes might see you and do the same thing.

Teacher: And save their lives?

Willy: Yeah, so it's good. Life is precious. God gave you life.

Stephanie: I think the shooters would go to hell and that the person that they have killed would probably go to heaven because even though they lied and said no that they didn't believe in God, they should still go in heaven because if they died they will probably still go to heaven because if they lied to save their life they should still just go to heaven.

Teacher: In Number the Stars when the Nazis came, was Annemarie wrong to take the star of David necklace off her friend Ellen's neck? Was that the right thing to do to save her friend's life?
Stephanie: I think that was a great idea to take off the necklace because she would have been dead right there if she had that necklace on. Her parents, that girl's parents would be really, really mad at the other girl's parents for not taking off the necklace and thinking good of saving her life.

In not telling the truth you betray your fellow humans. Deborah distinguishes between lying to a perpetrator and lying to someone you love.

Deborah: - I'm just saying like if a Nazi comes in and asks if I believe in God, I would say no cause well .... I don't know. Lying to the Nazis is different than lying to your family.

Some children make distinctions between lying about being an athlete and believing in God.

Melanie: If you say you don't believe in God, that's really bad. That will really offend God and to say you're not an athlete, that's a lie.

Ryan - If you lie to God you are betraying him because he like made the earth. And if you're just like an athlete you lie just to save your own life.

Chase- Lying about not believing in God [is worse] because it hurts more people.

Peter - Saying that you don't believe in God is bad because God is all you believe in all the time and being an athlete is just one part of you.
The gray areas surrounding lying began to emerge with the reading of *Shiloh*, but were even more apparent during the sharing about Columbine.

After finishing the book we responded to *Shiloh* with visual arts, tableaux, and poetry. The most engaging response for the children was a drama in the form of a trial. There were 3 characters, Judd, the abusive dog owner, Marty, the eleven-year old protagonist and a judge who would decide the fate of Shiloh. After hearing arguments from both sides, the judge would give the dog to either Marty or Judd.

In the end, one person played Marty, one Judd Travers and one the judge. The rest of the class became a courtroom audience. After hearing two impassioned sides of the case, the judge after much deliberation, decided to give the dog to Judd Travers because he paid for it. Judd was the rightful owner. I was in the role of a courtroom reporter and after the judges decision, went from student to student asking for their reaction. Most agreed that Shiloh should indeed go to Judd for the same reason. Finally, I came to Lisa, a new student with relatively low social status. She said, “I disagree. I think Shiloh should go to Marty. This trial isn’t about money. It’s about love.” Lisa was able to sway many opinions with her statement. This situation is not unlike the heart transplant
situation described in chapter two that happened a few years before in a different school. The collective nature of this work is significant. One voice, one perspective can influence the others. If it had not been shared publicly, the children would not have been privy to these new compassionate ideas.

![Marty, the happy hero](image)

Figure 11: Marty, the happy hero

This chalk on construction paper shows Marty, the happy hero with Shiloh.

**Introduction of *Number the Stars***

I began reading *Number the Stars* as a read a loud after lunch the first week of May. It is a book that tells of the courage and determination of the Danish resistance as the Danes work to save
the Jews at the same time the Nazis are determined to annihilate them. The story is told through the friendship of two families, the Johansens and their Jewish neighbors, the Rosens. The Rosens learn through their synagogue that the Nazis will soon begin to purge the capital city of Copenhagen of its Jewish population. Mr. And Mrs. Rosen leave their daughter Ellen with their friends to pass as the Johansen’s daughter Lise until they can arrange a safe passage to Sweden. Annemarie, Ellen’s best friend, plays a critical role in helping the Rosens escape the Nazi genocide.

We did fewer response activities for *Number the Stars*, some paintings and tableaux, because we lacked time. None the less, the students were captivated by the story.

![Figure 12: A yellow ray of hope](image)

This picture shows the darkness the victim feels with a ray of yellow hope.
Introduction of the Chart

On May 12, 1999 when *The Hundred Dresses* and *Shiloh* were finished and we were in the middle of *Number the Stars*, I introduced the students to the chart I developed as part of an assignment for my pilot study. At that time I did not realize the central role it would take in this inquiry.

![Diagram](image)

Figure 13: The perpetrator, victim, bystander, hero chart
Initially, I wanted the students place the characters from the three novels on the chart twice. The first placement would represent the characters actual behavior based on their actions and the second placement, their ideal behavior, based on their regrets. For example, Maddie did not take action in behalf of Wanda, but was forever sorry she did not. So her actual placement would be closer to bystander and her ideal placement would be by hero. Marty was a different case. His actual behavior was heroic for ending Shiloh's abuse, but he regretted lying to his family and friends and blackmailing Judd to do so. I predicted that the discussions would center around what kept bystanders like Maddie
and Marty’s family from taking action and what propelled Marty, Annemarie, and her family into heroic action. This was not the case.

In preparation for this activity I covered a large bulletin board with yellow paper and place the four roles on it. Next, I made two name cards for the major characters from the three books.

We began by placing Marty on the chart on May 12, 1999. Naively, I predicted the class would place Marty by hero for standing up to Judd, his parents, and the laws to save Shiloh from further abuse. And then place Maddie close to bystander and Wanda by victim, and so on. And so when we started, Oscar did place Marty as a hero and began our definition of hero.

Oscar: I don't really think Marty is really a bystander because when he seen Judd kicking Shiloh he reacts. He tries to do something about it.

Teacher: What is a hero?

Carson: Like someone like Marty because he saved Shiloh from getting kicked around.

The idea of Marty as a pure hero did not last long however. Right away the complexities that surrounded Marty’s behavior began to emerge. Brenden, Willy, and Stephanie started to challenge Marty’s status as hero.

Brenden: He [Marty] needs to move over there. (Brenden was pointing to the middle, away from hero, toward bystander).
Willy: Yeah, because he saw the deer get shot. He should move toward perpetrator because he is actually hurting the deer.
Stephanie: Marty should be near perpetrator because he’s lying to his family and because he didn’t tell people about the deer.

Teacher: So he hurt people by lying. So should we move him between hero and perpetrator?

Stephanie: And he lied to people which is bad.
Willy: And he saw the deer get shot.

Carson: Can a perpetrator also be doing something good?

Teacher - Define something good.

Carson - Well, he saw Shiloh get kicked around and he made the pen for him.

As the children talk, the notion of hero gets complicated. Melanie described the complex and fluid nature of the hero’s role.

Melanie - I think Marty should stay in the middle [between hero and bystander] because he started as a bystander who became a hero and he was sometimes a perpetrator.

Later on June 6, 1999, once again Melanie spoke of Marty’s complexity.

Melanie: On his actual behavior, I think he should be like in the middle of bystander and victim and hero because when he saw Shiloh get hurt, it hurt him, but he didn’t do anything when he saw the deer get shot. But he saved Shiloh.

As the students continued to add characters to the chart, all of the roles, hero, bystander, victim and perpetrator were complicated.
It was in the process of placing and moving the characters on the chart that lead to the development of the children’s six theories.

**Theory One Is Voiced**

With the placement of Marty on the chart Willy introduced what would become our first theory: If a bystander does not take action he/she becomes a perpetrator.

Willy: Yeah, because he saw the deer get shot. He should move toward perpetrator because he is actually hurting the deer.

![Figure 15: Judd poaching the deer by Willy](image)

Willy said that because Marty saw Judd Travers shoot a deer out of season and did not report it to the game warden and actually used that crime to blackmail Judd into giving him Shiloh, Marty is a bystander who does not take action and therefore a perpetrator of pain. Brenden challenged Willy.
Brenden: He wasn’t really a perpetrator when he saw the deer get shot because he says like I’ll tell on you to the game warden. So he wasn’t really a perpetrator.
Teacher: In other words he did threaten to do something about it. So you think he needs to move away from perpetrator and down towards the middle?

Willy: Yes, but still Ms. Córdova, he didn’t though [do anything about the deer]. (Willy was near tears about the deer.)

Ray: Yeah, but he did say something.

On June 1, 1999 while we were talking about the characters actual behavior and their ideal behavior Carson has a new take on this theory while Ray defends the original perspective.

Carson: I have one for actual behavior. I think Maddie should be right in the middle between bystander and perpetrator because like in [from] Wanda’s point of view she’s a perpetrator but she’s really just a bystander.

Ray: I still think Maddie is a perpetrator because Wanda continued to get hurt and if Maddie would have come over to a hero she may have been made fun of as one of the consequences. That is one of the consequences.

There is no class consensus on this theory. In fact Oscar says one thing and then a few minutes later says another.

Oscar: Um like Maddie she’s not really a perpetrator but Peggy is. And Maddie wanted to stop it but she couldn’t because she didn’t want to get made fun of like Wanda.
Oscar: Like if you are hanging a around a group of kids that are making fun of like Wanda that kind of makes you the same as they’re doing. That makes you a perpetrator.
About an hour later, during my lunch with the members of the Cat Club, Willy, Chase, and Deborah, Willy confessed to not helping his neighbor, Jackson.

Teacher: So you were afraid to help because nobody liked him?

Willy: Yeah. Well, people will think I’m not that cool cause like no one likes this kid. He’s called Jackson. I’m sort of one of the people that walked away though. So I’m a little bit a perpetrator. Also you Chase cause you saw it, too.

Willy: And also if you are a bystander and you watch somebody get hurt and if you don’t do anything about it you become a perpetrator because you’re still letting them get hurt.

On the second to the last day of school, as we were still discussing the various roles, Willy, like Maddie, was still haunted by not standing up for his neighbor, Jackson, and was hurt that Marty betrayed the deer. Willy believed all three had become perpetrators.

Theory Two Is Voiced

Ray first introduced this theory on May 12, 1999, our first day with the chart: If a victim is hurt often enough she will eventually become a perpetrator.

Ray: I think Judd Travers is kind of a victim. He became mean because his dad was mean to him. He was hurt so he was kind of a victim.
Melanie: So, Judd started out as a victim and moved up here to perpetrator...

Ray: Because of his dad.

Oscar: When those two kids got teased at Columbine, they became mean. They were victims then they became perpetrators. Because they got hurt so much they started hurting kids.

Teacher- So if you hurt somebody, if someone is a victim for a long time do they move up and become a perpetrator? How about Shiloh or any dog? If you kick it will it become mean?

Lou: Yeah, I think Judd was or most people who get teased a lot usually get mean.

A few minutes later Willy, Carson, and Stephanie find more evidence for the theory:

Willy: Also Judd's dogs, they were victims first and then they became perpetrators.

Carson: I've got two things, one's about the Columbine thing in Colorado. Well, after they killed all those people, they were probably still hurt. That's why they committed suicide.

Stephanie: Well, say Marty didn't take Shiloh and Judd would still be mean to Shiloh and Shiloh would turn out really mean and start attacking Judd. He would be so mean. He wouldn't like Marty no more. He wouldn't even like Marty.

During morning sharing 5/19/99 Carson brings up the Columbine tragedy again.

Carson: Kind of cause like the Columbine kids they were all victims before like the shooters they were victims because they were made fun of and stuff. But then they were made fun of so much that they became became perpetrators.
On May 28, 1999 Bart brings up a schoolmate from first grade.

Bart: Um I've got two things, I think it was in first grade there was this kid, Pat Play and he was made fun of because he was bald because he cut his hair for the pictures.

Ray: That kid has his hair cut long now. He's like um he's starting to get meaner. He's like jacking people up. He beat one person up on the soccer field.

Brenden: It's because he got made fun of.

Ray: Yeah, but he still, he still he doesn't get made fun of that much anymore but he makes fun of other people though.

During our 5/28 charting of Number the Stars characters when talking about the Nazi's dogs Bart uses the theory again.

Bart: They [the dogs] should go by victim because they were probably kicked and stuff.

Oscar adds to Bart's statement about learning to be mean.

Oscar: They [the dogs] are taught because just like some movies can teach you to kill cause the kids from Columbine, they watched that movie and played those video games.

Gary: Matrix and Doom and cartoons.

Crystal shares a story about her experience with the theory.

Crystal: And like how you can be a victim and turn into a perpetrator, I had a dog once and my brother started to tease it and then it tried to bite the mailman and my brother kept teasing it and my dog turned really mean and the dog bit me and my mom and my sister.
Terry Rogers: So how did you turn your dog back into a nice dog?

Crystal: We got rid of him. We gave him to my aunt and I went over there and my dog bit me and I had to get stitches.

**Theory Three Is Voiced**

This cycle can be broken if the victim can forgive their perpetrator.

The role forgiveness plays is in this construct is critical. Early in the year on November 5, 1998 when we were discussing if it would be better for Maddie and Peggy to write a letter of apology or a friendly letter to Wanda, Billy starts to see the importance of forgiveness plays in repairing the relationship.

Billy: Um I think it should be an apology letter because it could help her [Wanda] forgive them more and it can make her feel better about herself.

On May 19, 1999 during morning sharing Crystal brings up forgiveness in relation to the students at Columbine who lost their lives for confessing to their perpetrators that they did believe in God. Debbie takes her thoughts and forms the theory.

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1 Terry Rogers, my advisor at the time, came to class on June 8, 1999 to talk to the students about their ideas.
Crystal: I would have said no if that person asked me if I believed in God. If you believe in God then you would believe you can ask God for forgiveness. So if you said no you could always ask for forgiveness instead of taking your own life to die.

Teacher: I think forgiveness is a big part of this whole chart we have back here, too. [Indicating the hero/bystander chart.] For example, do you think Wanda forgave her perpetrators?

Class: Some yes's

Debbie: If you do not forgive your perpetrators then will you become a perpetrator your self.

Carson: Kind of cause like the Columbine kids they were all victims before like the shooters they were victims because they were made fun of and stuff. But then they were made fun of so much that they became became perpetrators.

Teacher: So did they forgive their perpetrators?
Class: some no's

Teacher: Do you think Shiloh ever forgave Judd Travers?

Class lots of chatter.

Stephanie: I say Shiloh did forgive Judd Travers when Judd let Marty have Shiloh.
Theory Four Is Voiced

Forgiveness is an act of heroism.

The topic of forgiveness did not come up again until June 2, 1999 during a morning sharing time when we were talking about a mother whose son was murdered while he was at a Catholic College in Ohio. She came on television and forgave her son’s murderer and asked that he not get the death penalty. Carson is main spokesperson for forgiveness. His two friends Jason and Brenden can not understand forgiving in this circumstance, however.

Teacher: What we talked about forgiveness from this chart what does forgiving your perpetrators do? I think we talked about Wanda forgiving her perpetrators and being able to break the cycle of if you are a victim long enough then what happens?
Carson: I think, think you’re really a hero yourself if you can forgive your perpetrators.

Teacher: So forgiving your perpetrator is a heroic act?

Carson: Yes, because it’s hard to do and it requires pain and sacrifice.

Brenden: I don’t think they [the mothers of the murdered boys] should forgive their perpetrators cause they, they like say like those two kids, the three of them killed them and you couldn’t like forgive them.

Teacher: It would be really hard.

Jason: Why would you forgive the killers?

Carson: I think I know the answer for Jason. So you don’t have that pain in yourself. If you are a victim long enough what becomes of you? You become a perpetrator. It’s so you don’t have the pain inside yourself for your entire life. If you can forgive them, it kinda goes away.

Teacher: Forgiveness is hard but it is an important kind of pain and I don’t think we talk enough about the role of forgiveness.

Ray: If you forgive someone like maybe the parents thought, like usually when someone dies you think it’s your fault because you weren’t there to help them. Once you forgive the perpetrators, once you admit it was not your fault, you can stop thinking it was you. You can stop thinking it was you, that it was your fault.

Teacher: So it is a way to forgive yourself too?

Ray: You can forgive yourself too.

Teacher: That is another really important point. If anyone gets hurt around you and you couldn’t prevent them dying you feel really guilty but if you can forgive yourself that is important in healing.
Teacher: Any other comments on this mother forgiving her son's murders? I saw her do it on television and she was crying. It made me cry the way she was talking about it. She said it was the hardest thing she had to do in her life but she said to the three young men who killed her son, "I can forgive you." That is a very big part of being a Christian I think, forgiving. St. Charles is a Catholic high school and Franciscan College is a Catholic college and I think anybody who sends their children to Catholic schools or religious schools it's because religion is an important part of who they are. So she is acting out her Christian beliefs.

Lou: I wear a bracelet with WWJD [What Would Jesus Do] on it. Jesus would forgive his perpetrators

Teacher: Is that heroic?

Lots of YES'S

Jason: He forgave the people who killed him.

Teacher: Why would Jesus forgive?

Jason: Because he thought everybody was equal everybody was the same.

Teacher: What does that mean, everybody is the same?

Jason: It didn't matter if you were black or white or like even a murder.

Carson: Jesus sacrificed himself for us.

On June 8, 1999 Melanie states her position on forgiveness.

Melanie: We were talking about some victims who grew up to be perpetrators because they were hurt but since she [Wanda] forgave Maddie and Peggy we thought that she wouldn't become a perpetrator. She forgave them so she kind of became a hero in a way.
During that same conversation Carson speaks to the heroism of forgiveness.

Terry Rogers: So what is a hero?
Carson: Someone who is a bystander and decides to take action and decides to take action to make things right or they could be a victim who can forgive their perpetrator.

**Theory Five Is Voiced**

For a bystander to become a hero they automatically fall below the line that separates perpetrator from victim because they feel pain.

The bystander feels the victim’s pain; they empathize with the victim and there may be painful consequences as a result of taking action. This theory began to take form when we were deciding where to put Miss Mason on the chart. Ray explains his placement of her.

Ray: I think Miss Mason is kind of a victim in a sort of way when she got that letter she felt sorry for Wanda because she got in the class and told everybody to quit it making fun of Wanda. Because she kinda felt sorry for Wanda and she was being hurt because she saw that other people were being hurt.

Nana, later in the week on May 28, wants to put Peter between hero and victim.
Nana: I want to start with Peter.

Teacher: Okay. Where does Peter go on this chart, Nana?

Nana: By hero

Teacher: How close to hero?

Voices: Close over. [very enthusiastically and loud. Lots of voices]

Nana: Down towards victim too because he lost his life.

When the class spoke with Terry, the theory began to crystallize

Melanie: Part of the reason Maddie wouldn't take action was because she would become a victim. They would turn on her because I mean if she stood up for Wanda they might start picking on her.

Terry Rogers: Are there good reasons for someone standing by and not doing anything? Can you ever say there is a good reason not to take action?

Ray: Um, as a bystander you can also become a victim because some people don't like seeing other people getting hurt. Maddie didn't like seeing Wanda get hurt so she was kinda also a victim because she didn't like seeing, like some people don't like to see other people get hurt so they become victims.

Terry Rogers: So I'm hearing some slightly different things about bystanders. Sometimes if a bystander doesn't do anything he or she may be a perpetrator but sometimes he or she may also be a victim.

Melanie: I think that if you're a bystander and you take action there is a consequence. Like Lise and Peter [in Number the Stars] did the right thing but they died doing it. Maddie was too late and she got a consequence, too.
Terry Rogers: But that is a different degree of consequence. What do you think makes a bystander decide to or not decide to do something?

Voices: Feelings and emotions.
Ray: Did you say take action or not take action?

Terry Rogers: Either way.

Ray: Well to take action they put themselves in other people's place. And they feel and they are kinda like a victim and they have to sacrifice themselves.

Carson: I know why they take action. Because they go the feelings they have for them. Cause they kinda know how they feel.

Terry Rogers: So they are identifying with them?

Carson: Yeah

On the last day of school we have a brief discussion about heroes and Ray talks about Marty’s mother.

Ray: I think Marty’s mom is kinda of [a hero] because she kept a secret from Marty’s dad and she never kept a secret from him. That is being a hero because you’re doing something you don’t want to do. She made a sacrifice.

Sabrina talks about the ultimate sacrifice Lise made as part of the a Danish Resistance Movement.

Teacher: Are any of the characters in the books we read heroes for you?
Sabrina: I think Lise because she chose to be a hero and help those people. She didn’t have to but she chose it because she knew it was wrong. She really didn’t know what was going to come up for her until she died. And she died a hero. And she can be proud of herself.

**Theory Six Is Voiced**

A perpetrator can be a hero if they stop being mean.

Stephanie introduced the theory when she said,

Stephanie: Judd Travers, he got nicer at the end so maybe he can go to... [she was interrupted]

Voice: Yeah, but only because Marty was nice to him.

Stephanie: [finishing her thought ] hero.

Emma: I think you should move her [Peggy] a little closer to hero because she started to realize she did something wrong. She kinda reacted after Wanda moved.

Gary: They [Judd and Peggy] both did because Judd gave him [Judd gave Marty a collar for Shiloh] that collar.

Lou: He gave Marty something too, he gave him water.

Later Ray restates the assertion and further defines hero,

Ray: Judd Travers is kind of a hero because he kind of held back his meanness when Marty was trying to be nice to him. Being a hero doesn’t always mean that you save someone. It can mean changing from being mean to being nice. He went from being cruel to Marty to doing what is right.
In a conversation about the hero perpetrator chart 5/25/99

Lisa and Melanie continue with the topic of reformed meanness.

Teacher: You know what I don’t understand on this chart is why Peggy is more heroic than Maddie.
Lisa: But Peggy stopped being mean

Teacher: Peggy stopped but Maddie never started.

Lisa: Peggy is the one that had realized what she had done so Peggy is the one that was making fun of Wanda and she realized that she was doing something really bad after Wanda moved so.

Melanie: I think that, I mean it’s really hard to stop being mean to somebody.

The class talked with Terry Rogers on the topic more.

Ray: There is another way to be a hero. When you’re a perpetrator and you end up being nice that is kinda being a hero because it’s hard to stop being mean.

Terry Rogers: Oh, that’s nice, so it takes courage to stop being mean.

Crystal: In the book, Shiloh, Judd Travers, he was always being mean but when Marty started to work for Judd to get the dog um he, Judd started being nicer. First, there was no water and then he gave him water with ice and then he gave him a rest so he kinda moved from perpetrator to hero. He tried to move one step at a time.
**Theory Seven Is Voiced**

Victims can be heroic if they defend themselves.

This theory was introduced on May 12, 1999 as we moved Wanda’s placement on the chart. She was near victim when Crystal introduced the last theory.

Crystal: I think Wanda should kinda move way up more towards hero because she ignored Peggy when they were teasing her and she didn’t like let most of her crying hurt feelings show.

Deborah: She kinda took a risk turning all them pictures into the art contest too. She didn’t know if they’d like them.

Later in the conversation on the same day, May 12, 1999, Debbie realized how Shiloh had also helped in saving his own life.

Debbie: I think Shiloh should move kinda of toward hero because you know dogs usually like to bark all the time. But when he was with Marty he hardly ever barked.

Later in the month on May 28, 1999 as we were putting the characters from *Number the Stars* on the chart, Ellen Rosen was given hero status along with Wanda and Shiloh.

Teacher: Where should we put Ellen?

Lisa: I think between hero and victim because she helped save herself.

Sabrina: Yeah, I think Ellen should go a little more towards hero because she she almost did lose her life because when she had her black [hair] and the other girls had their yellow hair and um when she said that um she was lucky that she didn’t lose her life because
of the picture when they were babies and um she acted like she was more of a sister than a friend and she tried her best and she should go a little bit more towards hero.

So, three characters that began with victim status were moved toward hero because of how they participated in their own salvation. First of all, Wanda by ignoring Peggy’s cruel comments and actions and by turning in her drawings of a hundred dresses for the classroom contest. Sabrina added, “Do you know how hard it would be to turn in your drawings knowing that everyone in the class made fun of you?” Shiloh found his way back to Marty and did not bark while Marty had him hidden in his pen. For dog not to bark, the children commented was very hard. It is their nature to bark. And Ellen had to act like she was Annemarie’s and Kirsti’s sister when she was without her parents and scared to death. Then on the boat to Sweden, all the Jews had to be absolutely silent as they hid in the bottom of Uncle Henrik’s fishing boat.
CHAPTER 5
IMPLICATIONS

But there come times—perhaps this is one of them—when we have to take ourselves more seriously or die; when we have to pull back from the incantations, rhythms we've moved through thoughtlessly, and disenthrall ourselves, bestow ourselves to silence, or a severer listening, cleansed of oratory, formulas, choruses, laments, static crowding of the wires.

Adrienne Rich, 1978

In the last two decades, as I taught fourth graders with the novels *The Hundred Dresses, Shiloh,* and *Number the Stars* in my language arts class, my students without fail have come to the realization that their lives are connected to Marty, Wanda, Judd, Annemarie, Peter, Shiloh, Ellen, Peggy, and Maddie's. My use of both literature and drama, and the act of becoming another in the middle of a moral dilemma, have fostered feelings of empathy, that is the vicarious experience of another's feelings and perceptions.
Fostering empathy is critical if I want to move my students to take caring actions, and it is, therefore, at the heart of the curriculum of care that I propose. Although I chose to create a culture of care through literature and the arts, one could conceivably examine issues of right and wrong through other subjects in the curriculum, as well.

The following four letters address educators, scholars, and the children who participated in my research, is an effort to delineate the various implications of what I propose in my study.

Implications for Educators

Dear Colleagues,

During the long and lonely hours I spent writing this dissertation, imagining both pre-service and practicing teachers as my audience was my inspiration. My study came from my frustration that when we designate children as incompetent and deficient, we exclude them from active participation in the construction of their own lives and moral identity. I therefore ask you to think of a number of important things that I learned as a result of this research. First of all and most importantly, I hope that you agree with me that we need to make our practices truly child-centered. To achieve this goal, we need to do four things. First, value children in their state of childhood. Second, honor our students multiple identities. Third, affirm their many ways of
making meaning from experiences through art. Fourth, offer children opportunities to develop and test their moral theories. Finally, we must also begin to raise our own level of consciousness about our cultural identity and how our own identity plays out in the classroom. I would like to elaborate on each of these points below.

Value children in their state of childhood

I appreciate how deeply you care, as I do, about the students whom we teach. I also am fully aware of our overwhelming job every day as we try to please administrators, families, and the students. But I remain convinced that the most important way our care can manifest itself is by valuing children in their present state of childhood and not always think of them as a future resource, as potential middle schoolers, high schoolers, or adults. I hope this study demonstrates that children, regardless of their age, do come to us with valuable lived experiences, insights, compassion, and theories. It becomes essential that we take heed of the invaluable perspective that they can impart to us. The children are a rich source of insight into their world and have something to teach each other and us.

Honor our students' multiple identities

We need to ask ourselves this: what happens if we fail to recognize that students of other cultures are present in our classrooms, in our communities, and in our world? At whose
expense do we ignore other cultures? Can we allow children like Rose to feel like they are outsiders? To feel like they are not normal? Can we overlook students like Chris who look into our faces only to see reflecting back at them a distorted half face that they try to hide because they hate who they are and feel like we hate them too? Do we want the Peggys in our classrooms to feel entitled to taunt other children like Wanda about their clothes, their accents, their names, their homes, and neighborhoods? Can we require young children to come to school without a promise, a commitment to protect them from the pain of alienation? Can we really afford to ask any child to betray his or her family identity in order to succeed in the dominant culture of school? For example, one of my students confided in me that she spent her winter vacation making up an imaginary list of gifts she received for Christmas, just to fit in. Another student, who could not bear the humiliation of not having been on a summer vacation, wrote made-up stories about a summer vacation that his family never took, because they could have never afforded it.

We cannot continue to impose curricula where children do not find themselves or do not find themselves reflected in positive ways. I believe that a caring morality in the classroom must be grounded in the lived experiences of the children. I have learned to be wary of single perspectives of truth because the perspective takes away the right of all students and teachers to define and share their reality and their identity. One way that I work to avoid reducing my students to demographic information and test scores is
by investing time daily to listen to my students' stories. I appreciate their stories as ways in which they explore and share their identity, knowing that narrative and identity are connected. But listening to their voices is never easy because the dominant voice of the institution asks us to listen to it alone and to ground our thinking with it. I therefore take the richly contextualized stories my students share, and look at the world from my students' perspectives. This gives us all a better understanding of who we are and a better chance at affirming our place in this complex world. Doing so helps us explore solutions that enable us to care for each other, not merely control; it also helps us to build a cultural topographical map to help each other see what was once invisible, or view what was visible from new angles. Only when children become privy to each other's hopes, plans, uncertainties, fears, and dilemmas, can they begin to truly create a classroom community founded on care.

**Affirm their many ways of making meaning from experience through art**

Like life in the classroom, art is at the same time affective and cognitive, individual and communal. As we get to know our students through story telling, we must begin to introduce other art forms as well. During this particular study I may not have appreciated the depth of Mary Ann's understanding of the world were it not for her *Pink and Say* collage, or understood Peter's interpretation if not for his chalk drawing of Wanda or, again,
Emma's feelings without her dramatic interpretation of loneliness. The various artistic renderings of experience gave us all new insights that we could not have experienced with words alone. If we avoid privileging one form of expression over other, less traditional art forms, then we can expect to get a fuller view of reality, enabling all of our students to achieve their full potential. Engaging children in sense making can arouse children's imagination. We must therefore infuse their sense making with feelings, and their feelings with sense making. With the arts, we can open windows to the world that were closed, locked, and boarded up.

It is the arts, with their multiple forms of expression, that make us most humane and it is the arts that will enable us to break through the layers of the banal and constant drone of the institution. It is therefore the arts that will enable us to explore the deep parts of our lives that only poetry, drama, song, dance, or paintings can reach. Our students are willing and able to use the arts to make meaning of our complex moral world. Through our research together, they can show us that they do not need a transmissive pedagogy that fills them with generic knowledge. They are vibrant, curious, creative learners ready to share their lived experiences and blend them with others from literature, the world, and their classroom.
Offer children opportunities to develop and test their moral theories

Our students need to be part of the solutions and they need to be able to use what they have learned from the arts to construct theories about their moral world. As we make policy in classrooms and in schools, we need to listen to, value, and nurture children's insights, perceptions, experiences, solutions, and voices about their day-to-day reality inside and outside of schools. We need to allow and encourage our students to theorize as a way to become critical thinkers, to challenge the status quo, to minimize the social pain they experience, in order to solve their own dilemmas. If we incorporate children's perspective, we can reduce alienation and increase affirmation. Allowing our students to use their knowledge and together setting policies can replace our existing policies of control with policies that care for all. Together, we can examine and deconstruct power relationships as we begin to imagine new and more humane ways of relating in our classrooms and school communities.

Our students need to develop theories that not only liberate the victim, but liberate those in the role of the bystander and perpetrator as well. I know there will be those who doubt that children can develop sophisticated theories, but I argue that it is possible. Once a fellow fourth-grade teacher told me while I was in the process of teaching science, that fourth graders do not have theories. He suggested that I should not ask my students to hypothesize about what might happen in the context of experiments about the properties of air. I was stunned, knowing that children in
preschool have all kinds of theories about the tooth fairy and Santa Claus, for example. We who have read this study know differently because of the seven theories these ordinary yet extraordinary students have developed.

**Raise our own level of consciousness about our cultural identity and how our identity plays out in the classroom**

To protect our students from the pain of alienation, we don't really need to add anything to the curriculum because it is already there. But it is something we need to bring to our consciousness. It is our own cultural identity that permeates everything we do, everything we feel, and everything we say. Perhaps it's the sound of our own voices, our voices in duet with the voice of the institution drowning out the more fragile, less experienced voices in our classrooms. We cannot allow that to happen. It is too painful.

We need to look at the behaviors we model for our students. Are we paying attention to how we ourselves play out the four roles, perpetrator, victim, bystander, and hero? Each has their own moral dynamic and moral complexity, but as our students teach us, together we can find ways for the hurting to stop.

Everyday as we walk through the school doors we must remind ourselves that we became teachers because we truly care about children. We all know that seeing children lonely on the playground or hurt after being bullied on the bus or ashamed after turning in a less-than-perfect project done at home without any parental help moves us emotionally. There is no question that we
feel the pain of the children. But where might the knowledge of such pain take us? Some of us may offer a hug for a quick fix. Or ask the principal, guidance counselors, or colleagues for help or insight. Others might choose to blame the parents. Or simply ignore the situation because we assume it is a chronic problem outside our professional expertise "It's not our fault."

But here's my question for all of us: could some of these situations be symptomatic of a larger pathology? Could the pain the students and we feel be the fallout of institutional racism, classism, and sexism? How would we know? Do we know what it looks like? Do we know what it feels like? Do we know how it manifests itself? We must educate children to name and resist the racist, sexist, classist agenda that is everywhere in schools in both blatant and subtle ways.

It is clear that we have a huge task. We spend a great deal of our time making certain that the curriculum guidelines are met; preparing our lesson; conferencing with parents; playground duties; grading papers; diagnosing and remediating learning problems; settling classroom disputes; taking university classes; going to committee and staff meetings. How can we possibly add one more thing to this already monumental job? Because the one thing we all need to add is what gives meaning to everything else: everything we do, everything we feel, and everything we say and that is that all knowledge (and, therefore, all teaching) is culturally situated. For example, our teaching methods, our curriculum, our textbooks, our literature, the way we assess our students, our assumptions
about what families should and shouldn't be, should and shouldn't look like, are all viewed through a specific, our own, cultural lens. Our assumptions are all based on our own past experiences, and those experiences have been predominately white and middle class.

Right here, right now, we must begin the difficult task of examining our cultural identity and how it, especially the white middle class identity, frames our curriculum, our teaching methods, the texts and assessments we choose. We must be committed to creating openness, an awareness, an acknowledgment of young people in our classroom and in our communities who are not like us, who do not look like us, talk like us, worship or celebrate like us. If we care about all of our students then we have to challenge the status quo, because it alienates those outside the dominant culture, the culture of power. The dysconsciousness of the dominant culture hurts and bullies our students in ways that we would never allow from another student on the playground nor can we allow such hurtful behavior in our curriculum or pedagogies.

We cannot turn our backs on any child in our care. In his acceptance speech for the Nobel Peace Prize, Elie Wiesel (1986), a Holocaust survivor, reminds us that "sometimes we must interfere. When human lives are endangered, when human dignity is in jeopardy, national borders and sensitivities become irrelevant. Wherever men or women [or children] are persecuted because of their race, religion or political views, that place must at that moment become the center of the universe."
And so I ask you, at this moment, to join each other and me with humility, with love, and commitment to make our students, whose human dignity is indeed in jeopardy, the center of our universe.

With my gratitude,
Carmen Córdova

Dear Administrators,

Today, more than ever, we in education are confronted with standardized testing, standardized curriculum, vouchers, corporate interventions, state interventions, state standards, state takeovers, school failures, student failures, and teacher failures when dealing with issues of curriculum. These potential mandates feel imposed and weigh heavy on my teacher shoulders. The proposed solutions for the moral crisis such as zero tolerance, surveillance cameras, locker searches, locked doors, dress codes, and metal detectors, feel no less heavy.

The moral crisis we face in schools defies easy answers, yet it must be in the forefront of our minds as we enter the doors of our schools daily. Possibly, the most difficult task we face in education is making our schools physically, emotionally, and culturally safe for all of our students. As an elementary school teacher for over twenty years, I still find this issue of how we affirm all students, how we develop a culture of care, my biggest challenge. In fact, I
have spent the last six years exploring issues of culture, reading about critical pedagogy, and researching a curriculum of care. I have dedicated my dissertation to this very cause. I was driven to undertake this study out of my daily frustration at witnessing so much alienation and pain in our schools. I was continually disheartened by an institution that perpetuates dysconsciousness around institutionalized racism, sexism, and classism. I was dissatisfied with solutions that do not nurture care, but try to control. I was unhappy with a system that does not affirm our students, but perpetuates alienation. I was troubled by the marginalization of children in their state of childhood, who are only valued for their potential as future citizens. I was disgruntled with those who are continually getting their students ready for standardized tests, for fifth grade, for high school, ad nauseum into the future.

If we believe that schools should challenge social injustice and promote democracy, and critical thinking, then it becomes necessary to face the fact that schools are failing at achieving these goals. If we believe that education should raise achievement for all learners, we must take a careful look at our policies. This discrepancy between our claimed goals and actual achievement in our schools can only be remedied by students, families, teachers, and administrators working together.

This is why I turn to you for your support and participation. We can no longer afford to ignore our failures. We cannot continue to be racially and culturally dysconscious. I write to you with the
hope that you as policy makers will consider some of the changes in the current curriculum, pedagogy, and school policies that I propose in this dissertation. What I would like you as administrators to take from this research project is the knowledge that children have insights, charm, talent, richly lived experiences and most of all, a sense of justice and empathy, all of which I would like you to take into consideration as you make school policies and write curricula. We all need to come together so that we can identify and eliminate hurtful policies and create places where children are safe from the hate and alienation generated from all the isms. I ask that we nurture the ethic of care present in our students and trust them to become the protagonists in finding solutions to their own moral dilemmas.

This dissertation provides an example of one way that a curriculum of care might look. It demonstrates children's potential to indeed care deeply for each other and to develop a complex sense of morality when given the opportunity. It also offers an alternative to policies that serve to control, rather than nurture, students' behavior. As the curriculum of care asks, our students must be included in the process of framing the problems in their schools, finding solutions to those problems, and assessing those solutions. The curriculum of care can enable us to work to create school and classroom communities where our students' experiences are valued as central to their learning, where children learn from each other's insights, where there is a shared commitment to affirm diversity, where multiple ways of knowing are validated, and where students
are the subjects of their education, not the objects of our teaching.

In my classroom, my students who participated in this research have expressed an interest in and an ability to become involved in solving social problems. They have listened to the voices from literature, current events, and most importantly, each other. And because of the careful listening, together we were able to create a learning community where we could begin to make sense of the moral world and contribute to making it more caring and more just. In such an environment, all children are able to express their full humanity, engage in critical thinking, and shape a social vision that affirms their hopes and dreams.

We need to create schools that provide a curriculum of care and a critical pedagogy for an increasingly diverse student population. We need schools that provide time and space for teachers and students alike, to create learning communities that nurture both an individual and a collective sense of care, responsibility, and social justice. These schools must be child-centered and diverse, so that all children can reflect on and voice their full sense of humanity through a pedagogy that allows for multiple ways of constructing knowledge, one that helps students imagine the many possibilities in their world.

One of the ways in which administrators could facilitate changes toward a more inclusive and caring curriculum would be to invite students, families, and staff to explore ways our schools can move from being controlling, rigid, sterile, monocultural warehouses of knowledge toward becoming fluid, colorful, and engaging
multicultural sites. Administrators can help create a fertile climate in order to change the role of teachers who are often reduced to the role of a bureaucratic cleric, whose main job it is to transmit static knowledge to one where teachers and students alike are exploring their reality and creating policies and curricula that resist the racist, classist, and sexist policies that serve to oppress.

It is not necessarily my intention to suggest that all educators replicate my study with their young students or, worse yet, try to impose my particular study onto their students. Rather, I would like them to explore the moral world with their students from a place that works for them, keeping in mind that students in their state of childhood have valuable, relevant theories, points of view, and strategies for making our world a caring and just place. Granted, each teacher will have to find their own medium through which to explore issues of right and wrong. This could be done through literature, art, sports, science, history, or other subjects. The inquiry must not become an add-on, but must be made central to the curriculum: How do issues of right and wrong affect decisions made by characters from literature, scientists, historical figures, athletes, coaches, artists, and educators?

Like my students, your students will be changed. They too can come to view moral dilemmas from the four vantage points, a victim, perpetrator, bystander, and a hero. They too can explore these roles through the use of metaphors from literature, drawings, poetry, drama, and from their own lived experiences. They too can think deeply about what it means to be in each role. The art can
help them to both make meaning and articulate what they ought to do in each role in order to confront powerful forces, to bring an end to suffering, bullying, and abuse. Their moral understanding can make their reality more complex, more inclusive, and more compassionate.

Together, let us look around our schools, examine our policies, and challenge power relationships that exclude, oppress, and alienate. Let us continually ask what moves our hearts to teach, to feel and think our way through each day with our students who are in our care. Let us ask who are the perpetrators, the victims, the bystanders here. Let us inspire all toward action, toward becoming heroes. As my students have taught us, it will not be painless, it will not be easy. It will require commitment, empathy, love, humility, and most of all, courage. But our students are counting on us like they counted on Miss Mason. Let us not turn our heads. Let us not sit idly by. Let us refuse to be complicit.

Sincerely,

Carmen Córdova
Implications for Future Study

Dear Teacher Educators,

I have a deep appreciation for the noble task you have of preparing our young people for teaching. I know the time you spend with your students is limited, making it harder to develop meaningful relationships with and among your students. With such time constraints, the task of building a community of learners is a challenge. You too have a hefty curriculum, standardized tests your students must pass, and administrators to please. Your job in the colleges and universities is no less difficult than ours is in the schools. I would like to share three ideas that emerge from my dissertation inquiry that I feel contribute to making teacher education more powerful. First, the cultural awareness of knowledge, teachers, and learners; second, the use of the arts in your university classrooms; and third, listening to and valuing the knowledge that students of all ages possess.

Although public school classroom teachers are my intended audience, my hope is that you too can gain some insight from this study. I feel the most important, albeit the hardest job you must do for your students is to help them understand that all knowledge, all teaching, all teachers, and all students are culturally situated. This job will be more important for you if you believe, as I do, that the purpose of education is not to merely transmit and perpetuate the status quo but to produce critical thinkers and to raise achievement for all learners. If we hope to attain these goals then there must
first be an awareness of how the dominant white middle class culture in schools leaves behind and alienates those who do not look like, do not speak like, or do not worship like, the white middle class culture. In your classes you must strive to make visible the ways the dominant culture permeates texts, curriculum, and epistemologies. If we fail at this we not only do our students a disservice, but we limit our own growth, possibilities, own potential for seeing and changing the world. Help your students uncover their own cultural assumptions. As they work with texts, policies, and curriculum ask them whose voice they hear. Is it the voice of the institution? Their voice? The voice of another? Can they hear their students' voices? We cannot afford to go on producing teachers with racial and cultural dysconsciousness. I believe that raising the cultural awareness of future teachers could do more to achieve our goals in education than any other single strategy. It becomes our moral imperative to help our students view the world from multiple viewpoints and critically examine what we are taught to accept as normal, as reality, to make visible and examine the values and customs of our own cultures.

My second request is to help your students integrate the arts into all they do. Allow them time to explore the possibilities for understanding and expression. I will be forever haunted by Lou's drawing of a voiceless Wanda, the figure with her mouth blackened out. It symbolizes a form of oppression so well, a symbol that can be easily transferred to the other victims, Shiloh and the Rosens. All the victims' survival depended, in part, upon them being silent.
Wanda found her liberation by expressing herself with her drawings, while keeping quiet about "the dresses game." Neither Shiloh nor the Rosens could call attention to themselves by barking or making any noise until they were free from abuse and oppression. This knowledge is present in Lou's work. She provides a powerful metaphor for what we are all trying to understand. We in schools can no longer privilege one or two forms of expression at the expense of others after seeing some of the rich examples of art and ideas in this research. We must not continue to ask children to limit their expressive forms their access to knowledge to just writing and math. We need to take advantage of and nurture the multiple ways children make sense of their world. The more metaphors, the deeper the understanding. If we give children lots of ways to think about one idea, they can become experts.

And this, my students did. They saw victims as heroes and heroes as victims. They saw bystanders as heroes, victims, and perpetrators. There were so many complexities and they explored them. They explored with art and poetry and with drama and theories. They were magnificent!

And so I ask you to assign projects that require an integration of the arts. Meet with those who teach the arts at your colleges and communities. Together explore the possibilities. Ask the students themselves for ideas. Learn all you can about the arts and cognition. End the privilege of the written word over all other expressive forms. In schools and universities we need to look at things as if they could be otherwise. It is the arts that give us the
metaphors to reorient consciousness, to help see things differently, to see them in a more inclusive way.

And finally I ask that in your own research work with students, you value their competencies as you research. Use methods that allow students, even young students, to be part of the research in meaningful ways. Include children not only when collecting data but especially while interpreting the data, as well. Allow enough room for children to decide how they will participate, and be open to the creative ways they will contribute to theory building. They can help us all know about their world in unique fresh ways. As you disseminate the results of your studies share what you have learned in new ways. Use the arts. Take advantage of the many ways that technology can include the visual arts, film, music, and sound.

The task you have before you is not easy, but requisite if we hope to produce critical thinkers and to raise achievement for all learners. Thank you.

Respectfully,
Carmen Córdova
Dear Fourth Graders,

I wanted to share with you the results of our work together on the moral dilemma of the bystander. As you know, these past two years as you have been finishing your time in elementary school, I have been busy typing and carefully reading your comments from our morning sharing and the afternoon sessions when we put the characters from *The Hundred Dresses*, *Shiloh* and *Number the Stars* onto our chart with the perpetrator, victim, bystander, and hero. Your words and ideas led me to seven theories that could guide our thinking when we are caught in the moral dilemma of witnessing someone hurting another person like Wanda and the Rosens or an animal in Shiloh’s case. I have shared your ideas with many adults and they all have been impressed with the depth of your compassion and moral thinking. I am sorry we did not have more time to work through the rest of the data because I have some questions I would have liked to ask you.

First of all, if we believe theory one, which states that if a bystander does not take action, that person becomes a perpetrator and theory three, that a victim will eventually become a perpetrator if abused long enough, what are the implications for our responsibility as bystanders? Are you saying that if the cycle of abuse and oppression is not broken and if we, as bystanders, do not reach out to help, the hurt will continue and quite possibly escalate?

Second, in the three books we used two of the perpetrators, Judd Travers and Peggy, did "get nicer." But Judd only after Marty, as a bystander, intervened and Peggy "got nicer" only after Wanda
proved herself to be a competent dress designer and Maddie urged her to go visit Wanda to congratulate her. I suppose you could also say the Nazis changed their behavior after the Allied Forces and the hundreds of brave people in the resistance movements, as bystanders, forced the Nazis to surrender, stopping their oppression. How important are we all in the role of bystander? How important is it that we take action?

I am also struck by how your theories collectively take away any chance for a bystander to remain innocent. This reminds me of a woman named Thompson's (1998) belief that there is no such thing as racial innocence, just racial responsibility or irresponsibility. Are you saying there is no such thing as bystander innocence, just bystander responsibility and irresponsibility? I know that for me, it is now harder to turn my head the other way and pretend I just don't see when someone is being hurt. I have to think about what I could and should do to help all involved. I know I could take action like Marty and the Johansen family did. Your theories have helped me understand that I could do something that would make a difference.

I also would have liked to ask you the following few questions about three kinds of power. First the kind of power Peggy, Judd, and the Nazis had as perpetrators; second the power Marty, the Johansens, Maddie, and Miss Mason had as bystanders; and third the victims' power to help themselves. Once you began putting these fictional characters onto the chart, did the power structure become easier for you to see? Is knowing more about the power
structure helpful when deciding whether or not to take action? Does this process of placing characters on the chart help you consider the sacrifices to be made and also the consequences of taking no action? Could you say some roles had more power while others had less? Did it seem to you that all had some? Could this process of placing characters on the chart be helpful in dealing with problems of bullying and abuse on your own lives? Has it been helpful at all so far?

I want also to tell you how much I have learned from you. When I began this project many years ago after I first shared *The Hundred Dresses* with a class of fourth graders, I believed that the only path to heroism was from the role of bystander. That if Maddie had only stopped her best friend Peggy from continuing with the hurtful "dresses game," then Maddie would have become a hero. You helped me understand that both Wanda and Peggy were heroic in their own way: Peggy, by stopping herself from being mean and Wanda, by ignoring the hurtful taunts, and in spite of the alienation she experienced, still finding the courage to turn in her 100 drawings for the contest.

You also helped me understand the role of the hero more fully. Although Marty was heroic he was also a victim because he felt Shiloh's pain. He was also perpetrator because he lied to friends and family in order to get Shiloh away from Judd and in his betrayal the deer Judd poached. You complicated the roles I had made simple in insightful and extraordinary ways.
I would not like to predict your responses to my questions. Even after working closely with elementary students like yourselves for years, you continue to surprise me not only with what you say, but with how deeply you understand and care for each other as you share your ideas and feelings through your art, drama, words and actions. You have helped me understand just how complex all the roles on the perpetrator, victim, bystander, hero chart are. I will be forever grateful to you all for sharing your stories, your ideas, and yourselves on this important subject. I will continue to give you all credit wherever I go.

With my love and respect for each of you,

Ms. Córdova
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