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Transformative Teaching:

The Stories Aspiring Teachers Tell of the Teachers

Who Made a Difference

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Cynthia J. Shigo

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The School of Education

And the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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TRANSFORMATIVE TEACHING:
THE STORIES ASPIRING TEACHERS TELL
OF THE TEACHERS WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE

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Date approved: May 3, 2016

Abstract

Transformative teaching (teaching to make a difference) is education for growth in students, through intentional, creative action and purposeful engagement in identity formation. The desire to make a difference in students' lives is at the heart of all curriculum theory and practice and is especially relevant as a purpose for teaching in teacher education programs with students who are working to create personal teacher identities. It is the primary reason teacher education students give, every year, for choosing to become a teacher. A commitment to the pursuit of excellence, expressed in a language of hope, with the purpose of creating a good life, within a relationship of care between teacher and students, is necessary to teaching to make a difference in students' lives. Transformative teaching is a significant alternative to the test-driven status quo of American educational theory because, although it is a practical and theoretic struggle, it allows for a renewed emphasis on personal excellence for students through the guiding relationship of care with a teacher committed to making a difference in students' lives. This narrative research project investigated the impact of transformative teaching on the teacher identity formation of undergraduates pursuing certification in the School of Education. The foundational question that drove this research was: *How do School of Education undergraduates and the teachers they identify as transformative narrate the relationship of transformative teaching and how that relationship has informed the undergraduates' identity formation as aspiring teachers and their decision to pursue a teaching career?* This question was explored by collecting the stories students told of teachers who made a difference in their lives and comparing their stories to the stories told by those teachers identified as transformative, to learn what it is about teaching to transform that influenced aspiring teachers to choose education as a profession, as well as how teaching to make a difference might help transformative teachers have a rewarding career in which they may endure. Narrative research is an appropriate methodology for an investigation of identity formation through transformative teaching because it "assumes that storytelling is integral to understanding lives and that all people construct narratives as a process in constructing and reconstructing identity" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 23).

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CHAPTER ONE

Telling My Story: A Problem Statement for Research

Transformative teaching (teaching to make a difference) is education for growth in students, through intentional, creative action and purposeful engagement in identity formation. The desire to make a difference in students' lives is at the heart of all curriculum theory and practice (Marshall, Sears, Louise, Roberts, & Schubert, 2007) and is especially relevant as a purpose for teaching in teacher education programs with students who are working to create teacher identities. It is the primary reason my students give for choosing to become a teacher.

This narrative research project investigated the impact of such transformative teaching. The foundational question that drove this research is: *How do School of Education undergraduates and the teachers they identify as transformative narrate the relationship of transformative teaching and how that relationship has informed the undergraduates' identity formation as aspiring teachers and their decision to pursue a teaching career?* Through collecting the stories students told of teachers who made a difference in their lives, and comparing their stories to the stories told by those teachers identified as transformative, it may be possible to learn what it is about teaching to transform that influences aspiring teachers to choose education as a profession, as well as how teaching to make a difference may help transformative teachers have a rewarding career in which they may endure.

For four years I have been an instructor for the *Introduction to Education* class at a large Midwestern state university. This is the class students must take before they apply for admission to the School of Education. The purpose of the class is to help students decide if teaching is a career they want to pursue before they invest four years of their lives and thousands of dollars in

preparation for that career. Every semester on the first day of classes I had students answer a poll

in their texts that questions why they want to be teachers. Every year, with each new group of

incoming aspiring teachers, over 75 percent of the class claimed that the primary reason they

want to be teachers is to make a difference in the life of a child. Every semester students in my

classes wrote an essay with the title, *Why Teach?* in which they named the desire to make a

difference in the lives of children as their foundational motivation for becoming a teacher. Every

year my personal commitment to make a difference in the lives of these students is reaffirmed.

The textbook we used this year clearly defines the biggest challenge I have had teaching

this class, which is also the main reason such introductory classes are taught in the first place:

> The current reality is that too many people leave teaching, especially in the early
> years of their careers, and many of those who leave had planned to stay. Between 40
> percent and 50 percent of all new teachers leave within the first five years. This is a
> serious problem, not only for our society, which needs more qualified teachers, but
> also for those individuals who may have spent several years in college or graduate
> school preparing to teach. That is why it is important to ask early in a teacher
> preparation program, "Is this for me?" (McNamara, 2011, pp. 10-11)

Every year that I have taught the class I have invited guest professors and school

administrators and master teachers to come speak to the students about choosing a career in

education. Many of these guests included this warning to students somewhere in their

presentations: "More than half of you will not last as teachers more than five years." The reasons

these guest speakers gave for this appalling teacher attrition were as varied as the topics they

presented to the class. The administrator who spoke on positive classroom management said

teachers left teaching because they did not have control of classroom discipline. The young

woman who spoke about teaching in an urban setting said it was the inability of middle class

white teachers to communicate cross-culturally in inner city schools that caused teachers to

abandon the profession. The professor who came to speak about managing stress claimed it was

teachers' poor nutrition and lack of exercise that created teacher burnout. In each case it was teachers' practice, not their philosophy, which was seen as the source of attrition, but I wondered what part a tension in philosophical values might also play in teachers' decisions to leave the profession. I began thinking about the impact of philosophical values on educational practice and policy when these guest speakers introduced my students to the profession of teaching with the warning that half of them would not last five years. Did the guest predictions for my students' future have an impact on their decision to pursue a career in education? Do other departments at the university introduce freshmen to careers in music or medicine or engineering with the prediction that they will not succeed in their chosen careers? What part does a tension in philosophical values—between wanting to teach to make a difference in a child and being required to teach to make a difference in test scores—play in teacher attrition?

When Teacher Attrition Becomes a National Crisis

Aspiring teachers coming into our teacher education programs every year continue to name the desire to make a difference in the lives of children as the foundational motivation for their decision to pursue a career as a teacher. At the same time, "in 2003, the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future labeled teacher retention a 'national crisis,' warning that attrition was most severe for beginning teachers" (Cochran-Smith, et al., 2012, p. 846). Research indicates that insufficient backing by school administrators, classroom management challenges, restricted agency in curricular decisions, and dwindling wages are reasons teachers give for leaving teaching (Ingersoll, 2001). Other research shows it is a deficiency in important teaching qualities that drives teachers away from the classroom, such as poor teacher training, lack of experience or ability, and inadequate content area knowledge (Borman & Dowling, 2008). Cochran-Smith and her colleagues suggest that the solution to this

national crisis is to train students in teacher education programs in better teaching practice

(Cochran-Smith, et al., 2012). Darling-Hammond calls for standardized tests of teacher

effectiveness as a means to cull ineffective teachers from the profession at every stage of their

teaching careers, including before they ever sit behind a teacher's desk at all (Darling-Hammond,

2012). In most cases, the focus of research on teacher attrition is on evaluating teacher practice in

an effort to keep good teachers in schools. But is the high incidence of teacher burnout that

causes new teachers to abandon the profession for which they have worked so hard to prepare in

some part the result of a philosophical disappointment, of feeling constrained in the goal of

becoming a transformative teacher, and not simply an inadequate preparation for practice?

When Burnout Becomes Demoralization

Burnout is defined as the stress experienced by those who work in chronically tense

occupations. This stress is a state of physical, emotional, and mental fatigue, which "produces

feelings of alienation, indifference, and low self-regard. . . . Estimates place the percentage of the

teaching population experiencing such stress at any given time as ranging from about 15 to 45

percent" (Leithwood, Jantze, & Steinbach, 2001, p. 73). Different factors are attributed to

causing burnout, from the enormity of the workload to diminishing trust in leadership to "a sense

of depersonalization . . . likely when teachers assess the goals of the school to be incompatible

with their own professional goals" (Leithwood, Jantze, & Steinbach, 2001, p. 79).

One cause of burnout new teachers describe is feeling as though they are unable to use

their teaching gifts and implement their creative ideas in the teaching environment of public

schools (Goddard, O'Brien, & Goddard, 2006). The scripted lessons, mandated curriculum, and

diminishing opportunities for creative teaching in today's classrooms may cause disillusionment.

"If high-stakes accountability renders the moral rewards of the profession inaccessible, it is

likely that strong teachers will find little to sustain them in the pursuit of good work" (Santoro, 2011, p. 18). Such teacher burnout may begin during the teacher preparation program, long before the students find their first teaching jobs. Factors that contribute to teacher burnout during the first two years of a young professional's career include very difficult workloads and disappointment in the work environment of the schools (Goddard, O'Brien, & Goddard, 2006). Teacher attrition may be the result of new teachers being unable to find moral purpose in the work they are asked to perform. When this happens, it may be more apt to describe the resultant feelings of alienation as *demoralization,* rather than *burnout* (Santoro, 2011). Rethinking the examination of teacher attrition, by shifting from an analysis of teachers' characteristics (burnout) to the philosophical disappointment with teaching practice (demoralization),

> provides a new perspective on teacher retention that relies less on individual teacher psychology and more on an analysis of the state of the profession. It shows that accessing the moral dimension of teaching is not only about cultivating individual teachers' dispositions toward good work but also structuring the work to enable practitioners to do good within its domain. In this model, teacher attrition does not necessarily reflect a lack of commitment, preparedness, competence, or hardiness on the part of the practitioner. Rather, teacher attrition is analyzed from the perspective of whether teachers find moral value in the actual work they are asked to perform. (Santoro, 2011, p. 3)

The *demoralization* of beginning teachers may also be seen as a tension between the philosophical values they hold and the emphasis on performance of work they do not value. While burnout implies a teacher failure, in which the personal store of ability and skill has been exhausted, demoralization is better understood as being continually frustrated in attempts to teach well and to make a difference in students' lives. This is a philosophical conflict, and not merely a practical one. Unfortunately, "a sustained consideration of how moral and ethical reasons may contribute to educators' decisions to leave the profession is absent from nearly all of the literature on teacher attrition and on the moral dimensions of teaching" (Santoro, 2011, p. 4).

When Transformative Teaching Becomes a Moral Purpose for Enduring in the Profession

Teachers with a clearly articulated personal philosophy and "a strong sense of purpose in their professional and personal lives . . . are less likely to experience burnout" (Leithwood, Jantze, & Steinbach, 2001, p. 75). When teachers are provided with the intellectual and philosophical resources needed to continue to grow professionally, they may endure in the profession. Restructuring the work environment of the schools to enable teachers to feel they are doing good work, work of value to them both practically and philosophically, is also a deterrent to attrition, because "for many teachers, their work is a vocational calling, one replete with notions of moral and ethical commitments to their practice and the students with whom they work" (Santoro, 2011, p. 4). The vocational calling that is based on moral and ethical commitments to teaching that makes a difference in students' lives is transformative teaching.

It may be time to take another look at the importance of creating a personal teaching philosophy to the education and identity formation of teachers. The popular treatment of teaching as a trade, in which would-be teachers are trained in best practice and taught the techniques of classroom management and crowd control, is inadequate as preparation for teaching as a profession. Creating a personal philosophy of education prepares teachers to understand the ideas and values that will shape their teaching, the subject matter they choose to teach, the teaching practices they will favor, and research in the field that they may use to improve that practice. "The claim is that the ability to think philosophically is an indispensable component of a teacher's capacity for professional judgment" (Winch, 2012, p. 305). Only by understanding the philosophical values involved can new teachers successfully navigate the policies that will govern their practice. Only an awareness of the theory behind current debates will empower teachers to put the best empirical research about education into practice (Winch, 2012).

To prepare students to be teachers requires creating teacher preparation programs and educational policies that work towards restructuring school environments to be places where teachers are not demoralized but are empowered to do good work, work that they value and work that gives them a sense of purpose. Contemporary education shifts in policy and practice have complicated the realization of that ideal. The standards movement, the accountability movement, and market-based educational reforms are just a few of the "swings in the political pendulum" that are having an effect on teacher job satisfaction and retention (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005, p. 39). The tragedy of current educational policy is that, while intended to improve school for those students most in need, recent reforms actually prevent teachers who want to make a difference in their students' lives from being able to address their real and present needs. "As has been shown in careful studies, high stakes accountability has a 'corrosive influence' on the quality of teaching and learning" (Santoro, 2011, p. 18).

There is some evidence that one reason so many teachers leave the profession so soon after they have begun teaching is because they do not believe the educational goals and values that are important to them are attainable in the contemporary philosophical and psychological environment of America's schools. They no longer believe they can do work that is good, work they find valuable, there. The belief that teachers are no longer free to work to make a difference in a child's life may be an important factor in teacher demoralization and attrition.

When Making a Difference in Test Scores Becomes Making a Difference in Students' Lives

In today's schools, where standardized test scores are used as the ultimate evaluation of teacher success, there is concern that the qualities of teaching which cannot be measured will be ignored. There is concern that teaching to make a difference in test scores has replaced teaching to make a difference in students' lives. This study was conducted to investigate how teachers

continue to find ways to teach transformatively when so much depends on the success of mimetic teaching in their classrooms, and how teacher education programs can prepare students to become teachers who make a difference in such a test-driven environment.

The American debate about what kind of education is most transformative and beneficial to students began long before Philip Jackson defined teaching that makes a difference as transformative (Jackson, 1986). Just after the Civil War, Booker T. Washington created a curriculum for African American students that aimed at preparing them to live and work as free men and women. He believed that the best education for his compatriots would be "built on the premise that learning should stem from personal experiences" (Stocker). Washington's theory of education sounds essentially like the progressivism of America's preeminent educational philosopher, John Dewey, though he predated Dewey by at least thirty years:

> The only kind of knowledge that has any sort of value for a race that is trying to get on its feet is knowledge that has some definite relation to the daily lives of the men and women who are seeking it. (Stocker)

Washington insisted that education be transformative of his students' daily lives, but W.E.B. Dubois, his contemporary, rejected the compliance with White subjugation of Black Americans that Washington accepted to gain the support of those in power in his day. Dubois believed that anyone who would surrender the higher education of his mind in order to receive training to live by the work of his hands was "not worth civilizing" (Dubois, 1903). Dubois argued: "It is wrong to encourage a man or a people in evil-doing; it is wrong to aid and abet a national crime simply because it is unpopular not to do so" (Dubois, 1903). Perhaps another African American leader said it most eloquently, "There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but he must take it because conscience tells him it is right" (Martin Luther King, Jr. 2003).

The current emphasis on equality in education for all, which overrides the pursuit of personal excellence in education, is a modern example of the Washington-Dubois debate over vocational training opposed to the prizing of the higher education of the mind. It is what makes mimetic teaching imperative and transformative teaching nearly impossible. It is presently very politic to fight passionately for absolute equity in education, as demonstrated by the drive to establish nationwide standards, curricula, and assessments for American public schools. I understand the desire to make schools places where students are taught to live as good citizens of a democratic society and vocationally equipped to earn a living which will provide for their families. But I fear, however impolitic this may be, that any education system which does not challenge its best students to reach far beyond the national standard in the enlarging of their minds may be a system not worth civilizing. It is my firm conviction that the teaching I want to do is teaching which makes a difference in students' lives, and not just in their test scores, which led me to study higher education in America, as a true follower of Frederick Douglass, who wrote, "I prayed for freedom for twenty years, but received no answer until I prayed with my legs" (Douglass, *Autobiographies*).

Nel Noddings has written about the imposition of a standardized curriculum on America's children, in *Education and Democracy in the 21st Century* (2013). In this very current context, Noddings asks some rather Deweyan questions about the purpose of education in a democratic society: "Is it to supply every child with a pre-specified body of knowledge and skills, or is it to help each child find out what he or she is good at and would like to know and do?" (Noddings N. , 2013, p. 6). Noddings connects the drive for national standards, to supply every child with the same approved knowledge and skills, with the popular notion that our schools have failed. Current educational policy holds that the remedy for school failure is to

standardize "what all students should learn in certain subjects and, further, what subjects all students should be required to study" (Noddings N. , 2013, p. 5). Noddings, in contrast, believes the remedy for school failure is to help each child know and do and become who they most want to be. This is the moral purpose of transformative teaching.

It is clear that Noddings's views on current trends toward standardization of curriculum, teacher accountability, and assessment are a legacy from Dewey's educational philosophy:

> The most influential theory of this century—John Dewey's—is itself explicitly democratic. . . . Far from describing a uniform course of study for all children, Dewey wanted a curriculum rich enough, flexible enough, to help each child find what he or she needs to build a satisfying and satisfactory life. . . . The lack of student choices in today's schools should be deeply disturbing to those who embrace the central ideas promoted by Dewey. (Noddings N. , Education and Democracy in the 21st Century, 2013, pp. 17-24)

The increasing lack of teacher choices in schools is also disturbing. Noddings is correct in her evaluation of where Dewey stood on the question of standardizing curriculum. Dewey declared, "A single course of studies for all progressive schools is out of the question; it would mean abandoning the fundamental principle of connection with life experiences" (Dewey, 1938, p. 34).

Noddings, like Dewey, deplores the understanding of schooling for democratic equality that "requires that all children have exactly the same curriculum from kindergarten through high school," maintaining that, "from the perspective of democracy in the twenty-first century, there is nothing quite so *unequal* as sameness in curriculum and pedagogy" (Noddings N. , 2013, p. 27). This all-consuming focus on equivalence of materials, methods, and assessment gives little opportunity for students to achieve personal excellence in schools. This is another sentiment with which Dewey heartily concurred: "What avail is it to win prescribed amounts of information about geography and history, to win ability to read and write, if in the process the individual loses his own soul: loses his appreciation of things worthwhile?" (Dewey, 1938, p. 20).

The test-driven standardization of American public schools is leading to a comparable test-driven standardization of teacher education programs, which is equally of concern. In such a culture of prescribed curriculum and instruction, how can we prepare new teachers to teach for the "appreciation of things worthwhile," to teach to make a difference in more than the test scores their students will achieve?

When Stories to Leave By Become Stories to Live By

To investigate the philosophical disillusionment with educational values, which is in part the source of teacher attrition, empirical research that aims to be value neutral is powerless. For this reason narrative research is a better option for studying the impact of transformative teaching on the formation of a teacher identity that will enable new teachers to persevere in the profession. Jean Clandinin, a pioneer of narrative inquiry, explored how the "changing landscapes" of schools have made, for too many, the teacher-identity "stories to live by" become "stories to leave by . . . investigating how teacher identity formation impacts the choices new teachers make, even the choice to take off a teacher identity" (Clandinin, Downey, & Huber, 2009, p. 141). The stories Clandinin tells of teachers in Canadian public schools describe a tension between what the teacher knows about her students and how the "institutional machinery will know the student," with a resistance to an institutional knowing of students as test scores (Clandinin, Downey, & Huber, 2009, p. 144).

This study is a collection of the stories of teachers who are transformative in their students' lives within a secondary school context, asking Clandinin's question, "How might we, as teacher educators, find ways to work with teachers that sustain their identities?" (Clandinin, Downey, & Huber, 2009, p. 144). How we can turn "stories to leave by" back into "stories to live by?" She suggests that to do so, teacher stories must be lived out in relationships, over time,

with freedom to imagine new lives. "They are storied spaces: spaces which allow for all of our stories, even the hard-to-tell conflicting stories we live as teachers and teacher educators" (Clandinin, Downey, & Huber, 2009, p. 144). How do enduring teachers in the present environment of public schools find ways to continue to make a difference in their students' lives? How can teachers entering the system this year teach in ways they themselves will find worthwhile, and, by writing a story of their lives as transformative teachers, endure in the profession for more than five years? These questions of national importance to educational policy and philosophy are the questions I find personally compelling to study the transformative experiences that shape teacher identity formation.

One goal of this study was to investigate how the power of narrative in identity formation in the stories of transformative teaching students bring with them to the School of Education may be used as powerful tools in creating their professional identities as teachers. "Teachers . . . should therefore clearly know . . . upon which values, standards and educational concepts they base their teaching and educating methods, and gain self-knowledge about processes of their identity development" (Vloet & van Swet, 2010, p. 150). In the same way, teacher educators must know their values and tell their own stories well to become transformative as teachers in helping students construct the identity of the teachers they want to be, teachers who will make a difference in students' lives, and teachers who can write stories to live by which will endure.

Looking for Answers to My Questions: A Purpose Statement for Research

Exploring Uncharted Territory

"Historically, qualitative methodologists have described [four] major purposes for research: *to explore, explain, describe . . . and to emancipate or empower"* (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 33). My first goal for completing this study is to *explore* transformative

teaching and "generate hypotheses" about what it is that makes teaching transformative (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 34). Philip Jackson began his book, *The Practice of Teaching,* with a question that is critical to the study of curriculum theory: "Indeed, is there any such thing as a 'pedagogical science'?" (Jackson, 1986). This question is central to the philosophical conflicts that have characterized American educational theory. Reigning educational policy and teaching practice are built upon the struggle to create a science and unified theory of curriculum design. "The act of curriculum making [has] become a quasi-empirical empirical science, ushering in an entire new field of study (evaluation) while placing teachers in a vulnerable new state of accountability (for student learning) without adaptability (in terms of what and how to teach)" (Marshall, Sears, Louise, Roberts, & Schubert, 2007, p. 90). It was perhaps his dismay at this empiricizing of the craft of teaching that inspired Jackson to offer transformative teaching as an alternative to the mimetic instruction so necessary to schooling which has as its purpose evaluation through standardized testing. But transformative, transcendent relationships in schools are unfortunately rare, even by Jackson's reckoning. "The metaphor of teacher-as-artist or teacher-as-creator gives the transformative tradition an air of profundity and drama, perhaps even spirituality" (Jackson, 1986, p. 122). My personal goal is to develop a transformative philosophy of education, which will improve my practice and accomplish my desire to make a difference in my students' lives and to prepare teacher candidates to likewise teach to make a difference in their students' lives, as preparation for a career that will endure.

Explaining Transformative Relationships

A second goal for this research is to *explain* the relationships that enable transformative teaching. James Macdonald described this as a relationship, "fundamentally concerned with human nature and the unfolding or maturation of the individual" (Marshall, Sears, Louise,

Roberts, & Schubert, 2007, p. 117), which places value on freeing students to become the best they can be. "The epistemological components of a transcendental ideology are grounded in the concept of personal knowledge" (James B. Macdonald quoted in Marshall, Sears, Louise, Roberts, & Schubert, 2007, p. 121). Personal knowledge of students requires a caring relationship with the teacher. Great teaching is not about teaching methods or great behavioral objectives. It is something more basic: "It is about the expression of who we are" (Anding & Quinn, 2005, p. 488). The focus on student transformation through the personal knowledge gained in caring relationships is what Macdonald called *centering*. "Centering as the aim of education calls for the completion of the person or the creation of meaning that utilizes all the potential given to each person" (Marshall, Sears, Louise, Roberts, & Schubert, 2007, p. 122). The relationship between teacher and students based on a knowledge of students' interests and needs is also foundational to Deweyan curricular theory. To teach to make a difference in students' lives, Dewey claimed, the teacher must be given the intellectual freedom to make curricular judgements that define and give purpose to teaching practice. Without this philosophic and pedagogic freedom, "it is practically impossible for a teacher to gain knowledge of the individuals with whom he is concerned" (Dewey, Experience and Education, 1938, p. 26). The intentional creation of a caring relationship in the classroom necessary to teaching to make a difference begins through the telling of stories which are a teacher's best tool for identity formation (Gee, 2000-2001 and Olson, 2011). This study was designed to investigate the moral purposes that enable transformative teachers to do work that they find valuable, according to philosophical principles that they deem good and to give voice to the stories students tell of teaching that has made such a difference to their own identities that they choose to become transformative teachers themselves.

Describing the Transformative Experience

A third important goal for this study is to *describe* the experience of transformative teaching from both the teacher's and the student's perspective, to create opportunities for students to create a story of their own identity in which they may teach to make a difference. Transformative teaching is based on the Deweyan focus on the growth and development of students through the teacher-guided pursuit of excellence (The Child and the Curriculum, 1902). This is a personal goal, to understand how a transformative teaching experience can change teachers' identity stories, and how the pursuit of excellence guided by a relationship of care can make an enduring difference in students' lives.

Emancipating Transformative Teachers from the Politics of Policy

A final goal for conducting this study is to find ways to *emancipate* and empower new teachers to teach transformatively in schools bound by a commitment to improving test scores as a means of teacher accountability (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). "Critical theory is aimed at emancipating (their word) those affected by the schools from the schools' debilitating practices" (Eisner, 2002, p. 73). How can teachers in today's test-driven schools find the intellectual freedom Dewey spoke of, which will empower them to develop transformative relationships with their students? How can teacher educators find the professional and intellectual freedom to teach transformatively, to enable their students to identify themselves as transformative teachers? How can I be freed to form relationships which will make a difference in my students' lives? This becomes a very personal, practical goal, to teach in such a way that student needs are met, that demoralized teachers find new meaning for their work, and that schools become places where both teachers and students are given the intellectual freedom to form transformative relationships that will make a real difference in all of their lives.

Looking to Moral Purposes: A Statement of Significance

For Theory

In the middle of the twentieth century, "intellectuals seemed finally to begin to appreciate 'that the conventional paradigm of scholarship in any given era is not the only possibility'" (Marshall, Sears, Louise, Roberts, & Schubert, 2007, p. 109). John Dewey's progressive proposals for education, even then, were in direct response to the traditional, singular focus on standardized subject matter and the importance of evaluation as the ultimate objective of instruction. According to Dewey, "the curriculum should be defined as growth experiences that lead to a continuous reconceptualization of culture, individuals, and groups" (Schubert, 1986, p. 50). Dewey understood that his theories, if put into practice, would entail an ongoing struggle against the Perennial pursuit of standardization and assessment as a measure of teacher quality and accountability.

> All social movements involve conflicts, which are reflected intellectually in controversies. It would not be a sign of health if such an important social interest as education were not also an arena of struggles, practical and theoretical. But for theory, at least for the theory that forms a philosophy of education, the practical conflicts and the controversies that are conducted upon the level of these conflicts, only set a problem. It is the business of an intelligent theory of education to ascertain the causes for the conflicts that exist and then, instead of taking one side or the other, to indicate a plan of operations proceeding from a level deeper and more inclusive than is represented by the practices and ideas of the contending parties. (Dewey, Experience and Education, 1938, p. 2)

Transformative teaching is a significant alternative to the test-driven status quo of American educational theory because, although it is a practical and theoretic struggle, it allows for a renewed emphasis on personal excellence for students through the guiding relationship of care with a teacher committed to making a difference in students' lives.

For Policy

It was a resistance to the limitations of a presently politic, quasi-empirical concentration on what can be measured that led Elliot Eisner to re-imagine teaching as an art form rather than a hard science. Effective teaching, like painting or composing or performing, is a lively art that happens in the now, that cannot be adequately pre-planned or prescribed or scripted in advance. "It is an art in that teaching can be performed with such skill and grace that, for the student as well as for the teacher, the experience can be justifiably characterized as aesthetic" (Eisner, 2002, p. 154). Efforts to turn the art of teaching into an empirical science are as vain, to my view, as analyzing the chemistry of the paint to appreciate Van Gogh's use of color or making meticulous measurements of the pitch of the stage at the Globe Theater to understand the balance of comedy and tragedy in *Romeo and Juliet*. Transformative teachers place "a new faith in the power of the human, particularly in the human's intelligence to guide and control his or her own future, to take control of his or her own life" (Eisner, 2002, p. 63). If American educational policy is at present committed to a national standardization of curricula, instruction, and assessment, then teacher education programs must prepare teacher candidates to find intellectual, ethical, and even aesthetic value for their own work within that political system. We must find new ways to make teaching both beautiful and meaningful and to help new teachers endure in the profession by equipping them to identify themselves as teachers who can yet make a difference.

For Practice

As true Progressives, transformative teachers focus on the autonomy of students and their intellectual and emotional development. This way of thinking about and practicing teaching is the most influential orientation to my own educational philosophy and purpose. To my way of thinking, the most appealing quality of this personal educational philosophy is that teaching

becomes a fine art rather than a quasi-science. As an art, the aesthetic value of the practice of teaching becomes as important as its academic rigor. The act of teaching becomes a work of beauty as much as a statement of truth. "Assumptions about the nature of beauty are the province of aesthetic studies. At first glance, one might think that this area has more limited applicability to curriculum, that it pertains only to teaching in art, music, dance, theater, and other performing, visual, and fine arts" (Schubert, 1986, p. 124). But it is a human art, an expression of the beauty of a developing human mind and spirit. "When it is sensitive, intelligent, and creative—those qualities that confer on it the status of an art—it should, in my view, not be regarded, as it so often is by some, as an expression of unfathomable talent or luck, but as an example of humans exercising the highest levels of their intelligence" (Eisner, 2002, p. 156). The personal relationship of teacher and students is the social context which is most important for the art and craft of teaching that makes a difference. The teacher's transformation is as important to the process as the students' transformation. "We can change our students by changing ourselves, by becoming transformational teachers. In the end it is a question of integrity" (Anding & Quinn, 2005, p. 487). This is personally significant for me, as a thoughtful theory, as a moral purpose, and as an aesthetic practice.

Making Meaning of Experience: Not the End of the Story

Last year after a presentation near the end of the semester on *The Future of Education*, one young woman in the front row of my class burst into tears, and said, "It sounds like there *is* no future in education for us." I was not surprised that she had come to this conclusion after the recurring emphasis of our guest speakers on reasons teachers leave the profession so soon after being trained and certified to teach. I attempted to console her, and the class, by telling them to look around, to see their classmates as beginning teachers.

"The future of education," I told them, "is not in mandated curriculum or standardized testing. The future of education is not even in technology and banks of computer knowledge. I believe that the future of education is here in this room, in another generation of teachers who will commit themselves to making a difference in the lives of their students and the hope for a free and just society, through excellent teaching and an ethical commitment to relationships of care."

From that day I began to look for ways to make a difference in my classroom and to imagine a teacher education program which would prepare my students to become teachers who endure and even aspire to becoming transformative. I began to investigate ways to avoid the demoralization of beginning teachers and to imagine ways to turn stories to leave by back into stories to live by. The purpose of this study is to give attention to how aspiring teachers narrate the teaching that has transformed their lives and to investigate how their teachers taught in ways that made a difference, in the hope of a future where my students tell the stories of their identities as transformative teachers.

CHAPTER TWO

Transformative Teaching: A Literature Review

A Triangulation of Theory

The triangulation of theory is a qualitative methodology used to create a multi-voiced philosophical position which will serve as a framework for research, "not to create a unified super theory of qualitative research, but to benefit from a dialogue between the different perspectives" (Maxwell J. A., 2013, p. 43). If I begin with theory as a basic way of understanding experience and a plurality of perspectives as a way to look at the world, the specific theory about what makes teaching transformative and how a transformative teacher's story may shape the identity formation of her students, "may emerge during the data collection and analysis phase" (Anfara & Mertz, 2006, p. xxii). However, there is a sense in which the theory one brings, even to grounded research, determines the way one tells the story, and even what is eventually learned about the world. Anfara and Mertz (2006) suggest that the influence of theory is as significant in qualitative research as it is in more scientific methods. It structures and directs every part of the study, "from determining how to frame the purpose and problem, to what to look at and for, to how we make sense of the data that are collected . . . the entire process is theory-laden. Indeed, they affirmed a statement reputed to William James, 'You cannot pick up rocks in a field without a theory'" (Anfara & Mertz, pp. xxiii-xxv).
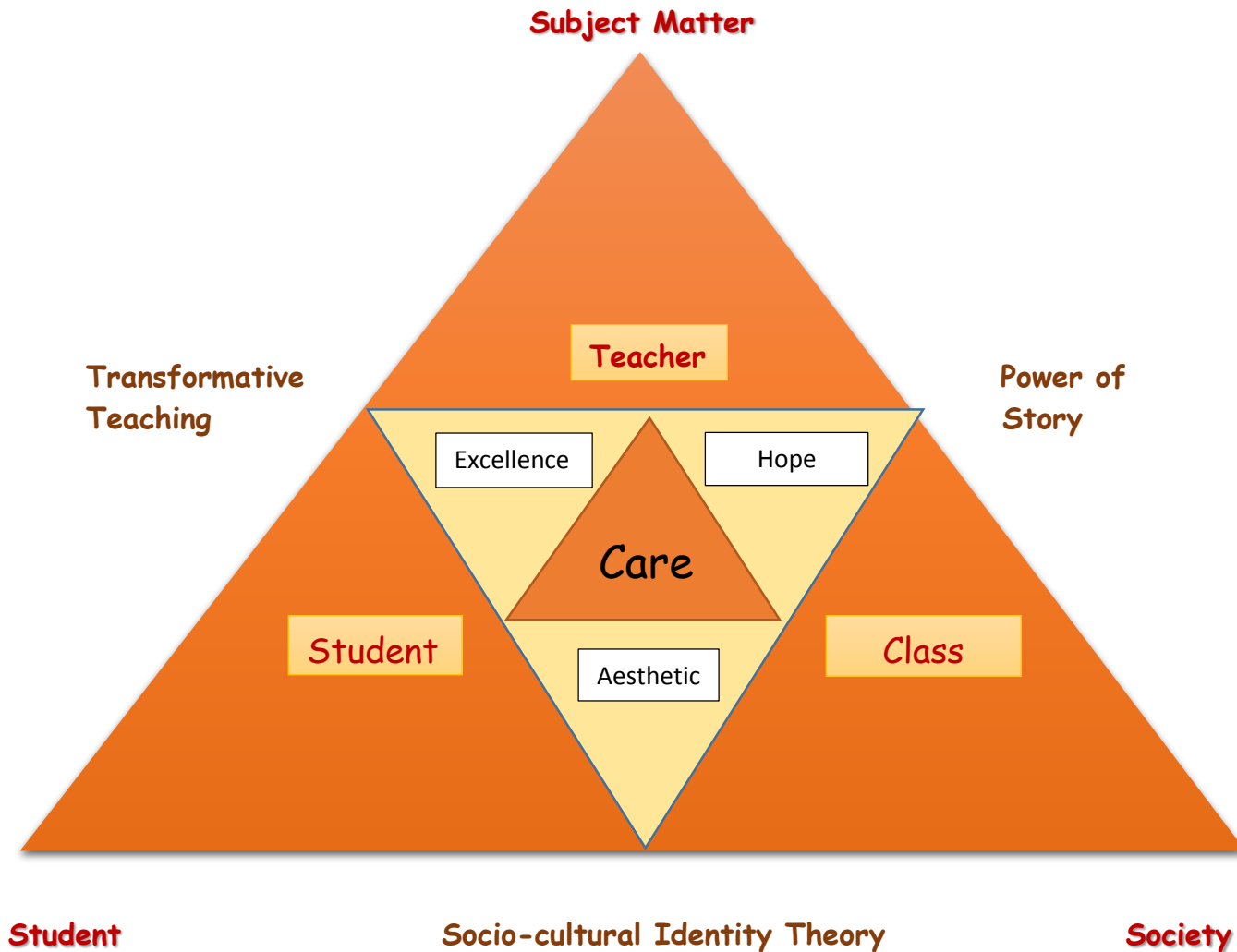
This triangulation of theory is an attempt to get a deeper understanding of teaching that is transformative by attending to all the "different voices, different perspectives, [and] points of view" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 5) of scholarship, which serves as a foundation for research. Triangulation of theory is telling the story from a variety of viewpoints, and serves to make the

lived experience under study more meaningful, more understandable, and even more generalizable in its application to other stories in other settings with different characters and themes. For this research the triangulation of theory will include 1) a humanist conception of teaching to transform, 2) a critical approach to sociocultural identity theory, and 3) a focus on the power of story in creating the identity formation that is the purpose of transformative teaching.

> What I believe we need are approaches to the study of educational problems that give full range to the varieties of rationality of which humans are capable, that are not limited to one set of assumptions about how we come to know. . . . Orthodoxy often creates blinders to new possibilities, and I believe the field of education has worn such blinders for too long. (Marshall, Sears, Louise, Roberts, & Schubert, 2007, p. 203)

I take off the blinders of my assumptions about the dire future of teaching to compose a theory of curriculum and instruction built upon the pursuit of excellence through identity formation and an ethic of care, which empowers teaching that makes a difference.

My triangulation of theory is embedded in the three curricular goals of Dewey's educational philosophy: subject matter, student, and society (Dewey, 1902). Because the moral purposes that empower transformative teaching are the product of the relational ethic of care that is central to my theory, Dewey's rather abstract triad is embodied in concrete relational persons, as identities being transformed by relationship. The teacher, who embodies the subject matter as its designer and presenter, the student, and the society embodied in other students in the class all become speakers in the triangular transformative dialogue. There is movement back and forth around the edges of the triangle (pictured below) between the conversant members of the dialogue, but there is also movement from the relationship of care which lies at the center of the diagram through the moral purposes that frame this relationship, out to every participant in the triangulated picture of what makes teaching transformative. Here is a visual conceptualization of this triangulation of theory:

Subject Matter

Transformative Teaching

Power of Story

Teacher

Excellence

Hope

Care

Student

Class

Aesthetic

Student

Socio-cultural Identity Theory

Society

Transformative teaching is drawn as a dialogue between the teacher and a student. The power of story is the dialogue between the teacher and all the students who make up the society of the classroom. Identity formation is enacted in the dialogue between each student and the class, as the societal recognition and affirmation of the person each student is becoming through the telling of personal narratives. At the very core, as central to the theory, are the moral purposes of teaching that makes a difference, with the relational ethic of care pictured as most foundational, out of which transformative teaching is made possible. The pursuit of excellence is

heard as the conversation between each student and teacher, and it is understood as the curricular value that makes a focus on content, in this case as embodied by a teacher, meaningful. The aesthetic of a good life can be understood as conversation between the student and the class, which is the philosophical excellence which gives meaning to a focus on student growth. The language of hope, or the practice of the pedagogy of possibility, is the conversation between the teacher and every student in the class, which is significant because it gives meaning to a curricular focus on changing society, one student at a time. Because this triangulation is set within Dewey's triad of curricular goals, and because his progressive focus on student growth is a foreshadowing of transformative teaching, the statement of a theoretical framework for research on transformative teaching must begin with an examination of the paradigms of curricular theory that have arisen in American education from Dewey's philosophy.

A Theoretical Framework for Research

In *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962), Thomas Kuhn used the term *paradigm* to describe shifts in ways of thinking held by astronomers and physicists in the hard sciences. In curricular theory, "we use the term *paradigm* to mean a conceptual framework or way to look at the world composed of knowledge, values, and assumptions that govern activity or inquiry in an academic field" (Marshall, Sears, Louise, Roberts, & Schubert, 2007, p. xxxii). In the development of a theoretical framework for educational research, I began by examining the historic paradigms of American curricular theory and following the admonition of the most transformative teacher I met at the university to look to the moral purposes central to each philosophy when evaluating curriculum orientations. "Perhaps . . . we need a theory of value to help us make a theory of curriculum" (Herrick and Tyler quoted in Marshall, Sears, Louise, Roberts, & Schubert, 2007, p. 25).

The Perennial Paradigm

The Perennial paradigm of curriculum theory is foundational to curriculum design and teaching practice in American schools. As described by Ralph Tyler in 1947, this curriculum development model calls for a focus on the subject matter of traditional academic disciplines, the Great Ideas of classical Western culture (Marshall, Sears, Louise, Roberts, & Schubert, 2007). "The most traditional image of curriculum stems back to antiquity and the seven liberal arts . . . curriculum is equated with the subject to be taught" (Schubert, 1986, p. 26).

Hebert Spencer (1861) was first to ask "the enduring curriculum question: 'What knowledge is of most worth?'" (Marshall, Sears, Louise, Roberts, & Schubert, 2007, p. 2). Perennial theorists answer the curriculum question like this—the knowledge that is most worthwhile is that which has been passed down for generations, the classics of the traditional academic disciplines. When education is characterized as an empirical science, it becomes important to not admit to an underlying value system or moral purpose (Schubert, 1986, p. 4). "Instead, the aspiration is to be value neutral and technical" (Eisner quoted in Marshall, Sears, Louise, Roberts, & Schubert, 2007, p. 172). However, all curriculum and instruction, like all scientific inquiry, is value laden. Traditional curricularists value meaningful knowledge that has endured. This is the oldest, most persistent paradigm of curricular theory.

The Progressive Paradigms

Dewey proposed a Progressive philosophy of education in direct response to the singular focus of the Perennialists on subject matter. According to Dewey, "the curriculum should be defined as growth experiences" of students (Schubert, 1986, p. 50). The Progressives' answer to the curricular question—what is most worth knowing—is that which is of most practical value to the growth of students, their intellectual and emotional development. This is the alternative way

of looking at teaching that Jackson calls *transformative* (Jackson, 1986), and it is the most influential orientation to my own educational philosophy and purpose. Progressives value the growth of the individual as much as the classic content matter and the interests of society and are "fundamentally concerned with human nature and the unfolding or maturation of the individual" (Marshall, Sears, Louise, Roberts, & Schubert, 2007, p. 117), which places value on freeing each student to become the best human individual he or she can be.

Progressivism has had two distinct but related branches. "One of those was rooted in a conception of the nature of human experience and intelligence, the other in social reform" (Eisner, 2002, p. 67). The social reformers of the Critical paradigm believe that the knowledge that is of most worth is that which frees the oppressed and gives to all an equal opportunity to live and succeed in society. Henry Giroux described the early years of the Critical movement: "In 1966, we were imbued with taking up a social field that smacked of giving something to others. There was a real deep sense of the ethical relevance of your job. Careerism was not the primary motivation. Teaching was seen as a vocation" (Marshall, Sears, Louise, Roberts, & Schubert, 2007, p. 146). Critical educators value social equity and justice and seek to fix what is wrong with schools and with the society through curriculum design.

The consequence of creating a hard science of curriculum development and instruction is that teachers are made mere technicians, scripted implementers of the curriculum developed far away by expert educators. Teachers are silenced in the classroom dialogue which is necessary to the identity formation of transformative teaching. Dewey argued that it was teachers who must create purposes, instruction, and evaluation (Dewey, 1902). Teachers must be reconnected to the curriculum design process, active artists throughout its creation. Paradoxically, in each of these curricular paradigms that have arisen out of Dewey's philosophy, the teacher is a silent and

invisible player in the dialogical scene. One goal for developing a transformative teaching philosophy is to imagine a classroom where teachers again have a voice in curriculum design.

For me, the development of a theoretical framework as a basis for research is built upon valuing the relationship between the actors in Dewey's curricular triad more than a singular focus on subject, student, or society. I have been working to create a personal educational philosophy that is as unapologetically humanist as Dewey at his best, while still commanding a pluralism of perspective that gives a voice to teachers as important actors in the transformative dialogue. In the words of Michael Apple, I have been looking for a "humanist tradition with some teeth in it" (Marshall, Sears, Louise, Roberts, & Schubert, 2007, p. 99). As a Perennialist, I remain committed to an emphasis on academic excellence. As a Progressive, I am passionately committed to the central educational goal of the personal growth and development of students, in the aesthetic pursuit of a beautiful life. As a Critical scholar, I think of school as the best place to change society, as it is accomplished through the transformation of one student at a time, hoping in the possibility that a teacher can make a difference in the life of a child. My personal response to the curricular question includes the centrality of subject matter, but also centers on student experience and growth that is truly transformational. The triangulation of theory that is the framework for this study is an argument for the power of story in identity formation, which is the substance of the dialogue of transformative teaching enacted in a relationship of care.

First Theory in the Triangulation: Transformative Teaching

Transformative teaching is teaching for growth in students, through intentional, creative action. "Transformation as an outcome refers to a deep and lasting change . . . a developmental shift or a change in worldview . . . enabling people to move toward habits of mind and habits of being" (Fisher-Yoshida, Geller, & Schapiro, 2009, pp. 6-7). Such a desire to make a difference in

students' lives is at the heart of all curriculum theory and practice (Marshall, Sears, Louise, Roberts, & Schubert, 2007). Because we live in a time when the world so quickly changes, schools and universities are challenged to empower students and teachers to adapt, to continue to develop in an uncertain environment. Our concept of a campus, a place where students meet to learn, is challenged by virtual schooling. Technology has made textbooks, term papers, and sometimes even teachers obsolete. The student body itself is more diverse than ever before. I do not believe we can face these challenges with new technology and more iPhones in every class. We need instead to remember that, "The thing being made in a university is humanity. . . . Good work and good citizenship are the inevitable by-products of the making of a good—that is, a fully developed—human being" (Johansson & Felten, 2014, p. 1). This is why a transformative undergraduate education is more important than ever before. Students must learn to write new stories of their lives to thrive in an ever-changing world. Teachers must learn to create a caring community where they can make a difference in their students' lives. "Transformation [is] understood as an ongoing process of intentionally aligning one's actions and behaviors with one's evolving sense of identity" (Johansson & Felten, 2014, p. 1).

John Dewey

"More than any other philosopher, John Dewey influenced the thought of curriculum scholars throughout the twentieth century" (Marshall, Sears, Louise, Roberts, & Schubert, 2007, p. 2). It was Dewey (The Child and the Curriculum, 1902) who specified three aims of curriculum studies: subject matter, students, and society. The focus on one or the other of these goals by different paradigms of curricular theory was not a source of conflict in Dewey's philosophy; rather the three curricular goals were connected and interrelated in the education of a child. Allowing children to pursue their own interests would lead, through careful guidance by a

teacher, to a realization of the importance of classical disciplines, as well as to transformative personal growth and citizenship in a democratic society (Schubert, 1986).

Dewey's focus on student growth and development is foundational for understanding what it means to teach to transform. In an early work titled *The Child and the Curriculum* (1902), Dewey began by comparing the progressive focus on the child with the traditional, old school focus on the curriculum. If the curriculum is a world of infinite and impersonal facts, the world of the child is one of personal contacts, bounded by experience. The specialized, abstract, and logical subject matter of the curriculum is contrasted with the single, whole-hearted, practical, and emotional life of the child (1902). The disciplines of the curriculum are counteracted by the interests of the child; the training in classics through the guidance and control of a traditional teacher is compared to a progressive teacher's sympathy with the child's progress towards self-realization, freedom, and initiative (1902). This is transformative teaching.

Even in this early work Dewey did not see the progressive problem as one of finding a way to turn the educator's focus *from* the curriculum *to* the child. Instead, he saw it as a problem of understanding and building upon the relationship or connection between the two; how are the facts and ideas so important to the classical curriculum already contained within the experience of the child? "The systematized and defined experience of the adult mind is of value to us in interpreting the child's life as it immediately shows itself" (1902, p. 13). The interpretation of a child's lived experience by a caring teacher is transformational.

In writing about the educational goals of the school and the society, Dewey likewise saw their purposes as not in opposition but in relationship. Changes in the values and focus of the society are mirrored in like changes in the schools, and these are indicative of changes in the education of individual children. This connection between educational trends and societal

changes was a major topic of another early work, *The School and Society* (1900). Before the Industrial Revolution, school was primarily for the sons of the elite classes. As people moved from farms to factories, from remote villages to large cities, schooling became available for the masses. This led to an Intellectual Revolution, a change in the schools that mirrored the change in society. Dewey saw the old school as intellectual, passive, and training for academia which was pointless to the lived experience of the individual child. The progressive alternative he proposed was a new school which would be productive, creative, active, and train for life in a democratic society. "Because our society has changed, our schools must" (1900, p. 27).

A new commitment to transformative teaching would recognize the teacher as the embodiment of academic leadership in the Deweyan triad of subject, student, and society. In a paradigm of curriculum and teaching centered on a transformative relationship between student and teacher, the teacher can no longer be an invisible member of the cast. Instead of seeing *conflict* between the child and the curriculum, a focus on the student rather than the subject matter, Dewey emphasized *relationship* (1902). To address the paradigmatic conflicts over curricular aims and opinions about what knowledge is truly of most worth—academic content, learner, or society—transformative theory places greatest value on the relationships among the different actors of the educational scene—teacher, student, and the society of the class—which relationships are the source of teaching that makes an enduring difference in students' lives.

Philip Jackson

"Two distinguishably different ways of thinking about education and of translating that thought into practice undergird most of the differences of opinion that have circulated within educational circles over the past two or three centuries . . . the 'mimetic' and the 'transformative'" (Jackson, 1986, p. 116). Jackson defined the *mimetic* as "closer to what most

people today seem to think education is all about," an approach which "gives a central place to the transmission of factual and procedural knowledge from one person to another through an essentially imitative process" (Jackson, 1986, p. 117). In mimetic teaching, knowledge is "transmitted" from the teacher to the student. It comes from the teacher's experience, not the student's. "What the teacher (or textbook or computer) knows, that shall the student come to know" (Jackson, 1986, p. 119). This approach sees education as a science, not an art.

By contrast, *transformative* teaching focuses on "a transformation of one kind or another in the person being taught" (Jackson, 1986, p. 120). Because this is seen as changing the very character or identity of students, it is considered knowledge that will endure. One of Jackson's students, Anne Kuehnle, collected questionnaires from 150 people in her hometown of Elmhurst, Illinois, asking them to tell about teachers they remembered who had changed their lives. From his reading of the responses, Jackson determined, "There seems no shortage of testimonial evidence to support the conclusion that at least some teachers do indeed modify character, instill values, shape attitudes, generate new interests, and succeed in transforming, profoundly and enduringly, at least some of the students in their charge" (Jackson, 1986, p. 123).

Jackson described specific teaching strategies he believed would be transformative. The most important of these was the teacher's modeling of the virtues of excellence that are the objective of transformative teaching. "Of the many attributes associated with transformative teaching, the most crucial ones seem to concern the teacher as a person. For it is essential to success within that tradition that teachers who are trying to bring about transformative changes personify the very qualities they seek to engender in their students" (Jackson, 1986, p. 124). Jackson also suggested that the teaching style be more the dialogue of discussion than the monologue of lecture. And finally, he acknowledged the power of story within the

teacher/student relationship to teaching that transforms: "Within the transformative tradition stories of one kind or another . . . play a large role" (Jackson, 1986, p. 125).

A transformative teacher, according to Jackson, would have as her moral purpose the development of the character and the mind of every student, in the creation of a human being, "in the sense of being closer to what humans are capable of becoming—more virtuous, fuller participants in an evolving moral order" (Jackson, 1986, p. 127). Unfortunately, teaching has become more *mimetic* and less *transformative*, "for generations, if not centuries" (Jackson, 1986, p. 131). The increasing reliance on mimetic teaching is a turning away from the transformative goals of personal, moral development of human beings. "In current discussions of what our schools are all about, talk of morality and character has been replaced by notions like mastery, basic skills, competency, and accountability" (Jackson, 1986, p. 132). The ultimate result of this turning away from transformative teaching is that subject matter that can be mimetically transmitted, like math, language arts, and science, is the focus of most current educational research and reform. The relationship between teacher and students essential to transformative teaching is difficult in this environment. "Differences in the conception of teaching within the two traditions go far beyond the question of what shall be taught and how it shall be done. They extend to the psychological and epistemological relationship between the teacher and his or her students" (Jackson, 1986, p. 125).

In the thirty years since Jackson defined the terms, the turn to the mimetic and away from the transformative has continued to increase, as evidenced by ever more reliance on test scores as accountability measures. In *The Moral Life of Schools* (1993) he has written extensively about the moral influence of transformative teaching happening in schools, both intentionally and unconsciously, whether or not the teacher's purpose is to be transformative.

> To anyone who takes a close look at what goes on in classrooms it becomes quickly evident that our schools do much more than pass along requisite knowledge to the students attending them. They also influence the way those students look upon themselves and others. They affect the way learning is valued and sought after and lay the foundations of lifelong habits of thought and action. They contribute to the growth of character. (Jackson, Boostrom, & Hansen, 1993, p. xii)

The Moral Life of Schools (1993) was the result of a two and a half year study of eighteen classrooms in public, independent, and parochial schools. As they began the study, the authors believed that teachers transform their students through the moral convictions they model, as well as those they explicitly talk about in school, but they also believed that "teachers and school administrators are not always fully aware of the moral potency of their actions" (Jackson, Boostrom, & Hansen, 1993, p. xv). As the study evolved, the researchers found that there are many spoken, "avowedly moral" (p. 3) and unspoken, "that embody the moral" (p. 4) instances of transformative education in every classroom.

> It is a moral question. What we want to know about any teacher is what kind of person he or she is. . . . Finally, because they boil down in the end to the question of whether the student will like or dislike the teacher, they become entangled with the fundamental moral attitudes of love and hate. (Jackson, Boostrom, & Hansen, 1993, p. 87)

The relationship between student and teacher and the moral character the teacher models are the most important elements of teaching that transforms. This relationship requires that teachers and students speak the truth to each other, which is one reason why the current obsession with testing as a measure of teacher effectiveness is so detrimental to the transformative teaching relationship. "The stress that testing places on the normal assumption of truthfulness in many classrooms is a topic worthy of extended treatment in its own right" (Jackson, Boostrom, & Hansen, 1993, p. 19). Another consideration is the significance to the transformative relationship of the "mutually shared assumption that the material being taught is important and the activity being engaged in is worthwhile" (Jackson, Boostrom, & Hansen, 1993, p. 24). This assumption

of *worthwhileness* is a moral act, because it rests upon a commitment to creating places where students can receive the help they need to become the people they most want to be. In the course of his two-year study, Jackson and his fellow researchers found that the unintentional moral influences of schooling were of "greater moral significance" (Jackson, Boostrom, & Hansen, 1993, p. 44). Even unintended modeling of moral values has a transformative effect on student identity, though it may not be the effect desired by teachers or school administrators.

> The question of what students are taught and how well they are taught is always, at heart, a moral question. This is so because . . . education's overarching goal is to make its recipients better than they were when they began the process. It seeks to improve them in some way. (Jackson, Boostrom, & Hansen, 1993, p. 146)

To Philip Jackson the intentional modeling of moral virtues in the practice of teaching to transform has become a "kind of pedagogical creed" (Jackson, Boostrom, & Hansen, 1993, p. 185). Teaching to transform has become for him a moral duty to teach for the growth of students.

Elliot Eisner

With a Deweyan return to a transformative curricular focus on the development and growth of children, Eisner's perception of teaching as an art rather than a science led him to speak for teaching "the Progressive way" where each child's education is designed specifically for that child. "This implies an approach that required teachers to appreciate the child's background, to deal with the *whole child.* 'Whole' here meant the child was to be seen as a social and emotional creature, not only as an academic or intellectual one" (Eisner, 2002, pp. 70-71). Eisner regretted the approach toward teaching practice in which schools were run "like factories" and teaching "was not viewed as a matter of artistry, but as a matter of efficiency" (Eisner, 2002, p. 71). In such places he found it unlikely that anyone was attending to the needs or the development of the *whole child. "*What is missing from American schools . . . is a deep respect for personal purpose, lived experience, for the life of imagination, and for those forms of

understanding that resist dissection and measurement" (Eisner, 2002, p. 77). Since schools focus on efficiency and accountability that is measurable by standardized tests more than the transformation of the life of each individual child, Eisner believed that individual teachers must redirect their teaching focus to the difference they can make by attention to the identity formation of their students. To teach to transform the life of a child

> requires a reconceptualization of how we think about educational programs, who develops them, and what they are for. They are not primarily . . . for learning how to earn a living, but for learning how to live. To learn how to live the child must learn how to listen to her own personal drummer in an environment that makes such attention not only possible but desirable. (Eisner, 2002, p. 78)

This is transformative teaching that is driven by the aesthetic purpose of creating a good, a happy, and a beautiful life.

Paulo Freire

Paulo Freire described his commitment to transformative teaching as a *Pedagogy of Possibility* (Rossatto, 2005). "An act of learning can be called transformative only if it involves a fundamental questioning and reordering of how one thinks or acts" (Johansson & Felten, 2014, p. 42). Freire's term for the mimetic is *informative* teaching, which is contrasted to the teaching that he, like Jackson, speaks of as *transformative*. For Freire, teaching becomes transformative when students feel "that not only their questions and comments, but their very selves, are being heard and responded to" (Johansson & Felten, 2014, p. 45). Teachers who are dedicated to the practice of a pedagogy of possibility are able to achieve the impossible, in transforming not only the lives of their students but also "the injustices of the world" (Rossatto, 2005, p. 8). Transformative teaching, in Freire's understanding, has moved past a personal Progressive philosophy into a Critical Praxis. Transformative optimism is hopeful about the future and about students' capability to construct their own identity, and in the process to reconstruct society.

Freire believes that the "test-driven environment" so prevalent in schools creates a hopeless fatalism among both teachers and students, which leads to despair "not only in regards to schooling, but also to life in general" (Rossatto, 2005, p. 90). Worse yet, "testing . . . denies children the access to opportunities for critical thinking as schools eliminate scheduled activities that do not appear on a standardized test, such as art, music, class discussions, and even play time" (Rossatto, 2005, p. 93). But when students become active in making meaning of their own lived experience, through the arts and through reflection and interpretation of the stories they are writing of their lives, they participate actively in the pedagogy of possibility. "Students learn to be agents of their own history as opposed to passive participants, thus enabling them to transform their reality and liberate themselves from hopeless conditions" (Rossatto, 2005, p. 128).

Transformation is made possible through a dialogue between teacher and students, a dialogue built upon their relationship. "Dialogue is a moment where humans meet to reflect on their reality as they make and remake it. . . . Through dialogue, reflecting together on what we know and do not know, we can then act critically to transform reality" (Shor & Freire, 1987, p. 13). This dialogue can only be built upon a transformative relationship between a teacher and a student. The student learns as the teacher directs through identity forming storytelling which is transformative (Shor & Freire, 1987).

More Recent Theorists Writing about Transformative Teaching

Research conducted more recently about transformative teaching is more likely written about training in the business world or adult continuing education than describing an approach to teaching in schools. Still, the basic theory of what makes teaching transformative has not changed much since Dewey wrote about a focus on the growth of students, Jackson talked about the role of storytelling in teaching that transforms, and Freire modeled a pedagogy of possibility.

In 2008, Sue McGregor wrote about not two but three types of teaching, the *transmissional*, the *transactional*, and the *transformational*. Like Jackson, she designated power to the teacher in the dissemination of knowledge in *transmissional* (mimetic) teaching and saw the student as the central focus of *transformational* teaching. The *transactional*, as defined by McGregor, is closer to what Freire called transformational, in which "power is more likely to be shared between the teacher and students. . . . The teacher is not just an expert, but is also a facilitator, mentor, and guide . . . jointly constructing meaning that informs each learner's personal growth and development" (McGregor, 2008, p. 52).

McGregor enlarged upon the difference between Freire's model of transformation as socially constructed and Jackson's original definition of it as the identity development of an individual child. "The intent is to help each student find his or her own inner voice or power, so he or she feels empowered to effect social change" (McGregor, 2008, p. 53). She cites Jack Mezirow as an important theorist writing about transformative teaching and learning. Mezirow's theory has three common themes: "centrality of the learner's experience, critical thinking and reflection, and rational discourse" (McGregor, 2008, p. 54). In Mezirow's theory, the educator's task is to intentionally create cognitive dissonance, a disruption of the student's way of thinking or perspective, in order to encourage reflective thinking and give learners "a chance to change their minds, even their views of the world" (McGregor, 2008) and (Mezirow, 1997). Mezirow's theory diverges from Dewey's and Jackson's most in that he sees transformative learning "as a uniquely adult form of metacognitive reasoning" (Mezirow, 2003, p. 58) and writes exclusively about transformative learning in adult education. Like Dewey and Jackson, he views transformative teaching as not only working to change a student's mind, but as active in helping students recreate their very selves. "Transformative learning develops autonomous thinking" and

changes the learner's mind or "frame of reference," the beliefs, values, and storied experience through which a world view is defined (Mezirow, 1997, p. 5). These frames of reference consist of "habits of mind and a point of view" (Mezirow, 1997, p. 6), which I have drawn in my conceptualization as the Aristotelian intellectual, moral, and aesthetic virtues that frame the centrality of a relational ethic of care necessary to teaching that transforms. Even though he sees transformative *learning* as a reflective practice of the learner which does not require a relationship with a teacher, Mezirow acknowledges that a participation in discourse "becomes central to making meaning" (Mezirow, 1997, p. 8). To my view, this discourse requires a dialogue with a teacher who is committed to transformative teaching in a relationship of care.

Discussing the use of transformative teaching methods outside the academy, Fisher-Yoshida, Geller, and Schapiro define transformative teaching as "teaching for change through intentional action" (2009, p. 2). These researchers raised criticisms of Mezirow's theory as too individualistic, not seen as happening in relationship, but "as a primarily rational process" (Fisher-Yoshida, Geller, & Schapiro, 2009, p. 2), a process of learning rather than of teaching that does not find a teacher necessary. In all these theories, transformation is seen as a change in perspective, as *individuation* (a personality change), as moving to a new stage in development. "All transformations involve our emotions as well as our thinking, our habits of being as well as our habits of mind" (Fisher-Yoshida, Geller, & Schapiro, 2009, p. 9). This suggests to me the development of virtues of moral, intellectual, and aesthetic excellence.

The University and a Transformative Teaching Theory

Transformative teaching is especially appropriate in universities where the changing settings and new ideas students encounter are uniquely suited to identity formation. When we work with undergraduates, "our purpose is to help students both transform themselves and

understand the process of transformation so that they are well-equipped to embrace change and flourish after they graduate" (Johansson & Felten, 2014, p. 2). The ways college students have always looked at the world are disrupted, their assumptions are challenged, their understanding may be broadened, and they are learning new ways of being and living in the world. They are thus uniquely positioned for transformative learning. In a relationship with a caring teacher, students can be challenged to grow as humans. "Learning that is transformative is characterized by a deep and enduring change in thinking that is evidenced through changed ways of being in the world" (Johansson & Felten, 2014, p. 3).

When I assumed the responsibility of Instructor for the *Introduction to Education* class, I was very much aware that it had historically been focused on preparing students for teaching in American public schools. It was, in that sense, almost entirely vocational training. When I redesigned the content of the class, I focused on three strands, the professional, the practical, and the personal. In the professional strand, I introduced the paradigms of educational philosophy that shape a teacher's theory and practice, regardless of the setting in which she teaches. In the practical, the students observed public school teachers at work in their classrooms. In the personal, I initiated the telling of personal narratives that define our identities as teachers. I broke the very large class into discussion groups, and because they were telling their own stories, students were mostly not afraid to speak. I told my stories, as well, to show that we all have a rich narrative of school, even if we have never been inside an American public school building. I believe that the stories we tell about our lives and experiences have transformative power to make meaning of who we have become and to create the identities of who we wish to be.

Student teachers may learn as much from the story of who their teachers are as they learn from course content and assignments (Murray & Kosnik, 2011). By reflecting on their own

experience of school and listening to the life stories of their classmates, they begin to see themselves and be recognized by their peers as teachers. "Because humans have something to do with making themselves and others turn out in certain ways, human nature must be informed, as well as shaped, by some kind of moral ideal" (Howe, 1992, p. 244). That is why it is crucial to attend to moral purposes to teach in a way that transforms. What we include in the curriculum, the life-changing experiences we prepare for our students, especially the formation of new identities by our affirmation of who our students' stories are creating them to be—all of these are ethical actions which require a clear understanding of moral purposes (Agnello, 2010).

Teaching to transform must be a primary objective of teacher education programs because the identity formation of teachers is key to their eventual success as teachers and to their hope of enduring in the profession. "Teaching is done by somebody. . . . It matters who the teacher is. . . . Any attempt to conceptualize teaching needs to include a concept of the teacher as a person" (Kelchtermans, 2009, p. 258). Transformative teaching implies a relationship of care that must begin in the classrooms where teachers are created. "How I teach is the message" especially relevant to teacher education (Kelchtermans, 2009, p. 259). Even at the university level transformative teaching depends upon a relationship of care between faculty and students.

The problem is that in our time "the human subject faces threats of becoming decentred, fragmented, or even obliterated" (Piper, 2004, p. 279). It is hard to individuate identity in a global sociocultural setting. It is difficult to prepare teachers both to teach to nationally set standards of what knowledge is of most worth at the same time as we prepare them to know their students well enough to teach to make a difference in their individual lives. The eclipsing of individual needs and personal growth by global objectives and international assessments leads to a diminishing of the importance of personal identity. "All of this results in a sense of personal

meaninglessness and worthlessness, in feelings of existential isolation, and in a diminished sense

of personal authenticity" (Piper, 2004, p. 279). Truly transformative teaching now depends on

developing an individual sense of identity within the social context of the global community.

In teacher education programs that focus exclusively on improving teacher practice, as

preparation for teaching to the tests by which American teachers' effectiveness is now evaluated,

transformative teaching becomes a pedagogy of impossibility. If we do not look to the formation

of teacher identity as a primary purpose for teacher education, our newest teachers will have no

resources to teach to make a difference in the identity formation of their students. A teacher in

relationship with students takes on responsibility for their transformation and learning. A

professor in relationship with student teachers must also take on the responsibility of guiding

them in reconstructing their identity stories, always remembering that when teachers are

prepared for the profession with no thought given to their "stories to live by" they become

"stories to leave by" (Craig, 2013, p. 268). The 1996 Delors Report commissioned by the United

Nations' Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) described four pillars of

education: learning to *know*, learning to *do*, learning to *live together*, and learning to *be* (Craig,

2013, p. 270). Our teacher education programs spend so much time preparing students with what

they need to *know* and what they need to know *how to do*, that there is very little time given to

learning how to *live together* and how to *be* teachers who make a difference. How can we expect

to develop transformative teachers without having transformation as a goal of teacher education?

Recent scholarship marks college as "an age of possibilities" when it comes to identity

exploration (Johansson & Felten, 2014, p. 9). Students come to university expecting to be

changed forever by the experience, but "for transformation to occur, change must be deep and

lasting, touching close to a core identity" (Johansson & Felten, 2014, p. 10). The schools which

do the best job in creating a culture where student transformation can happen do so "by finding and creating ways for students to tell their stories" (Johansson & Felten, 2014, p. 56).

"One of the characteristics of 'transformative intellectuals' [is] their commitment to using autobiography to reveal beliefs, to uncover assumptions, and connect these relived experiences to thinking and acting in the present moment" (Lester, 1993, p. 240). By telling their own stories, in dialogue with their instructors and peers, students begin to create the teacher identity of a transformative teacher. "Ultimately, to better prepare preservice and inservice teachers for understanding and working within rather than against the tensions of their own dialogical classrooms, teacher educators need to create classes that are dialogical spaces" (Fecho, Collier, Friese, & Wilson, 2010, p. 429). The teacher education classroom must be a space where students are safe to challenge their sense of self and explore their identities as teachers, to write new stories of the teachers they want to be.

Second Theory in the Triangulation: Identity Formation

Developing a Sociocultural Teacher Identity Theory

Because transformative teaching is about making a change in students' lives through identity formation, a sociocultural identity theory is important to the creation of this philosophic triangulation. Norton defines social identity as "the relationship between the individual and the larger social world" and cultural identity as "the relationship between individuals and members of a group who share a common history, a common language, and similar ways of understanding the world" (1997, p. 420). Whether speaking of individual identity or identity in a sociocultural relationship, some recognition of the individual identity by the society is necessary to create meaning of a person's life. "Being recognized as a certain *kind of person*, in a given context, is

what I mean here by *identity*. In this sense of the term, all people have multiple identities connected not to their *internal states* but to their performances in society" (Gee, 2000-2001, p. 99). The desire to be recognized as a person whose life has meaning is of vital importance to students in any social or cultural context. "Identity relates to desire—the desire for recognition, the desire for affiliation, and the desire for security and safety" (Norton, 1997, p. 410).

Sociocultural identity formation "has, in addition, a transformative agenda" (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005, p. 279). Creating a teacher identity involves employing teacherly discourses in order to be recognized as a teacher. This process, especially for beginning teachers, often involves "trying on a variety of ways of being a teacher. . . . It is situational—it shifts from context to context" (Hallman, 2007, p. 475). Learning a new language is difficult and identity fragmenting, and the shift from a fluent student discourse to a halting teacher language is often a confusing and conflicted, if transformative, process. "Moreover, teacher educators can help beginning teachers recognize that the dissonance they feel in the effort of constructing their identity as beginning teachers should be viewed as constructive" (Hallman, 2007, p. 485).

It is the relationship of the power of story in identity formation to transformative teaching which makes a sociocultural identity theory so important to my triangulation of a theoretic framework for research. Norton calls for a collaborative storytelling in language classrooms for identity formation which "is not just descriptive but fundamentally transformative" (Norton, 1997, p. 420). Because teaching is embedded in the teacher's identity, teaching is a vulnerable activity, "a persistent challenge to one's sense of self" (Bullough, 2005, p. 144). This makes teacher identity formation an important topic for reflection and research. It is Gee's concept of the crucial importance of recognition, or affirmation of identity, that makes transformative teaching essential to identity formation at any level (Bullough, 2005).

Recognizing the Power of Story in Identity Formation

Identity is told in the stories we narrate about our lives. "Identity *arises out of* language use. . . . The stories we tell about ourselves along with the stories told about us, in fact, *are* our identity" (Olson, 2011, p. 262). The significance of the stories we tell about lived experience to the formation of identity is a recurring theme in educational identity theory. Stephen Saifer (2011) prescribes the use of storytelling in a multicultural classroom to enable students to understand personal cultural values through the narration of "jarring" cultural experiences, listening to one's own stories as a first step to hearing the stories others tell. Writing about literacy education, James Gee describes discourse (the languages we use to communicate in a social context) as the "most useful tool in a teacher's identity kit" (Gee, 2000-2001, p. 111). To fully achieve an identity transformation, or a new sense of self, the individual must also be recognized by others to be the person in the stories or discourses he creates to make sense of his world. Identity is defined, though "complex, contradictory, and multifaceted," and "dynamic across time and place" as being created through language (Norton, 1997, p. 419).

It is my goal to use what I have learned about the power of story in identity formation among transcultural students to inform my practice as a teacher educator, using the stories of school students bring with them to the School of Education as powerful tools in creating a professional identity as a teacher. "Teachers . . . should therefore clearly know . . . upon which values, standards, and educational concepts they base their teaching and educating methods. They should have insight into their personal experiences, feelings, values, and motives, and gain self-knowledge about processes of their identity development" (Vloet & van Swet, 2010, p. 150).

"We have a memory of who we are ourselves that is inextricably narrative in structure" (Baldock, 2006, p. 5). It is only remembering and telling the stories of all my past lives that can

create meaning of my own identity. "Our narrative ability makes us what we are" (Baldock, 2006, p. 54). Understanding who I have been and who I am within the context of each different world where I have lived informs the story of the self I have become (Maynes, Pierce, & Laslett, 2008). The self constructed and interpreted through stories told and retold is identity formation in which storytellers "actively write their lives" (Connelly & Clandenin, 2006, p. 478). The stories we tell not only describe our identity, they create it.

An understanding of the power of story to create identity was central to the way I taught in Budapest. The stories my multilingual students told about themselves, in all the languages in which they had learned to think and to dream, not only described who they were, they created that identity. When life stories are set in multiple cultures and foreign languages, their narrators may find they are speaking with multiple voices to multiple audiences, even if they are speaking only to themselves. The "fuzzy boundaries" of cultural and linguistic discourse communities (Porter, 1992, p. 84) exist within the multicultural speakers' own minds and storied selves. But in community even transculturals can begin to "recognize their own split selves, their multiple and often unknowable identities" (Stevens, 2009, p. 28). The value that students hold for finding a place where they belong turns the peril of losing themselves in the community into a possibility for defining personhood through the telling of stories. We must find new ways of "representing diverse and divergent voices *and* giving space for voices not previously heard" (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 256).

One problem for culturally diverse students may be that the multiplying of voices of multiple cultures becomes a confusing Babel of different tongues and values, a "fractured self" (Fleckenstein, 1997). Sometimes the world speaks to *me* in Hungarian with a West African French accent that is hard to understand. The complexity of multicultural communities can make

hearing our own voices difficult in the cacophony. This struggle to make an integrated sense of self out of the conflicting voices with which we tell the stories of our experience is also a daunting challenge for teacher candidates who have left small towns or urban neighborhoods to enter the university in an exercise of teacher identity creation. "It is through language that a person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different points of time, and it is through language that a person gains access to—or is denied access to—powerful social networks that give learners the opportunity to speak" (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005, p. 283).

> Every time language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with their interlocutors; they are also constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world. They are, in other words, engaged in identity construction and negotiation. (Norton, 1997, p. 410)

A socially critical perspective sees the sociocultural relationships that are essential to identity formation as negotiations of power. Sociocultural identity theorists' "intention is deliberately political: to resist and struggle against the exercise and the effects of illegitimate power. . . . Emancipation is the ultimate goal" (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005, p. 279). Freeing my students from the powerlessness of a fractured self was my primary teaching purpose in Budapest, and the most transformative means I had to accomplish that goal was telling my own story and listening to the stories students told. "Well-crafted personal narrative analyses not only reveal the dynamics of agency in practice but also can document its construction through culturally embedded narrative forms that over an individual's life impose their own logics and thus also shape both life stories and lives" (Maynes, Pierce, & Laslett, 2008, p. 2).

Creating Narrative Spaces for Identity Formation in the School of Education

A great deal of attention has been given in recent research to the importance of teacher identity formation as preparation for teaching. "Developing a strong sense of a professional identity as a teacher may be crucial to the well-being of new members of the profession"

(Thomas & Beauchamp, 2007, p. 229). The necessity of intentional teacher identity formation is viewed as increasingly important; this is a call for transformative teaching as a central component of teacher education. The development of a professional teacher identity is foundational to a teacher's education. The focus of teacher education programs must become "less about how they consider what they do, or should do, and more about who they are, or should be. We believe that the process of envisioning self-as-professional is a crucial stage in the development of an effective teacher" (Thomas & Beauchamp, 2007, p. 232). In their study of 21 beginning teachers in Quebec, Thomas & Beauchamp discovered that while beginning teachers were clear about the teacher they would most like to be, they had no idea how they would reach that ideal or if, failing to do so, they would be able to endure in their chosen profession. Equal numbers in their study named the coursework and the practicum of student teaching as most helpful to becoming teachers, but "not one of the participants mentioned having learned about themselves in terms of who they were as teachers during their four year programme" (2007, p. 238). A majority of new teachers defined their ideal teacher self as being in a relationship of care with their students. "There is definitely a need, and an interest on the part of students, to include a component in teacher education programmes designed to raise the consciousness of student teachers about professional identity development" (2007, p. 240). "If identity is a key influencing factor on teachers' sense of purpose, self-efficacy, motivation, commitment, job satisfaction and effectiveness, then investigation of those factors which influence positively and negatively, the contexts in which these occur and the consequences for practice, is essential" (Day, Kington, Stobart, & Sammons, 2006, p. 601). If teacher education programs prepare teachers to work in the current political environment of schools and even teach them to recognize diverse student needs and abilities, but fail to teach them to recognize their selves as teachers, they are

accomplishing only half the job of teacher preparation. Schools are undergoing profound changes in populations, expectations, accountability, and evaluation, and teachers trying to create teacher identities that foster relationships of care and respect for children in those changing places may find they cannot continue to teach with integrity and a sense of knowing who they are (Clandinin, Downey, & Huber, 2009). "As pre-service teachers [learn] about the children in the classrooms to which they [are] assigned, they [find] little space in the university program of teacher education that lets them acknowledge and work with this learning; that is, to be responsive to children's lives" (Clandinin, Downey, & Huber, 2009, p. 146).

Teacher identity is composed of the image teachers have of themselves as they tell their stories, their sense of moral goodness, a commitment to their work, a personal philosophy of education, and a hope for their future. The relationships teachers have with their students have impact on all of these elements of identity formation. If caring relationships are not created, the stories teachers tell are of moral failure, inadequacy for the work, and despair for the future. "Identity formation is an ongoing process that involves the interpretation and reinterpretation of our experiences as we live through them—suggesting that focusing on transactive relationships . . . might provide a deeper understanding of the multiple 'I's' of teacher identity" (Day, Kington, Stobart, & Sammons, 2006, p. 607). Teachers who come to feel alienated from the values and practices of the schools where they teach are demoralized and unable to create the teacher identities they desire. Then these identity stories to live by become stories to leave by. "Teachers will define themselves not only through their past and current identities as defined by personal and social histories and current roles but through their beliefs and values about the kind of teacher they hope to be in the inevitably changing political, social, institutional and personal circumstance" (Day, Kington, Stobart, & Sammons, 2006, p. 610).

The stories teachers tell of their lives demonstrate their ethical commitments and their moral purposes. "Identity is the way one is with and for others; it is the basis of an individual's claims both to dignity and to authenticity" (Bullough, 2005, p. 144). It is dynamic and emergent, a creation of both the stories told of past experience, to make meaning of it, and the stories told of a hopeful future. What we include in the curriculum of our teacher education programs is likewise an ethical decision and commitment. "I believe it is unethical if we do not teach students to understand who they are" (Agnello, 2010, p. 19).

"Teachers naturally gravitate toward teaching what Schwab called 'their best-loved selves'" (Craig, 2013, p. 264). Schwab taught that we are able to create an individual history of our lives as the people we most want to be. Teachers have the ability to create of themselves a best-loved teacher (Craig, 2013). Schwab's views on teacher identity formation provoke an interesting question: "If the best-loved self is integral to the teacher-as-curriculum-maker image, what practices might we engage in, in teacher education, to foster the best-loved self?" (Craig, 2013, p. 267). If identity formation is a creation of the stories we tell to make meaning of our lives, then giving teacher education students the opportunity to tell their stories in university classrooms may be life-changing exercises in the creation of their best-loved teacher selves.

Owning a Transformative Teacher Identity as a Teacher Educator

Of course the professors who desire to help their education students tell stories of their lives as teachers who make a difference must also create for themselves a best-loved-teacher identity that is transformative. The only way beginning teachers can hope to learn to teach to transform is to see the relationship of care necessary to transformative teaching modeled by their professors in the School of Education. This means that professors need to attend to their own identity formation, but unfortunately little attention is given to the professional development of

teacher educators. "Gaining insight into the rather new research domain of professional identity development is important, for it could provide effective tools to educational professionals to cope with changes in their practice, especially when stimulated to become change-agents themselves" (Vloet & van Swet, 2010, p. 150). Teacher educators are themselves their best curriculum and their stories are their best tool for identity formation. "Teachers and their educators should therefore clearly know . . . upon which values, standards, and educational concepts they base their teaching and educating methods . . . and gain self-knowledge about processes of their identity development" (Vloet & van Swet, 2010, p. 150). Through the dialogue of stories they tell, both teachers and teacher educators can create stories to live by which will encourage the formation of their identities as their best-loved-teacher-selves.

Unfortunately, in the American School of Education, so much time is now given to repeated courses on best practice, classroom management, and preparation for the test, little time remains for serious exercise in identity formation. "At present one must have serious doubts about the competence of teacher educators to serve as role models in promoting new visions of learning" (Lunenberg, Korthagen, & Swennen, 2007, p. 586). In teacher-education settings, the teacher educator is always first an example of who a teacher should be, before even serving as a model for how a teacher should practice her craft. "Teachers teach as they are taught, and not as they are taught to teach" (Lunenberg, Korthagen, & Swennen, 2007, p. 587). This is so foundational to teacher identity theory that it is perplexing to think how seldom it is considered best practice for a teacher educator to consistently model the best practice being taught. "Teacher educators apparently lack the knowledge and skills needed to use modelling in a way to make their own teaching explicit, and to rethink the connection between their teacher education practices and public theory" (Lunenberg, Korthagen, & Swennen, 2007, p. 597).

"The literature dealing with the actual work of teacher educators is quite limited" (Lunenberg, Korthagen, & Swennen, 2007, p. 588), but when teacher educators model best teaching practice, student teachers "not only hear and read about teaching, they experience it" (Lunenberg, Korthagen, & Swennen, 2007, p. 588). Teacher educators have the opportunity not only to shape their students' teaching but to change teaching as a practice. Jackson's transformative teaching for the development of an individual student becomes Freire's vision of changing the world, one student (and teacher) at a time.

Education students expect to be taught the content knowledge they will need to master to be competent teachers themselves. They expect to be taught methods of teaching language arts, math, and science that have proven to be effective over time. But they also expect "to be greeted by a whole person, a caring person, one who knows who and what he is, who has moral standing, and who can be counted on to continue standing, face to face, with students" (Bullough, 2005, p. 143). They expect to be included in a relationship of care with their professors that will enable them to write the stories of their own identities as competent, knowledgeable, and caring teachers who can make a difference in their students' lives.

Teacher identity is continually being formed and transformed. "It is for this reason that teaching is often experienced as a daily exercise in vulnerability, a persistent challenge to one's sense of self" (Bullough, 2005, p. 144). Knowing who we are and working to transform our own identity is fundamental to being a transformative teacher educator. The creation of a teacher identity theory about the importance of a caring relationship to transformative teaching is a rapidly growing subject of inquiry in teacher education studies. "Our stance . . . accepts that what student teachers learn during their initial training is as much influenced by who is responsible for teaching them as it is by the content of the curriculum" (Murray & Kosnik, 2011, p. 263).

Third Theory of the Triangulation: The Power of Story

The power of story for the formation of identity and for making meaning of experience

was my most effective teaching tool at the international school in Budapest. The stories we tell in

classrooms create understanding of our lives and community in diversity. "The open-ended

structure of storytelling reflects the ebb and flow of human experience in ways which make it

particularly suitable as a pedagogical tool" (Woodhouse, 2011, p. 216). Storytelling creates a

being-together in relationship which engenders a sense of communal identity. The meaning of

the story told is not merely repeated in the presence of others, "it is made in that presence"

(Kuyvenhoven, 2009, p. 65). In the telling of a story, students make meaning of who they are

within the community of the classroom. "Stories define us and help us to become. We know

ourselves, and others, through a patchwork of biography, memoir, myth, parable, and prophecy"

(Cosier, 2011, p. 44). Storytelling is an *identity-making* activity; the power of storytelling leads

to transformation. The ability to tell stories about our lives is a definitively human ability. The

stories people tell about themselves

> express who they are, where they have been, how they have lived and what they aspire
> to. Narrative is considered central to being human because much of our sense of
> purpose and meaning, selfhood, values, and aspirations are based on our narratives. At
> the same time, narrative also allows the possibility for individuals to adapt, modify, and
> shift their stories and thereby lived experiences can be transformed. . . . Life is the
> source of narrative and narrative gives meaning to life. (Goodson & Gill, 2011, p. 5)

The power of story draws its strength from an understanding of the ethical dimensions of human

experience, which is an ancient use of storytelling for identity formation in education. Plato

wrote, "We must first of all supervise the storytellers. We will select their stories whenever they

are fine and beautiful . . . and we will persuade mothers to tell their children the ones we have

selected, since they will shape their children's souls with stories" (Goodson & Gill, 2011, p. 3).

"Storytelling can be a tool in transformational learning and developmental change" (Nelson, 2009, p. 208). Storytelling and its use for transformative teaching is a human exercise, as is made clear by the practice of storytelling around the world. All over the world storytelling is important to cultural understanding and identity formation. "Stories are sacred, they preserve oral history. . . . You cannot understand the world without telling a story" (Woodhouse, 2011, p. 215). The stories we tell give our lives meaning. "They communicate personal and social values ranging from ideas about relationships to life's meanings" (Kuyvenhoven, 2009, p. 51). The telling of stories is powerful in identity formation, which is truly transformational.

The Power of Story in Identity Formation

My personal identity story is so multi-layered that the concept of interpreting the many layers of a person's story fascinates me. The stories we tell create our identities.

> As is now widely recognized by narrative researchers across many different disciplines, whatever else a personal narrative is—oral history, dinner party anecdote, legal testimony, response to an interview question—the list of possibilities is endless—it is also and *always* a narration of the self. . . . Indeed, many identity theorists now conceptualize personal identity as the accumulation of stories we tell about ourselves. (Patterson, 2008, p. 29)

Recently I was talking with a student about how through the years we must narrow, again and again, the focus of our studies. He started college with too many interests and changed his major several times. He finally chose to study English, but grieved the history teacher he would never be. Choosing not to follow one passion or interest felt like a small death, a dying to some other self he might become. Every time he choose to follow one path, he must choose to let another go unexplored. What I have mourned most in my transcultural life is the *me* I have lost with every move: the pampered pastor's daughter left behind in Illinois when we moved to Utah for my father to get his doctorate; the childhood packed up too soon with tears in barrels in Grandma's basement when we moved to Switzerland; the fair and freckled African brought back

to America for college. It is only through telling the stories of all these past lives that I have a hope of creating meaning of my own identity. "Our narrative ability makes us what we are" (Baldock, 2006, p. 54). Understanding who I have been in each of the worlds where I have lived informs the story of who I am now (Maynes, Pierce, & Laslett, 2008).

As I began to think of myself as a teacher, I relearned my history and convictions through retelling my story. The stories of my past were the only possession I had which truly belonged to me, and they became a source of "power where I could write myself into the world as a significant character whose life had some meaning" (Fowler, 2003, p. 160). Stories are powerful in helping us become who we choose to be. "Children live unfettered inside the storyworld. They become what they longed to be. They [are] heroic, desperate, invincible, terrible, and wonderful. They grow bigger, they find identities" (Kuyvenhoven, 2009, pp. 145-147).

Storytelling as Identity Formation in Transformative Teaching

Because storytelling is socially constructed, a transformative teacher can make a difference by affirming her students' identity stories and helping to make meaning of their lives. Because stories are shaped by the audiences that hear them being told, teachers "who are concerned with the social and cultural place of narrative, are also interested in the socially effective 'agency' of personal stories" (Squire, Andrews, & Tamboukou, 2008, p. 7). Storytelling as identity formation which is central to transformative teaching balances the power of personal experience with the influence of the social environment in which those stories are told. "The value of personal narrative analyses lies in their potential to see people and their actions as both individual and social" (Maynes, Pierce, & Laslett, 2008, p. 69).

My experience with transformative teaching has been most remarkable in composition and theatre classes of transcultural students, perhaps because in these social and educational

settings, the telling and interpreting of personal narratives is a natural component of the class. "Research demonstrates that journaling, meditation, life narratives, and creative writing in a variety of disciplines are some of the modes of internal dialogue and critical reflection shown to be valuable in the transformative process" (Johansson & Felten, 2014, p. 47). But that does not mean that transformative teaching should be confined to fine arts classrooms and dismissed as irrelevant to teaching in science or history or math. Whatever the discipline, "transformative teaching helps students shape their academic identities and abilities" (Waff, 2008, p. 14). The power of story in transformative teaching works across disciplines to create identity formation of students in which they are empowered to see themselves as mathematicians and scientists and teachers as well as writers and actors and artists.

Storytelling teachers pose moral and ethical questions and model the values they hope to shape in their students' identities. But unfortunately storytelling is not included among the best practices of most school of education courses in teaching methods and classroom control.

> Nearly all teachers encourage talking with stories in their classrooms. They know that empathy, tolerance, and friendships are nurtured by the sharing of stories. . . . Such good practices make good teaching. . . . [But] most teachers do not have any models to help them know what this looks like or how it feels. They have received no encouragement to try it. . . . It was not included in their teacher training, or if it was, it was not demonstrated or strongly urged. So, without help or experience, it is hardly likely that a teacher would take up storytelling. (Kuyvenhoven, 2009, p. 186)

Even in English classrooms, "storytelling [is] squeezed into the small pockets of leftover classroom time. Language arts instruction currently emphasizes phonics skills, writing conventions, information-hunting, and related abilities . . . . Story talk and thinking, storyworld experiences are not easily captured on assessment forms" (Kuyvenhoven, 2009, p. 190). Still, research in identity formation shows that "storytelling is the natural way through which people make sense of the events, situations and encounters they find themselves in" (Kelchtermans,

2009, p. 261). We must begin to model the power of storytelling to identity formation in teacher

education programs so that students can use the power of their own stories to create

transformative teacher identities, regardless of the focus of their academic specialties.

> One way to understand teaching is to think of it as a process of storytelling about ourselves as professors and about the subjects we teach. On the one hand, we provide a narrative about our own lives in the hope that our interests and passions will reach out to our students and enable them to become engaged learners. On the other, we tell stories about the subject matter itself. . . . The purpose of both these aspects of storytelling is to 'humanize' the process of learning by appealing to the students' imagination, so that they . . . feel empowered to tell stories about their own experience and deepen their understanding of the subject. Storytelling then becomes central to learning itself. (Woodhouse, 2011, p. 212)

A Personal Narration of the Power of Story in Identity Formation

When I taught drama to transcultural students, I used an exercise to help my students

learn to express emotion on stage. I sat them in a circle and asked them to tell the story of a time

when they were angry or happy or frightened and had the other students watch how each actor

expressed emotion with his or her entire body. Then we all imitated that physical expression of

emotion. The most remarkable thing about this exercise to me was that every time I asked these

international students to tell a story about a time when they were sad they talked about saying

goodbye. In describing the emotion, the student who was speaking, as well as several who were

listening, started to cry. This is a wonderful tool for young actors who need to cry on cue, but I

fear it speaks only too eloquently about the grief in which we all need to be comforted. Giving

my students the permission to tell their stories of old grief brought intense emotions that we had

to stop and experience before we could go on. "Storytelling allows faculty to reach out to

students' emotions . . . [and] can strengthen students' imaginative and aesthetic appreciation, as

well as their growing capacity to learn. . . . True storytelling opens up spaces for the expression

of different groups whose voices have been marginalized" (Woodhouse, 2011, p. 211). This

drama exercise was the first time a teacher had recognized the unresolved grief of my students'

transient lives, the first time they had looked their own sadness in the face, and told the story of

their losses of family, friends, homes, and community. "Teachable moments . . . enlarge their

field of comprehension, broadening and deepening an understanding of reality and their capacity

to act. Teachable moments . . . seem to involve both students' imagination and their aesthetic

appreciation" (Woodhouse, 2011, p. 223).

At the university, I was at first dismayed to learn I would earn my tuition by teaching the

largest class at the School of Education, the course required of all students who wished to apply

for admittance to teacher certification programs. But as I was given more freedom to create the

curriculum for this class, I loved teaching it, and I included storytelling as a way to help students

construct their teacher identities. "Helping students understand the complexities of identity is a

fundamental component of our teacher education program. . . .We have found that stories are

compelling tools that can give students access to such understanding" (Cosier, 2011, p. 41).

Giving students the opportunity to tell their own school stories and to hear the stories

their classmates told was the best tool I had for helping them understand how their identities

were socially constructed (Cosier, 2011) and (Coulter, Michael, & Poyner, 2007). The use of

storytelling in teacher education programs has been found to help in the creation of a personal

teacher identity and philosophy of education. As a teacher, I have found storytelling to be the

quality of my teaching that best transforms it from a cold, hard science to a lively art. Telling

stories brings laughter and joy to teaching; it is an art form in which the teacher can be most

vulnerable, most real, inviting her students to a relationship of care (Kuyvenhoven, 2009). It

offers opportunities to take the risk of becoming real to every other member of the classroom

community, for both student and teacher. It is where I best learn to speak the truth with love.

Looking to Moral Purposes

Creating a Personal Values Theory of Curriculum and Teaching

A friend of mine commented, one day in a class on *Teacher Effectiveness*, "I want to be a progressive teacher, but I think I am really just a behaviorist, using the approved methods to prepare my students for the test."

I agreed. "My philosophy is progressive, with a desire to focus on student growth, but in practice I believe I am very traditional, because the classical subject matter of the academic disciplines is important to the way I prepare curriculum and to how I end up teaching it."

Our professor advised, "When you are evaluating these paradigms of educational theory to determine a personal educational philosophy, look to moral purposes. What do they value, and what is important to you?" That was the day I began to focus on the implicit values of the curricular theories I studied and to create a personal theory of education which has at its center the moral purposes important to me. I am convinced that the university is an appropriate context in which to discuss moral convictions. The most pressing educational and social problems which must be addressed need courageous moral action. Educators, like politicians, are sometimes afraid to use moral convictions to speak to ethical questions in public. "Our fear of getting preachy may lead us to discount the role that values and culture play in some of our most urgent social problems" (Sandel, 2009, p. 246).

If the university is to prepare educators to do the right thing, it is necessary to educate them in making ethical decisions. "Moral reflection emerges naturally from an encounter with hard moral questions and is not a solitary pursuit, but a public endeavor" (Sandel, 2009, p. 28). My reflections on moral purpose have produced ethical convictions which are central to my educational philosophy and to my teaching practice.

I have often wished I could ask my father what he was thinking, one day when I was very small, and he told me, "Remember, people are more important than ideas." Was he working through his own philosophy of education? Or had he seen in my infant excitement over some new thought a tendency to value my own brilliance over a caring relationship with others? This fatherly advice has become a foundational tenet of my educational theory. Still, I am sensitive to an enduring tension between subject and student, the theoretical and the practical, indeed, the importance of both people and ideas to my philosophical values and teaching practice.

I describe teaching as an art, an aesthetic skill, creative in designing objectives individualized for real students, which arise out of instruction. This is the definition of progressive practice, and this is the kind of teaching I want to do. If it is true that all curriculum choices are value driven, for me it is also true that all instructional choices are aesthetically driven. I dare to hope that an attention to establishing a relational ethic of care may give me the aesthetic, moral, and intellectual courage to see the real people present in my classrooms as more important than even my most brilliant ideas. The development of a personal educational philosophy as a basis for the research I will do has been a process of reflection on who I identify myself to be and what is important to me as a foundational value for teaching practice.

The central value of an ethic of care between teacher and students in a transformative teaching relationship is discussed in Dewey's progressive theory, Jackson's definition of what makes teaching transformative, Freire's treatment of transformative teaching as a pedagogy of possibility, and even Eisner's argument for education of the whole child. It lies also at the center of my understanding of the triangulation of theory that is a framework for this research. This relationship of care necessary to teaching that makes a difference is driven by the moral purposes

of the pursuit of excellence, the aesthetic virtue of a happy life, and the creation of a language of

hope in an affirmation of identity that completes the transformative process.

> What does it mean to speak of transformative teaching in these terms? In what sense
> is it either a moral or a philosophic undertaking? It is moral in that it seeks moral
> ends. Teachers working within the transformative tradition are actually trying to
> bring about changes in their students, (and possibly in themselves as well) that make
> them better persons, not simply more knowledgeable or more skillful, but better in
> the sense of being closer to what humans are capable of becoming—more virtuous,
> fuller participants in an evolving moral order. (Jackson, 1986, p. 127)

Teaching is a moral pursuit, because it involves training students in the ways in

which moral humans lead their lives. Thus, in order to teach with integrity, I must create for

myself a personal theory of education which gives attention to the moral purposes I believe

to be most important to my teaching. "Teaching means standing for something, for a

particular idea of what constitutes a good life: a meaningful, valuable life" (Kelchtermans,

2009, p. 265). Teaching requires taking a stand on what knowledge I believe is of most

worth to the telling of my story and to the transformation of my students' identities as they

tell their stories, too. "Teaching is 'a profoundly moral activity': firstly, because it

contributes to the creation and recreation of future generations; and secondly, because

teachers constantly make small but morally significant judgements in their interactions with

children, parents, and one another" (Kelchtermans, 2009, p. 268).

In order to escape the burnout and demoralization which leads to teacher attrition, new

teachers must be as well schooled in creating a personal educational philosophy and values

statement as they are trained in teaching methods for best practice. "Excellence in teaching is

rooted less in a teacher's specific classroom skills than it is in a teacher's educational philosophy.

. . . While many teachers have well-polished skills, most teachers fail to support those skills with

intellectual robustness because their educational philosophy is seldom as well developed as their

skills" (Gregory, 2013, p. 4). Many teacher educators fail to see that the value judgements they model for their students are likely more important to their transformative influence on their students than their most professional practice or academic expertise. "Teachers are always teaching themselves in addition to disciplinary content . . . . There is no substitute the teacher can rely on for guidance that will serve him or her better than prolonged, deep, self-critical thought about educational philosophy" (Gregory, 2013, p. 12). Such intentional reflection on personal teacher identity as the actual content and curriculum taught is as transformative to teachers as it becomes in the lives of their students. My personal theory of transformative teaching, at its core, requires a relational ethic of care with students, which arises out of the moral purposes and ethical commitments of the pursuit of excellence, an aesthetic dedication to living a good life, and a steadfast attention to practicing a pedagogy of hope and possibility.

The Virtue of Excellence in Education

To discuss the centrality of the virtue of excellence to the moral purposes of my transformative teaching theory, I must first define excellence. Though it is very difficult to define such a personally constructed concept, my working definition of excellence would be doing my very best at every endeavor in order to become the very best person I can be. This attention to becoming my own best-loved-self is what makes the virtue of excellence foundational to transformative teaching theory. A story may provide a clearer definition of the term as I understand it. On the last day of second grade at her school's field day, my daughter was pulled aside by her teacher and counseled, "Catherine, could you let the boys win some of the races?" When she came to me with the story, I told my daughter that her teacher was mistaken. In our family, we do our very best. If Catherine chose to run, she should run as fast as she can. Excellence is not in winning the race, it is in running as fast as we can.

Excellence as a Moral Purpose in Educational Theory

It was Aristotle who defined an ethic of excellence in education. The Aristotelian ethical philosophy is often called a *virtue* ethic, but the literal translation of the Greek word *arête*, so often given as *virtue,* is, more accurately, *excellence* (Ess, 2012). The best explanation of Aristotle's ethic of excellence comes from his *Nicomachean Ethics:* "Excellence is an art won by training and habituation" (Aristotle, 350). Aristotle's virtue is an excellence of character, and excellence of character depends on cultivating the right habits. Ethical education in excellence is less about making and enforcing moral rules that must be obeyed than about giving practice in making moral choices and shaping character. It is truly transformative education.

We do not act ethically because we have virtue or excellence, but we rather have those because we have acted ethically. "Roughly, an act is right because it is what a virtuous person might do" (Zagzebski, 1996, p. 16). Excellence is the habit of making right choices in the pursuit of a good life. Even the Greek word for *ethics* reflects the fact that virtue is achieved by forming habits of excellence. The Greek word *ethos* is translated as *habit* (Ess, 2012). In my family we make a habit of excellence by the practice of running as fast as we can.

The ethic of excellence is as foundational to American educational philosophy as it was to that of ancient Greece, because Dewey's ethical convictions arise from Aristotle's habits of virtue. "In Dewey's writings on moral theory where he does discuss virtue, he often calls traits of character 'habits,' rather than virtues" (Rice, 1996, p. 271). The practice of virtues until they became habitual was an idea straight out of the *Nicomachean Ethics: "*Moral virtues, like crafts, are acquired by practice and habituation. . . .The virtues we do acquire by first exercising them, just as happens in the arts. Anything that we have to learn to do we learn by the actual doing of it (Aristotle, 350).

Because he was so influential as an American educational philosopher, Dewey's insistence on the importance of habituated virtues (excellences) to educational theory and practice cannot be ignored. "Within the framework of virtue ethics the virtues are thought to be of primary, rather than secondary, moral significance. . . . This framework looks to virtuous persons as guides to conduct rather than to rules or principles" (Rice, 1996, p. 268). Virtues are not innate; they can be taught and learned by following the example of virtuous teachers. Teachers, as models of excellent character, become transformative. The virtue of excellence is central to transformative teaching because the purpose of practicing excellence of character is to create persons of excellence. Transformative teaching is about creating people of excellence.

Teachers concerned with transformative practice through character education, starting with Aristotle and continuing since Dewey, set their transformative teaching in the context of community. "The way Aristotle understands the acquisition of virtue is fundamentally social since virtue is acquired primarily through imitation of those in one's society who already have it. . . . Most virtues are traits that enable individuals to live well in communities" (Zagzebski, 1996, p. 44). All education becomes moral education "to the extent that it enables students to participate more actively and meaningfully in social life" (Rice, 1996, p. 280).

Intellectual Excellence as a Moral Purpose of Transformative Teaching

One of the most important consequences of the pursuit of excellence through the habitual practice of virtue is that it makes possible education in intellectual as well as moral excellences. "Aristotle's list of virtues included excellences of the speculative intellect, as well as aesthetic qualities such as those exhibited by the 'great-souled' man" (Zagzebski, 1996, p. 84). A theory of intellectual excellences was what made Dewey's habits of character so central to his educational theory. It is also what made a transformative teacher vital to his progressive practice.

> I find the fundamental need of the school today dependent upon its limited recognition of the principle of freedom of intelligence. . . . The teacher has not the power of initiation and constructive endeavor which is necessary to the fulfillment of the function of teaching. . . . The system which makes no great demands on originality, upon invention, upon the continuous expression of individuality works automatically to put and to keep the more incompetent teachers in schools. . . . Just because education is the most personal, the most intimate, of all human affairs, there, more than anywhere else, the sole ultimate reliance and final source of power are in the training, character, and intelligence of the individual. (Dewey, 1903, p. 198)

Just as the right act becomes habitual in moral virtue, a "rational, warranted, well-founded" way of thinking becomes habitual in intellectual virtue (Zagzebski, 1996, p. 7). If transformative teaching is teaching which fosters the development of both moral and intellectual excellences, a teacher who is concerned with the development of her students should be empowered to teach them to be not only good, but also wise and understanding. The intellectual virtues may even include such high level thinking as impartiality, intellectual courage, and perseverance (Zagzebski, 1996). "Such higher-order virtues are connected to the virtue of integrity since integrity in one of its senses is the virtue of having a morally unified self" (Zagzebski, 1996, p. 19). Intellectual integrity is "the virtue of having an intellect with an identity" (Zagzebski, 1996, p. 24). Teaching which is concerned with the moral and intellectual identity formation of students is transformative teaching.

In a theory of intellectual virtue, creativity is the excellence most concerned with identity formation. "The virtues of originality cannot be so easily dismissed if . . . virtues are traits that are vitally connected with a person's identity. Not only might such traits be among the most prominent of a person's excellences, but they might be claimed by the person herself as those that are most deeply constitutive of herself" (Zagzebski, 1996, p. 125). Students who experience creativity as a virtue of excellence are never again satisfied with anything less.

The Virtue of Excellence and the Demand for Equity

Dewey believed that training in moral behavior was possible; excellence of both character and intellect could be developed. To be an excellent teacher one must practice the habit of excellence and then inspire students to excellence, as well. "Indeed, I know of no greater gift a teacher can bestow than to impart to students an abiding appreciation for excellence" (Cahn, 1986, p. 15). An excellent teacher will first of all give her students the freedom to pursue the virtue of excellence. "Great Teachers . . . project a vision of excellence" (Cahn, 1986, p. 14). The ethic of excellence in transformative education requires a teacher who has developed a personal lifestyle of excellence. "We have too often equated excellence of education with the quantity of the content learned, rather than with the quality of character the person develops. . . . Education should develop intellectual character" (Shields, 2011, p. 49).

Aristotle claimed "excellence is the product of teaching and is liberty's measure. There is no excellence without freedom" (Ess, 2012). It is my belief that there is likewise no true freedom without a commitment to excellence. To my view, a school system that pursues equity without excellence is neither just nor virtuous. A curricular focus on academic content that is not committed to excellence is meaningless. The best, creative learning is not measurable by testing. Eliot Eisner warned that "the fields . . . that are difficult to measure are neglected" (Marshall, Sears, Louise, Roberts, & Schubert, 2007, p. 140). I have seen it happening. There is little time in the schedules of teachers who must prepare students for high stakes tests for teaching poetry or putting on a play. There is little time for giving attention to excellence.

> It is not only that we concentrate too heavily on material that can be easily tested. . . . But what of all the wonderful ideas that might interest only some students—ideas from which they might construct their own learning objectives? Must everything a teacher introduces be aimed at an objective everyone will master? This is such an impoverished notion of teaching that one wonders why anyone with intellectual vitality would enter the profession. (Noddings N. , 2013, p. 125)

If the concern for equality is not balanced by a concern for excellence, all our best reforms will accomplish nothing. No Child Left Behind cannot mean that no child is ever encouraged to excel, to run as fast as she can.

Dewey claimed that in his time,

> Our democracy is not yet conscious of the ethical principle upon which it rests—the responsibility and freedom of mind in discovery. . . . The teacher has not the power of initiation and constructive endeavor which is necessary to the fulfillment of the function of teaching. The learner finds conditions antagonistic to the development of individual mental power. (Dewey, 1903, p. 194)

Not much seems to have changed, in the application of these philosophical values upon which Dewey claims our democracy rests, to the freeing of the intellect of both teachers and students, in the generations of schools which have come and gone since Dewey wrote, over a hundred years ago. "The dictation of the subject matter to be taught, to the teacher who is to engage in the actual work of instruction, and . . . the attempt to determine the methods which are to be used in teaching, [are] the deliberate restriction of intelligence, the imprisoning of the spirit" (Dewey, 1903, p. 196). To achieve greater intellectual freedom and possibility for growth for children, according to Dewey, we must first create a teaching relationship which gives intellectual freedom to teachers to enable them to be transformative in students' moral and intellectual identity formation.

Excellence as a Moral Purpose of Transformative Teaching

The best way for a teacher to encourage excellence in her classroom is to believe in the capability of all students to live excellent lives. This is teaching that makes a difference. A belief in the value of excellence in education is built upon the conviction that people can learn, even more than can be measured by our best tests of achievement. Believing in students' ability to learn and raising a standard of excellence in academics and the arts will result in students who

have acquired the habit of excellence. "I believe that work of excellence is transformational. Once a student sees that he or she is capable of excellence, that student is never quite the same" (Knoester, 2004, p. 167). The virtue of excellence is the highest moral purpose for teaching that is truly transformative. The development of a virtuous character and the pursuit of excellence is more to be desired even than the acquisition of the noblest facts and ideas. "Academic learning is important, of course. Yet the academic goal of education has less to do with accumulating specific knowledge than with developing intellectual character" (Shields, 2011, p. 49). People are still more important than ideas.

The foundational ethic of excellence in education is more about developing people of excellence than offering an equal opportunity for less-than-excellent education for all. Excellent teaching will only occur in teaching relationships where teachers who care demonstrate faith in their students' ability to achieve excellence. Excellent teachers "offer students both a commitment to high standards and an explicit confidence in each student's capacity to learn and grow" (Johansson & Felten, 2014, p. 19).

"Genuine education . . . can be done only by persons who, while they are teaching their expert knowledge, are also modeling in their ways of thinking and interacting the properties of educated minds" (Gregory, 2013, p. 18). Our schools too often equate excellence in education with a quantity of knowledge learned, rather than with excellence of character and intellect developing in the learners.

> When we focus on the character of the learner, rather than the content of learning, we address what is likely to be sustained through time and circumstance. Few people remember most of what they learned in school. . . . What endures are personal qualities that shape how a person interacts with ideas [and] people. . . . We have too often equated excellence with the quantity of the content learned, rather than with the quality of character the person develops. (Shields, 2011, p. 49)

My creation of a personal educational theory which looks to moral purposes has been nothing less than an attempt to unify the moral and intellectual virtues of excellence in my own life and practice. One of my favorite drama students in Budapest was a tall, thin boy named Bruce. Bruce was a natural mimic; he could reproduce English with any accent imaginable, a talent which I encouraged him to use in the theatre. Once I gave him three small roles in a musical, so he could try on different characters in the same play. Bruce told me at the first rehearsal that he was happy to do all the parts I had assigned him, but that I should give the solos those characters were supposed to sing to another cast member. "I had a music teacher last year who told me I cannot sing," he explained. "She told me that I should just mouth the words in choir, because my voice is unpleasant to listen to."

I answered, "Why, Bruce, I am sure you have a good voice and musical ear. I heard you play the piano beautifully at your recital. Try singing these parts for the first few weeks of rehearsals, and if you are still uncomfortable after you have tried, then I will assign the parts to someone else." Bruce ended up singing three solos in that musical, and proved to himself that his former teacher had been wrong. He had a strong voice, and he loved singing. Now he is about to finish his bachelor's degree in vocal performance, and he is planning to start next year on a master's degree in opera. The transformative influence I had on Bruce's life was not based on my brilliant teaching methods, or even on the integrity of my philosophy of education, but on my encouragement to pursue excellence and a firm belief that he was capable of brilliance.

The Aesthetic of Transformative Teaching

To Aristotle, an aesthetic of education was as important as an ethic or moral purpose. "For ancient Greek philosophers, the key question . . . was what one should ultimately be aiming for in life, so as to make that life . . . as good as a human life can be" (Bett, 2005, p. 45). To my

way of thinking, it is as important to live beautifully as it is to live morally or even wisely in order to attain the ultimate aim of a good life. "The moral life aims at happiness" (Sandel, 2009, p. 196). When the happy life is understood as the life purpose of a good person, it stands for "whatever it is that human beings by nature would do best to aim for" (Bett, 2005, p. 47).

Happiness, in the aesthetic of a good life, "is not a state of mind but a way of being, an activity of the soul in accordance with virtue" (Sandel, 2009, p. 197). Happiness is a virtue when it becomes, through practice, a habit of being. The aesthetic of living a good and happy life is also a moral purpose of transformative teaching. "The attraction of philosophers of education to virtue ethics is a 'natural' one in the sense that this orientation has always been concerned principally with the question of how people become good" (Rice, 1996, p. 270).

In the beginning of my junior year in college my father died. I was away from school for nearly six weeks during his final illness and travelling to attend the memorial services held in his honor. During that time I read *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man,* by James Joyce (1916). This book had a profound influence on my development of an aesthetic of living. In this fictionalized autobiography, "Joyce discusses the relationship among the three fundamental concepts of goodness, beauty, and truth" (O'Rourke, 2011, p. 97) that is loosely based on the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas. For Joyce, as for me, it was important to work out a personal theory of beauty, an aesthetic of the good life. Aquinas defined as good whatever was most desired; truth is the good most desired by the intellect, or the mind of a person; and beauty is the good most desired by the aesthetic spirit of a person (O'Rourke, 2011). If the ability to recognize and understand truth is an intellectual virtue, then the ability to recognize and appreciate beauty is an aesthetic excellence. Keats expressed the same sentiment in his *Ode on a Grecian Urn:* "Beauty is truth, truth beauty—that is all ye know on earth, and all ye need to know" (1820).

Aquinas always defines the good as "that which all things desire; for Aquinas goodness and beauty are identical, responding to different faculties of the soul. . . . Aquinas is preoccupied with precisely the same relationship as is Joyce, namely that of goodness to beauty" (O'Rourke, 2011, p. 103). When I returned to college after my father's funeral, I struggled to find beauty in the goodness of his short life. I went walking in an evening thunderstorm the first weekend I got back to school and remember stopping in the middle of the soccer field, sitting in the grass as the pouring rain soaked me to the skin. In that moment, I made a decision to seek after beauty and joy in life, to honor my father's memory by celebrating the influence his example had on me, to pursue excellence, to seek after truth, and to find the grace to be happy.

Since that day, my belief in the "transformative power of the arts" (Woodhouse, 2011, p. 224) has evolved from a philosophic conviction for living to an ethical and aesthetic commitment in teaching. This is why I have focused so much of my life work on teaching the fine arts of theatre, composition, and rhetoric. Now this aesthetic commitment informs my moral purposes in conducting research as well. The beauty of story, in teaching and in research, adds the force of the imagination to the power of reason as an instrument for making meaning of experience.

In an interview Paulo Freire was asked why teaching, especially teaching that transforms, must be seen as an art and not a science. Freire responded,

> I am in my perspective a helper of the students in their process of formation, of their growing up. This process is necessarily an artistic one. It is impossible to participate in the process of getting shaped, which is a kind of rebirth, without some aesthetic moments. . . . Another point that makes education once more an artistic event is precisely when education is also an act of knowing. For me, knowing is something beautiful! This is an artistic task because our knowing has a life-giving quality. (Shor & Freire, 1987, pp. 30-31)

For me, knowing and becoming are both beautiful. The most appealing quality of this transformative educational philosophy is that teaching becomes a fine art. As an art, the aesthetic value of the practice of teaching becomes as important as its academic rigor. The act of teaching

becomes a work of beauty as much as a statement of truth, because it is a human art, an expression of the beauty of a developing human mind and spirit. "When it is sensitive, intelligent, and creative—those qualities that confer on it the status of an art—it should not be regarded, as it so often is by some, as an expression of unfathomable talent or luck, but as an example of humans exercising the highest levels of their intelligence" (Eisner, 2002, p. 156).

Herbert Read called the attention to "the aesthetic principle" in humanist education the most natural teaching, where a skill becomes a craft (Marshall, Sears, Louise, Roberts, & Schubert, 2007, p. 123). Teaching that is transformative to the human spirit is elevated to the finest of arts. It is impossible to educate the *whole child* without giving attention to our students' spiritual transformation through an aesthetic education in the appreciation of beauty.

The teacher's transformation is as important to the process as the students' is. "We can change our students by changing ourselves, by becoming transformational teachers. In the end it is a question of integrity" (Anding & Quinn, 2005, p. 487). This is both a moral purpose and an aesthetic practice. "We must breathe life back into the curriculum, make learning meaningful, and focus on the art of teaching. We must not let teaching well take the backseat to covering curriculum" (Sameshima, 2008, p. 31). The best curriculum theory has no value until it is applied by a teacher making in-the-moment curriculum decisions in her classroom. No matter if the curricular objectives are set by a school district or even mandated by a state, the teacher who uses those objectives is the only one responsible for the ultimate curricular design (Eisner, 2002, p. 71). Transformative teaching enables both students and teachers to be involved in the aesthetic art of creating the curriculum which will help them become the very best that they long to be.

One of my best young actresses was a girl named Britney. She was a pretty, popular, cheerful girl who soaked up everything I could teach her about developing a character,

presentation on stage, and comedic timing. She left Budapest just before her senior year of high school. During Britney's last year in Hungary, a new principal at the school required that we begin every class with a reading from scripture, so I started every drama rehearsal by reading one of the delight scriptures, the passages in the Bible that tell of God's love for humanity. I reminded my students every day that our creative efforts are an expression of all that is most divine in human nature. I honestly did not think Britney paid much attention to these opening comments, as I rarely gave them a second thought myself.

Then I got an email from Britney the following year. She wrote, "Mrs. Shigo, I never thought that I would be attending a large American public school for the first time my senior year of high school. It has been a difficult year for me, and I have struggled to find a way to be happy here. I wanted to let you know that even though there is a big drama department at this school, and a wonderful stage, there can never be another director like you. Every day I come to school I hear angry students cursing their teachers and talking about how much they hate being here. I wanted to let you know that I comfort myself by remembering the teacher in Budapest who told me that I am the delight of God and that I can choose to live a happy life." Even the things we do mindlessly, if done as an expression of our care for students, may have a transformative effect on their identity formation in the creation of a good and happy life.

A Language of Hope

In *Pedagogy of Hope,* Freire (1997) claims that the *most* important purpose and goal of transformative education should be to give students hope. Mike Rose is one of my favorite educational philosophers because he dares to write with hope about the future of education. In his book, *Why School?* (2009), Rose discusses the politics of high stakes testing and the philosophical despair so prevalent in our educational system. "We have lost our way. We live in

an anxious age and seek our grounding, our assurances in ways that do not satisfy our longing—

that, in fact, make things worse. We have lost hope in the public sphere" (2009, p. ix). Rose

regrets the ways our national dialogue about education has moved, past critique and calls for

reform, toward despair and "a dangerous hopelessness" (2009, p. 146). In the face of this despair,

Rose calls for attention to what we can learn from our successes, rather than our failures:

"lessons about development, about resilience and learning, about the power of hope and a second

chance" (2009, p. 3). What most resonates with my own moral purposes is his search for a

language of hope with which to discuss the possibility of curricular change. We do not need

more mandated standards, curricula, and assessments, but rather, "we are in desperate need of

rich, detailed images of possibility" (2009, p. 152). Without a hope in the possibility of

transformation, a socio-critical attempt to change society by changing schools is futile.

Like Rose, I have faith in the power of hope to change how we talk about schools, how

our talk may impact educational policy, how that policy may affect curricula, practice, and

evaluation, and even, "what we expect schooling to contribute to our lives" (2009, p. 5). "If all

we look for is pathology, we will miss everyday moments of promise" (2009, p. 95). It is in the

hope of excellence in academic achievement that I see the greatest promise in realizing the

possibilities of educational and curricular change which will make things better. We need a

language of hope in education that speaks to the beauty of possibility in creating a life that is

both happy and good.

Hope becomes a moral purpose of transformative teaching when teachers set a standard

of excellence, in the conviction that attaining that standard is a possibility for every student. Rose

believes that we need other, more hopeful ways to talk about standards of excellence to enable

all students to become the very best that they can be (2009, p. 98).

> We need a different kind of critique, one that does not minimize the inadequacies of curriculum and instruction, the rigidity of school structure or the 'savage inequalities' of funding but that simultaneously opens discursive space for inspired teaching, for courage, for achievement against odds, for successful struggle, for the insight and connection that occur continually. (Rose, 2009, p. 150)

Freire agrees that giving students reason to hope is the highest calling of transformative teaching. "I believe my strongest calling is exactly the calling to realize my dream, to never allow the dream to die, to always therefore maintain hope" (Rossatto, 2005, p. 19). The ability to hope is rooted in the belief that we can change, can transform ourselves into the good, the wise, and even the happy people we most want to be. "Without such an awareness, young people are liable to feel locked into a world others have constructed. I have seen the empty eyes of children who have no hope, no capacity to look at things as if they could be otherwise" (Greene, 2000, p. 12).

Hope and Belief in Students is a Moral Framework for Transformative Teaching

The best way for a teacher to encourage excellence in her classroom is to believe in the capability of all students to live excellent lives. This is teaching that makes a difference, and one of the best tools a teacher has for helping students create for themselves an excellent identity is the power of story. "Storytelling which incorporates true accounts of the value of life . . . becomes an imperative. Stories of this kind form the basis of a renewed pedagogy capable of providing hope to the lives of students and faculty alike. . . . True stories become a tool for challenging pessimism and asserting a life-enhancing value system" (Woodhouse, 2011, p. 229).

There was another young man who performed in the musical with Bruce, named Ted. Ted was a boy who struggled with autism and who had never been in a traditional school setting, but when his mother heard we were doing a musical, she brought him to the auditions and he tried out for a lead part, which had no speaking lines but had five important solos. Ted had an unusually beautiful voice, full and deep for a fourteen-year-old boy. He was the first actor that

year to learn all his lines and he never forgot a word or missed a cue. But it was obvious that he was uncomfortable with the relationships with other characters that were required of his role, so I coached him very carefully, matching movements to every line of script.

I would say, for example, "On the first line, stand with your feet apart and sing right to the audience. On the second line, turn just your shoulders toward the other character. On the next line take a step toward him, looking him right in the eyes. On the final line, put your arm around the other character as you sing." Ted's mother told me later that she watched him perform the actions I had blocked for him when he was having an important conversation with his older sister about how he had missed her while she was away at college, and that his sister started to weep when he put his arm around her for the first time.

Ted played his part with excellence, and at the end of the first performance, a counselor who had been working with him for two years came up to me, also with tears in his eyes, telling me that he had not believed the boy would be able to perform on a stage in front of so many people, and that he, too, was seeing Ted make unprecedented social initiations toward his family and friends. I saw his limitations when he came to audition for the play, but I also recognized his gifts of a beautiful voice and an excellent memory. I believed in the possibility of Ted working to transform his own story of himself, into a person able to reach out to another person, if only as a scripted part of a play. Ted is just completing his degree in vocal performance and he recently posted a video of his senior recital to my Facebook wall.

A Relational Ethic of Care

Nel Noddings insists that teaching that makes a difference can only happen within an ethical relationship of care (Caring in Education, 2005). "Our objective in moral education is to establish a climate in which natural caring flourishes. . . . Our first task is to model caring. . . .

Our behavior must be a genuine reflection of our moral selves" (Noddings N. , 2013, p. 119).

The elements of an excellent education, from the care perspective, are dialogue, or the narration

of stories by both students and teachers, opportunities to practice caring in the safe setting of a

caring classroom, and confirmation. "When we confirm a person, we help bring out the best in

him or her" (Noddings N. , 2013, p. 122). This is the affirmation of identity that is necessary to

transformative teaching. A caring classroom will also, through the affirmation of each student's

storied self, be a transformative classroom. A transformative classroom will encourage the

practice of the moral, intellectual, and aesthetic virtues of excellence. "We think of a person's

virtues as closely associated with her very identity" (Zagzebski, 1996, p. 85).

Noddings defines the relationship of care essential to teaching that makes a difference as

"a decent, respectful way of meeting and treating one another" (Noddings N. , 2013, p. 119).

> I do not mean to suggest that the establishment of caring relations will accomplish
> everything that must be done in education. . . . Teachers show students how to care,
> engage them in dialogue about moral life, supervise their practice in caring, and confirm
> them in developing their best selves. (Noddings N. , 2005, pp. 4-5)

Noddings's argument is that requiring teachers to make the scores students earn on standardized

tests the most important valuation of student learning leaves no time for intentional commitments

to developing relationships, and this is an ethical problem we must address (Noddings, 2013).

With the current focus on assessment of both students and teachers in public schools, there is

little time left for the teacher, who must concentrate on teaching to mandated curriculum

standards in preparing her students for state tests, to participate in the power of storytelling for

identity formation in classrooms committed to a relational ethic of care and to teaching that

transforms. "Although I endorse accountable teaching and high standards for success, I am

worried about classrooms in which relationships, personal stories, and the sense of wonder and

curiosity are considered tangential" (Kuyvenhoven, 2009, p. 191). If teachers become too busy

meeting state requirements for common core standards, how will they have time to form relationships with students which will make a difference in their lives? The relationship between teacher and student is the most important contributor to teaching that makes a difference.

The first year that the school in Budapest opened a dormitory for boarding students, there was only one girl in the girl's wing of the dorm. Her name was Anne, and she was a freshman who became my student in English, drama, and creative writing classes that year. I realized very early on that Anne was lonely and missing her mother. That year our drama class performed *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and I assigned to Anne the part of Puck. I invited her to go with me when I went shopping for props and costumes for the play, and she came to my house on a Saturday to help me design and make fairy costumes out of some colorful lengths of netting we found together. She was a very bright and eager student, got high marks in all my classes, but did not return to the school as a boarder the next year.

Recently I was reconnected with Anne when she sent me a friends request on Facebook. I learned that she had graduated from a prestigious fashion school in London and that she was featured as a Rising Young Designer in major fashion shows in Canada last spring. When she wrote to catch me up on all she had accomplished since we had been in touch, she said, "I want you to know that the first time I ever touched scissors to fabric was on your living room floor making fairy costumes." Nothing I taught Anne when she was in Budapest was as transformative to her life as intentionally developing with her a relationship of care.

To me the art of transformative teaching is a calling of joy. The most amazing gift a teacher can give to her students is the gift of themselves, the very best selves each one of them can be. "Great teachers call ordinary students to embrace their own greatness" (Anding & Quinn, 2005, p. 488). One year in Budapest I chose the musical, *Narnia,* for our high school play. As I

posted the cast list on my bulletin board and watched the students gather around it to see what role they would play, I noticed an unprecedented lack of enthusiasm. Four students came up to my desk and asked if they could meet with me at lunch to talk about the play.

At lunchtime every student who had auditioned was present. Carl, a senior who I had cast as Aslan, served as spokesman. He said, "We wanted to ask you if we could do a different play. This is a fun story, but some of us have been looking forward to the play we would do this year ever since you came to Budapest. I know I was hoping for a play my senior year that had a complex character I could portray. We just do not want to dress up like animals and sing and dance on stage." I looked around the room, trying to catch every young actor's eye, to be sure this was what they all felt, and was not just Carl's idea. I was convinced they all agreed. I went to the shelf in my room that held my collection of plays, we brainstormed ideas for the kind of play the students were interested in doing, I chose 3 or 4 off of the shelf that met most of their qualifications, and they voted on the one play they all wanted to do. It was *Life with Father,* with a cast of just 17. The students unanimously chose that play, even though it meant only half of them would get a part. As I dismissed them to go to their next classes, Carl said, "Group hug!" and they swarmed my desk. I was completely enveloped in their arms, and Britney whispered in my ear, "Now we know for sure how much you love us." It was, perhaps, the most transformative teaching experience of my career.

A Personal Story of Transformative Teaching

James Macdonald wrote, in *A Transcendental Developmental Ideology of Education* (1995)*,* "The teacher from a transcendental point of view is also in process. That is, the developmental aim of centering is as valid and important to the person of the teacher as it is to the child" (Marshall, Sears, Louise, Roberts, & Schubert, 2007, p. 124). About five years ago I

went to Sarajevo to direct a group of high schoolers in *The Importance of Being Ernest,* in one week. We rehearsed all day and ate together every night and by Friday night performed in front of a very full house. It was one of the most creatively wonderful experiences of my life. On Thursday night as we were driving from the theater where we had been rehearsing to the house where we were going to eat, one boy posed this question: "What five things do you want to accomplish before you die?" I was surprised by how seriously everyone answered the question, and how seriously they listened to each other's stories. Then the young man asked, "What about you, Mrs. Shigo? What are your life goals?" Without giving it much thought, I answered with these: "I want to write a book and have it published. I want to go back to school and get my doctorate in education. I want to go live closer to my daughters and get to know them as adults. I want to learn to teach very well, and someday I want to direct my grandchildren in a play."

Then I asked what one thing each student might do that year, that month, or that week to start accomplishing just one of their goals. What amazes me now is that the simple statement of my ambitions was the first step in seeing them accomplished. I have met all of these goals except the last, because I do not have any grandchildren yet. I have often wondered if that experience was as transformative for the students as it was for the teacher. It was experiences like this one that caused me to be more intentional in listening for student cues about what was important to them, and in following those cues to be transformative in my teaching.

Personal Transformation at the University

Marc Mahlios's Budig Teaching Professor's speech was a pivotal moment in my understanding of how transformative teaching can make meaning of human experience. I was present in the audience as he gave his speech on *Meaning Based Practice: Steps toward a Unified Framework of Teaching* (Mahlios, 2013). He began by making reference to teachers who

had been transformative in his life, quoting his adviser, Kaoru Yamamoto, the man he believes "best exemplifies the unity of the transformative and mimetic functions in teaching adults." Yamamoto taught that, "What sustains a teacher in such a deeply involved vocation is nothing other than the familiar triad which is found in any other human enterprise of worth, namely love, faith, and hope" (Mahlios, 2013, p. 2). Mahlios said that transformative teaching helps students make meaning of their lives, and I noted how he followed his own directive, "We need a unified or integrated theory to teach with integrity" (Mahlios, 2013, p. 2). I agreed that our development as teachers involves a search for "identity, integrity, and compassion" (Mahlios, 2013, p. 3).

For me, the importance of a relationship of care is enriched by a commitment to academic excellence, which I recognized in Mahlios's theory. He spoke of a balance of the mimetic and the transformative: "Teachers should practice from both traditions toward the goal of helping their students become better persons who are more knowledgeable, more virtuous and more fully human;" these are the goals he believes "guide and inform" his teaching (Mahlios, 2013, p. 5). This also resonates with my own theory, that the teaching relationship is foundational, but that the pursuit of excellence makes meaning of the relationship, and gives purpose to education.

I am coming to believe in a personal story of the transformation of human character and in making meaning of my own growth as a person, as a teacher, and as a writer. I want to help a new generation of teachers find ways to become the very best teachers they can be, empowering them to make a difference, even in a public school setting which increasingly limits their creative possibilities. In the current educational environment where "decisions about what and increasingly how to teach are made without classroom teachers' direct involvement," Mahlios agreed it is difficult to teach to transform. He feared such schools are "at risk of becoming meaningless" (Mahlios, 2013, p. 5).

It was when I watched a transformative professor practice his transformative teaching philosophy that I realized that this is a way to pursue intellectual, ethical, and even aesthetic excellence in education, which has become my personal goal. In a class on curriculum philosophy, the professor was speaking about the difference a progressive, transformative theory makes to teaching, and I said, "I understand the theory behind a progressive approach to teaching that focuses on student growth, but I still do not know what it looks like in practice."

The professor repeated his definition, "A traditional teacher prepares objectives for teaching subject matter, plans instruction, and develops ways to assess student learning before he comes to class. A progressive teacher begins by presenting the material, pays close attention to the students' response, then develops objectives as he is teaching that arise out of that student response." He looked slowly around the table at each student there, and then demonstrated for us what he meant. He spoke directly to each student, suggesting a resource *he* might read particularly suited to his subject area, or asking how *I* taught to student need in my classrooms, or answering any question *she* posed about the chapter in our text that we had just read. I was, frankly, stunned. I recognized that this was the way he taught all the classes I had taken at the university. This was an instructional strategy I was convinced would transform my teaching practice. It was excellent, compassionate, and beautiful. Such transformative teaching enables both students and teachers to be involved in the aesthetic art of creating the curriculum which will help them aspire to excellence and become the very best they can be. Together the students and teacher can choose the play which will portray their most excellent characters.

Last semester a student named Audrey asked if she might interview me for a paper she was writing on transformative teaching for her *College Composition* class. I was happy to answer her questions about teaching to make a difference and very pleased that she had become as

interested in the topic as I am. For her closing question, she asked me to describe a teacher I had as a child who was transformative.

I told Audrey that I was sorry, but though I have tried very hard to remember a teacher I had as a child whose teaching made a difference to my life and my identity, I cannot remember having the relationship of care that creates transformative teaching with any teacher when I was in school. But then I told Audrey about the change in my teacher identity that I had experienced since I had taken classes with a transformative teaching professor. My first real experience with transformative teaching had happened at the university.

Audrey smiled and said, "I have been trying in vain to think of a teacher I had as a child who was transformative, as well. But I think you are the first transformative teacher I have ever known. Mrs. Shigo, you are my *transformative teaching professor*."

"Audrey, that is wonderful to hear," I answered. "But even more wonderful is this. Someday, perhaps soon, you will have a student who will say to you, 'You have made a difference in my life.' You will be the transformative teacher to another generation of students because you will teach them in such a way that their entire lives will be changed. You, Audrey, are becoming a teacher who will make a difference."

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology: A Narrative Research Study

This is a narrative research project to investigate the impact of transformative teaching on students who decide to pursue a career in education. The foundational question that drives this research is this: *How do School of Education undergraduates and the teachers they identify as transformative narrate the relationship of transformative teaching, and how that relationship has informed the undergraduates' decision to pursue a teaching career and their identity formation as aspiring teachers?* Narrative research is an appropriate methodology for an investigation of the power of story in the identity formation of transformative teaching because it "assumes that storytelling is integral to understanding lives and that all people construct narratives as a process in constructing and reconstructing identity" (Marshall & Rossman, Designing Qualitative Research, 2011, p. 23). The focus of narrative research "into the construction of identity, and inquiry into narratives about identity" (Cosier, 2011, p. 43) makes this an excellent choice for a research methodology that examines the creation and transformation of teacher identity.

This chapter is an argument for why I have chosen narrative research as an appropriate methodology for my research questions about the importance of story to the identity formation of transformative teaching, as well as a discussion of the narrative methods used to complete the study. Narrative is both a theory about the power of story—as described in chapter two—and a methodology for discovering theory, as discussed in this chapter. The turn to qualitative research in recent educational scholarship is a direct response to a growing discomfort with quantitative research that objectifies people:

Indeed this was originally the claim of social science—to be neutral, cut off, objective. Researchers took their 'subjects' as 'objects'—probing and prodding, poking and peeking, testing and measuring as if they were studying molecules or mice rather than ethically engaged human beings. (Goodson & Gill, 2011, p. 17)

The storytelling of personal narrative is seen as the most human of research methodologies, which makes room for creating meaningful records of human experience and aspirations, for understanding personhood as it is created through the telling of stories, and as it is hoped for in teaching that transforms (Goodson & Gill, 2011).

I Choose Narrative Research

Because it is a Qualitative Methodology

In quantitative research, the researcher makes measurements of physical reality, and the truth of research is in the accuracy of those measurements (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005); however, it is nearly impossible to measure the *qualities* of effective teaching, such as teaching to transform, with *quantitative* measures. In narrative research, the researcher collects stories, and the truth of the research is not primarily in the factual accuracy of the story, but in the meaning the teller and the recorder make of the story together (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011), (Merriam, 2002), and (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005). "Qualitative research typically: is enacted in naturalistic settings, draws on multiple methods that respect the humanity of the participants in the study, focuses on context, is emergent and evolving, and is fundamentally interpretive" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 3). The interpretive objective is "a key difference between qualitative and quantitative research" (Maxwell, 2013, p. 30). The determination of a narrative researcher to develop theory that arises or evolves from the stories told, rather than going into the research with predetermined theories and assumptions to prove, is another qualitative distinctive important to narrative scholarship (Mackey & Gass, 2011) and (Maxwell, 2013). "Qualitative

research has an inherent openness and flexibility that allows you to modify your design and focus during the research to pursue new discoveries and relationships" (Maxwell, 2013, p. 30). The source of these differences between qualitative and quantitative research lies in the theoretical ground and moral purposes of these distinctive paradigms. Quantitative methods "hold that behavior can be explained through objective facts" and seek to explain the causes of research findings "through objective measurement and quantitative analysis," while qualitative methods begin with the assumption "that there are multiple realities that are socially defined" and are concerned with understanding the meaning the participants in their research make of the research data (Firestone, 1987, p. 16). The most basic philosophic distinction between the two methodologies is that "the ideal quantitative researcher is detached to avoid bias [and] the qualitative researcher becomes immersed in the phenomenon of interest" (Firestone, 1987, p. 17). Quantitative researchers claim to rid their practice of bias and value judgments, but all research is value laden. I have aimed to be transparent about known biases, using the power of my story as a research tool with the understanding that "the field is inherently political and shaped by multiple ethical and political positions" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 7).

Quantitative research is pursued to explore how the practice of *x* educational process would create *y* product in increased student learning (Maxwell, 2013, p. 31) and (Mackey & Gass, 2011, p. 2). For questions about human experience and identity formation, such research is almost powerless. With qualitative research, like Denzin and Lincoln, I "seek a redemptive, pragmatically prophetic, existential ethnography, a vulnerable scholarship that shows us how to act morally, in solidarity, with passion, with dignity, to engage the world and its dispossessed in complementary, not competitive or destructive ways" (2011, p. 1053). This is research with a moral purpose, and I have found that it is work that I want to do.

Because it is Built on the Power of Story

It is the power of story unleashed in narrative research that makes it the kind of research I find I want to do. Storytelling is an act of describing and making meaning of experience. "As Jean Clandinin and Michael Connelly (1994) put it: 'people by nature lead storied lives and tell stories of those lives, whereas narrative researchers describe such lives, collect and tell stories of them, and write narratives of experience'" (Woodhouse, 2011, p. 213). Narrative is a methodology for doing research to analyze the stories we are told for the meaning the storytellers make with them. "Storytelling as cultural representation and as sociological text emerges from many traditions . . . and is becoming more disciplined in a line of work called narrative inquiry" (Stake, 2011, p. 441). Narrative inquiry "assumes that people construct their reality through narrating their stories" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 153). People create their identities and come to understand who they are as persons, "as they interpret their past in terms of those stories" (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 477).

I have chosen to do narrative research because of its "view of human experience in which humans, individually and socially, lead storied lives" (Connelly & Clandenin, 2006, p. 477). This genre of qualitative research is especially fitting for the investigation of the power of story in identity formation which is central to transformative teaching. The narrative research process in fact becomes a double narrative, as the relationship between the narrator and the researcher "shapes the form and the content of personal narratives and their analysis" (Maynes, Pierce, & Laslett, 2008, p. 99).

"Learning how individuals experience and interact with their social world, the meaning it has for them, is considered an interpretive qualitative approach" (Merriam, 2002, p. 4). A central concept of narrative research is that meaning is socially constructed, it is a relational act

collaborated upon by a qualitative researcher and the teller of stories, in contrast to a fixed and measurable reality described and tested by a quantitative researcher (Merriam, 2002, p. 3). The relationship between the researcher and the participants is another tool for making meaning, because "narrative is a process, a journey that leads to learning, agency, and better understanding of oneself, others, and one's purpose in the world" (Goodson & Gill, 2011, p. 97).

It is this characterization of narrative inquiry as a double narrative, a conjoining of the stories of researcher and narrators, which makes even the subjectivity of the researcher a tool for inquiry, an asset rather than a detriment to the investigation of meaning. "Critiques of positivistic epistemology in the social sciences have challenged the notion that social scientists can be objective observers whose research produces universally accepted truths" (Maynes, Pierce, & Laslett, 2008, pp. 98-99). For the narrative researcher, the negotiated agreement on meaning becomes the truth claim of the research findings. This is why the relationship between the researcher and narrators is such an important piece of narrative methodology. "Researchers have scholarly purposes in mind in seeking out life stories. . . . The narrators of life stories also have agendas in agreeing to talk or deciding to write their stories. Personal narrative analyses are enriched by attention to these different and often competing agendas because they tell us about the social processes involved in and having consequences for the production of knowledge" (Maynes, Pierce, & Laslett, 2008, p. 111).

There is yet a third party present in the collaborative analysis of qualitative data. Whoever reads the research report will take a part in making meaning of its analysis. In order for readers to make sense of how narrative research findings might apply to their own storied experience, "it is more than usually necessary for analysts to be transparent about their concepts, methods, and logic of argument" (Maynes, Pierce, & Laslett, 2008, p. 128). This transparency

with an audience is especially important to the integrity of narrative research. "There is no true version of a life, after all. There are only stories told about and around a life. . . . What kinds of truth claims can be made on the basis of personal narrative evidence?" (Maynes, Pierce, & Laslett, 2008, p. 148). The truth claims that are of value to narrative research are not the truth of the facts about what happened, but the truth of the meaning the narrators make of the stories they tell. Storytelling is a human act. Narrative research "assumes that sequential temporal orderings of human experience into narrative are not just characteristic of humans, but *make* us human" (Squire, 2008, p. 43).

Because Narrative is a Tool for Identity Formation

Narrative inquiry is an important methodological option for research on teacher education as it pertains to the identity formation of teachers. Through her narrative work with teachers in Canada, Jean Clandinin found participation in research to be identity forming and even transformational: "Through the analysis we [saw] a reconstruction of the novice's experience in a process of growth and change" (Clandinin, 1989, p. 121). Clandinin's perspective on teacher identity formation was a narrative one. "We do this experientially and biographically by understanding these constructions as, in part, reconstructions of novice teachers' life narratives" (Clandinin, 1989, p. 122). For narrative researchers like "Connelly and Clandinin, 'Life is a story that we live,' and it is through the telling and retelling of those stories that we make meaning and come to understand the stories of others" (Coulter, Michael, & Poyner, 2007, p. 106). In narrative inquiry, "self-narratives" are instrumental in "self-construction" (Maynes, Pierce, & Laslett, 2008, p. 42). "Research participants and perhaps the researcher herself . . . derive meaning from the stories and the storying process, and can begin to create a new story of self" (Goodson & Gill, 2011, p. 24).

The self is constructed and interpreted through the narratives told and retold, and as storytellers work with researchers to make meaning of their stories, they "actively write their lives" (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 478), making narrative ideal for the investigation of teacher identity formation. In my classes, the stories my students told not only described their growing teacher identities, they created them. This collaborative self construction requires a trusting relationship, "akin to friendship" (Connelly & Clandenin, 2006) among storytellers and researchers who collaborate to make meaning which is identity forming. "It demands intense and active listening and giving the narrator full voice. Because it is a collaboration, however, it permits both voices to be heard" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 153).

Since narrative is a human attribute, life becomes most human through narrative. The stories people tell about themselves

> express who they are, where they have been, how they have lived and what they aspire to. Narrative is considered central to being human because much of our sense of purpose and meaning, selfhood, values, and aspirations are based on our narratives. At the same time, narrative also allows the possibility for individuals to adapt, modify, and shift their stories and thereby lived experiences can be transformed. (Goodson & Gill, 2011, p. 5)

The telling of stories is transformational to the identities of the storytelling participants of narrative research. Identity is formed in the telling of a story. "Identity becomes a way of talking about the self. . . . In order to have a sense of who we are, we have to have a notion of how we have become. . . . [This] involves an understanding of what it means to be a person" (Goodson & Gill, 2011, p. 13). It is the focus of narrative inquiry "into the construction of identity, and inquiry into narratives about identity" (Cosier, 2011, p. 43) that makes narrative an excellent choice for a research methodology that examines the creation and transformation of teacher identity in the School of Education.

Perhaps to illustrate the creation of a teacher identity through the power of storytelling in teaching, I need to start with my own teacher identity story. A key influence on my life as a teacher has been all of the different school settings in which I have been a student. I attended American public schools as a young child, then my family moved to Switzerland where I went to a British international school. From Switzerland we moved to Togo, where I did not attend the national school, because the older students were all boys. For high school I went to a boarding school in Nigeria, where there were only 36 students in my class. I spent a semester at home because I had been very ill, taking the University of Nebraska high school by correspondence. I spent a semester at a large public school in Illinois while my father was undergoing chemotherapy. My class at that school had over 1000 students and I was frankly lost, until I found a home in the theatre department.

The places where I have been a teacher are almost as varied as the places in which I have been taught. In boarding school I was conscripted into teaching sixth grade French. When I was fifteen I taught French to the English speaking students at the seminary where my father was the president, and English to the Francophones. My father insisted upon reviewing my lesson plans for these classes, and for the first time I learned about objectives, instruction, and assessment.

At college, I minored in drama and got a double major in English and French. I was editor of the literary magazine in high school and copy editor of the student paper in college. I wanted to be a writer, and took the secondary education certification program as an afterthought. I received my certification, but did not plan to teach. Despite my experience teaching since I was fourteen, my sense of who I am did not yet include a teacher identity.

I finally returned to teaching in Aurora, Colorado, at a school where, in my eighth grade English class, with only eight students, five had behavior contracts to specify behaviors not

allowed in school. Since that first class of troubled middle schoolers, I have continually taught, at private high schools in Denver and Budapest, in colleges in Colorado and Hungary, and here at the Midwestern state university where I teach undergraduates.

To understand my teacher identity formation, I must also reflect on experiences that created an interest in teacher education. Since I began to teach I have focused on teaching writing, although I had no preparation to do so, nor even the experience of a good composition class as a student. This feeling that I was unprepared to teach one of the most important academic disciplines, especially for an English teacher, was compounded by my experience teaching how writing is taught at seminars in Colorado and Eastern Europe. At the beginning of every session, I asked teachers to discuss the most important thing they learned about writing in school or their favorite writing teacher. Over and over again I heard, "I was not taught anything about writing in school" or "I never had a writing teacher." While teaching in Budapest, I traveled to schools and education conferences in Hungary, Ukraine, Russia, Turkey, Austria, Bosnia, Romania, Uzbekistan, Greece, and Thailand, all to talk about teaching writing well.

I was a consultant traveling around Europe and Asia to meet with teachers educating expatriate children. I taught seminars about preparing for college or choosing curricula or teaching transculturally. One year I taught high school seminars on poetry in Ukraine, Russia, and Bosnia, did inservices at international schools in Kiev, Odessa, Moscow, and Istanbul, taught 12 separate seminars at yearly educational conferences in Budapest and Istanbul, and even directed plays in both Budapest and Bosnia. Often the most difficult questions and problems I heard from the teachers I met in all these travels were not educational. Instead, they asked about ways to help their students understand what it means to be a transcultural person, ways to help them discover who they are and where they belong, and ways to help them overcome the grief of

constant partings that can hinder a sense of identity and of belonging. I began to think about the importance of identity formation, of understanding how to be a person, and to wonder how I could use the power of students' stories in the identity formation of transformative teaching.

Because Narrative is Transformative

Narrative research can become, in itself, a transformative learning experience for both researcher and storyteller. "The heart of the enterprise is research in the form of story or, in other words, exploring the world by telling a story about it" (Schaafsma, Pagnucci, Wallace, & Lambert Stock, 2007, p. 282). More and more research in the field of education has turned to narrative inquiry to interpret teachers' lives and make meaning of their experiences in school. For example, *Composing Storied Ground: Four Generations of Narrative Inquiry* is the account of four English professors who presented their dissertation research in story form. One of the four described their progress as narrative researchers like this: "[We] were lucky enough to publish what were largely narrative dissertations as books, although we did not call them 'narrative inquiry' at the time. . . . We explored classroom worlds by telling stories about them, not objectively, because we were part of that story" (Schaafsma, Pagnucci, Wallace, & Lambert Stock, 2007, p. 290). These professors used narrative as a research methodology because they "thought in stories" (Schaafsma, Pagnucci, Wallace, & Lambert Stock, 2007, p. 293). They saw story not only as a research or teaching tool, but as a way to view the world and live in it. They actually believed they could make the world a better place by telling their stories well. They claimed that doing narrative research was in itself transformative. They claimed it had changed their lives, that they had learned things they never knew and found meaning in their own work that they had never seen before (Schaafsma, Pagnucci, Wallace, & Lambert Stock, 2007). It is this personally transformative promise of narrative research that is most remarkable to me.

As I reflect upon my own growth as a narrative thinker, I see my experience at the university as a time of increasing understanding about the transformative importance of story to qualitative research. My culturally storied experience has been so diverse and ever-changing that I must know myself before I can interpret the stories others tell. The stories I tell about myself create the identities of who I want to be, as a teacher, as a writer, as a culturally aware global citizen. That story of who I want to become is built upon the story of how I have come to hold the values that shape who I am. Linda Tuhiwai Smith's book about post-colonialism, *Decolonizing Methodologies* (1999), seems pertinent to a discussion of this personal life story. As a child who grew up in the post-colonial independent nations of West Africa, the struggle of indigenous peoples to determine their own identity, to write their own history and dream their own future, was one I understood and lived alongside. But another personal identity, as the child of missionaries, was one I soon realized would silence my voice and make my experience invisible. To Tuhiwai Smith I must be a member of the "communities who were referred to as 'half-castes' or 'half-breeds', or stigmatized by some other specific term which often excluded them from belonging to either settler or indigenous societies" (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, p. 27). As an American, not born into the colonial way of life but sharing the lived experience of post-colonial West Africa, I am stigmatized as one of Tuhiwai Smith's half-breeds. This feeling that I am not a citizen of any world, with a story no one wants to hear, makes me sensitive to the voices of the silenced among whom I may claim a connection and a common cause.

The purpose of this research is not to develop an argument about the definitive qualities of transformative teaching that have the most impact on student identity formation, but to give both students and teachers an opportunity to be heard, to tell their stories about the kind of teaching that has made a difference to their lives. To try to draw meaning from each narrator's

truth claims, to bring them all into synthesis in what I can personally believe, has more value to me than to prove any claim indefensible or to win any argument by attacking another's position, aiming at Lincoln and Guba's "negotiated outcomes" where researcher and narrator work together "to negotiate meanings and interpretations with the human sources from which the data have chiefly been drawn because it is their constructions of reality that the inquirer seeks to reconstruct" (Howe, 1992, p. 248). I am much happier telling stories of diverse views of reality than I am framing arguments in support of empirically supported truth claims.

Narrative research is the best choice for a researcher who wants to make a difference in the lives of the participants, to do transformative research. Storytelling is used in teacher education as a teaching tool, when narrator/teachers "gain insights into their practices and set new directions for their ongoing professional development" and as a research method in narrative inquiry, collecting teacher stories and seeking "multiple critical readings from a variety of analytic approaches" (Coulter, Michael, & Poyner, 2007, p. 106). Participation in narrative research is transformative for teachers because "it is the narrative repertoire of our imagination that helps us distinguish the world we live in from the world we want to live in" (Coulter, Michael, & Poyner, 2007, p. 108). It is transformative for researchers because the methodology of narrative inquiry is recursive, moving from theory to data to "the emerging plot, always testing the story with the database. . . . Collaboration is key to this process, and it is this collaboration that holds the most potential for the dual roles of narrative inquiry as a pedagogical strategy" (Coulter, Michael, & Poyner, 2007, p. 108). Teachers benefit from participation in narrative research because they "need a place to share their stories about public education," which is transformative in creating a "collective text in which they realize they are not alone and that their experiences are not isolated events" (Coulter, Michael, & Poyner, 2007, p. 110).

Narrative research becomes an effective teaching strategy in teacher education because, in telling their stories, students discover their developing philosophy as well as new ways of knowing that are both creative and imaginative and factual and intellectual. "Engaging in this ongoing dialogic through narrative inquiry turns storytelling into pedagogy allowing preservice and practicing teachers to problematize and change the nature of teaching and learning" (Coulter, Michael, & Poyner, 2007, p. 121). I found this true in *Introduction to Education* classes when I invited students to participate in my research by telling their stories of teachers who had been transformative in their education. Participating students were empowered to write new stories of their own teacher identities as transformative and to reflect on what it was about a teacher's practice which made a difference in their lives. This is research with a transformative purpose.

The Methodology of Narrative

In considering which methodology is best suited to answering research questions about the power of story for identity formation and teaching that transforms, I have chosen narrative research. To complete a research project I believe is of value, that I really want to do, it becomes imperative that I use the methodology which is most productive, most rigorous, and most trustworthy for answering my research questions. As a writer, I love the conviction of narrative research that, "storytelling is integral to understanding lives" (Peshkin, 1993, p. 23). My strongest motivation for doing this research is to publish the stories of transformative teachers.

Selection of Participants

I selected participants from among the students in my class who indicated in an assignment (153 assignments were collected) that they have experienced transformative teaching, and that this experience influenced their decision to pursue a degree in education. I then surveyed the entire class on the philosophical preferences of the students as well as what

qualities of teaching they believed most important to transformation; 126 surveys were collected.
From the students who answered in the affirmative to my initial questions, I chose 15 who were
interested in becoming secondary school teachers and willing to participate in focus group
interviews about the importance of transformative teaching to their decision to pursue teacher
certification. These focus groups participated in in-depth interviews about the relationships and
moral purposes that they describe as foundational to teaching that makes a difference. The
students were all applicants to the School of Education: 83 freshmen, 29 sophomores, and 13
juniors between 18 and 41 years old.

The teachers selected for participation were identified by my students as transformative
and were public and private high school teachers who worked in schools within driving distance
of my home. Here is a pie chart which illustrates the proportion of teachers identified as
secondary by the subjects they taught:

Subject Area of Teachers

■ English/L.A. ■ Counslors/Coaches ■ Fine Arts ■ Math ■ History ■ Science
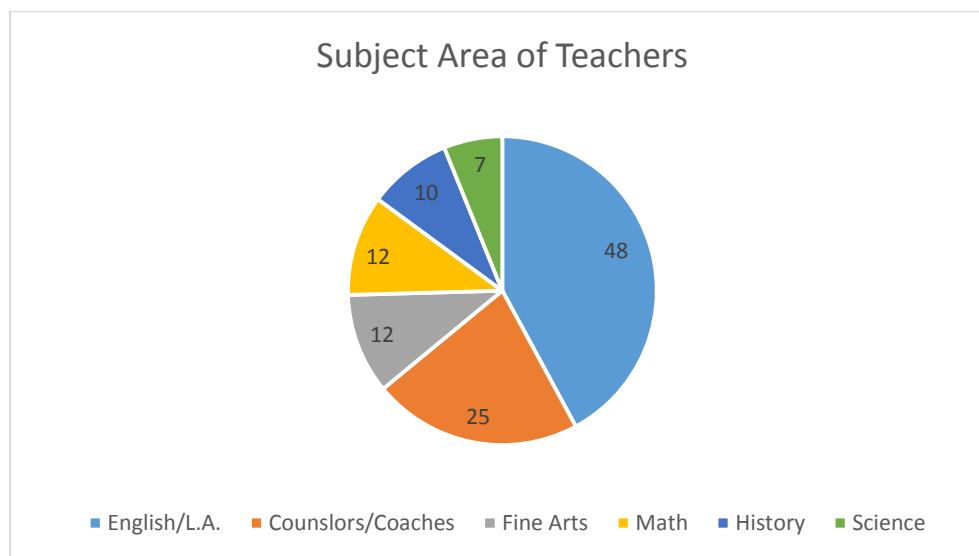
One hundred and fourteen of the 152 teachers identified as transformative were
secondary school teachers. Of those I contacted 24, twelve of whom were English teachers, six
were fine arts teachers, four were high school counselors, and two were history teachers. The

seven teachers who responded that they were willing and able to participate were sent a survey in which they were asked to tell stories of their transformative experiences with students, or they participated in personal interviews in which they responded to the same questions.

Other participants included in this purposeful selection were a Superintendent of Schools who has spoken to the *Introduction to Education* class every semester about being a teacher who makes a difference, and the university professor who has been most transformative to my life as a teacher. I chose the superintendent because his story gives voice to the perspective of a school administrator who is committed to transformative teaching. I chose the professor because he is the most authentic example of a teacher who makes a difference whom I have personally known.

The Researcher as a Participant in Research

The qualitative attention to the impact of the researcher's own story on the interpretation of research is an important reason for my choice of a narrative research design (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011) and (Mackey & Gass, 2011). I myself am also a participant in the research. The understanding that the researcher's story is an important part of the narrative and that her values and cherished theories must be clearly articulated requires a narrative approach to research about the power of story in the identity formation of transformative teaching. "Traditionally, what you bring to the research from your own background and identity has been treated as bias, something whose influence needs to be eliminated from the design, rather than a valuable component of it," however, "in this field, the researcher is the instrument of the research. . . . My subjectivity is the basis for the story that I am able to tell. It is a strength on which I build" (Maxwell, 2013, p. 45). If researchers transparently describe themselves and their subjectivity as an analytic instrument, they will at least be able to see where their selves and their subjects interact and relate, and how they have collaborated to make meaning of the data. "They can at best be enabled to write

unshackled from orientations that they did not realize were intervening in their research process .

. . [and] be aware of how their subjectivity may be shaping their inquiry and its outcomes"

(Peshkin, 1993, p. 17).

Peshkin describes his own subjectivities as "I"s, identities he must narrate to give

meaning to his analysis of data (1988). As I reflect upon how my story impacts my research on

the power of story, I recognize these subjectivities, these identities which will surely be heard as

voices in the narration: the transcultural I, the academic I, the pursuing-excellence I, the teacher-

artist I, the writer I, and ultimately, the human storytelling I. *"The point is this: by monitoring

myself, I can create an illuminating, empowering personal statement that attunes me to where

self and subject are intertwined"* (Peshkin, 1988, p. 20).

I am a participant in the research. I am a teacher of English, drama, speech, French,

journalism, composition, and education. I have twenty years' experience teaching these courses

at both high school and college levels in Colorado and in Budapest, Hungary. I am also a

multilingual international student, having studied in five countries on three continents in three

languages. I am currently an instructor for the Department of Curriculum and Teaching at a

Midwestern state university. My personal educational philosophy is both perennial and

progressive, and my personal goal is to be a transformative teacher. I believe in the possibility of

becoming a teacher who makes a difference. I believe in the power of story for identity

formation, and that a caring relationship is necessary to transformative teaching.

The Settings for the Study

Another distinctive aspect of narrative research which is essential to my proposed study

is a focus on understanding the context, both as physical setting and as social environment, of the

phenomena under study (Maxwell, 2013) and (Mackey & Gass, 2011). "Qualitative researchers

stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 8). The natural setting for this narrative inquiry is in the School of Education where students create a teacher identity and in the schools where they learn to practice transformative teaching. The assignments that were collected as the first data in the study were written in the largest lecture hall in the building, a classroom with rows of tiered seats at long curved ranks of tables. There are over 100 seats in this space, and during the semester in which this research was done there were two sections of the class, meeting on separate days, of more than 90 students in each section. It is a classroom without windows, with a large podium at the front of the room and a wide screen for projecting power point presentations. One perplexing quality of this classroom I have often reflected on is that it seems designed to remove the students to such a distance from the teacher stranded at the front of the room that any hope of teacher and students creating a relationship of care is made unlikely, if not impossible.

The focus group interviews were conducted on the third floor of the education building, where the professors in the Department of Curriculum and Teaching have their offices. There were three separate focus groups with three to six participants in each group. Two of these group interviews were conducted in a large conference room next to the elevators. This room is furnished with 25 upholstered armchairs placed around the edges of the room. Before each interview I arranged the chairs in a close circle in the center of the room. The walls, carpeting, and furnishings of this room are all beige, and there is a whiteboard and projector screen on one wall, a bank of windows on the wall opposite the door, but no other decorations in the room. The third focus group interview was conducted in a smaller conference room at the end of the hall on the same floor, decorated again in shades of beige, with one wall of windows and a large

conference table in the middle of the room, surrounded by comfortable, rolling chairs. The interviews were all conducted with the doors closed to keep distractions to a minimum and to enable recording of the interviews with a small digital recorder. The focus group interviews were all conducted the first week of November, 2015. The individual interview with the superintendent was recorded in this same conference room on December 4, 2015.

Although conducting the interviews of teachers identified as transformative in the setting of the schools and classrooms where they teach was offered as an option, none of the teachers who agreed to a personal interview chose that option. Instead, another neutral location was chosen as a setting for the interview. For example, the band director who was named as a teacher who made a difference in the lives of two of my students chose to be interviewed in the lobby of a local hotel where he was staying overnight. That room was furnished with very comfortable sofas and chairs, decorated in shades of orange and brown. It was a dark room with soft lighting, and the traffic of people coming into the lobby was considerable, but did not seem to be a distraction to the teacher who told his story with great feeling and answered each question both completely and concisely. The teacher interviews were all conducted in February, 2016.

The interview with the professor was held in his office on the same floor of the building that houses the School of Education, in January of 2016. The building is carpeted on this floor with blue-grey carpet squares. The walls throughout the building are painted the same neutral beige. In this office, the desk sits under a window that overlooks the road and the sorority and fraternity houses across the street. When I entered the room, the professor was listening to classical music while he worked on his computer. His walls are lined with bookshelves and filing cabinets, and a pen and ink drawing of an English castle hangs on the wall just over his head. He had pulled up a chair beside his desk, and turned to face that chair when I sat down.

The Collection of Data

When interviews are seen as a method for "investigating truths, facts, experience, beliefs, attitudes, and/or feelings of respondents" and the language of the interview is seen "as a neutral medium that reflects or corresponds to objective or subjective reality," the interview is a method of doing research. But in narrative research interviews may be viewed as more than a research tool or method, rather as a social practice which requires a relationship (Talmy, 2010, p. 120). When the interview itself is seen as a social encounter, it becomes more than a collection of data; it becomes a means of "knowledge production" as an active social interaction (Talmy, 2010, p. 130). **"**An often neglected source of theory is the theories held by the participants in your study. . . . Any attempt to interpret or explain the participants' actions without taking account of their actual beliefs, values and theories is probably fruitless" (Maxwell, 2013, p. 52). The interviews collected for this research became more than a record of stories told; they became a source of theory created out of the relationship that developed among the participants.

I obtained signed permission forms from all participants to use their stories in my research, and data was gathered through the collection of: assignments in the 2015 Fall semester's *Introduction to Education* course, describing a teacher who made a difference in the students' lives; surveys of those students' philosophy of curriculum and instruction, as well as personal theories about the qualities of teaching that make it transformative; focus group interviews with 15 participants selected from those students; surveys and interviews with teachers identified as transformative in the student interviews; and individual interviews with the superintendent and the professor. The focus group interviews explored the students' interpretations of what it was about their teachers' instruction that made a difference to their lives and impacted their decision to become teachers. Personal interviews with the teachers

identified as transformative explored how those teachers narrated lived experience with teaching that makes a difference in students' lives. I investigated the transformative teachers' use of story as a tool for identity formation, the resolution of conflicting forces that made such teaching difficult, and the moral purposes that empower their teaching. I transcribed every word of each of these interviews, recorded on a digital recorder.

I planned the interviews to be semi-structured, meaning that I had a prepared script of three sets of main questions, with *follow-up* questions to elicit more detailed responses to the main questions and *probing* questions if there was time to pursue a topic at greater length. I began by asking preliminary questions about the students' stories of transformative teaching relationships. I asked questions about the ways transformative teachers had encouraged students to pursue excellence and had helped them to believe that transformation was possible. I asked what impact this transformative experience had made on their decisions to become teachers themselves. I asked both teachers and students to choose the quality of teaching they believed was most important to transformation. I asked the teachers and the professor and the superintendent to tell their stories of teaching to make a difference, and asked them all how they were changed by the experience of transformative teaching.

Other questions emerged out of the interviews as I conducted them. I asked students if they had experienced transformation as a result of a teacher intervention during a crisis in their lives. I asked them what their greatest concerns about teaching were, and what they believed the teachers who had made such a difference in their lives would advise about dealing with those concerns. I asked them about the investments their teachers had made in their lives of time and money and care, because that had been a ubiquitous theme in student essays about transformative teachers. I asked them how their lives had been changed by the experience.

I asked teachers about specific values they mentioned modeling for students, such as leadership and affirmation. I asked the superintendent how he created a transformative culture in the schools he worked in, using his language and metaphors to phrase my questions. I asked the professor about the metaphors I had noticed students using to describe their experiences with transformative teaching, and about the ways in which such teaching compared to a mentoring relationship. I asked him the significance to him of the questions that had arisen out of the assignments I had collected from students about transformative teaching relationships, to negotiate with him the meaning to be made of their discussion of teacher interventions in a crisis and about transformative teaching as an investment of themselves that teachers make in their students' lives. I asked everyone if there was anything important to their understanding of the transformative teaching relationship that I had missed, that they believed I should add to my developing story of teaching that makes a difference to students' lives. Transcripts of the interview questions are attached in the appendix.

The Analysis and Writing of Research Findings

The Listening Guide

To listen very carefully to the storied experience of each participant, I used the *Listening Guide* designed by Gilligan, Spencer, Weinberg and Bertsch, a "voice-centered relational method" of listening to the text, because this method involves the researcher more actively through listening for the voice of the research participants, rather than merely coding the text for answers to the research questions (2006, p. 159). "The recent emphasis on reflective practice and teacher research has strengthened the focus on listening to the voices of teachers and hearing their stories" (Bell, 2002, p. 208). I included my own reflections and interpretations of each story, as influenced by my own personal history as a teacher who desires to make a difference

and hoped-for-future as an educational researcher. This method of analysis of narrative research data involves multiple listening for multiple voices, including, in this project, listening for the theme of the power of story in identity formation, listening for stories of the relationship central to transformative teaching, listening for the moral purposes of the storytellers, listening for plot (what happens), listening for character motivation and growth, listening for competing voices, and listening for my own responses as a participant in the research.

In *The Construction Zone: Literary Elements in Narrative Research,* Cathy Coulter and Mary Lee Smith (2009) addressed using knowledge of the literary elements of narrative in the analysis of narrative data, in an attempt to borrow an understanding of the elements of story for data analysis. The literary elements that the authors focused on in their analysis were *point of view* and *planning action within scenes* (Coulter & Smith, 2009, p. 585). *Point of view*, as a literary term, can be defined as the perspective from which a story is told. The authors broaden the term: "in narrative research, point of view consists of how the story presents the relationships between researcher and participants" (Coulter & Smith, 2009, p. 579). The literary element the authors called *playing action within scenes* is essentially creating a *setting* for the action of plot. The literary definition of setting is the time, place, and atmosphere of the story. The authors argue that the narrative researcher must establish a chronology for her story, as well as describe with sensory imagery the place in which the story occurs, giving due attention to Connally and Clandinin's commonalities of temporality and place for narrative inquiry. At the same time, many important literary elements of narrative were entirely ignored. The most important elements of story are *character, setting, plot,* and *theme*. Nothing was said in this article about the importance of *motivation* to character or whether the characters were *dynamic* or *static* (which is largely the point in a story about transformative teaching). Although theme was

mentioned, there was nothing about reading theme through the development of character, the description of setting, and the unfolding of plot. The omission of conflict, crisis, and resolution as elements of the plot of a story, which give it meaning, is difficult to understand. How can the development of plot and the description of a character's struggle with conflict be used to understand the layers of meaning and conflicted voices of a narrated experience? How can the interpretation of symbolic devices be used to open up multiple, layered meanings of narrated experience? These are questions investigated through my analysis of the stories I collected in essays, surveys, and interviews for this research.

Because the personal narratives collected in narrative research are stories, an analysis of the elements of story should inform our research. The analysis of context or setting is already widely practiced in narrative inquiry. However, "like all narratives, these stories have drama, plot," and characters also important to their themes (Maynes, Pierce, & Laslett, 2008, p. 43). In discovering themes to their stories, storytellers rely on "the interrelated components of narrative, including the plot, story, characters, and focus, [which] supply a pattern by which readers shape their interpretations of a social reality" (Holley & Colyer, 2009, p. 684). Not only the storyteller uses these literary devices in analyzing literature; readers will use them as well. Because people think in stories, and make meaning of their own lives through the stories they tell, the elements of story are our "most important meaning-making tools" (Holley & Colyer, 2009, p. 684). My analysis of the data included an assessment of conflicts and crises resolved in story plotlines, an investigation of characters as dynamic or static—whether they grow and are transformed, or remain unchanged—and an examination of how metaphors used to describe the relationship of transformative teaching can reveal how the narrators think about the experience, and how they make meaning of their stories in the identity formation of their best-loved-teacher selves.

Inductive and Deductive Analysis

   I applied both inductive and deductive reasoning to my analysis of the interviews to answer my research questions. Deductive reasoning brings theory and themes to an analysis of data, concluding that they must be present, and searching for evidence that they are there within the data. I began with the transformative theory that attention to the power of story in identity formation of students can lead to teaching that makes a difference in their lives. I also looked for stories about the moral purposes of the pursuit of excellence, a commitment to an aesthetic of the good life, a belief in the possibility of students becoming their best-loved-selves, and the intentional cultivation of a relational ethic of care as central to transformative teaching practice.

   Inductive reasoning is the process of discovering a pattern in a collection of data that makes sense of the themes and theories evident within the data. "Inductive research has theory or an in-depth understanding as its goal" (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005, p. 257). Qualitative research can never be exclusively deductive or inductive. "A researcher cannot, for instance, enter a research site or begin interviewing a participant without any idea of what to look for or what questions to ask. . . . Inductive research has sometimes been referred to as hypothesis-generating research because further research questions are suggested by the recurring patterns in the data" (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005, p. 258).

   Many of the actual questions I asked during the interviews emerged from my conversation with individual participants, for example, questions about when transformative teaching was the result of an intervention of a teacher when a student was in a crisis situation. Analysis included coding the transcripts of interviews by identifying patterns that emerged from the data (inductive) as well as looking for the themes described in my research questions (deductive). To my deductive themes of transformative relationships and their impact on the

decision to become teachers who make a difference were added themes of transformative

teaching as intervention in a crisis and the intentionality of teaching to transform, in tension with

stories teachers told of transformative teaching being a happy accident. The coding of qualitative

data was done by noting themes and patterns in the data, many of which emerged during the first

reading of the transcribed interviews. "This process, in which initial categories are based on a

first pass through the data, is sometimes known as open coding" (Mackey & Gass, 2011, p. 241).

Strategies for discovering themes in the data included: underlining key phrases; looking for

repetitions; looking for ways participants describe that surprised; highlighting metaphors and

analogies; looking for similarities and differences; looking for what is missing; and looking for

themes related to underlying theory and the research question (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

Ultimately, the analysis of narrative inquiry also relies upon a developing relationship

between the researcher and research participants because, "analysis is about the representation of

reconstruction of social phenomena. We do not simply collect data; we fashion them out of our

transactions with other men and women" (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 108). Because writing is

a way of thinking, the structure and style of writing become an analysis method. "Different texts

inscribe different analyses, and thus construct the research itself in different ways" (Coffey &

Atkinson, 1996, p. 118). In an attempt to triangulate the methods of my analysis, I have included

these three: using the *Listening Guide*, interpreting the literary elements of story evident in the

narratives, and applying both deductive and inductive reasoning to my final analysis.

Another Approach to Validity

Quantitative research is deemed valid when it is replicable (other studies come up with

the same results) and generalizable (the results of the research will apply to other cases and

applications). Because narrative research is the telling of unique and specific, personal stories,

these measures of validity do not seem to apply. "Another family of validity approaches has emerged" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 42). Qualitative researchers rely on trustworthiness rather than replication and personal, transparent integrity rather than generalizability as indicators of a study's reliability. "The principles and practice of ethical research [are] central to the trustworthiness of any study. . . . For trustworthiness we argue that reasoning must move beyond the procedural to focus on matters of relationships—with participants, with stakeholders, with peers, and with the larger community" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 44). Narrative researchers may not make claims about the generalizability of what they have learned from the stories told to them, but they enter into a relationship with both storytellers and readers to collaborate on an agreement about what those stories mean, and how they contribute to an understanding of the reality of lived experience (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). "Internal validity asks the question, how congruent are one's findings with reality? . . . In qualitative research, the understanding of reality is really the researcher's interpretation of participants' interpretations or understandings of the phenomenon of interest" (Merriam, 2002, p. 25).

To establish validity, I relied upon strategies qualitative researchers have developed to increase the trustworthiness of their research. These include the triangulation of theory, "using multiple perspectives to analyze the same set of data;" a triangulation of methods, using "multiple, independent methods of obtaining data in a single investigation in order to arrive at the same research findings" (Mackey & Gass, 2011, p. 181); and even a triangulation of the analysis of that data, as described in the previous section. Other strategies I have used, which are commonly used to increase trustworthiness in narrative research, include "member checks," in which participants are asked to review the researcher's interpretation of data and collaborate on making meaning of it, "peer review," in which others are asked to contribute to the analysis, and

"reflexivity," in which researchers transparently reveal their own theoretical positions and experiences (Merriam, 2002, p. 26).

Perhaps the most widely used strategy to ensure trustworthiness in qualitative research is "providing rich, thick description. . . . This involves providing an adequate data base, that is, enough description and information that readers will be able to determine how closely their situations match" (Merriam, 2002, p. 29). To establish validity, or trustworthiness and authenticity, I examined the data and its interpretation through the lens of the purposes and defining questions of my research.

Establishing a New Approach to Reliability

"Lincoln and Guba were the first to conceptualize reliability in qualitative research as *dependability* or *consistency*" (Merriam, 2002, p. 28). For narrative researchers reliability is achieved through participant reviews of the analysis that concur that findings are consistent, and that they make sense. One of the strategies I have used to increase reliability is recording an "audit trail—the best we can do is explain how we arrived at our results. . . . [Through] an in-depth analysis . . . and [considering] how knowledge can be transferred to another situation, generalizability in qualitative research becomes possible" (Merriam, 2002, p. 28). For dependability, I was transparent about my methods and analysis, both in presenting the research to participants, and in reporting the results, giving full descriptions of settings, participants, and methods of analysis. I demonstrated credibility to the research population by presenting the finished research study for member checks and respondent validation (Mackey & Gass, 2011)**.**

In quantitative analysis, it is considered a negative judgment to say, "That is a value-laden statement." As a narrative researcher, when I write, I try to be transparent about what I value: I value people more than ideas. I value creativity more than criticism. I value work that is

real, that is driven by passion and concern for people, and that makes a difference. I value the striving for excellence and the relationships of care that create an abundant life. All research is value-laden. It is the bold, crying-out-loud declaration of values in qualitative research that make it the kind of research I want to do.

To increase trustworthiness and dependability, I began each interview with the same questions, only changing the content and direction of my questioning to rephrase my prompts in the narrator's vocabulary or to follow up on a theme introduced by the participant. I engaged participants in the interpretation of their own narratives, looking together for cues to the moral purposes which define their teaching. I completed field notes, writing down everything I recalled about each interview, as well as my personal response, noting immediately what resonated with my deductive theory or what contradictions and tensions suggested new directions for inquiry. As a final check, I looked for both confirming and contradictory findings between my analysis and the greater literature of my theoretical framework.

Limitations

There are certainly limitations to this research. The major limitation I discovered for this study was the lack of a body of scholarship about teaching to transform in the test-driven environment of today's schools. It was also difficult to predict how transferable my personal story and understanding of identity formation among transcultural students at an international school would be to the identity formation of students studying to be public school teachers in the School of Education. Another limitation, of possibly notable consequence, is that, though narrative inquiry in education is dedicated to research conducted in schools, by living alongside the participants in the research, none of my interviewed teachers agreed to answering my questions in their classrooms or their schools. I do not want to make too much of this surprising

occurrence, but it may be indicative of the tension teachers experience when trying to teach to transform in a setting in which mimetic teaching is not only the norm, but at times the only pedagogy made possible by school and system demands on teachers' time and resources.

Yet another limitation is that, though I hoped to find a balance of male and female teachers to interview, only men responded to my first survey with a willingness to participate in a personal discussion of my questions. Only after a second and third request for participation did I receive a response from any female teachers, which led me to wonder if for some reason they were more hesitant to tell their stories of becoming a teacher who makes a difference.

The Ethical Considerations for Narrative Research

The primary ethical concerns of all research are to demonstrate a respect for personal privacy, to be careful to do no harm, and to be just in the distribution of benefits to all involved in the research (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). To demonstrate respect for personal privacy, I did not disclose the identity of participants (all the names have been changed), and I obtained written permission to include any participant's story. The effort to do no harm and to be sure the participants benefit from this study included a member review of the research findings.

In this narrative research project, where the relational ethic of care is seen as the central ethical commitment of transformative teaching, ethical problems center around the relationship of researcher and participants, which is made evident in how the consent for participation is gained, data is collected and analyzed, and even how the research is written and the findings are published. In the end, research ethics are about the integrity of the investigator. "Although policies, guidelines, and codes of ethics have been developed by the federal government, institutions, and professional associations, actual ethical practice comes down to the individual researcher's own values and ethics" (Merriam, 2002, p. 230).

The Pursuit of Excellence

An ethical commitment to the pursuit of excellence is as important to my researcher self as it is to my teacher self. The power of story in research draws its strength from the understanding it brings of the ethical dimensions of human experience. "This is an essentially Aristotelian view of ethics which postulates that the virtuous life is the good life of human flourishing and fulfillment" (Goodson & Gill, 2011, p. 106). For this study, this has become a pursuit of both intellectual excellence, through rigorous research, moral excellence, through establishing a caring relationship with participants in the research, and even aesthetic excellence, in the endeavor to write their stories well.

An Aesthetics of Research

"Stories emerge as data, are collected, and then are framed and rendered through an analytical process that is artistic as well as rigorous" (Coulter and Smith, 2009, 577). Research, like teaching, is as much an art as a science, especially when it involves the telling of stories. If the process of analyzing narrative data is *artistic as well as rigorous*, perhaps the criteria we use to evaluate its reliability should be aesthetic as well as ethical.

I have long considered what makes me identify myself as a writer. Most of my life I have not identified with the people among whom I lived. I was a child who did not speak French living in Switzerland. The first year that we were there, my mother gave me a diary for Christmas. The entries in that diary expressed sorrow at being in a place where no one understood me when I spoke. I was a fair and freckled girl in sub-Saharan Africa. In boarding school in Jos, Nigeria, I wrote long letters home every Sunday, which were careful not to speak of sorrow or loss. When I returned to America, I found my parents' home culture was the place I fit in least of all. I began to write poetry and won a writing contest that awarded me a scholarship

for college, where I majored in English and began to use writing as a tool for my own identity formation. At university in Missouri, when someone asked me who I was, I would not answer, "I am an American," or "I am an African," but, "I am a writer." I really did not know if I was from America or Switzerland or Togo, but I knew that writing about my life gave me a sense of who I was and who I was capable of becoming.

So what I appreciate most about narrative research is the insistence that the research must be written well. "Every form of telling a life story draws on rules and expectations about writing and storytelling, literary conventions, rhetorical strategies, and ideas of what is interesting or important to readers and listeners" (Maynes, Pierce, & Laslett, 2008, p. 70). The story is as important as the truth, because "the writing of a research text is a narrative act" (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 485). Writing up research is an analytic task, but it is also an aesthetic one (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Writing research is a craft that involves form and style as much as it involves documentation and argument.

The narrative experience "has both artistic and aesthetic dimensions. . . . In our work, artistry and aesthetics are both in the lives we are studying and in the doing of narrative inquiry" (Clandinin & Huber, 2002, p. 162). Storytellers speak of experiences that have both artistic and aesthetic qualities, and often it is the aesthetic dimensions which speak most clearly of the meaning they have made of their existence. The attention to artistry in writing, to a creative imagination in teaching, and to the pleasure of telling a story well in research has become an aesthetic commitment which shapes my life and work. "The poetics of teaching is a conscious reconstitution of our selves toward beauty, truth, justice, wisdom, art, and meaning" (Fowler, 2003, p. 168). Narrative research is not "for the faint of heart and certainly not for those seeking escape from quantitative research. . . . With narrative . . . I do believe one notices the parts of

teaching that have to do with truth, meaning, and beauty, which make possible fresh, startling, poetic, reframed vision and understanding of teaching" (Fowler, 2003, p. 169). To fully tell the stories of teachers who make a difference, I give attention to the "aesthetic dimensions" of their lives (Clandinin & Huber, 2002, p. 163). Because it is these "aesthetic dimensions of [their lives] that keep calling to us. It is the beauty that [they have] composed in [their] story to live by that holds our attention" (Clandinin & Huber, 2002, p. 167).

An intentional investigation of the "aesthetic and artistic dimensions of experience" will show how teachers are "engaged in an artistic and aesthetic composition of life experience, and also reveal how, as narrative inquirers, we, too, are composing artistic and aesthetic stories to live by" (Clandinin & Huber, 2002, p. 161). This dedication to an aesthetic of excellence in research focuses, not on the constraining and demoralizing conditions of schools where transformative teaching is rare because teachers are unable to do work they value in the creation of relations of care in their classrooms, but instead on the "rich, detailed images of possibility" (Rose, 2009, p. 152) teachers tell of making a difference in their students' lives, through teaching that is as beautiful as it is wise and good. It also becomes a commitment to writing their stories with the same attention to artistic and aesthetic composition.

A Methodology of Possibility

One characteristic of narrative research that makes it an excellent choice for research about the power of story to identity formation in transformative teaching is that, by giving voice to the people who tell their stories, narrative inquiry can empower the oppressed and marginalized (Connelly & Clandenin, 2006) and (Merriam, 2002, p. 4). The telling of personal narratives gives voice to the marginalized and can create counternarratives that introduce a new, more hopeful perspective on teaching and school (Maynes, Pierce, & Laslett, 2008). With

Lincoln and Denzin, I believe that my work should "articulate a politics of hope" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 1054). I want to envision a future in which we have reintroduced a study of what is good, or even what is excellent into the ethical imagination of how things could be different. I am learning the importance of listening carefully to the stories teachers tell of how their experiences define who they know themselves to be and who they dream they may become (Goodson & Gill, 2011). I am likewise learning to position my research within the context of my own storied past and hopeful future.

A Relational Ethic of Care

Relational Ontological Commitments in Narrative Research by Clandinin and Murphy was the article in which I first read about the importance of relationships between participants in narrative inquiry. The relationship of care is as central to narrative research as it is to transformative teaching. These researchers claim (and I agree) that "ontological commitment to the relational locates ethical relationships at the heart of narrative inquiry" (Clandinin & Murphy, 2009, p. 600). Narrative researchers must move back and forth between the stories they hear and the stories they tell. This movement back and forth is filled with relational tensions. The relationship of the author to her audience is another important consideration. "Knowing that our research texts need to speak not only to our participants and ourselves as researchers but to a wider scholarly and public audience . . . we speak turned in two directions" (Clandinin & Murphy, 2009, p. 600).

Clandinin and Murphy envision an ethic of care that has the potential to change the "dominant cultural and institutional narratives" (2009, p. 601) that do not center ethics in a commitment to caring relationships. They emphasize the significance to narrative inquiry of the relationship between researchers and researched in the analysis of the stories they narrate.

"Human experience is the most fundamental reality we have, and that experience is relational. . . . Narrative research is relational research" (Clandinin & Murphy, 2009, p. 599).

With the current focus on assessment of both students and teachers in public schools, I am concerned that there is very little time left, for the teacher who must concentrate on teaching to mandated curriculum standards in preparing her students for state tests, to participate in the power of storytelling for identity formation and teaching that transforms. Even a concern for justice and equity must not be allowed to force an attention to aesthetics and a commitment to excellence out of schools. If teachers become too busy meeting state requirements for common core standards, how will they have time to form relationships with every student which will make a difference in those students' lives? The relationship of teacher and student is the most important contributor to teaching that makes a difference. The relationship of researcher to participants is also the most important contributor to inquiry that will make a difference in our teacher education programs and our schools.

One afternoon, when I was busy making the first contacts, by email, with the teachers I surveyed and interviewed to hear their stories of transformative teaching, I confessed to my husband that I was nervous about making these contacts. I was worried that the teachers my students had identified as transformative would be too busy to answer my questions, would not think my research was of value, and would not be willing to tell their stories to me. Joel reminded me of my foundational value, that people are more important than ideas. He suggested that I begin to think of each interview as an opportunity to begin a relationship with a teacher, who, like me, wants to make a difference in her students' lives. He said he thought the teachers my students remembered as transformative must be interesting and compassionate people, and he advised that I begin to think of them as friends. I sent my emails out on a Friday night and was

astonished when the responses began to come in. Several responded that evening, and most had replied by Saturday at noon. They were "happy to participate," "flattered to have been named as a teacher who made a difference," and they would "love to be interviewed" about teaching to transform. Focusing on developing a relationship with these remarkable teachers made my interviews and correspondence with them a social experience as much as a research investigation. I am more than ever convinced that a relational ethic of care is as important to narrative research as it is to teaching to make a difference.

I believe the ethical commitments of teacher educators and narrative researchers are as important to the story they will tell about what they have learned as are the questions they ask, the methodologies they design, and the theories that direct their research. The virtue of excellence which leads to the aesthetic of a good life, involving a relation of care, defined in a language of hope: these are the ethical commitments and the moral purposes which inform my research as strongly as the questions I ask, the theory I bring, or the methodology I use. There is, in the interpretive practice of narrative inquiry, "an aesthetics of representation that goes beyond the pragmatic, or the practical" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 4). In this narrative study it is my goal to do rigorous research, to write good stories with compassion and care for the storytellers, and to write those stories as well as I can.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Analysis: Making Meaning of the Stories Teachers Tell

Every year in the *Introduction to Education* class students have written an essay about why they want to be teachers, with the title, *Why Teach?* It was in these student essays that I began to hear about my students' desire to make a difference in the lives of children. It was in these essays that I first read the stories of all the many teachers they remembered who had made a lasting change in their lives. It was in reading these stories of transformation that I began to wonder about what qualities of teaching make it transformative and to develop the research question that is the focus of this narrative research study: *How do School of Education undergraduates and the teachers they identify as transformative narrate the relationship of transformative teaching and how that relationship has informed the undergraduates' identity formation as aspiring teachers and their decision to pursue a teaching career?*

In the 2015 fall semester I began the class with a new assignment: "In one paragraph, write a story of a teacher who made a difference in your life." One hundred and fifty-two assignments were completed. Twenty-nine male students identified 9 female and 20 male teachers as transformative; 123 female students identified 80 female and 43 male teachers as transformative. Thirty-eight of the teachers identified as transformative were elementary school teachers, and 114 were high school teachers. Of those secondary school teachers, over half were English, foreign language, or fine arts teachers. (I myself have taught English, French, Speech, and Drama.) Others were history, science, or math teachers, advisors, or coaches. All but three students narrated a relationship of care as central to teaching that transforms; 110 also described the pursuit of excellence as a critical quality of transformative teaching.

When I made the assignment I explained that I was interested in hearing stories about teachers who made a difference in their lives because this was the topic of my dissertation. I did not discuss my theoretical framework for writing or give hints to what I expected students to say about what makes teaching transformative. I was then amazed at how insistently they spoke to the themes that were central to my triangulation of theory, illustrating how the stories students tell create the identity that is the result of teaching that transforms. The relational themes centered on an ethic of care were clearly expressed in the stories they told, and therefore, as a first step in data analysis, I compiled my students' thoughts on transformative teaching, collected in those first assignments, as they relate to the themes of my theoretical framework. I edited for misspelled words and poor grammar, but otherwise the following is a story of transformation recorded in the students' exact words. I believe their stories are powerful in narrating the relationship of transformative teaching and in showing how a transformative teaching experience impacts their identities as teachers and their decisions to pursue a teaching career.

Students Narrate Teaching that Transforms

One teacher who inspired me was my twelfth grade English teacher. She is the most positive, upbeat, and cheery person I ever met. She truly loved her job; she was the kindest, most patient and loving teacher I ever had. "Mama Z," as her students affectionately referred to her, was the embodiment of what is right about education. Not only was she excellent in teaching literature, she was a great advisor. She was the most caring teacher I have ever met. She was always in a good mood and never hesitated to help. She pushed me to see my potential. She did an amazing job of making every student feel special. She made school a place I wanted to be.

When I was a sophomore, I walked into a history class that changed my life forever. The teacher created a fantastic environment in his classroom. He set the tone, making it clear that

putting others down would not be tolerated, that in his class we would only build each other up.

If someone had a question about anything, he would focus his whole lesson on that question. His

classroom was the place students would go after school just because they liked to be there.

On the Importance of a Relationship of Care

The thing that made him transformative was how caring he was towards every student.

He paid attention to each individual in the room. I could tell that he genuinely cared about his

students. He was loved by everyone. I felt a personal connection with him. His role as an honors

science teacher shifted into a role as a mentor, as he devoted time to getting to know and

understand us. It was the first time I felt a teacher noticed me and cared about me. He really

made an effort to get to know each of the students in his class. He knew when some kids needed a

little slack and who he needed to push harder, because he knew a lot about us. He became a

good friend, and a mentor for me. He wanted our class to be our family. He was a great role

model in and out of the classroom. When I like a teacher, I will try my best not to let him down. I

think how a teacher treats a student is really important, and may change many students' lives.

What was truly amazing about her was the care and love she had for her students. I

believe to influence children one has to connect with them on a personal level. No matter what

was going on in our lives, she knew about it. She was the sponsor of a club called the Kindness

Council. She was always kind, willing to help, and always put us first. The individual

relationships she created with every student were admirable. She was always positive and

helpful, someone I could go to with problems. She was willing to have a close relationship with

her students; there was something about her everyone loved. I even called her "grandma"

because I felt so close to her. She built relationships with each student she had, even though she

had hundreds each day. She was not just my teacher, she was my friend.

On the Transformative Power of the Pursuit of Excellence

Mama Z expected more from me than ever before. She continually challenged us in our studies, but she made sure we had the tools to be successful. From then on I worked my absolute hardest in school. She pushed students to excel. She demanded that her students give their best effort, and in turn put everything she had into her teaching. Because she pushed us to do our best that class ended up being the class I was the most successful in, and I owe that success to her. The work was long and strenuous, but it gave me skills I still use in classes to this day. I think what was so special about this teacher was that she expected me to do better and be more intelligent than I ever thought I could do or be. He told us anybody could excel if they were willing to do the work. He showed how proud he was of the time and effort we put in every day.

On Speaking a Language of Hope to Create an Aesthetic Appreciation of a Beautiful Life

I had no dream for the future, but he gave me a dream. He said that he saw my potential and had confidence in me. He showed me how beautiful teaching can be. She challenged us to work hard in school, but she also wanted us to grow as individuals outside of the classroom. She turned things around. She let me know I could do anything I aspired to do. She motivated me to do my best and loved me at my worst. She knew we did not attend the most resourceful district and we did not live in the most positive environment; she worked with those factors rather than against them. She had to teach us we were somebodies and when we came to school, it was time to learn. She taught us that education is a privilege and a responsibility. She taught the importance of art, music, friendship, hard work, and compassion. She taught me to believe in myself. She made me feel I could change the world with my ideas. She told us we were brilliant, caring, and amazing human beings. She told us we had beautiful minds and hearts. She told us we could do anything, and never to stop until we reached our highest goals.

On the Power of Story for Identity Formation

My teacher is a woman with many stories. From the stories she told in class, she has been a jazz singer, movie critic, and actress. I looked forward to going to school because I would see her and talk to her. She could calm a student down in seconds, simply by listening. She made sure every student was involved in the conversation. She left her door and heart open for us to come and talk whenever we needed about whatever we needed. She told me she did not know what she would do with her life if she were not a teacher. The most transformative thing she did was to be a good listener. He made sure we knew we could come talk to him any time of day, about anything that was troubling us. He had a genuine interest in what was going on in our lives. There was never a moment that I spent in that class where I was not comfortable with talking to that man about anything at all. And he listened and responded with such sage advice.

On Transformation

I met a teacher who made a great difference to my life. Because of this teacher I have become the person that I am today. He gave me a chance to change, a motivation to become better. I think his way of getting along with students was transformative. I became someone who cared about others. He got to know me. This made him transformative in my opinion. From that point on, I changed drastically as a person. The guidance of a loving teacher was indeed transformative. She was transformative in her teaching by living out the things she expected of me. She made the greatest impact on who I want to be as a teacher and a person. She is the kind of teacher and person I strive to be. She made a difference in my life by creating the fire I have in my heart for learning. She was my toughest teacher, but this is what made her transformative. Through her enthusiasm, I came to believe that learning is a gift. She molded me into the young woman I am today, and for that I am ever grateful. She completely changed my life forever.

On the Impact of Transformative Teaching on Teacher Identity Formation

My teacher definitely influenced me to want to be a teacher. A teacher can be, with a little compassion, a truly powerful influence on a young life. She is the kind of teacher I hope to become. I hope I can offer my students the support, encouragement, and warmth she gave to me. She showed me I can change kids' lives if I do simply one thing: care. To see how many lives she has touched in some way is incredible. I hope to one day change a child's life as she has changed mine. Overall, she changed me into a better person; I care so very much about things that I am passionate about, and I was transformed into somebody who takes action when he sees injustice. What is more transformative than that?

I want to teach English like he does. He showed he cared, and that inspired me to become a teacher. His passion for helping kids inspired me to continue down the long road ahead; I know it will be worth it. After his class my desire to be a teacher was confirmed. I want to make a difference in a young persons' life, like he did in mine. He inspired me to be a teacher who cares. The kindness and compassion he displayed as a teacher is a significant influence in my choosing to become a teacher. He made me want to be a teacher like him.

An Initial Interpretation of Data

As I read these stories of the relationship of care central to teaching that transforms, I am struck by how often I hear them as a great chorus sung in unison, a song with repeating themes and melodies. I find myself echoing Philip Jackson's observation: "There seems no shortage of testimonial evidence to support the conclusion that at least some teachers do indeed . . . succeed in transforming, profoundly and enduringly, at least some of the students in their charge" (Jackson, 1986, p. 123). Reading my students' stories convinced me once again that my questions about the qualities and impact of transformative teaching are important questions,

worth the time it has taken to investigate them, and that a teacher who cares about her students enough to model excellence in the creation of a good life can truly become a transformative teacher. Through understanding participants' life experiences from their own perspectives and including the meaning the tellers of stories make of their own life histories, the power of story is unleashed in narrative research that is still the kind of research I find I want to do.

Using the Gilligan Guide to Listen to Compelling and Conflicting Voices

Since over 85 percent of practicing and aspiring teachers are female, it is only reasonable to use an analytic guide that gives attention to the feminine voice of an ethic of care. In 1982 Carol Gilligan wrote *In a Different Voice,* an exploration of a feminist ethic of care that is discordant with the patriarchal ethic of justice, then the dominant moral refrain.

> Hearing the difference between a patriarchal voice and a relational voice defines a paradigm shift. Theorizing connection as primary and fundamental in human life leads to a new psychology, which shifts the grounds for philosophy and political theory. . . . Voice, relationship, resistance, and women become central rather than peripheral in this reframing of the human world. (Gilligan, 1995, p. 120)

Before Gilligan's paradigm-shifting book about the moral purposes that drive human behavior, the voice of morality was intoned in a bass, male register, which articulated ethical behavior as an individual making right choices to champion justice. "The voice that set the dominant key in psychology, in political theory, in law and in ethics, was keyed to separation: the separate self, the individual acting alone" (Gilligan, 1995, p. 121). Because the voice of moral choice was heard as separate, an individual standing alone, a solo part, "it was difficult to hear connection without listening under the conversation. . . . [But] women's voices carried a sense of connection, of living and acting in a web of relationships" (Gilligan, 1995, p. 121). In giving attention to a different voice, Gilligan reframed morality as a relational ethic of care: "A feminist ethic of care begins with connection" (Gilligan, 1995, p. 122). A feminist ethic of care also

reframes my philosophy of education. Because the relational ethic of care Gilligan describes is central to my transformative teaching theory, the Gilligan *Listening Guide* was chosen as the analytic method best suited to the interpretation of the data collected in interviews about teaching that made a difference.

"The *Listening Guide* method provides a way of systematically attending to the many voices embedded in a person's expressed experience" (Gilligan, Spencer, Weingerg, & Bertsch, 2006, p. 157), a way of hearing the conflicted and connecting voices resonating in an ethic of care. Using this method of analysis, themes were discovered in the transcription of interviews by: underlining key phrases; listening for repetitions; highlighting metaphors; listening for literary elements of character, plot, and setting as they are connected to the development of theme; listening for themes related to underlying theory and the foundational research questions; and listening for themes that arise from the stories that are told (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). This method was designed "to offer a pathway into relationship rather than a fixed framework for interpretation" (Gilligan, Spencer, Weingerg, & Bertsch, 2006, p. 157).

First Listening: Hearing the Stories Told

Listening for Plotline, Conflict, Crisis, and Resolution

The Listening Guide involves a succession of *listenings*, "each designed to bring the researcher into relationship with a person's distinct and multi-layered voice" (Gilligan, Spencer, Weingerg, & Bertsch, 2006, p. 159). The first listening is for the plot, attending to what happens in the stories that are told. Through a careful listening to the plot conflicts in the narratives, a theme emerged of intervention by a teacher during a time of crisis in a student's identity formation. In all the assignments and interviews collected, a teacher's intervention during a student's crisis was narrated as the plotline of the transformative experience no less than 70

times. This evolving theme became a major thesis to explore, which is done at length later in the chapter. The recurring resolution of this crisis in the plotlines of student narratives was that transformative teachers recognized their students' distress because they developed a relationship of care and knew their students well, so they were able to help them overcome a personal crisis.

Listening for Character Growth and Motivation

Another recurring conflict in the students' stories was the struggle to find meaning in their lives. This was resolved most often in a commitment to endure in the teaching profession, as a determination to make a lasting difference in the lives of children. This recurring theme was heard as the character motivation of the narrated experience, to find personal meaning by having a transformative impact on a student. The administrator described this teacher motivation as a desire to reach from his heart to the heart of a child. He also described the motivation of the students undergoing transformation as simply a desire to please the teacher who cared for them: "The way he treated us—we wanted to please him. We would run through the wall for him. That's why we won state championships. Coach said we have to do this, so we have to do this. I have been fortunate to receive some nice honors in education, and every time it happens I think, 'I hope Coach hears about this,' because I still want to please him. It is that relationship piece."

Listening for Metaphor and Key Words

The first listening also gives attention to repeated metaphors and key words narrators use in telling their stories. The professor described the importance of attending to metaphors: "The argument for using metaphor is that it is a way of understanding how people interpret the world in very basic ways." For example, he used a metaphor of family relationships to describe his own experience with transformative teaching. "It is not unlike being a good mother. I would say that good teaching ought not to be vastly different than good parenting at its best." This metaphor

comparing good teaching to good parenting was by far the most prevalent analogy. The band director said, "Your students become like a family," and one student who identified him as transformative concurred, "Because he made band a family, we would call him Dad. He cared about us as if we were his own kids." Other students also voiced this family connection saying, "She became a mom. She took care of me." The teacher was "a maternal figure" referred to as "Mama Z," and, "I even called her grandma once," or "He was another dad to me."

The administrator used more metaphors than any other narrator, and, perhaps because he was on his high school and college football teams, his metaphors were active, even athletic. Besides describing a student's motivation to please a caring teacher as being willing to run through a wall, he talked about his Coach setting a high standard by "raising the bar," about teachers cultivating the cultural soil of their classrooms and leaping over barriers to student understanding and building students through teaching that transforms. The analogies students used were more personal comparisons. One described his teacher's encouragement to write of what he was most passionate about, "He was just talking about papers, but I took it that I could do whatever I want with my life." A young woman described her storytelling teacher, someone who was authentic, as "an open book," smiling at her own play on metaphors. A young man told of a teacher who brought him a mug from her visit to New York, and how that mug symbolized for him the care she took of him by thinking about him even when she was far away and was not obligated to do so. He also smiled when he finished his story, adding, "I still have that mug."

The key words and phrases in each interview gave rise to other themes not brought to the research project but arising from the data. The professor's key words centered on *knowing, thinking*, *supposing,* and *wondering*, which might be heard as a statement of his teaching identity as a thoughtful, philosophic man. He also used words related to *choosing* and *rejecting*, which

introduced the idea that some people might reject the thesis that teaching to transform is a worthy aspiration, another evolving theme addressed later in the chapter. He spoke at length about the mentoring relationship and about a reciprocity of care necessary between a student and teacher, themes that may be beyond the scope of this research, but are ideas to explore in further study.

Key words in the administrator's interview spoke of *investing, pleasing, creating a vision, and cultivating a climate* in the classroom in which transformative teaching can grow. Students described their teachers most often as *hard-working, dedicated*, giving *leadership*, creating a *family* bond, and giving their students the *freedom* to *choose* who they wanted to be. The frequency of the use of these key words gave rise to new and evolving themes, of transformative teaching as an investment in students and as intentional relationships.

Second Listening: Hearing the Identity Statements of "I" Poems

This stage of the listening process attends to the voice of the "I" of the narrator, creating "I Poems" as identity statements based on the storytellers' use of the first person pronoun to speak about themselves. This enables the researcher to hear the first person voice of the narrator, by copying each narrator's "I statements," in the order in which they appear in the transcribed text, as a stream-of-consciousness statement about who the speaker understands her or himself to be (Gilligan, Spencer, Weingerg, & Bertsch, 2006, p. 162). Because the triangulation of theory which serves as a framework to this research includes a socio-cultural identity theory which uses the power of story in creating the identity transformation of transformative teaching, these I statements, when read as identity statements, become especially pertinent to an interpretation of the stories told.

I have included I poem identity statements by both teachers and students on the following pages, beginning with student statements, simply because they were recorded first:

Student Identity I Poems

I loved my teachers because they cared about me
I want to be a teacher who cares
I changed drastically as a person
I was transformed
I know it will be worth it
I started to gain confidence
I looked up to her
I have a great connection with her
I wanted to be just like her
I am a person who cares
I want to imitate this man
I want students to feel loved
I hope I can follow her example
I push myself to excel
I want to reach out
I want to help
I want to show kids they are worth something
I became someone who cared
I am extremely grateful for her
I hope I can offer support, encouragement, and warmth
I want to be a transformative teacher
If I can help I will be incredibly happy
I want to make a difference
I hope that my students feel empowered
I persist
I see the power of encouragement
I see the beauty of being a teacher
I would not want to be anything but a teacher
I want to make every single student feel special
I want them to work hard because they know I care
I want to make a difference in a child's life
I hope to be half the teacher she is
I will never forget the teacher who changed my life
I want to have a personal relationship
I wish I could tell her how much I appreciate everything she did for me
I owed my success to her compassion
I hope to influence students
I want to make a difference
I wanted to be like her
I really want to be a teacher who can change children's lives
I want to be like him and make a difference
I hope to have an impact
I aim to help students find a real self
I made up my mind to become a teacher

Teacher Identity I poems

I read what he had to say about me
I was floored
I had no idea
I like to think that I was a good teacher
I like to think that teaching is important because teachers make a difference
I was flattered
I think I could have done better
I taught in the greatest schools there are
I learned so much
      I know of no teacher who is worth anything past his relationship with students
      I remember being flattered
      I did not expect she would champion me as a transformative teacher
      I do not know that her life was changed
      I let kids know who I am
      I am proud that I paid attention
      I think I transformed his experience that day
            I try to build authentic, meaningful relationships
            I still have contact
            I do not often get the chance to know
            I am proud every time
            I do not know if I have made a difference
            I hope I have
            I would never be so boastful as to make that claim
            I hope that she remembers
                  I refuse to allow students to settle for mediocre
                  I watched as she developed self-confidence
                  I am not sure I can accept credit
                  I hope that I inspired her
                  I hope that they see me as patient, kind, and respectful
                  I wish I knew
                        All I can hope for is that I did more good than harm
                        I do not feel I can answer
                        I do think that in some infinitesimal way, I helped
                        I do not want to sound boastful
                              I am bogged down
                              I do not have time
                              I believe I have to earn the right to be heard by my students
                              I care about them
                              I invest in them
                                    I helped her exceed her own expectations
                                    I hope that they feel cared about
                                  I have found most students want to know a teacher
                                  I cheerfully pushed
                                  I genuinely care

It is amazing how much this simple process reveals about the attitudes of students, compared to those of teachers, on the transformative teaching experience. The students are so grateful for the care their teachers expressed for them. They are so hopeful in their aspirations to become transformative teachers themselves. They are so confident in their expression of care for the students they will teach. The teachers, on the other hand, express misgivings about being identified as transformative teachers. They are "floored," they are "flattered," they "did not expect" to be identified, because they did not know that they had made a difference. Others "don't want to be," "would never be" so "boastful as to claim" to be transformative teachers. No one professed to being aware of making a difference to students' lives. Is this indicative of a culture in schools that does not encourage close relationships between teachers and students? How will new teachers, coming to their first jobs with such hope and persistence in their determination to become teachers who make a difference, endure in such a culture?

Third Listening: Attending to Conflicting Voices

This third listening allows the researcher to listen for conflicting and connecting voices that may be heard in the narration, playing in harmony or in discord through the thematic melody (Gilligan, Spencer, Weingerg, & Bertsch, 2006). In the literature, the conflicting voices recorded spoke of tensions within the test-driven context of schools, where the necessity of mimetic teaching to prepare students for standardized tests may leave little time for teaching that transforms. One determination of this research was to hear the conflicting voices of the students and teachers, and to listen for the connections they made with tensions documented in the literature. In this step the voices in tension heard in the first readings are attended to as binary opposites, in this case voices of knowing in tension with voices of doubt, of harmony and dissonance, and of resilience and distress.

Listening for Voices of Knowing and Doubt

The professor narrated more expressions of knowledge, doubt or uncertainty than any other participant, saying, for example, "I am not sure that is true, but that was my thinking. . . . I began to think . . . I think so . . . I have found . . . it is hard to imagine . . . I do not think . . . It does not surprise me . . . I suspect . . . I do think. . . Given what I know. . . I wonder . . . Knowing you . . . I was quite perplexed." In all, the professor made 36 statements of knowing and doubt. The administrator made fewer such statements, and almost all were statements of confident knowing rather than of uncertain doubt: "I thought; we know that; we are learning; I knew."

It is clear by the following tabulation of statements of knowing and doubt that at the most extreme ends of the continuum, students made statements of certain knowledge almost twice as many times as their teachers did, and teachers made statements of absolute doubt twice as many times as students did. Here is the table which records the number of times participants used terms of knowing or of doubt:

Statements of	Knowing: I know I knew I deter-mined I found out I realized Knowing	Certainty: For sure Definitely Absolutely Know this I've found That's true I am sure I always thought	Expectation: I bet I hope	Supposition: I think I like to think I thought It makes sense I feel I felt	Conjecture: I believe I wish I knew In my opinion I didn't feel	Uncertainty: I guess I don't think I never thought You don't often get the chance to know I cannot say I was unsure	Doubt: I had no idea You just don't know I don't know You never know No one knew Nobody knows
Students	18	5	5	31	0	15	10
Teachers	10	4	11	25	6	9	20

The women who responded to the interview questions, both students and teachers, were as likely to begin their statements with "I feel" as they were to begin with "I think" or "I believe." No male participants used those words. The Gilligan method was developed to listen to the voices of women speaking out of an ethic of relational connections. What is the significance of this feminine voice expressing feeling as clearly as reasoning as a way of knowing?

Listening for Voices of Harmony and Dissonance

One theme of dissonance was expressed when the professor warned that, "There will be people who will reject the notion that teaching and teachers have any role or right to attempt to influence students as persons." This theme was so prevalent in the stories teachers told that it is explored as a theme which arises from the data later in this chapter. The themes of harmony and dissonance arising from the student interviews were concerned with ways transformative teachers helped harmonize the dissonance brought on by crises in their lives, such as dealing with the death of a friend, passing a class they were afraid they would fail, or determining to live well after a suicide attempt. The themes of harmony and dissonance voiced in teacher interviews were spoken in answer to questions about the teacher's personal educational philosophy in tension with the philosophy held by their schools or districts. For example, one teacher said, "Many administrators and some teachers would insist that standards and benchmarks are paramount; however, to most of my colleagues, critical thinking, knowledge acquisition, and personal development are most integral." A young teacher expressed feelings of dissonance when a story he wanted to teach raised a parental complaint: "This story was immediately pulled from our classrooms. Our superintendent banned the story." Fifteen voices in dissonance were heard in the stories students told, while teachers spoke of discord twenty-nine times, in contrast to only eight statements of philosophic harmony in the schools and districts where they teach.

Listening for Voices of Resilience and Distress

      The administrator introduced voices of resilience and distress, telling about a transformative teacher who helped him recover from a very bad school experience. His story presented a motif repeated many times in student stories of transformation. He also told stories of his transformative experience helping children in distress become more resilient: "I created a thing called Mr. W's Breakfast Club. Every Saturday morning kids who had no place to go— deep in poverty—we set this thing up at the YMCA. We cooked breakfast together, did our homework together and played some games. We did that every week. Half of that time was spent telling stories and building relationships. I told them, 'You ought to be able to graduate from high school like falling off a truck backwards; what I want you to do is be an honors student.' So they assumed, 'Well, I have to graduate. Mr. W said so. What is next?' They all did graduate."

      The teachers were most apt to tell stories of distress they felt over their own inability to make the relational connections they hoped to make. These stories were sometimes hard to hear. One young man lamented, "I know of no teacher who is worth anything past his relationship with students. I have, over the years, either pushed too hard, asked too much, or in some other way led a student to see me as not on his side. There is nothing worse than losing the trust of a student." A young woman spoke of her distress trying to meet her own goals of being a teacher who makes a difference, when, "In my opinion, we are over-assessing students. We are asked to spend so much time giving Performance Assessments that I am bogged down in two ways: the grading sucks up all of my plan time, and just allocating the class time to administer those assessments gets in the way of more exciting/creative lessons." Students told stories of distress and resilience 11 times and teachers gave voice to these conflicting feelings and experiences 16 times. Tables of the incidence of these thematic voices are included in the appendix.

Fourth Listening: Harkening to Inductive and Deductive Themes

In this stage of the Listening process, giving attention to deductive and inductive themes of the research was an added step to the Gilligan method, as perhaps the most significant step to intentionally explore what was learned about the research question; how do the stories narrated by students and transformative teachers voice the themes of the triangulation of theory, and what emergent themes do they introduce? The purpose of this stage is to investigate how the narrators make meaning of their transformative teaching experience, and in so doing bring the different, conflicting, and connecting voices into relationship as one means of interpretation of data.

Listening for Deductive Themes

Deductive reasoning brings theory to the analysis of data, concluding that the themes central to the theoretical framework of research must be present, and searching for evidence that they are there. Attention was given to the power of story in identity formation, which supports teaching that makes a difference in student's lives. Listening for stories about the moral purposes of the pursuit of excellence, an aesthetic of the good life, a belief in the possibility of students becoming their best-loved-selves, and the intentional cultivation of a relational ethic of care as central to transformative teaching practice was also important in this analytic process.

Transformative Teaching

One goal for completing this study was to *explore* transformative teaching and generate hypotheses about what it is that makes teaching transformative. The first step towards meeting this goal was to ask students and teachers to choose, among a list of qualities of transformative teaching, the one quality they believed most important to teaching to transform. This question was included on a survey of the entire class (125 responses were given), the focus group interviews (15 participants), the teacher interviews (7 respondents), and the interviews of the

professor and the administrator. On class surveys, the percentage for each option chosen as first or second in the ranking of qualities is indicated by the number at the end of each statement.

Educators who have written defining transformative teaching have listed these qualities of a teacher that they believe make teaching transformative:

- **The teacher's knowledge of the subject being taught** **7%**
- **The teacher's focus on the growth and development of each child** **23%**
- **The teacher's modeling of the virtues of excellence that are the objective of transformative teaching** **4%**
- **A caring relationship between the teacher and the student** **22%**
- **Teaching that focuses on the education of the *whole* child, as a social, emotional, intellectual, physical, and spiritual being** **19%**
- **Teaching that uses dialogue between the teacher and students in making meaning of and reshaping reality, to change not only the students, but also the world** **3%**
- **Teaching that opens up possibilities for students to change through expressions of belief in their ability to learn and hope for the future** **9%**
- **Teaching which encourages the pursuit of excellence in helping students reach their own goals and grow to become the person they most want to be** **13%**

Which of these qualities of a teacher do you believe was most important to your experience of transformative teaching? Tell a story to support your view.

At the focus group interviews, four students chose the caring relationship, four chose education of the whole child, three chose hope for the future, two the pursuit of excellence, and one each chose the student-teacher dialogue and a focus on growth as the most important transformative teaching qualities. The difference between the rankings of these qualities on the survey and in the interviews was surprising. The highest ranking quality on the survey, a focus on development, was chosen by just one of the students interviewed. The quality which focuses on hope and possibility was ranked first or second by only nine percent of the class on the survey, but 3 of the students interviewed (20 %) chose that as the most important quality.

More than half of the teachers interviewed (four of seven) chose the relationship of care as the most important transformative teaching quality, two teachers chose the dialogue between student and teacher (the quality students chose least of all), and just one chose the teacher's knowledge of the subject as the most essential feature. Was this that teacher's choice because she

was a Spanish teacher and she had suffered through too many Spanish classes (as I have in French) where the teacher really did not know the language very well?

The administrator chose educating the whole child and the professor chose the relationship of care as the qualities they believed most important to transformative teaching. When participants were asked to discuss these important qualities as they define transformative teaching, the richest stories about what it means to teach to transform were told. The administrator, for example, spoke of his desire to make a difference that compelled him to pursue a career, first as a teacher, then as a principal, and finally as a superintendent of schools: "I thought that might be a way I could make an even bigger difference, if I could not only be in a classroom, but run a school. Then my sphere of influence would expand exponentially. It is about the child, educating the whole child, the whole-hearted child. It is not about the test score." As he was telling his story, the administrator began to redefine teaching to make a difference as helping a child create a vision, a dream for the future. "We can provide hope for a kid, and give them a vision of who they can be. Vision is a compelling dream for the future with a concrete plan to achieve it. That builds relationships, to say to a kid, 'Let us dream about your future.' This is a life-changing experience where we can change a child forever."

The teachers' descriptions of the relationship crucial to transformative teaching were also enlightening, as one explained, "I have just begun to realize it is not about what I teach, it is about the relationships and how I care about my kids that matters most to me." Another defined transformative teaching as, "Teaching that focuses on educating the whole child would be the most important. Teaching that helps students believe in hope for the future is part of that, to me." A third teacher who spoke of the importance of a teacher-student dialogue explained that having a caring relationship was the incentive for students to tell their stories, and that this storying

dialogue was crucial to identity formation. "The transformation occurs only when the student and teacher can create a respectful dialogue that fosters honest, insightful, courageous discourse." The students also defined transformative teaching through stories they told about their lived experience and their hope in a future as teachers who will make a difference: "The best thing that could happen would be that I would know that I made a difference, that my students would want to come to this interview and talk about me like I have talked about my teachers today."

Perhaps what resonated most with my own experience as a teacher who lives to empower students to create the identity of their best loved teacher selves, was to hear how lives had been changed through knowing the care of a transformative teacher: "Everything changed for me; I realized how important student/teacher relationships are for success and happiness in school. I could do whatever I want with my life, be a doctor, lawyer, or journalist. Yeah, that is how he changed my life. She made such a difference to my life because she always pushed me to do more and be better; it made me feel like someone cared. She helped me transform my adolescent anger into a different kind of passion. I think I am a better person for having gone through that. He never failed to remind me that he was proud of me, so believing in myself, I got a lot of that from him. I think for me the key word was confidence. That was a big change for me."

Identity Formation

The stories both teachers and students told about how their lives were changed by the experience of transformative teaching was evident in the identity statements transcribed in a previous section as "I poems." One of the most prevalent identity themes among the teachers was voiced by the administrator very well. "I wanted to do something that would last long after I am gone. I wanted to find a way in my life to love people and to make a difference. I decided there was no greater way to do that than in the classroom."

The students began to tell stories of their developing identities as teachers who will make a difference. "I hope anybody who comes into my classroom will leave feeling cherished. I think those relationships will be the most rewarding part of teaching for me. I want to be a teacher who will not crush a student's dreams or limit their future. I guess what I got was a new self-image; it was transformed into something more positive. And not just a general self-image, but my image of myself as a teacher. He set a new standard for what teaching could be. I think I share his passion for caring about people. I want to be dedicated to seeing students succeed. I want to be that person they can trust. I want to be a teacher who cares. I cannot wait to have students to see how successful they will be, knowing that I was a part of who they became."

The Power of Story

One goal set for this study in the first chapter was to *describe* the experience of transformative teaching from both the teachers' and the students' perspectives, to give opportunities to create an identity story in which they may teach to make a difference. The teachers spoke of the power of story as "a kind of currency. The more stories we gather, the more cultural wealth we store up, but we are all walking, talking stories." The administrator introduced another important theme when he said one of the most transformative things a teacher can do to empower student identity formation is not only to affirm, but also simply to listen to the stories told. "Our stories are powerful," he said, "and with kids, it is earning the right to hear their story. That requires vulnerability. A lot of kids feel they have a lot to hide, and it is shame driven. That breaks down a huge barrier. The dialogue reshapes reality to change the students' world."

The teachers also narrated how important the telling and hearing of stories is to teaching that makes a difference: "I felt there were times when I should tell my story. I make sure that I let kids know who I am as a teacher and what I value. Transformation occurs only when the

student and teacher can create a respectful dialogue that fosters honest, insightful, courageous discourse. Every story is an identity story. So the stories we read and the stories we tell all add up, get banked, so to speak. I talk about my own stories often and openly. I also encourage them to tell theirs. This is where I feel I excel. I cultivate a defined classroom culture through storytelling. I have to earn the right to be heard by my students. I have told stories from my life to my students to illustrate what I teach. I have found that this transparent dialogue gives us a connection to each other. By approaching literature as a dialogue about our lives, we discover common ground; and, hopefully, my students have the opportunity to reshape reality."

The students described how hearing their teachers' stories had a transformative effect on them, as well as how it encouraged them to tell their own stories, which were powerful in identity formation that changed their lives. "Oh yeah. She was very comfortable telling her story. There was not much she would hold back from us. If we had a question she would answer it. She would address it directly. Whenever something big was happening, like Ferguson, she made sure we could talk about how we felt, and we would have classroom conversations about it."

"He was transparent. I remember him talking about how much he liked teaching, and that he would not be preparing us for college if he did not believe we could do it. He had a beard and talked about how his father and grandpa had beards and he wanted to grow old like them and have a long beard and smell like coffee. This teacher meant the most to me because he loved hearing what everyone had to say. Talking about issues in my life with someone as unbiased as he was made a difference in how I looked at the situations that were causing me problems."

"My teacher would tell us stories about her life, like how she ended up swimming with a swordfish. We really got to know her, and then the students opened up and let her know them more. I really enjoyed that. She had sports teams she really liked, and I think she made it part of

her identity story. At the time I just thought she was a big sports fan, but I think it was a way to connect with kids. She was able to tell if a student was having a bad day. She would talk to us in class, crouching beside us so we were face to face, and not at different levels, which makes a big difference to me. She would ask how she could help. She spoke about how powerful a person's words can be. I was taught to use my voice to change the world, and I decided that teaching others to use their voice is my way of making a dent in society. She taught me not only about comma splices and run-on sentences, but also how to trust in myself and to believe in what I am saying. I liked that he had a background outside of teaching because he was able to tell us valuable stories about journalism in the real world. He shared his personal life with us and genuinely cared about mine. One of the things I remember is the stories he would tell. He only had nine fingers and he would make up elaborate stories about how he lost his pinky, all of which were not true. I still do not know what really happened, but I really enjoyed his stories."

Looking to Moral Purposes

The deductive themes in the data collected that spoke to the moral purposes of the people involved were as important as the themes about the triangulation of theory that informed the research question. The values implicit in stories told of living in a relationship of care, pursuing excellence, and speaking a language of hope to create a life that is good, as well as beautiful. The professor was curious to learn what moral purposes narrators believed gave meaning to the experience of transformative teaching. He wondered, "I do not know what you will find in terms of qualities of transformative teaching that were important to them as people. One of the things I can see coming out of your study [is that] you could begin to get some sense of what is most important to people. Can you have a relationship in which people value different things? I suppose you could. [But] I think shared values are important to the [teaching] relationship."

The Virtue of Excellence

In order to clearly hear the narrators' stories of teachers who encourage excellence, they were asked, "In what ways did you (or your teacher) inspire excellence?" In answer to this question, the administrator told a great story about the pursuit of excellence. "He was my track and football coach and biology teacher. The way he carried himself and the way he interacted with students, you just knew he was a person who made a difference. He absolutely wanted us to be our very best. He would invest himself in us, and he demanded a lot out of us. He sat down with me when I was in high school and said, 'Here's the vision of your high school career.' He nailed it. He told me to do high jump, and he set the bar. I said he set it too high, and he said, 'This is not long jump, it is high jump. You will always jump at least six feet.' That year at the state track meet I did very well. Once he said, 'It is time for you to get your doctorate.' I said I did not want to get a doctorate. He said, 'I did not ask if you wanted to. I said it was time.'"

The teachers also described the transformative influence of "holding them up to the highest point of excellence. My students feel like I know them and know their capabilities, which leads them to try harder. I refuse to allow students to settle for mediocre. I encourage and redirect as the student needs. I help my students exceed their own expectations about themselves, and their confidence has grown tremendously. It was amazing to watch. I cheerfully pushed them to reevaluate what they have done and to find a way to make it even more excellent."

The students spoke even more insistently on this theme. "If I did not meet her expectations, I could just see the disappointment in her eyes. She would say, 'I expected more of you.' Hearing those words made me feel terrible. If I did meet those expectations, it was always 'I am so proud of you. I am so impressed. You did a great job.' She wanted me to push myself as far as I could go. She made sure we were achieving our own standard, but then she would say,

'Now take it a step further.' That is how she got us to achieve excellence. Singing was a passion before I went to choir, but singing was such a passion for my teacher that it became all about being the best I can be. She always told us to not hold ourselves back. I think that is something that I took to my life as well. I never want to hold myself back or let anyone else hold me back. She was really someone who inspired me to try to reach my full potential in everything that I do. He believed in me and I was capable. Because he believed in me I was able to believe in myself. I would say he had high expectations because he knew the high potential of his students."

An Aesthetic of a Good Life

The significance of an appreciation of the beauty of teaching with compassion and excellence was the deductive theme least supported in the data collected, perhaps because no interview questions were posed about this value as a moral purpose for teaching to transform. Still, a few stories were told about the importance of an aesthetic value to transformation. The band leader talked about how his relationship with his father had been transformative to his identity formation. "Musically speaking, it had to do with the beauty with which he could play. That was what I was completely taken by. I wanted to be like him." One English teacher also discussed the transformative power of exposure to beautiful literature: "I hold strongly the principle that the study of literature, particularly poetry, is the study of what it means to be human—to experience and express humanity. Therefore, reading a poem closely is a deeply human experience. To get students to witness and participate in this can be transformative." He described the teacher who had been most transformative to his teacher identity like this: "She unlocked the power of the study of literature, particularly poetry, with her humane and thorough treatment of various texts. The kindness and generosity with which she worked with a text mirrored the kindness with which she treated her students. It made me a better human."

An older student best described the aesthetic quality of transformation. "On 9/11 I was working as a student aid. We heard what had happened in New York, and she had to explain it to the kids. The way she handled that situation was so graceful. It was incredible. It was a beautiful experience. Once I saw that was what a teacher can do, I thought, 'I can do that, too.'" This lovely description of the aesthetic delight of watching a teacher teach with such grace and care it was beautiful to behold resonates with my own experience, when I first observed my professor's life-changing progressive teaching practice. It was like having a front row seat at the opera house in Budapest, listening to *Carmen*, sitting so close I could see the tears in the soprano's eyes.

A Language of Hope

Paulo Freire (1997) claimed that the *most* important purpose and goal of transformative education should be to give students hope. The professor spoke of this as intentionally attending to the humanity of his students and to focusing on their growth as individual human beings. "The language of hope is to remember who you are attempting to teach. What do you do that is nurturing the growth of human beings? When you talk about teaching human beings, you are seeing teaching as a developmental process. What are you doing to contribute to the growth and development of your students in the most fundamental, healthy way?"

The administrator spoke of it as the most necessary ingredient for transformation. "Hope for the future is key. If you go to an urban district and hang out at their high schools, a lot of those kids come from an environment where no one is going to graduate from high school. Go to college? Are you kidding me? They will shake their heads and say, 'Yeah, that sounds like a great idea.' But inside they are saying, 'I cannot afford to go to college. Who is going to support me to go to college? I have people at home I have to support.' They smile and nod their heads, but they have no hope. We can provide hope for kids, give them a vision of who they can be."

One teacher described the teacher who had changed her life as someone who gave her hope. "I was a very average science student at best, but he taught me as if I were his best chemistry student. I always felt like he believed I could grasp the content, and I wanted to for him. I often share my own stories of both failure and success to help my students understand that despite life's difficulties there is still hope." Another described that language of hope as a significant factor in her transformative intervention in a student's life: "She knows that I see her as strong, smart, and capable (which she is!). Not many people in her life make her feel that way. I know that my belief in her makes her feel like she can get through some of the hard days. She does not want to fall off her wagon because she does not want to disappoint me. That I can be that person for her is invaluable, to both of us."

Students also spoke of teachers who gave them hope by believing in them, by opening up possibility, and by having faith in their potential. "She saw something in me that I did not even know that I had. She said, 'I think you would be good at this.' And then I was. She was always there on the sidelines cheering me on, saying, 'You can do this,' and, even when I thought what she expected was impossible, I found that it was something I could do. She opened up all sorts of possibilities and helped me believe I could do anything."

A Relationship of Care

Another goal for this research was to explain and identify the relationships that enable transformative teaching. Many of the research participants held that teaching that makes a difference can only happen within an ethical relationship of care. The professor, for example, said, "I thought [my teacher] was really quite remarkable. I am not sure exactly why. But she was smart and articulate and well educated. She was also a really caring person. I suppose it was that relationship of a caring teacher that has been most important to me."

I asked, "How do you manage to develop those caring relationships?"

He replied, "Well, you have to get to know them. You have to ask them questions. It is the right thing to do, but educationally, also the best thing to do, to let students know that you care about them. It is relational."

The administrator described the care of the teacher who made the biggest difference in his life. "The first thing she did is, she told us she loved us. The second thing she did is, she loved us. We knew it. It was affirming. It is that relationship piece. It is huge. It drives everything else. Unfortunately, no one ever taught me that when I went through the university, so that is what I try to focus on when I teach. Not only in teaching, but in all my life. Everywhere a bridge. Building relationships, building relationships, and building relationships." He smiled and asked me what personal experience I had with transformative teaching, and I told him the story of the professor who had changed my life by modeling the relationship of care and the pursuit of excellence so important to my educational theory and practice. "So he is the demonstration of that care for you," the administrator continued. "You will be like your professor, because he demonstrated what that means. I really think it is about demonstrating that relationship."

One of the teachers I interviewed had been identified as a transformative teacher by not just one, but two of my students. This is how he described the relationship of care that made his teaching so transformative: "There were times when we threw our arms around each other and showed that we accepted each other. And there is just that magic that can happen in a room full of kids in a crisis situation. We love each other, and we are family. It transformed me more than it transformed them." Every teacher interviewed spoke of that relationship of care as central to their teaching practice. "The relationship between students and teachers can be the cornerstone of the students' willingness to attempt a variety of opportunities. If they trust I have their best

interest in mind, they are willing to attempt something new. They will invest more in learning if they believe that I care about them. Then, we can trust each other and I can help them grow. Any success I have had as a teacher can be traced back to time spent getting to know each student."

To record everything the students said about the importance of the relationship of care to teaching that makes a difference would require a separate chapter dedicated to that theory. It was the most recurrent theme in every student's story: "I always felt he liked me and cared about me. He was always interested in *my* life and *me*. He had an individual relationship with every student. He is someone I still talk to. It is a genuine relationship, because he cared about me as a person. That is the kind of person he was. I just really liked him. He was one of my favorite teachers. She had a good relationship with everyone. She put her students before herself. Her focus was on her students. She went out of her way to have a relationship with us. She was strong. I wanted to make her happy. She became one of my best friends. I call her by her first name now."

Attending to Inductive Themes

Inductive reasoning gives attention to patterns found in the data to make sense of arising themes and theories. Many of the actual questions asked during the interviews emerged from conversations with individual participants, for example, questions about when transformative teaching was the result of an intervention of a teacher in a student crisis. Analysis included coding the transcripts of interviews by identifying patterns that emerge from the data.

Intervention in a Crisis

The first reading of the first assignment asking students to tell a story about a teacher who made a difference introduced a theme about transformative teaching that was not addressed in the literature. The number of times students told stories about teachers who made a difference to their identity formation by intervening during a crisis in their lives inspired a primary interview

question to directly ask about this evolving theme: *Did you ever have a relationship with a teacher or a student that was built around intervention during a crisis?* Every teacher answered in the affirmative. The professor said, "I did. There were two boys in my class when I was teaching middle school. Their father had been arrested for a mafia related murder in which he planted a bomb under the car of a reporter. These boys were twins, and they were just magnificent young men. It was a time when they would have been 12 or 13, and their father had been gone for a very long time. I was able to help them through that difficult time."

The band leader said these crises students experienced were, in his experience, the most transformative opportunities a teacher might have. "At some point we need to talk about what a great opportunity these times are for kids to learn about themselves and the real world and what we can do for each other." Other teachers told story after story of times their interventions in student crises were transformative: "This particular student dealt with substance abuse issues. We worked together to make school curriculum more meaningful to him."

"One of my emotionally troubled but academically gifted students did not feel as if she was sufficiently challenged in the classroom. We devised a supplementary curriculum and arranged for discussion times to analyze the material. Although this student benefited from the additional study, the real challenge was to gain her trust and help her on a deeper level. She knows that I genuinely care about her and will speak truthfully without telling her what to do."

Fifty-seven separate stories of a teacher's intervention during a crisis were told by the students in assignments and interviews. One young women told a compelling story of her principal's intervention when she was being bullied by another girl at school. "All I remember is that Miss Q got under the officer's arm, and she looked at me with a mommy expression on her face, and said, 'You need to stop, NOW.' She was the person who ended up fighting for me to go

back to school. I ended up graduating with really good grades. She got me to stop, she got me to the office, and she got me to calm down. I told her what had happened, and she fought for me."

Other students told stories of intervention in a family crisis. "My senior year we had a family crisis [when] my mom got sick. I never even told [my teacher] anything. One day she pulled me out in the hallway and said, 'You know, you have not been you lately.' Then she said, 'Let me know if there is anything I can do.' I felt I was doing a good job putting on a happy face, and no one else had asked. . . . I struggled with depression when my mom passed away. I attempted to suppress my feelings, but they often interfered with my focus on schoolwork. I was having a rough year adjusting and he made things better for me at school."

Many of these stories were heart-rending, and I found myself reaching out to the story tellers to say how glad I was they had had a teacher who helped them through such a difficult time. Sometimes I had to intervene in an ongoing crisis. One young woman told this story: "My senior year my best friend was killed in a car accident. My teacher knew her, too. He helped me, after she died, getting my assignments done and giving me a place to go if I needed a safe place during school. It was the weekend before school ended that my friend was killed. It was the week that all my finals were due. He told me, "I know you are a good student and you will get your work done, so just get it to me whenever you can. That helped a lot."

"Was this just this past May?" I asked. "How are you doing now?"

"A little better," she answered very quietly, looking down at her clasped hands.

"That had to be really difficult," I tried to console, remembering the day I went back to school after my father died, how no teacher had spoken to me directly or suggested a way to help me make up work I had missed. "Do you have a supporting network of friends to help you work through your grief here at the university? Please let me know if there is any way I can help you."

Others told stories of intervention to help a failing student succeed in school. "She was my sixth grade teacher, and sixth grade was the accumulated story of my being a misbehaving youth. Word had gotten out, and none of the teachers wanted me in their class. No kid wants to be identified as a bad kid. So in sixth grade my teacher's intervention was so important because that is a time when my self-image was developing. I got positive feedback that I was smart, and I could do well in school. Previously I had really struggled. From then on, everything changed."

Investment that Makes a Difference

Fifty students told stories of teachers making a sacrificial investment of time and resources to make a difference in students' lives. The students expressed awareness of the many demands on a teacher's time and spoke of great appreciation for the teachers who willingly made these investments. The professor said, "It is hard to imagine somebody having a transformative influence on a student if they are not willing to spend time with them, and repeated time. I do not think you can have a relationship of any kind if you are not willing to invest time."

I responded, "It is affecting my thesis because I wonder if teachers *have* the time to invest in students when there is not a crisis that calls that student to their attention. Is this becoming something that is so difficult to do that there needs to be a crisis to get their attention?"

"I think it is going to become even more difficult," he answered. "Because teachers' time is an important issue, the number one issue they say they need help with. The expectations of them keep going up, while the time they have to meet those responsibilities remains constant."

The administrator also spoke to the theme of teachers investing in students as a key component of the transformative experience: "He would invest himself in us, and he demanded a lot out of us. I thought that was probably something I wanted to do, to invest my life in. You always want to invest in something that will make your life count."

The teachers barely mentioned the investment required of them to teach to make a difference, but students spoke of it again and again. "The school was long out of session at one forty-five am, and the only ones left in the building, the only ones who would ever stay this long, were the debate team and our coach. She genuinely cared about us and was always available before or after school to give extra help if needed. She gave up her lunch to chat. She would bring in treats. That was an investment of both time and money. All of her time went into her students. She would be at school until six every night, doing paperwork because she did not have time to do it in class. Because in class she had to teach. In three hours, she would pack us into the bus, and drive us to the state debate championships. On those incredibly late nights, when we were in her classroom practicing, we stayed for her, because she always stayed for us."

"He was so dedicated to helping us learn how to write a college paper that he would have AP writing parties. He would hold them from right when school got out to 9:30 at night. He would get a laptop cart, and we could find a space where we could write. He would give us feedback before we submitted our papers for a final grade. He was constantly at school, always putting in extra hours. He was there at 4 a.m. when we had 7:00 rehearsal. He was just always there." This investment of personal time and resources by so many teachers is one indication that, though perhaps they would not boast of being transformative, it is a purpose that they work towards, because they do want to "invest [their] lives in something that will count."

Intentionality or Happy Accidents?

Although the stories students told about teachers' reaching out to make a difference in their lives told of intentional action by teachers which was transformative, a number of teachers claimed it was more the result of a happy accident than an intentional choice. Actually, every male teacher began his story about a time he had been transformative to a student's life with a

disclaimer, saying that it was not a result of his purposeful action, but a serendipitous happening: "Well, you do not often get the chance to know exactly when these things happen. I had no idea that what had happened in high school had made such a difference. I think I got surprised a lot."

"She is evidence that you never know who will latch on and who will not; I enjoyed her thoroughly as a student, but did not expect that she would emerge and champion me as a transformative teacher. I do not know that her life was changed! I wish I knew! I do not know if I have ever really made that big a difference in a student's life. I hope I have done so, but I would never be so boastful as to make that claim. All I can hope for is that I did more good than harm."

I was surprised by these disclaimers because it has been my experience that students tell me how their lives were changed in my classrooms. I asked the professor what he thought about this evolving theme of the teacher interviews, to invite him to help me negotiate meaning of the data I had collected. He said, "Is it intentional? I do not know. I think in the way that it actually really occurs, it is a choice. Obviously, knowing you, you will put that in the context of the relationship. But also knowing who the teacher is and who the student is, what are the facilitating conditions that might invite that relationship to form? With [my advisor], you see, in his case it was intentional. Part of his intentionality was in choosing people he thought were capable. But in my case, it was a very subtle thing; it was just teaching the way I know how to teach."

Other Moral Values Central to Transformative Teaching

Because the moral purposes that are central to the theoretical framework from which this research has emerged are personal values, attention must be given to themes that arose from the data about other values the students and teachers believed were driving purposes of transformative teaching. One theme spoken of by many participants was the authenticity of teachers, which requires a vulnerability in letting students know them as they really are. The

professor was one of the first to narrate this moral purpose for teaching: "As Connelly and Clandinin say, at the end of the day, you simply teach you. Often people think the duality that exists—between being some subject matter expert because that is what they teach and being who they are as a person—is something that does not enter the picture. But I think it is impossible to separate those two parts of who we are. We think that we can divide ourselves between our teaching selves, possessing knowledge, and who we are as people. I do not think that is possible. I think students pretty quickly see who we are as a person."

This was a very common moral purpose in the stories students told: "In the end, I want to treat my students the way that she treated her students; she built authentic, meaningful relationships. I think that being authentic is an important quality. My teacher was really real. She did not put on a face for us. I think in turn that helped her students be real with her. We would talk about real issues and even personal things, too. She guided the classroom through support, kindness, and openness so that no one was ever fearful to express their true self."

Other important moral purposes centered on a theme of kindness and patience: "To be a patient person, to be accepting, to be tolerant, I think are good qualities to have. I was able to see how she developed both her academic and creative sides as well as her humanity—kindness, conscientiousness, and personal ambition. Most importantly, I hope that they see me as patient, kind and respectful and that these qualities are most important to my philosophy of education." This kindness in the classroom led to an ethical atmosphere of mutual respect. "When he retired after 40 years in the classroom, almost every student he had taught showed up for his retirement dinner. His innate respect for me and my fellow classmates is something I have tried to emulate as a teacher. I think what is really important is mutual respect between a teacher and student. Knowing that your teachers respect you makes you happy to be their student."

Relational Themes

Two themes that emerged from the data about the relation of care necessary to transformative teaching are that this relationship is reciprocal and that it is a lasting relationship. The professor was the first participant to introduce those themes: "I always sat front row center to be as close to her as I could, so as to not miss anything, and to be able to interact with her a lot, which I did, and she appreciated that. . . . You cannot have a unidirectional relationship with people; that is impossible. So you have to get to know students, you have to ask them questions about themselves. And some people will reciprocate. I think teaching is a caring relationship, so it needs to bi-directional. Students need to know we care about them. I think they do. And when they do, then we can take them further. It is a long-term caring relationship, which I had, with my advisor. He still calls us back to meet with him about every two years, after all this time."

The administrator and many of the teachers also spoke of the reciprocal and enduring quality of the transformative relationship: "Most of those kids I am still friends with on Facebook today. I am going to have dinner with one of my students tonight. Now she is a nun. She is going through some things, and we need to sit down and talk again, talk about her vision for the future and what her life could be. They still call me for advice. Because I continue to have relationships with them. She and I are still the closest of friends. Years after graduation, I still have contact with this student. I think she knows she can still seek my support. I still keep in contact with her. He will still email me to see if I am okay. He is someone I still talk to."

The students also told stories of reciprocated relationships with teachers, with great warmth and appreciation. One student told of being on tour with her choir director over spring break when her teacher heard that her mother had had a heart attack and the choir gathered around her to comfort her. "I think that was one reason she was so open with us, because she

knew we were there for her as much as she was for us." Others spoke of relationships that endured long after the students had graduated from school. "She will still text me and say, 'What are you doing in your teaching class?' She has become a friend to me. To this day, if I run into her at McDonalds, she tells me how proud of me she is or how great it was for her to watch me grow up. Just the other day, I was having a rough time and needed some solid advice. Neither of my parents answered their phones so I called him. He was able to walk me through my academic issues. We became very close and we still keep in contact. I know if I ever see her again, she will walk towards me with open arms and embrace me with the same love and respect she gave me while I was in her class. She has become a true friend."

Transformative Teaching as a Mentoring Relationship

Philip Jackson wrote that one of the most significant ways in which teachers make a difference in students' lives is by modelling the virtues they wish to see students develop as they grow. When the professor was asked, "How do you model a teacher identity?" He answered, "At the end of the day, if you are going to have a significant effect on people, you are going to have to have a relationship with them. Simply trying to share information gets forgotten fairly quickly. This is not unlike a mentoring relationship. Usually the mentor makes the choice. A teacher might choose to make that relationship and investment to be helpful to students, and they may choose to accept or reject it. What that dynamic is and how those relationships are formed would be interesting to study more. In the literature I have looked into, mentoring is a relationship put into process by the senior person choosing who he or she would mentor."

The administrator and teachers also spoke of their transformative relationships as being like mentoring, with the modeling of virtues by the mentor as an important aspect of that mentoring relationship. "I had a lot of really great teachers. One was not actually a teacher but a

mentor when I was in high school. He was influential to my being the man that I am, a guide and a mentor in who I was becoming. I think we also have to accept the responsibility of being a role model. I think that means looking inside and finding what we believe are true virtues, and then doing our best to live those virtues." In the teachers' stories of transformation, often the transformative relationship was "not necessarily as a friend but hopefully as more of a mentor."

A Rejection of Transformative Teaching

It was astounding how many teachers interviewed expressed surprise at being identified as a transformative teacher. Often the denial of knowing that their teaching had changed a student's life read like a rejection of transformative teaching as a worthy goal. They said, "You have to be careful how you form those relationships" and, "you do not often get the chance to know when these things happen. This is hard. It is hard to talk about myself in those terms. [This student] is evidence that you never know who will latch on and who will not; I do not know that her life was changed. I do not know if I have ever really made that big a difference in a student's life. I hope I have done so, but I would never be so boastful as to make that claim."

The professor warned that this theory might be roundly rejected, when he said, "There will be people, as you know, who will reject the notion that teachers have any right to attempt to influence students as persons. The majority, I suspect, of people, will primarily identify the mimetic as the role of what teachers should do. I do think a receptiveness to the whole idea of transformative teaching for some people will be problematic. They will see that as reaching beyond the parameters of what is legitimate, and what they see as legitimate in teaching is the mimetic." It was still unexpected that so many teachers seemed to think that teaching to transform might be reaching beyond the parameters of what is legitimate teaching practice. By contrast, none of the students expressed the notion that transformative teaching was not a worthy

endeavor. Is the resistance to the idea by some teachers (particularly the men) an indication that they are uncomfortable admitting to cultivating a relationship of care? Is there something about the culture of schools that makes teachers hesitant to becoming so vulnerable with their students? Is this one root of the demoralization that makes new teachers find that they cannot endure?

Telling Transformative Tales

A dedication to creating a language of hope in research focused this narrative research study, not on the demoralizing conditions of schools where transformative teaching has become so rare because teachers are unable to do work they value, but instead on the "rich, detailed images of possibility" (Rose, 2009, p. 152) discovered in the stories students tell of the teachers who made a difference to their lives. The final section of this chapter is devoted to telling the stories students and teachers narrate of their dedication to teaching that is as beautiful as it is wise and good. Because the stories we tell about ourselves not only describe our identities, they create those identities, these transformative teachers' tales are told in their own words.

The English Teachers' Tales

Forty-eight students identified high school English teachers as transformative. This was more than any other type of teacher identified, and makes one wonder if this could be because English teachers teach stories. They read stories, they tell stories, they analyze stories, and they teach their students to write stories. Does this focus on story release the power of story in students' identity formation in ways that is remarkably transformative? One student wrote, "What we did that year that was transformative for me was, we read Romeo and Juliet. At the end we had to write a paper about a theme from the story, and I was struggling with it because I really thought that Romeo and Juliet were idiots. And they are. I went to my teacher and said, 'I cannot write this paper. I cannot make up two pages about what this play says about love.'"

The teacher answered, "It does not have to be like that. You can write about a theme in any way that you want, as long as you find ways to support what you think respectfully." The student believed this was transformative because, though the teacher was talking about papers, he understood it as meaning he could do whatever he wanted with his life, as long as what he did was true to himself. That is how he believed his life was changed. When he decided he wanted to teach, this student went back to thank his teacher for being a model of the teacher he wants to be.

Tales of Intervention

Another student told a story of transformation as intervention in a crisis: "I was in an alternative high school my senior year. I was about to drop out, and she was my English teacher. She instilled a confidence in me that I did not have before. I always thought I went to school to get credit and be done with it. She encouraged me to think I could do more than just what was expected of me. There was a vulnerability that she understood, when there was a sense of crisis about how I was going to do this. How was I going to graduate? I had resigned myself to the possibility that I would not graduate high school. That vulnerability in me allowed her to play an important role in my life. It is really harrowing to think what my life would have been like if I had not encountered her at that time. It is not something I really like to think about."

A similar story was told of an intervention that was transformative, "I was awful at English. It was always the subject that I dreaded. My parents insisted that I take honors English so that the following year I would be eligible to take an AP course. I was hesitant to sign up for the honors class when I did not feel successful in the regular class. Mr. J was known for his challenging course. I was timid and only offered one insight to the first class. He told me I offered the best insight to the class that day. He inspired me to be a teacher because I now know that a teacher can empower a student to become confident in a subject they once feared."

This young woman's teacher was also an interview participant. He expressed surprise that she had identified him as transformative, saying, "She is evidence that you never know who will latch on and who will not; I did not expect that she would champion me as a transformative teacher." He told stories of other students for whom he was more confident that he had made a difference. "A new student to our school had an awful situation at his former school with bullying, and his whole family moved as a result. His mom told me she credited me for his success here, and that he talked about my class at the dinner table each night. [Another] kid last week looked deathly sick, and I sent him to the nurse despite his protests. He did not want to miss wrestling practice. Sure enough, he got sent home with a fever. I made sure his coach knew that it was ME who sent him to the nurse. His mom thanked me for sending him to the nurse and for e-mailing his coach. I am proud that I transformed his experience that day!"

A Tale of the Power of Story to Create a Human Being

Another teacher spoke to the power of story in helping his students become the people they want to be. The student who identified him as transformative, told his story like this: "For a teacher to be truly transformative in a student's life, he should show interest in that individual's feelings and capabilities. Mr. V exemplifies this standard. Before his class, I had never come across a teacher who made my thoughts and opinions seem so valuable. He individualized assessments. For instance, I painted a portrait using symbolism from a popular novel that we had read as a class. This allowed me to learn and grow in a new way, which is an example I hope to follow as I learn and grow as a teacher myself."

Mr. V remembered this student and her story. He explained, "I was lucky enough to work with her over multiple semesters through her sophomore, junior, and senior years. So I was able to see how she developed both her academic and creative sides, as well as her humanity. I recall

her hard work on several class projects that required both scholarship and creativity. In her senior year, I assigned a personal identity essay that required a self-portrait as accompaniment. She worked extremely hard on this project to match the quality she expected of herself. And it was worth it. I hope she remembers this project and considers it at least a little bit transformative."

This English teacher told a fascinating story about what he has found to be transformative in his teaching practice: "Transformation occurs only when the student and teacher can create a respectful dialogue that fosters honest, insightful, courageous discourse. As an English teacher I have found over the years that some of the most meaningful and transformative moments in my classroom have involved the close reading of a poem. This works best when the teacher allows an organic discussion of the poem to develop. When curiosity about words and rhythm and figures of speech is appreciated, then a sense of confidence as a reader is born. This can be transformative. From that point on a student reads a poem differently, but even more, they may see life differently. Every story is an identity story. The stories we read and the stories we tell add up. I talk about my own stories often and openly. I encourage them to tell theirs, as well."

It was also interesting to read how this English teacher's story of transformation as a student had influenced his transformative practice as a teacher. "[I had a college English teacher who] unlocked the power of the study of literature, particularly poetry, with her humane and thorough treatment of various texts. The kindness and generosity with which she worked with a text mirrored the kindness with which she treated her students. This made me a better human." The stories he told about times he had made a difference in his students' lives were likewise concerned with "a humane and thorough treatment" of texts: "I have heard from students who have followed other paths of study outside of the Humanities, but still read poems. I love that idea. I have received kind greetings from former students, often thanking me for providing them

with knowledge that they used in college or their careers. These are fairly few and far between but they are sustaining and affirming. Teaching is a difficult job, but the thought that some students may be transformed certainly helps."

The Fine Arts Teachers' Tales

If it is their use of story that makes English teachers' practice so transformative, perhaps it is no surprise that fine arts teachers were also often identified as teachers who made a difference. In teaching students to write stories well in composition, creative writing, and journalism classes, in teaching them to tell stories well in speech or debate classes, even in teaching student actors to perform a story well on stage, fine arts teachers also released the power of story in the identity formation of the students who recognize them as transformative.

The College Composition Teacher's Tale

"My composition teacher was so dedicated to his students," one young woman explained. "This was our first college grade, our first college papers. He set up a 30 minute conference with each of his students, where we could meet with him and talk about our concerns or what we were struggling with. It was such a hard-core dedication. He had an awesome relationship with his students. I loved having him as a teacher so much. He talked to me about having the confidence to know that I am a good writer. He set a new standard for what teaching could be. I thought, 'That is what I want to do. I want to be dedicated to seeing students succeed.'"

The Creative Writing Teacher's Tale

Another student told the story of a creative writing teacher's transformative practice. "My senior year I had a Creative Writing teacher who gave freedom in the assignments he made. I actually loved the final in his class. He made a tic-tac-toe board and we got to choose any three

in a row that we wanted to do. I chose to write 3 fiction pieces, 10 poems, and present a designed

book cover for a book I had read. I loved having the freedom to write about whatever I wanted to

write about. He was the most supportive teacher I have ever had. My senior year my best friend

was killed in a car accident. She was in my class, so he knew her, too. He helped me, after she

died, getting all my assignments done and giving me a place to go if I needed a safe place during

school. He made sure I succeeded and that I could do my best." This writing teacher showed his

care for his students by telling his story and listening to the stories his students told. "Basically

he showed it more than he told it, that he cared about his students. When we had an assignment,

he would do it, and he would share what he had written with us. That made me passionate about

writing. I got excited about writing poetry. He gave freedom with responsibility. And it worked."

The Composition Teacher's Tale

One of the teachers who participated in the interviews was also a composition teacher.

His student said, "I had an abundance of spectacular English teachers, but he was the most

inspiring of all. He is a friendly guy who cares about his students. He is so passionate about his

work. It is easy to see that he loves what he is doing. I would say he had high expectations

because he knew the high potential of his students. When I decided I wanted to be a teacher, I

thought about how much I loved going to his classes every day. I could see myself doing this.

My biggest hope is definitely that I would make a difference, that my students would want to

come to this interview and talk about me like I have talked about my teacher today."

The composition teacher this young woman found so encouraging was another of the

teachers who expressed great surprise that he had been identified as transformative. When asked

to describe what it was about his teaching that made a difference, he answered, "I do not know if

I have ever really made that big a difference in a student's life. I hope I have done so, but I

would never be so boastful as to make that claim." However, he did claim that any success he had as a teacher "can be traced back to time spent getting to know each student on an individual level." He acknowledged that other students had told him that his teaching had changed their lives, but still believed "they might have just been being kind." He thought telling his story and getting his students to tell theirs was a teaching strategy in which he excels. He said, "I cultivate a defined classroom culture through storytelling and inside jokes. Making the students feel that they are a part of something is the most effective thing that I have done as a teacher."

The Drama Teacher's Tale

Another fine arts teacher who agreed to participate in this study was an English and drama teacher from a small Christian private school. Her student told her story: "In my small class I had many opportunities to know my teachers. This teacher was a kind, approachable woman, one who inspired me to achieve what she knew I was capable of, even when I did not see it myself. She was stern when necessary, but gracious every time we entered her classroom. She commanded respect and admiration. Not only was she a splendid educator, she was a great mentor as well. One time I had a personal issue that I did not know how to reconcile. I approached her and asked if she could help me. Looking back on that moment, I realized the type of teacher I want to become, a teacher who is firm but loving to my students. I knew she did not care only for how I excelled academically; she truly valued who I was as a person."

This drama teacher spoke to the importance of story to her teaching practice. "Teaching that uses dialogue…reshapes reality," she explained. "I have told many stories from my life to my students to illustrate what I teach. For example: When I teach *To Kill a Mockingbird*, I allow the students to tell stories of their elementary days, but I then share stories from my childhood. I have found that this form of transparent dialogue gives us a connection to each other. By

approaching literature as a dialogue about our lives, we discover common ground; and, hopefully, my students will make meaning of their own story and reshape reality." She expressed confidence that her former student was now creating a story of her identity that would help her find success and meaning for her life and articulated the hope that her student would find her a worthy model of a teacher who made a difference, saying, "I endeavor to balance my love and knowledge of my subject with my care and concern for my students."

The Foreign Language Teachers' Tales

The French Teacher's Tale

Several students identified foreign language teachers as transformative. One young woman in the focus group interviews said, "The teacher I want to talk about was my high school French teacher. The way that she was in the classroom and the way she engaged her students really inspired me. The class talked a lot about French culture, but we also talked about world issues. She really wanted to get to know her students. I had a really good personal relationship with her. She was very real. She was comfortable telling her story, because she was authentic and she was bold. That is something I have learned from her, to get rid of my guard and to be authentic. There was not much that she would hold back from us. If we had a question she would answer it. She would address it directly. She was opinionated and driven to helping enforce change. She was passionate about letting her voice be heard. I guess I am now the same way."

The Spanish Teacher's Tale

Another of the teachers who participated in this research was a Spanish teacher. Her student wrote, "The most influential teacher I had was my Spanish teacher. Not only was she a great Spanish teacher, but she also taught me a lot about life. The most transformative thing she did for me was inspire me, help me, and make me believe in myself." The Spanish teacher spoke

more about her personal educational philosophy and its impact on her practice that any other teacher. She said, "In my opinion, we are over-assessing students. In Spanish class, some of it should just be fun. And by that I mean cultural, including food, music, travel, and things that are more applicable to students' personal experiences. I have been very lucky to teach at this high school. My principal has a school philosophy of *4+1*. The *4* represents levels of student learning and teacher intervention. The *+1* represents the student/teacher relationship. I believe that I have to earn the right to be heard by my students. They will invest more in learning if they believe that I care about them. They may not all care about Spanish as a life goal, but they will invest more in my class if I invest in them."

This teacher was not one who denied knowing she had made a difference to her students' lives. When asked to describe her experience with transformative teaching, she said, "Oh goodness, where to begin? I have had so many positive, long term relationships with students. One current student comes to mind. She struggles with a lot of emotional and mental health issues. She is so smart and beautiful, but she does not fit in socially in a way that is comfortable for her, and she feels insecure. I know that my belief in her makes her feel like she can get through some of the hard days. That I can be that person for her is invaluable, to both of us."

The Spanish teacher was also aware of the difference she had made in the life of the student who identified her as transformative. This is how she told that story: "I have a former student who is currently a freshman at university. Spanish always came pretty easily to her, but I do not think she really considered continuing her study of Spanish until her senior year. She and I keep in contact, and she emailed me to let me know that she got an A in a junior level class, and she was *thrilled*. I helped her exceed her own expectations, and her confidence has grown tremendously."

There were other skills the Spanish teacher believed her student had gained from her experience in Spanish class. "I know she is still pursuing the study of Spanish, but who knows where it will take her? She is bright, beautiful, social, easy to be around, and motivated. I really have no idea what career path she will choose, but I know that her foundations in Spanish have given her a great springboard into a variety of professions. Because I have traveled and lived a pretty interesting life (If I do say so myself!), she was inspired to have new experiences, too."

The Advisors' Tales

Several students identified high school advisors as the people who had been most transformative in their lives. One young woman at the focus group interviews told this story: "My advisor came up to me in the hall and handed me an application. She was in charge of the school leadership team— a carefully selected group of twenty diverse personalities that was designed to reach all corners of the student population. Beginning my junior year, I was one of those twenty members who orchestrated spirit events, clothing and food drives, and led charitable events. I was pretty introverted when I was younger. So it made me feel good that she thought, 'You know, I think you would be good at this.' I did not really want to do it, but she pushed me and said, 'This is what we will do.' So I applied, and my junior year I was the youngest girl. She gave me projects to work on. She saw something in me that I did not know that I had. She made a difference to my life because she pushed me to do more and be better.

"The school was very socioeconomically diverse. I mentioned to her that we had some of the most wealthy people in the city in our school and some of the poorest, as well. I felt we should be doing something to help those who were on the fringes. So we came up with this idea; we called it the South Pole. We got brand new items donated from families. Then anybody who was on free or reduced lunch was invited to come in and shop for their families. She put me in

charge of it. I guess, yeah, she would always look for what people were interested in and then ask, 'What can you do with this? How can we use your passion and relate it back to leadership at the school?' I would almost consider myself extroverted now. She pushed me to be my own person. Ever since I am way more confident. She was always there on the sidelines cheering us on, saying, 'You can do this,' even when we thought what she expected was impossible.

"She was also a business teacher, and there was a program the chamber of commerce sponsors every year called Bizfest. She told me to apply, and she would write my letter of recommendation. So I did it and I placed in the top ten of 110 kids. Then I went on to the next level, and I got first place. I never thought I would win scholarship money for a business thing. I tried it and I had so much fun. That is now my fallback plan. If for some reason a career in education does not work, I will go into marketing. When I become a teacher, I want to be like her. I do not want anybody in my classroom to feel under cherished. I hope every student who enters my classroom feels important. I think those relationships will be the most rewarding part of teaching for me."

One of the teachers who participated in this interview study was also a high school advisor. The young woman who identified her as a transformative teacher wrote, "All through high school my advisory teacher was always in my corner. She never taught me a subject but helped me learn so much throughout high school. She is one of the reasons I would like to become a teacher because I want to have that effect on someone, I want to guide someone to become someone. She has been at my high school for as long as I have been alive, and to think of how many people she has helped become well-formed individuals amazes me. Knowing she does this for every student in her care shocks me, because of how personal she makes the connection between teacher and student."

The advisor explained the important personal connection between students and teachers like this: "The relationship between students and teachers can be the cornerstone of the students' willingness to attempt a variety of opportunities. If they trust I have their best interest in mind, they are willing to at least attempt something new." The advisor described the relationship she had developed with the student who named her as a teacher who made a difference as very personal. "She was enrolled with me for advisory class. This class is designed to help students transition into high school as well as seek support in classes as needed. We talked about her future plans and resolved conflicts which she experienced. I think she knows she can still seek my support now."

This teacher also remembered other transformative experiences she had had with students, "According to a previous student, his graduation was possible because of strategies and supports I provided for him to succeed. This student dealt with substance abuse issues and we worked together to make school more meaningful to him. We also focused on vocational interests and abilities. Years after graduation, I still have contact with this student. He has a family and operates his own business. He told me he would not have made it through school, or been successful if it had not been for my not allowing him to settle for less than he could do."

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The Music Teachers' Tales

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The Choir Director's Tale

Several students said it was music teachers who had made the biggest change to their lives. One young woman described a transformative choir director: "I loved coming to choir, because every day the director would walk in and I could just tell she was happy to be there. She would say, 'How lucky am I to be able to teach you guys?' Now I want to be a teacher, because I can walk into a classroom and say, 'How lucky am I to be able to do this?' In choir we would go

on trips, and she would talk about her life. She was really close to her mom, and when she found out that her mom was dying, she was on tour with her choir in New York. She told us she had to leave, and we all circled around her. We had a song we sang at the end of every concert, and we sang it for her then. I think that was one reason she was so open with us, because she knew we were there for her as much as she was for us. Singing was a passion before I went to choir, but singing was such a passion for her that it became all about being the best I can be. Even though as a choir we wanted to sound unified, to sing as one, she always told us, at the same time, to not hold ourselves back. I think that is something that I took to my life as well. I never want to hold myself back. She was someone who inspired me to reach my full potential in everything I do."

The Band Leader's Tale

There was one band leader whose leadership was so transformative that he was identified by not one, but two students in the *Introduction to Education* class as the teacher who had the most influence on their lives. A young man who had been a member of his band told the story like this: "The most influential teacher I have ever had the pleasure of working with was my high school band director. He had a way of making people come together. My senior year, a marching band member's brother was diagnosed with lymphoma. All two hundred and eighteen members of the band received an email telling us to meet in the band room. In the center of the room the band leader stood on a conductor's podium. He raised his hand, and the room went dead quiet. He told us what was going on. He told us to do just one thing: give. And we gave, and all the members and alumni of the band continue to give, because of one man who made us a family."

A young woman in the class told the story like this: "With 200 students, musicians, and friends sitting around band room 506, our director told the band that a member's brother had been diagnosed with cancer. The room was still and he allowed Johnny to speak to the class.

With tears in his eyes, he listened to Johnny, and then he embraced him. He treated every student as one of his kids and we called him Dad. He never let us forget how proud he was of us. I want students to feel as loved as I did in his classroom. I am a better person because I was involved in band." This young woman also participated in the focus group interviews, and she told the story of this band leader's influence on more normal days at school. "Our band was 200 people, so it was huge, but he focused on the idea that we were a family. This was a place that we could call home. He had an individual relationship with every student, and with 200 kids that is a lot. I was an awful musician, but he put me in leadership roles and reminded me that he believed in me. It is a genuine relationship, because he cares about me as a person. That is the kind of person he is.

"In the band there are section leaders appointed to run individual sections. He took the section leaders to a leadership presentation on being a selfless leader. He knew we had the potential to think of others first. So the expectations he had for us challenged us to become better people. He was always putting others before himself, and I think I need to put students first. He believed in me, and I was capable. I wanted to be a teacher since I was little, and it is obviously happening. I have just begun to realize it is not about what I will teach, it is about the relationships and how I will care about my kids that matters most."

This band director's personal story of transformation was not about a relationship with a teacher, but about a relationship with a stepfather who was "certainly transformative. My stepfather was one of the greatest musicians I have ever known. I will never approach what he knows, musically. In his 40s we were thrown together through his marriage to my mother and everything changed for me. Everything changed in that I knew I was going to become a musician. I learned new instruments, I learned how to write music, and I learned all these things from him. That is the person in my life who most changed who I became as a person, for sure."

When asked what it was about his relationship with his stepfather that was transformative, the band leader said, "Musically speaking, it had to do with the beauty with which he could play. That was what I was completely taken by. I wanted to be like him. Honesty became one of my most important virtues. I strove to be as honest as he was. Brutally honest, sometimes." When asked about times when he was the teacher who made a difference, the band director clearly remembered several stories, but still expressed astonishment that his students thought of him this way. "Here is one example. I had a student when I was a young teacher. He was a guitar player in my jazz band. We lost touch with each other, then someone told me he had a web site. So I looked him up, and when I read what he said about me I was floored. I had no idea that what had happened in high school jazz band had made such a difference to him."

Although his stories of transformative teaching were clearly important to him, the band leader said that he did not like to talk about them. "This is hard. It is hard to talk about myself in those terms. I like to think that I was a good teacher. I like to think that teaching is important because teachers make a difference. It is hard to talk about myself in those terms, but I will try. Here is a story about a student I had about that same time. He played bass guitar, and he was pretty good. But man, he was a little cuss. Finally one day I had had it with him. I said, 'You. Me. Out in the hall.' I looked at him and I said, 'You must really hate this class.' And he said, 'I love this class!' It totally undid me. I said, 'Well, start acting like it!' It changed everything about the two of us. He is to this day one of my closest friends. He teaches orchestra at that same school. We love each other, and we are brothers. It transformed me more than it transformed him. What I find to be incredible is the learning I got to do as a band director, through teenagers showing me time and time again, over and over, what they are capable of doing, what they are capable of achieving. They never stopped amazing me. I learned so much."

The Administrator's Tale

The final two participants interviewed for this narrative study were included because they have both been influential in my understanding of what it means to be a transformative teacher. The administrator was the guest speaker for my class who had the most positive, hopeful message for my students about becoming a teacher who could change a child's life. The stories he told in class were inspiring stories of intervention in students' lives, as a teacher and as a principal. He told a story of a troubled boy who had been sent to his office. Instead of suspending the boy for bad behavior in class, the principal realized that it was the boy's birthday, and he was acting out because he felt no one remembered or celebrated his life. Instead of lecturing the boy, he took him out for doughnuts. That boy never again ended up in the principal's office.

He told stories of a homeless boy he had coached on the wrestling team, and how his relationship with that child enabled the boy to do better in all his classes than anyone had thought possible. He told stories of children for whom he knew he had made a difference, and stories of children who he had not been able to help in time. The crowning story he told to my class of aspiring teachers was of one boy who had been abused in foster care, whose life had been so difficult that the only way the administrator found to make a lasting difference was to adopt the boy and make him a permanent member of his family. At the end of this presentation, my students had laughed and they had cried and they had given him a standing ovation. He was asked to participate in this narrative research project because he believes in the possibility of transformative teaching.

The stories the administrator told of teachers who had been transformative in his life were as compelling as the stories he told of when he was the transformative teacher: "Well, first I think of my father, who was a guidance counselor. He had a terrible childhood but grew into an

amazing man. I always thought it would be kind of cool to be like my dad. My dad told me, at one point, 'You are going to be a teacher.' I thought, 'Yeah, right.' Then, once when I was in eighth grade, my dad got mad at me because I was goofing around with a bat and ball and one of my friends, while my dad was working hard and sweating, working on the car. And he said, 'You ought to get a job where all you do is play.' I thought, 'That is a good idea!'

"In high school I started looking at teachers who were making a difference in my life. I thought that was probably something I wanted to do, to invest my life in. You always want to invest in something that will make your life count. But the person who moved me the most was a fifth grade teacher named Mrs. H. She did three things that changed our lives. The first thing she did is, she told us she loved us. The second thing, again, she loved us. We knew it. It was affirming. She invested herself in us and gave us the best she could. The third thing she would do is, she had a cardboard box in her room. It had rubber spiders and candy bars inside, and if I had performed well enough I could walk across the room and pick something out. It was not about what I picked out, it was the walk across the room. I had a horrendous fourth grade experience. While everybody else got through with their fourth grade math book, I was only halfway through. So I was way behind and hated school. But when she came in, I caught up and passed most people in math. I got through calculus in high school and in college as well. She set me up for success. I would be nothing without that teacher at that time who saved me academically."

The administrator went on to tell the story of the coach who inspired him to strive to be the best he can be. "I wanted to please him. Everybody would run through the wall for him. That is why we won state championships. Coach said we have to do this, so we have to do this." He spoke of still working, as a superintendent of schools, to please his coach. That was the lasting effect that transformative teacher still had on his life.

One of the things that I admire most about the way the administrator tells his story of transformation is that his purpose is to make teachers visible, to give attention to honoring teachers who make a difference. When asked to tell a story about transformation, he often did not tell a story about his own work, but instead told of a teacher working under his administration who changed students' lives. For example: "I have a teacher who attracts broken birds. Kids love him. They flock around him. Recently I was sitting at a table right next to him, embarrassing him, and the person sitting across the table at dinner, I was talking to her about this teacher. I said he earns the right to hear their stories. And he said, 'What do you think? How do I do that?' I answered, 'It is simple. You listen.' He will listen and listen and listen and not judge and not tell them how bad they are, but just listen. That breaks down a huge barrier, for them to know that he loves them anyway. And being able to show that love in the way he cares for them."

The administrator acknowledged that teachers need the support of their administrators, of parents, and of the community to be empowered to teach to make a difference. "The first thing is you have to have leadership that will allow it. You can have people who are control freaks who are more interested in teaching curriculum than they are in teaching kids. If they are more interested in test scores than they are in learning, kids will fail. You have to have a superintendent who will support the principals to support the teachers in risk taking. The principal starts by setting a culture of fun, a culture of play. Then hiring is another thing. If they do not share that vision, do not let them in the building. You have to bring the right people in and then encourage those people, fill their cup, make sure that not only they see the glass as half full, but more than that, make sure the glass is half full or more. We try to encourage teachers to have the courage to cultivate a culture of care. We do culture as a school as well, not just for students, but for staff. One thing I like to do is recognize teachers and staff for good ideas. Anytime during

a meeting anyone can interrupt me to reward another faculty member for a good idea. We practice lifting each other up, because we are great at lifting kids, but not so good at lifting each other. That is a culture thing—lifting each other up."

The administrator said he continually heard from former students that he had made a difference in their lives. "I got a message recently (looking it up on Facebook on his phone). So this kid wrote, 'I remember that you gave me my first pair of Nikes. You gave them to me because we were too poor to get new shoes. I grew so fast my shoes were falling apart, and you gave me another pair. That single act has impacted my entire life.' We do not know what we are doing when we have a relationship with a kid. Whatever the need is, we step in. That one just happened a couple of days ago. But they are constantly reaching out and telling me. That feeds me and makes me want to be better and to reach out more. They still call me for advice." This is a teacher who has had a lasting and transformative impact on many children.

The Professor's Tale

During my very last doctoral class the professor stepped out of the room for a short break, and I turned to the students seated around the classroom table with me and said, "I feel like celebrating. This is my last class, ever. Next year I will be working on my dissertation." The student sitting next to me asked, "What is the topic of your research?" and I told her my plan to tell stories of transformative teaching. She smiled and said, "If you want to write about our professor, I can tell you about how he has made a difference to my life." She wrote her email address in my notebook so that I could contact her if I wanted to hear her story. But I did not contact her when the time came to collect the data in these interviews, because this one was *my* story of the transformative teaching experience, and I wanted, myself, to be a participant in the narration of the teaching that has made a difference to me.

To authentically argue that the power of story is essential to the developing identity formation of transformative teaching, I must be able to illustrate from my personal narrative how this theory has become a story I live by. From the first exposure to the foundational educational theory I inherited from my father, that people are more important than ideas, through the philosophical quest which would inform my teaching practice and make meaning of my own experience, this personal story of transformative teaching is an important piece of who I understand myself to be and who I hope to become. A relational ethic of care is central to my understanding of what it means to be a teacher, but, to be honest, the only teachers I had as I was growing up with whom I experienced that caring relationship were the teachers in my family.

My father was probably the most transformative teacher of my life. He was the teacher who made me believe that I could accomplish anything I set my mind to do, that I was capable, and that whatever I chose to do with my life was a good choice. I knew that he loved me, that he believed in me, and that he had done everything in his power to educate me with excellence as preparation for living a good life. Then, much too soon, my father died. It was my first experience of death, but it became the most transformative experience of my life. At his funeral I was astonished when every person who came to honor his memory told me of their assurance that my father loved them. I did not realize then how important this day would be to my life, but I began to understand and create for myself a personal definition of a life worth living. That was to become, for me, a life in which I could be confident that everyone close to me knows for sure that I love them. This definition of personal success has had a great impact on my parenting, my scholarship, and my teaching. That is perhaps why, when I came to the university and began to read about the importance of a relational ethic of care to teaching that makes a difference, this was an educational theory I wanted to explore. My experience at the university has been

transformative. I now believe in a personal story of the transformation of human character and in making meaning of my own growth as a person, as a teacher, and as a writer. I want to help another generation of teachers find ways to become the very best teachers they can be, empowering them to make a difference. I am now certain I am capable of becoming a teacher whose relationship with her students is transformative.

The professor whose narrative is the last tale of transformation I will tell is a key player in my story of teaching that has changed my life. It was in his class that I first heard of the difference between mimetic and transformative teaching. He first loaned me Philip Jackson's book, *The Practice of Teaching* (1986), in which I could read about the qualities of teaching Jackson believed made it transformative. In his class I first witnessed the progressive teaching that focuses on starting where students are, with who they are, and building upon their knowledge and experience to intentionally create a lasting change. Because of transformative experiences as a student in his class, I began to plan lessons for the class I taught that began in the students' life experiences, giving them opportunities to tell the stories which shape the identities of the teachers they choose to become.

I first asked the professor to describe the teachers who had been most transformative in his life several years ago. I asked him what educational theory was foundational to his own practice, and how those important teachers had influenced his thinking about what it means to be a teacher. He answered, "What first influenced my thinking about education was years of long conversations with my father-in-law about what teaching was, as he modeled that in so many ways. My first teaching experience taught me that education was not merely about translating and transmitting ideas from one person to another. Teaching is not just teaching ideas, but it is teaching human beings. We need to relate knowledge to who people are as persons. I think it is

remembering what your father said, that the human being is the most important part of teaching. I do believe human meaning and purpose are important."

"Another man who influenced my teaching was my advisor. He is the best scholar I have ever met in education. He is outstanding, actually. People can be quite outstanding teachers or scholars. Usually not both. He was both. This man has been retired for at least 12 years and he still writes more than most professors who are striving for promotion. It is quite remarkable."

When asked if he had experience with other teachers who were transformative to his life, the professor told this story: "I did not have teachers in my school days who I would describe as transformative, but in college, I did. I was going to be a social worker and I completed a bachelor's degree in sociology. I had a teacher there, her name was Dr. G, and I thought she was really quite remarkable. I am not sure exactly why. But she was smart and articulate and well educated. She was also a really caring person and was interested in getting people to go into social work. [In her classes] I realized that learning about professional practice, in that case social work, could also have an intellectual quality." I smiled as I listened. This understanding that the study and practice of education could also be an intellectual endeavor, and not just an accumulation of best practice strategies, was what most drew me to my professor's theory of education, especially as it referred to what was important to study in teacher education programs. The professor went on, "She taught an interesting mix of helping social practice with an intellectual side. It was a nice thing to see."

"You described her as caring," I said. "Can you tell a story that would illustrate the relationship you had with her?"

"It was a pretty formal one," the professor answered. "I always sat front row center to be as close to her as I could, so as to not miss anything, and to be able to interact with her a lot,

which I did, and she appreciated that. She was supportive of me going on into the MSW program, because it was preparation for social work practice. That was probably the bridge for me to education. I began to think about how to help children develop intellectually, and grow intellectually. That was one thing that made progressive education and curriculum theory attractive, that growth perspective."

When I asked the professor to tell a story about a time when he had been the transformative teacher, he said, "I had a student a year ago. It was her first semester here from China. Given what I know about the Chinese education system, one of the things that was different for her was the exercise of choice. She got to choose what she wanted to study or read at times, to think about options, which is not a part of the educational culture in her country. I could see her in class just looking at me sometimes, cocking her head sideways. I could tell she was really thinking about these things. We did not talk about this a lot, given the way young Asian female students often are—very quiet, very deferential. But when I would ask her about ideas, she would clearly have a position to take, including sometimes saying to me, 'What you are telling me, I do not think is even possible,' which I appreciated. She was a spunky little character in some ways. By the end of the semester, she kept holding back, kept holding back, and finally came up and told me that for the first time she understood that she had the freedom to think about new ideas. She was crying and gave me a big hug. I could tell, for her, it had made a difference. She was thinking about options. It was just teaching the way I know how to teach. But it had changed her. It clearly had."

"I think being supportive and open to her questions and statements was something she was not used to. She was used to, in Jackson's framework, teaching that was mimetic, that was knowledge transfer. That is what she was ready for and knew how to do. To think about ideas

and grapple with alternatives, particularly about curriculum, which was what I was teaching in

that class, about curriculum theories and options and alternatives, I think she had not done that

before. The Chinese want to improve and accelerate their education system, and that systematic,

mimetic approach to teaching is insufficient to reach those goals. It will probably be of some

value later, but it may be a rocky road for this young woman, I suspect, at first."

Then I asked the professor if building that supportive relationship was intentional, in his

experience, and he said, "Some people have those relationships and some do not. I had, with

Yamamoto. But, you see, he was very intentional about who he chose. In my case, I think it is

just teaching the way I know how to teach."

Just teaching the way he knows how to teach had certainly changed this young woman's

life, as it had mine. As I reread the professor's story, listening for the themes that I expected to

find and surprised at times at themes I had not expected, I wondered if the prediction the

administrator had made was true. Would the professor's demonstration of the relational ethic of

care and the pursuit of excellence be transformative in my life, making me also able to

demonstrate those values to my students? Would my demonstration of the values central to my

teaching philosophy change my students' lives, so they will begin to tell the stories of their

identity as transformative teachers?

I chanced upon an article recently that has given me hope to believe that there may

indeed be a generational aspect to teaching that makes a difference. It was an article by the

professor's advisor, *The Life of the Mind, a Tribute to Three Professors* (Yamamoto, 2000). In

this short article, the professor's advisor wrote about his good fortune in having three professors

who enabled him "to glimpse the life of the mind" (Yamamoto, 2000, p. 48). The first he called a

Phoenix rising from the ashes. This was a professor who taught chemistry at the Imperial

University of Tokyo, who taught his students to rise from the ashes of World War II: "We must work hard but, mark my words, we will rebuild our industry! (Yamamoto, 2000, p. 48)."

The second professor was a psychology teacher at the University of Minnesota who had intentionally brought together an international team "including members from at least half a dozen nations. We were apparently selected from the four corners of the earth to serve as windows on differing cultures and education systems" (Yamamoto, 2000, p. 49). This professor was described as a member of the Secret Society of Happy People, "a gentle soul with a versatile, creative mind" who stressed "the primacy of original thought" (Yamamoto, 2000, p. 49). This "unassuming man of quiet faith and goodwill" coined the term *Beyonder* to describe creative minds who keep pushing the boundaries (Yamamoto, 2000, p. 49).

The *Steersman* was the third professor on the list of teachers who had made a difference to his life, his doctoral advisor at the University of Minnesota. "He admonished each of his advisees . . . to become a whole and wholesome person" (Yamamoto, 2000, p. 50). This advisor's advisor wrote a poem, *Forward I Paddle,* in which he expressed his desire to be the steersman of a boat, ever looking forward, and not the oarsman, doomed to work facing backwards to the past. What these three inspirational professors had in common was a dedication to pursuing knowledge and understanding. They taught their students to connect "ideas and ideals, yesterday and tomorrow, change and renewal" (Yamamoto, 2000, p. 50). The short essay ended with these words: "I owe my professors so much for all their living and loving tutelage" (Yamamoto, 2000, p. 50).

What strikes me most about this article is that these qualities the professor's advisor used to describe his professors—the determination to rebuild the profession, the gentle-souled man of good will who keeps pushing the boundaries, and the steersman ever looking forward with hope

for the future—might also be an apt description of him, as seen through the eyes of his student, my professor. They might just as well be used as descriptors of the professor who has so changed my life. Are the qualities of teaching that make it transformative able to be passed down from one generation to the next? Is this a generational gift? Has each professor embodied the qualities he admired in his teachers, and modeled those values in his time? Will I also become like my teacher? I do see the character of the Phoenix, the Beyonder, and the Steersman reflected in my professor's teaching and scholarship, and hope that in time I will have students who describe me with such kind and thoughtful words as a teacher who has given them just a glimpse of "the life of the mind" and made a difference in their lives that will endure.

CHAPTER FIVE

Significance of the Study: Revisiting Questions, Purposes, and Goals

Transformative teaching, as defined by Philip Jackson (Jackson, 1986), John Dewey (1902), and Paulo Freire (Johansson & Felten, 2014), is teaching for growth in students through intentional, creative action. The theoretical framework for this research conceptualizes transformative teaching—accomplished through a relationship of care, driven by the pursuit of excellence, through a belief in possibility and the aesthetic value of a beautiful life—as creating, through the telling of stories which are a teacher's best tool for identity formation, a lasting change in a student (Gee, 2000-2001) (Olson, 2011) (Jackson, 1986). Based on that theory, this chapter considers how students might be prepared to become teachers who make a difference.

Fifth Listening: Attending to My Own Response

In the final stage of the Gilligan *Listening Guide,* the investigator pulls together what has been learned from previous stages in an analysis focused on making meaning of the data by looking through the lens of the personal story and experience of the researcher. Because the researcher is a tool of research, this step in the process of analysis listens closely to how the stories the narrators tell resonate with the researcher's personal experience. What surprises, disturbs, or perplexes when the stories are heard again and again? A transparency with an audience is especially important to the integrity of narrative research; I must reflect upon how my story impacts interpretation of the stories I have heard. When do the tears in my eyes reflect my sadness for the storyteller, and when are they markers of an old personal grief, long forgotten, but still influential in how I hear and understand the stories I am told?

What Have I Heard that Resonates?

A number of research participants began their stories of transformation by describing a relationship with their fathers. For example, the professor said, "What first influenced my thinking about education was years of long conversations with my father-in-law about what teaching was, as he modeled that in so many ways." The administrator began with, "Well, first I think of my father. . . . I always thought it would be kind of cool to be like my dad." The band leader described his relationship with his stepfather as "certainly transformational," explaining that "it had to do with the beauty with which he could play. That was what I was completely taken by. I wanted to be like him." When asked who was most transformative in their lives, other teachers also began their stories by saying, "My mom and dad, of course." Students who spoke of a mother or father as the most transformative influence in their lives told stories of growing up with a parent who was a teacher, or of being homeschooled and having their mother or father become the most influential teacher in their story of school.

These stories of the transformative influence of parents as teachers were what most resonated with my own experience. The professor's conversations with his father-in-law were influential in helping him see himself as a teacher, to create a teacher identity. The administrator's stories of his father's influence made him want to be, like his dad, "an amazing man." The band leader's appreciation of the beauty with which his stepfather played transformed his life: "Everything changed in that I knew I was going to become a musician. That is the person in my life who most changed who I became as a person, for sure." In the same way, the loving relationship my father had with everyone who knew him became for me a personal relationship of care which made a lasting difference to my life. It was in hearing the stories my father told about me that my identity was first fashioned and affirmed. His stories of my life led

me to think of myself as a good student, a creative thinker, an actor, a writer, a teacher, even as a person who cared about people more than ideas. It may be that the experience of care naturally arising between a parent and a child *is* the best metaphor and description for the kind of relationship necessary to teaching that makes a difference.

Another story that resonated with my own experience was the administrator's narrative of working so hard to please the coach who set high standards of excellence for his team, expecting his players to meet and exceed those expectations. That motivation to please his coach endured. He still hopes his coach will hear of his achievements and honors; he still wants to please his coach. This desire to please is a lifelong characteristic I share. Perhaps when we have grown up knowing the care of an important teacher, we always long to live up to that teacher's dreams and ambitions for our lives with excellence, to "do more and be better" than we ever thought we could do or be. As one student said, "He believed in me, and I was capable." This is my story, too. When I write well it is in the attempt to please a teacher who cares about my work. This is likewise a personal story because of all the casts and crews who have aimed for excellence and worked so hard to please me as a director. I have not yet asked them to run through a wall, but they have built walls out of toilet paper rolls and duct tape, taken running leaps into other characters' arms, and nightly overcome barriers of stage fright, illness, and other mishaps to perform with brilliance and passion in the creation of a play, all in the hope of pleasing the director, because, as Britney whispered in my ear, they knew for sure how much I loved them.

Another aspect of the administrator's story that resonates with my own is his attention to the voices of teachers. To my way of thinking, the historic paradigms of curricular theory, through their focus on subject, student, or society, make the teacher a silent and invisible actor in the curricular theatre. It is the transformative emphasis on relationship, in which the abstract

Deweyan curricular elements are embodied as relational beings, which gives the teacher a voice in the dialogue and makes her a very visible player in the scene. The administrator described his schools as places where teachers are encouraged to take the risks necessary to teaching to make a difference. He affirms the teachers in his schools by telling their stories and by acknowledging their transformative practice. It is in hearing my students' stories in the School of Education and in affirming their developing identities as transformative teachers that I hope to have the greatest impact on students, schools, and society, speaking with the confidence that my own teacher voice will be heard and my own identity as a transformative teacher will be affirmed.

The relationship of care which is so necessary, by all accounts, to the transformative teaching experience is not, to my mind, a warm emotion or a fuzzy feeling, but a moral strength. It involves holding up a high standard for intellectual integrity, academic authenticity, and an aesthetic appreciation of all that is truly beautiful, with every expectation that the standard we have set is possible, and that students are capable of intellectual growth and creative endeavor. The administrator introduced a troubling theme when he expressed concern that the attention to creating a relationship of care through the pursuit of excellence is being overlooked in teacher education programs: "Unfortunately, no one ever taught me that when I went through the university. There are a few [professors] who demonstrate that relationship here and there are a few who do not get it because they have never had anyone demonstrate that relationship to them. It comes down to you have to find teachers at the university level who will humble themselves to learn. If they will not humble themselves in that way, I would not tenure them and I would find someone who would." I agree that making school a place where transformative teaching can happen must begin at the university in teacher education programs. When the administrator said that because the professor *had* demonstrated to me both the transformative relationship of care

and the setting of a standard of excellence, I would, as his student, also be *able* to demonstrate that care and set that standard, I hoped most sincerely that his expectation would come true.

I remembered one of our first conversations, during a conference on a paper I was writing for his class, when the professor described his advisor as a person he greatly admired because he was both an excellent scholar and a gifted teacher. I found his admiration of excellent scholarship and practice remarkable, and I remembered it so clearly, because that quality of smart teaching (a descriptor I heard him use) was what made me want to take every class he taught at the university. When the professor then told me that, though that combined excellence in scholarship and teaching was rare, he believed I was capable of excelling as both a scholar and a teacher if I wanted to, that is what I set out to do. The importance of good scholarship and the development of a personal, informed philosophy of education in teacher education programs always resonates clearly to what I hope and believe to be true.

What Have I Heard that Surprises and What Have I Heard that Disturbs?

I heard a number of stories about transformative teaching experience that truly surprised. First, the stories teachers told of not knowing if they had ever made a difference in a student's life were surprising, as was the warning the professor gave that some people would not believe that becoming a transformative teacher was an appropriate aspiration for a teacher to have. I began to wonder if it was a disinclination to admit to intentionally developing a relationship of care with students that made teachers hesitate to tell confident stories of transformation in their classrooms. When I pointedly asked teachers, "What was it about the relationship that was transformative?" they often responded by avoiding the question altogether. For example, the band leader answered, "This is hard. It is hard to talk about myself in those terms. I like to think that I was a good teacher." When asked how that relationship helped them set a standard of

excellence, the English teachers answered as a chorus: "This is a difficult question to answer," and "She is evidence that you never know who will latch on and who will not; I did not expect she would champion me as a transformative teacher" and, even, "I wish I knew! If I knew that, then I would write a book and go on a national speaking tour."

Another theme that both surprised and delighted was the administrator's connection of the power of story to our responsibility as teachers to earn the right to hear what our students want to say. This concern for being a teacher who can be trusted emphasizes the vulnerability we must courageously assume to be authentic, to be safe, to be trustworthy stewards of stories of transformation, and to be fluent speakers of the language of hope and possibility that will convince students that they are indeed capable of becoming whoever they want to be. To gain that right to hear their stories, teachers must show they are willing to listen, that the stories students tell of their lives are important to becoming who they choose to be. This is nowhere more true than in our university teacher education programs.

Other surprising stories were disturbing. When I asked students at the focus group interviews their greatest concern about teaching, more than half answered, "My biggest concern is, will I lose passion for teaching, maybe become discouraged? I do not think that will happen, but I hear it so often it has become a concern." It seems that this concern is arising because they "hear it so often" in the School of Education. Are students working so hard to become teachers being socialized to fail in the very place where they should be prepared to succeed?

Another disturbing motif that I began to hear was that, although every student could tell stories of teachers who made a difference to their lives, these experiences of transformation were unfortunately rare. One young woman, describing a principal who had changed her identity story, said that other principals at her school "did not seem to care what was happening with the

students as long as everyone seemed to be doing what they were supposed to be doing. As soon

as she came everything changed. She knew everybody by name." While the story of the principal

who knew everybody by name is inspiring, the stories of principals and teachers who do not

know their students' names are disturbing in their frequency. Another young man ended his story

of transformation by saying, "It is really harrowing to think what my life would have been like if

I had not encountered her at that time. It is not something I really like to think about," which also

speaks to the theme of the disturbing reality that too few teachers are committed to teaching to

transform. It *is* harrowing to think about students in crisis who may never experience the

intervening care of a teacher who makes a transformative difference to their lives. I do not like to

think about it, either.

What Have I Heard that Perplexes?

What most perplexes me in my response to all the data I collected was the paucity of

evidence for the importance of an aesthetic theory to transformative teaching. Because the

majority of the transformative teachers interviewed for this research were English and fine arts

teachers, I expected them to narrate more ways a teacher-guided appreciation of beauty in art,

music, and literature might be transformative. Four of the teachers interviewed ranked "teaching

that focuses on the education of the whole child, as a social, emotional, intellectual, physical, and

spiritual being" as the first or second most important quality of teaching that makes it

transformative. So I was very surprised that they did not talk about the importance of aesthetic

excellence in teaching that makes a difference in the life of a child.

At my comprehensive oral exams, seeing this quality of educating the whole child listed

as a characteristic of teaching that might make it transformative, the professor asked, "How

would you do this? How would you go about educating the spirit of a child?" As I have

considered this critical question, even looking for answers in the data collected, which I did not find, I remembered another time I was asked a similar question and the answer I gave at that time. I was teaching at an education conference in Istanbul in November of 2010. At the conference were women who were teaching expatriate children across the Middle East and Asia. Because this was a secular education conference, I was surprised when I was asked to present a seminar on *Spiritual Formation in Children*. The seminar was very well received. The question arose at the end of the session, when a brave woman in the back of the room stood to ask, "How can we guide our children in their spiritual formation when they are spending their formative years in a spiritually dark place?"

"I have found," I began a little hesitantly, "that the best defense against any spiritual darkness or *evil* is a *good* offense. I fight against the devaluation of the human spirit in ugly popular art and music by exposing children to beautiful, classical works. In a culture that demeans women and raises arrogant sons, I consistently model a relationship of mutual respect and dignity and give children opportunities to practice courtesy and kindness with both boys and girls. I am confident that the best defense against spiritual darkness is a resolute exposure to all that is bright and beautiful."

The signs of a dehumanizing ugliness in modern culture are evident everywhere in the arts. Popular music lends countless examples in the debased lyrics of songs. Visual artists choose colors that are rich and vibrant, but the people they paint are grotesque and misshapen, as if they fail to see the beauty of the human spirit beneath the skin. Best-selling, prize-winning stories are about inhuman creatures, monstrous and ugly distortions of humanity. My favorite medium, the theatre, is perhaps the worst of all. The last time I made the long flight over the Atlantic Ocean I made the mistake of watching a movie on the plane. The flight magazine described it as a story

set in a British boarding school. It was a very misleading description of the film, which turned out to be set in an institution that raised human clones to be transplant donors for original people. The theme of the story was that we are all doomed, just bodies without a spirit waiting to die. It was a perfect example of art which denies a human spirit and produces an evil distortion of human life as a result.

I am still perplexed that the teachers who described the importance of an attention to educating the whole child rarely spoke to ways an introduction to an aesthetic sensibility might be a part of that whole-hearted education. The best defense against this plague of ugliness and lies is to fill our lives with truth and beauty. To fight against ugliness masquerading as art, the best defense is to appreciate beauty and cultivate a taste for excellence. Anything that encourages excellence in the arts will nourish the human spirit. Excellent academics are the best defense against a culture of ignorance. Excellence in the arts is the best defense against the dehumanizing of the human spirit. And excellent living, an aesthetic commitment to creating a life that is happy and good and beautiful, is the best defense against the modern despair that causes so many of our young to give up on life. We can choose to make music together, produce our own plays, write our own sonnets, throw our own pottery, grow our own vegetables, and paint our own portraits. To my mind, every activity which enlarges a child's spirit in relationship with a caring adult will encourage excellence in living and make a difference that will endure.

My daughter, Elisabeth, was in the second grade when American involvement in the war in Iraq escalated. She asked to watch the news every evening with her father, because she wanted to know what was happening in the war. It was distressing to watch our little girl learn about the horrors of war and the brutality of man. One night while Elisabeth was watching the latest reports of death and destruction, she began to silently weep. Catherine, who was just five years

old, went and put her arm around her big sister and said, "It is okay, Elisabeth. We are safe here. The war is a very long way away," repeating what she had heard about the war at school.

Elisabeth sighed as the tears continued to fall. "There are little girls over there, in Iraq, just like you and me," she cried.

It was a turning point in my life as a mother and as a teacher. I looked at this precious child and thought, "I knew she had a brilliant mind, but did not realize until this moment what a big heart, what a great spirit she has." And I knew, even then, that any education which enlarged her mind without reaching her spirit would diminish her.

I have included my story of the value of a personal aesthetic theory to teaching that makes a difference in the life of a child as an attempt to be a transparent and authentic instrument of the research I have reported here. Although other participants in this narrative research study did not often speak to the value of an aesthetic of a beautiful life to their transformative teaching practice, I remain convinced that it is a central moral purpose of my own theoretical framework, especially as teaching to transform is concerned with educating the whole child, body, mind, and spirit. I believe it is as equally important to give attention to the spiritual development of aspiring teachers, to guide them in creating a personal philosophy of education and a personal aesthetic appreciation of beauty, as it is to teach them how to control a classroom, teach the scientific method, or use technology as a teaching tool.

Revisiting the Research Question as Thematic Statements

The ultimate culmination of data analysis must be to revisit the research question, giving attention to how the data informs a restatement of the question as a thematic statement or thesis about what has been learned. A first response might be: School of Education undergraduates and the teachers they identify as transformative narrate a relationship of care as the central, most

essential quality of transformative teaching. Their stories of teaching that makes a difference include an intentional encouragement of excellence and a belief in the possibility of students becoming and doing more than they ever thought they could be or do. Students aspiring to be teachers name the transformative teaching experience as the greatest influence in their decision to become teachers. Transformative teachers inspired their students to want to be transformative teachers themselves, because they saw the value of teaching to make a difference in the life of a child. The teachers believed it was watching their practice, as they modeled the values that made teaching worthwhile to them personally, that made their students decide to become teachers. The students concurred: "I have thought about becoming a principal just because she was. He set a new standard for what teaching could be. I was unsure of what I wanted to do with my life, and he inspired me. His dedication changed the way I see teachers and inspired me to want to become a teacher myself. I definitely look up to her and aspire to be like her, especially in how she is with her students, in the relationships she has built. The reason she influenced my decision to become a teacher is that I saw how much she cared about us." This is how the participants of this study narrated the influence of a transformative teaching experience on their own identity formation as teachers. The teachers who made a difference inspired students to want to be like them through caring about them and holding them to a standard of excellence.

<div align="center">**Revisiting the Stated Purposes of the Study**</div>

Exploring the Data to Generate Theory about What Makes Teaching Transformative

The first purpose of this narrative study, recorded in the beginning chapter, was to generate theory about what makes teaching transformative. Thematic statements created in revisiting the research question are the first step in this theory creation: The transformative teaching experience can change aspiring teachers' identity stories, and the pursuit of excellence

guided by a relationship of care can make an enduring difference in students' lives. New definitions of transformative teaching also evolved from the interviews: Teaching to transform gives students a vision, a dream of who they can be and all they can accomplish. Transformative optimism is hopeful about the future and about students' capability to construct their own identity. Transformative teaching goes beyond making a change in the life of an individual child, empowering students to aspire to change the world as they live out their life dreams.

I have had a life-long, recurring dream about finding myself in a strange house, filled with innumerable rooms and an odd assortment of furnishings. This recurring dream, which I have begun to think of as an identity dream, is the first dream I dreamed in French and, years later, in Hungarian. I remember clearly looking about the rooms of my dream house and thinking, first, 'Quelle grande et étrange maison!' and later, 'Quelle grande és furcsa épület!' realizing even in my sleep that my identity dream had just morphed from French to Hungarian in a single sentence. I have understood for a long time that this dream is a psychic attempt to find a place where I belong, a place where I can live and speak the language with ease.

I recognized that the value my international students in Budapest held for finding a place where they belonged in their multicultural world became a possibility for defining their individual personhood through the telling of stories. Identity formation for these international students was clearly a matter of looking for a place where we belonged, culturally and personally. I believe that teacher identity formation is also a matter of looking for a place within the setting or social context of the schools where we belong. New teachers trying to fit in a place where they do not belong, where their fundamental values for teaching are viewed as inconsequential and irrelevant to the job, where they feel constrained from creating caring relationships with students, may indeed become demoralized and leave the profession too soon.

The need to belong culturally and philosophically explains the attention being given in recent scholarship to teacher identity formation as preparation for teaching. This is a call for transformative teaching as a central component of teacher education, an experience of teacher education which gives attention to developing a relationship of care in the pursuit of excellence, even in our schools of education. It is also a call for a renewed focus on the power of story in creating the identity formation that is the purpose of transformative teaching. The beauty of story joins the strength of the teacher's personal experience with the academic preparation for teaching and the acquiring of the best skills and practices of teaching that makes a difference.

Explaining the Relationships that Make Teaching Transformative

The participants in this research narrated stories of a caring relationship between student and teacher and the values the teacher modeled as the most important elements of teaching that transforms. The relationship of care described as necessary to teaching that makes a difference is driven by the moral purposes of the pursuit of both ethical and intellectual excellence, the aesthetic virtue of a happy life, and the creation of a language of hope and affirmation of identity that completes the transformative process. Both teacher and student participants in the research also narrated the moral purposes of authenticity and kindness as central to the relationship of teaching that transforms, a relationship that they storied as both reciprocal and long lasting.

Describing Transformative Teaching from Both the Teachers' and Students' Perspectives

Students and teachers described transformative teaching as dependent on a relationship of care developing among them. They both saw setting a standard of excellence as another essential quality of a teacher who makes a difference. They confirmed that the affirmation of student identity through the teacher's belief in the possibility of transformation was crucial to the transformative experience. They agreed that teachers must gain the right to hear their students'

stories, proving they are trustworthy through a personal authenticity and by displaying the kindness of understanding. Many spoke of the transformative experience as the intervention by a teacher during a crisis in the student's life. While the teachers often spoke of the experience as a happy accident, "just teaching the way I know how to teach," the students described it as an intentional investment of a teacher's life in students.

Every student narrated stories of transformation, remembering how their relationship with a teacher had changed their lives, but teachers were much more likely to claim they did not know when they had made a difference. It is my hope that by intentionally creating a relationship of care in my teacher education courses I may gain the right to hear my students' stories, and in so doing intervene in their experience in ways that will help them create teacher identities empowered to become transformative teachers themselves who intentionally invest in their students' lives and endure in the profession they have chosen to pursue.

Empowering Teacher Education Students to Teach to Make a Difference

A fourth and final goal for conducting this study was to find ways to emancipate and empower teacher education students to teach transformatively in schools bound by a commitment to mimetic teaching for improving test scores as a means of teacher accountability. I believe that any return to transformative teaching must start in the School of Education. Dewey claimed that when teachers are not empowered to teach creatively, with intellectual freedom to choose and develop curricula, and students are constrained by national standardized testing to focus on learning objectives standardized for all, "antagonistic to the development of individual mental power" (Dewey, 1903, p. 194), schools are not fit places for preparing citizens of a democratic society. We have not seen much progress in the freeing of the intellect in our public schools since Dewey's time. Our educational theory and practice is yet a "deliberate restriction

of intelligence, the imprisoning of the spirit" (Dewey, 1903, p. 196) in schools where the teacher is more invisible than ever, teaching scripted lessons to a state mandated objective in preparation for national tests of achievement.

To realize a greater intellectual freedom for teachers and the possibility for growth for children we must first create a teaching relationship which gives intellectual freedom to teachers to enable them to be transformative in students' moral and intellectual identity formation. I believe transformative teaching makes teachers visible, giving them agency to make a difference in their students' lives, which will in turn prepare those students to be democratic citizens who can change the world.

Revisiting a Statement of Significance

For Philosophy

I am resolved to develop a personal philosophy of education by which I might understand how transformative teaching will improve my practice and accomplish my desire to make a difference in my students' lives. I have become equally determined to prepare teacher candidates to likewise teach to make a difference in their students' lives, as preparation for a career that will endure. My study convinces me that transformative teaching is a significant philosophical alternative for curricular theory because it allows for a renewed emphasis on personal excellence for students through the guiding relationship of care with a teacher committed to making a difference. I also resolve to commit further study to the significance of including educational philosophy as an essential component of teacher education curriculum. In developing a personal philosophy students work to create a personal teacher identity and learn ways to navigate the demoralization of feeling the work that they most value is not a shared value in the culture of the schools where they must teach. At last they can create a place where they belong.

For Policy

   If American educational policy is at present committed to a national standardization of curricula, instruction, and assessment, then teacher education programs must prepare teacher candidates to find intellectual, ethical, and even aesthetic value for their own work within that political system. In the School of Education we must find ways to make teaching both beautiful and meaningful and to help new teachers endure in the profession by equipping them to identify themselves as teachers who can yet make a difference. In my classes I spend at least a third of my time in the identity formation of storytelling, a third in guiding students through the creation of a personal educational theory, and a third of the time learning to put that theory into practice. For me, another crucial part of this policy changing work has been teaching to make a feminist ethic of care politically and personally attainable by demonstrating that relationship of care in my own classrooms and explaining the difference a care ethic makes in the lives of students whose teachers set for them a standard of excellence. In this way I aspire to changing educational policy, as I change the society and the world, one student at a time.

For Practice

   The personal relationship between teacher and student is the social context which is most important for the art of teaching that makes a difference. The teacher's transformation is as important to the process as the students' transformation. "We can change our students by changing ourselves, by becoming transformational teachers" (Anding & Quinn, 2005, p. 487). For this reason, teaching about transformation must begin in graduate programs, so that the transformation of teacher educators becomes the foundation on which teacher identity formation might be transformed. If new teachers never experience a relationship of care in university classrooms, how can they find the moral courage to make a difference in students' lives?

Enduring Questions for Further Research

This narrative investigation of transformative teaching has provoked a number of enduring questions, which may be beyond the scope of this particular paper, but pose interesting and compelling problems for further study. The first of these enduring questions was one I began with: What part does a tension in philosophical values—between wanting to teach to make a difference in a child and being required to teach to make a difference in test scores—play in teacher attrition? To answer that question, it might be necessary to conduct a long term study of teachers entering the profession at the same time, to hear how they narrate both their stories to live by as teachers, as well as the stories they leave by if they do not choose to persevere.

A Question about Transformative Teaching and Mentoring

Another enduring question was introduced by the professor, and many of the teachers and students, when they described the transformative teaching relationship as being like a mentoring relationship. Without, as the professor said, "over conflating [or oversimplifying] the mentor/transformative teaching connection," it would be very interesting to compare what has been learned and reported in the literature on mentorship to the literature on transformative teaching. In what ways are the relationships different, and in what ways are they the same? Is the transformative relationship an intentional choice by the teacher, as choosing a mentee is a choice the mentor makes? Just what those dynamics are, how those relationships are formed, and how similar teaching to transform is to choosing to be a mentor would be intriguing to study more.

A Question about the Rejection of Transformation as a Teaching Objective

The question that has arisen from this research that I would most like to answer is, why do some people reject the validity of transformation as a teaching objective? Why is this not already a general education requirement for study in teacher education programs? Why did no

female teachers respond to my first request to be interviewed and why did every male, who did

respond to that first request, deny knowing that they had made a difference to their students'

lives? Is there a connection in this hesitation to talk about or admit to having caring relationships

with students to tensions about forming inappropriate relationships in schools?

And why do teachers narrate transformative teaching as a mostly unconscious, happy

accident? There is a connection, in my mind, between this claim that teachers did not know or

would not boast that they had been transformative and Jackson's findings in *The Moral Life of

Schools* (1993) that the unconscious, unspoken moral instruction teachers give in their

classrooms, by modeling the values they hold and setting a standard of excellence, are often the

most transformative teaching they do. Is teaching to transform an unconscious act because being

transparent and authentic and intentional about what we most value is not acceptable in schools?

I recently summarized my motivation for teaching to transform in my class at the university with

this statement: "I care about you. I care about who you are and the life you have lived that

created you to be this person. I care about who you want to be and am committed to helping you

become the teacher and the person you most want to become, according to your story of what

makes an excellent teacher and an excellent human being." Is this statement so politically

incorrect in current educational policy that other teachers would decline to say it aloud?

Has transformative teaching become more and more rare in schools because it is

understood by many as an exercise in indoctrination rather than transformation? When I first did

a search for the use of the term *transformative teaching* on search engines for scholarly journals,

I uncovered many articles which were of no use to my research because, although they purported

to be about transformative teaching, they were so politically and ideologically driven that they

read to me as articles about indoctrination rather than transformation. Transformative teaching is

student focused, in that it is teaching for the student's transformation of identity, into that self they themselves most want to become. The articles not chosen for my theoretical grounding were about teaching for specific goals in social or political reform, with titles like: *A Conversation with my Goddess; Implicating Neo-Liberalism; Confucian Virtues—Heavenly Warnings; Negotiating the Geopolitics of Student Resistance in Global Feminism's Classrooms;* and *Challenging Contemporary Politics.* Students must learn to write new stories of their selves to endure as teachers in an ever-changing world. But "when we write of transformation, we are not suggesting that higher education should mold students into a specified form, belief system, or mind-set. . . . Transformation . . . [is] an ongoing process of intentionally aligning one's actions and behaviors with one's evolving sense of identity" (Johansson & Felten, 2014, p. 1).

Several years ago, in my first conversation with the professor where he spoke of transformative teaching as a theoretical and practical phenomenon I might want to explore, it was in the context of questions I had about the current philosophical culture of American schools. He explained, "The history over the last 100 years has been a growing dominance, not of the philosophical, but of the psychological. When you look at learning theories over time, the ones that are certainly the most dominant at present are the behavioral. They are very dominant. I think when knowledge was the focus of school curriculum, and the teaching of it, then I think philosophical models were much more influential in educators' thinking. But when you shift away from focusing on knowledge to a more psychological question of how students learn, then I think the dominance of the behaviorist has really become hegemonic, in that sense. It is really now the dominant view of a lot of teachers and teacher education programs. Particularly as it relates to student learning measured by standardized tests. Then the question is, how do you promote teaching, which is principally mimetic, utilizing behavioral strategies to increase test

scores? That is not a philosophical lens; that is a psychological lens. I do not think it is

principally philosophical any more. I think it is psychological."

This was a mind-shifting new idea for me. I asked, "What values are primary in this

behavioral approach? What moral purposes drive it? What makes it attractive to educators?"

The professor answered, "It is control. What is valuable is it allows policy makers and

administrators to exercise control over the focus of curriculum and teaching. If you define

quality as higher test scores and you relate teaching to trying to increase those test scores, I think

you can do it through the kind of control that behaviorism outlines. It is a control model."

My mind was reeling, and I responded, "I had not thought of it that way."

"Oh yes," the professor went on. "What do you choose to reinforce? What is it that you

want to try to increase in terms of student knowledge? I think it is principally a control

mechanism." Even recalling this conversation now, I am dumbfounded, because it was such an

unexpected answer to my question, but it explained so much. Now I cannot help but ask—is

transformation rejected as a worthy teaching objective because policy makers and administrators

cannot control transformative relationships? I recognize that this question might be very difficult

to answer, but it remains a question to which I would like to devote further research.

A Question about Teacher Identity Formation

The final enduring question to pursue in further research is Clandinin's question, "How

might we, as teacher educators, find ways to work with teachers that sustain their identities?"

(Clandinin, Downey, & Huber, 2009, p. 144). On a more practical slant, the question as it was

later restated by one of Clandinin's students was: "If the best-loved self is integral to the teacher-

as-curriculum-maker image, what practices might we engage in, in teacher education, to foster

the best-loved self?" (Craig, 2013, p. 267). Professors who desire to help their education students

tell stories of their lives as teachers who make a difference must also create for themselves a best-loved-teacher identity that is transformative.

The only way beginning teachers can hope to learn to teach to transform is to see the relationship of care necessary to transformative teaching modeled by their professors in the School of Education. But how can we make that happen? To investigate this question, it may be necessary to undertake a long-term study of professors like Clandinin and Craig, who have devoted their practice to modeling a relationship of care. It would also be instructive to explore in long-term studies how enduring teachers in the present environment of public schools find ways to continue to make a difference in their students' lives. These questions of national importance to educational policy and philosophy are the questions that I find personally most compelling as topics for further research.

Looking Beyond to a Generational Story of Transformation

One of the most hopeful concepts I have uncovered in my study of teaching that makes a difference is the generational influence of one transformative teacher creating a new generation of transformative teachers, who in their turn also inspire new generations of teachers who make a difference in their students' lives. From my great grandfather overseeing Indiana's first public schools, through my great aunts who all taught at elementary schools in Illinois, through my father who moved my whole family to Africa in order to become a teacher who changed the world one student at a time, I have inherited teaching to transform as surely as my freckles and green eyes. From the Phoenix, the Beyonder, and the Steersman through the advisor, the professor, and through me to the undergraduates in my class, transformative teaching becomes a generational pursuit, made possible in each new generation by the values modeled and the relationship of care created by a transformative teacher.

I had a student in Hungary I will call Paul. Paul was an extraordinary young actor who was in nearly every play I directed at the school in Budapest. He was Mr. Wickham in *Pride and Prejudice* his freshman year. He got that important role because no other boy in the school wanted to play the part of a villain. I remember telling Paul that at first I was worried he could not pull it off because he had such a kind face and sweet smile. But he did an excellent job making the audience believe he was charming enough to win all the ladies' hearts and devious enough to also delude them all.

In his sophomore year Paul read every role at the auditions for *Arsenic and Old Lace* so well that the auditors could not decide which part to assign to him, so I pulled him aside and simply asked him which part he would most like to perform. He chose to be Teddy, a small part, which was demanding because the character was quite insane, believing he was Teddy Roosevelt, running up the stairs and yelling, "Charge!" and burying "yellow fever victims" in the basement when his crazy sisters had served them their famous elderberry wine.

When he was a junior, Paul played the role of Clarence in *Life with Father,* and I remember teaching him about the theatrical power of three. I told him that if any action is repeated three times in a comedy, it becomes funnier each time it is performed. So I told him to look across the audience, smiling slowly, the first time he saw the young girl who was his love interest in the play. I told him to pause and slowly smile at the audience again when the girl later took his hand, and again, as the last action of the performance, when she kissed him in answer to his proposal of marriage. At first Paul was unsure about my direction. He told me he felt really silly grinning like a fool. But at the first performance, the audience laughed at his first smile, roared at the second, and gave him a standing ovation at the finale. He told me he would never again doubt my comedic instincts.

In his senior year Paul got his first taste of musical theatre, playing Tevia in *Fiddler on the Roof.* His success in that role inspired him to get a degree in music when he came back to America for college, and he has just completed a master's degree in vocal performance at a large southern state university. His successful performances there have included such roles as Tamino in *The Magic Flute*, Jean Valjean in *Les Misérables*, Bert in *Mary Poppins,* and, most recently, Don José in *Carmen*. One of the last performances in that role was to an audience of high school students, and Paul made this appeal to the entire cast in a very recent Facebook post:

Hey Carmen Friends!

Tomorrow we sing to a crowd of sleepy, possibly uninterested young people. You never can know when the opera you sing for someone is their first experience. They may discover in themselves a passion that they never understood until they heard some of the most beautiful music on earth. Schumann said that it is the duty of the artist to send light into the darkness of men's hearts. This world is confusing, tremendous, and very dark indeed. Let us be light tomorrow. Every breath, every intention, every subtext, every note like the light of a trillion stars. No one deserves it more than they do. Tomorrow can be our greatest show yet. I know we are tired. I know we have done this over and over and over. ONCE MORE UNTO THE BREACH!!

This sounded so much like something I might have said to the cast before the last performance of a play that I had to reply to Paul's post. I wrote:

You never do know when the play you agree to direct at a small school in Budapest will change someone's life, when a young man charging up the stairs, pretending to pretend he's Teddy Roosevelt, will catch the acting bug. I am so happy for you, that you have found this work that you love, and that you are dedicating your art to catching another generation, to being light in a dark world, and to making a difference in the life of a child.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Tabulation of Survey Results

I. Demographics of participants

Number: **126**   Female: **102**   Male: **24**

Age statistics: 18: **49**   19: **45**   20: **15**   21-25: **11**   26-30: **2**   31-35: **2**   36-40: **1**   41-45: **1**

Freshmen: **83**   Sophomores: **29**   Juniors: **14**

Majors:

Unified Early Ed.: **5**   Elementary Ed.: **62**   M.S (Math): **3**   (Eng.): **1**   (Sci.): **1**

Secondary (English): **21**   (History): **6**   (For. Lang.): **2**   Sped: **3**

English: **2**   Journalism: **3**   Linguistics: **1**   French: **1**   Clarinet: **1**

Beh. Science: **3**   Ind. Design: **1**   Psych: **2**   Nursing: **2**   Occ. Therapy: **1**

Undeclared: **5**

II. Ranking of Philosophical Orientations (students)

RANKING	6	5	4	3	2	1	W.T.
A. Traditional	13	16	18	27	25	19	380
B. Progressive	74	21	16	5	1	1	631
C. Cognitive	15	35	23	19	19	7	459
D. Social Praxis	10	27	31	23	18	9	433
E. Behavioral	4	1	9	14	26	64	223
F. Practical	2	18	21	30	29	18	352

III. Ranking of Qualities of Transformative Teachers (students)

TRANSFORMATIVE	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	W.T.
1. Subject Knowledge	8	9	8	16	13	16	8	48	419
2. Focus on Growth	35	26	16	16	16	9	7	1	744
3. Modeling Virtues	3	7	3	8	17	25	35	28	372
4. Caring Relationship	28	25	21	15	15	13	7	2	715
5. Whole Child	24	23	22	13	12	16	10	6	672
6. Dialogue	2	7	7	13	16	19	34	28	389
7. Pedagogy of Hope	8	14	24	21	19	12	19	9	570
8. Pursuit of Excellence	18	15	25	24	18	16	6	4	655

Appendix B: Tabulation of Themes from Student and Teacher Interviews

IV. Incidence of Deductive Themes Based on the Research Question

	Relationship of Care [Lasting]	Change	Power of Story to Identity Formation	Excellence	Hope	Aesthetic	Influence on Decision to Become Teachers
Students (Essays)	145 [21]	43	48	58	39	9	98
Female	75 [13]	22	35	39	21	1	15
Male	18 [2]	10	5	9	3	1	5
Teachers							
Female	31 [11]	11	16	21	4		3
Male	45 [5]	18	14	12	3	5	13
Superintendent	43 [5]	5	17	12	13	3	6
Professor	36 [4]	4	3	6	8	2	

V. Incidence of Inductive Themes Arising from Data

	Intervention	Investment	Intentional	Happy Accident	Other Values	Mentoring	Resistance to Transformative Teaching
Students (Essays)	34	34			60	15	
Female	18	14	1	1	13	2	0
Male	5	2	1	0	6	0	1
Teachers							
Female	3	3			3	4	2
Male	6	2		13	10	9	16
Superintendent	2	8	3	1	5	1	
Professor	2	3	8	2	6	12	8

VI. Preferred Philosophical Orientations (Only 118/126 students correctly used the table to indicate their preferences.)

	Traditional	Progressive	Cognitive	Behavioral	Socio-Critical	*Practical*	*Transformative Qualities*
Students	13	74	15	4	10	2	Relationship 4 Whole Child 4 Hope 3 Excellence 2 Dialogue 1 Growth 1
Teachers		6	1				Relationship 4 Dialogue 2 Teacher knowledge 1
Schools				5			
Superintendent							Whole child
Professor							Relationship

VII. Incidence of Themes Heard through the Gilligan Listening Method

	Knowing Vs. [Doubt]	Harmony Vs. Tension	Resilience Vs. Distress	Voice Vs. Silence	Literary Themes In Stories	Metaphors	Key Words
Students (Essays)					26	Family- 8 Journey- 4	
Female	41/16	0/13	3/8	3/2	18	Family- 8 Shadow Community Drowning Open book	Work, Expectations, Dedication Authentic Freedom
Male	18/9	0/2	1/1	0/0	5	Writing, bridge, mug	Choice
Teachers							
Female	16/8	2/5	0/1	3/1	5		
Male	34/27	6/24	4/11	2/12	9	family	leadership
Superintendent	3/3		6/9		5	Setting the bar, run through a wall, breaking down a barrier, soil, climate, game, builder	Invest, influence, vision, please, culture,
Professor	28/8		0/4		9	Parenting, adoption, bridge, duality	Time, choice, supporting, thinking, reciprocal, rejection, mentoring
Totals							

Appendix C: Teacher Interview Questions

PART ONE: WHAT'S MY ORIENTATION?

A. Rank EACH of the following curricular orientations according to how well it fits your thoughts about what curriculum SHOULD BE. Use this scale: 6 = **best fit**; 1 = **worst fit**. USE EACH RANK ONLY ONCE.

___ **Curriculum A**: Focuses on acquiring knowledge of traditional academic content
___ **Curriculum B:** Focuses on student growth and development
___ **Curriculum C:** Focuses on students' mastery of thinking and learning processes
___ **Curriculum D:** Focuses on developing students' ability to analyze social problems and to generate solutions
___ **Curriculum E:** Focuses on using prescribed standards, benchmarks, and objectives, applied to student learning
___ **Curriculum F:** Focuses on practical reasoning emphasized within the local context

Primary: Which of these curricular orientations do you believe is most important in the school where you are teaching?

Follow-up: Is there a philosophical tension between what curriculum theory and practice you believe SHOULD BE the focus of your teaching and what it MUST BE because of the curricular theory currently in practice in your school?

Probing: If so, tell a story about a time you have experienced such a tension and how you work to resolve it.

Primary: Did you have a teacher who made a difference to your life and your identity as both a student and a teacher?
Follow-up: Tell a story that illustrates how that teacher's teaching was transformative for you.
Probing: How were you changed by this transformative experience?

Transition: Tell a story about a time you were the teacher who made a difference in a student's life.

Primary: A student in the KU C&T100 class, (student's name), has identified you as a teacher who made a difference to her/his life.

Follow-up: Tell a story about a specific incident when you believe your teaching was transformative for this student.

Probing: Describe your relationship with this student. Tell a story that illustrates that relationship.

Primary: In what ways did you inspire your student to pursue excellence?

Follow-up: What were your expectations for this student in your classroom?

Primary: In what ways do you believe your student's life was changed by your transformative teaching?

Evolving: Was your relationship with this student built around your intervention during a crisis in his/her life? Tell the story of that experience and the change it brought to your student's identity.

Follow-up: In what ways was your student's identity, the story s/he tells about her/him self, transformed by knowing you?

Probing: In what ways do you invest in your students' lives that are transformative?

Primary: Do you believe your teaching was an influence in your student's decision to pursue a career as a teacher? Why or why not?

Follow-up: What identity stories did you tell in your classroom? How do you model your own teacher identity story for your students?

Probing: Which of your passions have become a personal interest and pursuit of your students?

Educators who have written defining transformative teaching have listed these qualities of a teacher that they believe make teaching transformative:

- The teacher's knowledge of the subject being taught
- The teacher's focus on the growth and development of each child
- A caring relationship between the teacher and the student
- Teaching that focuses on the education of the *whole* child, as a social, emotional, intellectual, physical, and spiritual being
- Teaching that uses dialogue between the teacher and students in making meaning of and reshaping reality, to change not only the students, but also the world
- Teaching that opens up possibilities for students to change through expressions of belief in their ability to learn and hope for the future
- Teaching which encourages the pursuit of excellence in helping students reach their own learning goals and grow to become the person they most want to be

Primary: Which of these qualities of a teacher do you believe is most important to your experience of transformative teaching? Tell a story to support your view.

Follow-up: What was it about your practice that was transformative, in your opinion?

Follow-up: Have other students indicated to you that your teaching has been transformative in their lives? Tell the stories of how your teaching has made a difference in other students' lives.
Probing: What do you believe is the most important quality of your teaching that makes a difference in your students' lives? Tell a story that illustrates that transformative teaching quality.

Appendix D: Student Interview Questions

Primary: Tell a story about a teacher who made a transformative difference to your life.

Follow-up: Describe your relationship with this teacher. Tell a story that illustrates that relationship.

Probing: Did you feel like he knew you better than other teachers?

Primary: In what ways did this teacher inspire you to pursue excellence?

Follow-up: What did your teacher expect of you?

Primary: How do you believe your life was changed by your teacher's transformative teaching?

Follow-up: In what ways was your identity, the story you tell about your self, transformed by knowing this teacher?

Probing: Are you a different person than you were when you first knew this teacher?

Evolving: Was your relationship with this teacher built around his/her intervention during a crisis in your life?

Follow-up: How do you feel that intervention in a time of crisis changed your identity?

Probing: Tell the story of that experience and the change it brought to your identity.

Primary: Was his teaching an influence in your decision to pursue a career as a teacher?

Follow-up: What identity stories did your teacher tell? How do you model your own teacher identity story after his/hers?

Probing: Did she talk about what it was like being a teacher? Did she tell that story? What was that story for her?

Probing: Which of your teacher's passions have become a personal interest and pursuit?

Primary: What was it about this teacher's practice that was transformative, in your opinion?

Educators who have written defining transformative teaching have listed these qualities of a teacher that they believe make teaching transformative:

- The teacher's knowledge of the subject being taught
- The teacher's focus on the growth and development of each child
- A caring relationship between the teacher and the student
- Teaching that focuses on the education of the *whole* child, as a social, emotional, intellectual, physical, and spiritual being
- Teaching that uses dialogue between the teacher and students in making meaning of and reshaping reality, to change not only the students, but also the world
- Teaching that opens up possibilities for students to change through expressions of belief in their ability to learn and hope for the future
- Teaching which encourages the pursuit of excellence in helping students reach their own learning goals and grow to become the person they most want to be

Follow-up: Which of these qualities of a teacher do you believe was most important to your experience of transformative teaching? Tell a story to support your view.

Primary: These next questions also come from student essays. First, what is your greatest concern about teaching?

Follow-up: Imagine that you just expressed that concern to this teacher, what do you think she would tell you?

Probing: What is your greatest expectation? What do you think you will find most enjoyable about being a teacher?

Anything else you want to say? Anything you want to add?