

POWER, RESISTANCE, AND SUBJECTIVITY IN AN URBAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

By

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Abstract

This dissertation examines how power is deployed and contested in two classrooms in an urban elementary school. It adopts a Foucauldian framework for understanding power as a transactional exchange in an attempt to illuminate tacit, taken-for-granted school structures and practices. In particular, this study examines how teachers attempt to limit and regulate the behavior of their students, and how students resist their efforts. To understand this relationship, I adopt qualitative research methods, including participant and qualitative observation, interviews, visual methods, and documents.

Chapter one defines the problem this study addresses, discusses some guiding questions, and introduces Washington Elementary. Chapter two situates this study theoretically, particularly through a detailed examination of Michel Foucault's writings on power. Chapter three reviews the literature that informs this study, especially work in the Weberian, authority tradition and Foucauldian scholarship on power as a form of social exchange. Chapter four explicates my methodological positioning and discusses the methods that were employed in generating data for this study. Chapter five reveals how power was applied to the student body in micro-articulations that managed details and rendered the student still and silent. Chapter six examines power relations in pedagogical contexts. Chapter seven looks at the confluence of power and space, specifically examining techniques of isolation and movement at Washington. Chapter eight focuses on the student participants in my study and their position in relations of power, and chapter nine offers a conclusion, including a discussion of this study's implications and limitations.

This study helps to address a critical gap in educational studies generally, namely the paucity of qualitative work dealing with power relations in schools. At the same time, this study addresses the critical relationship between power and subjectivity—that is, how one's position in

a given relation of power forms and shapes the contours of subjectivity. In addition, this study lends empirical validity to many of Foucault's writings on power, while at the same time complicating others. Ultimately, this study adds to conceptual writings on power and the work of Foucault, and to qualitative studies focusing on social dynamics between teachers and students in schools.

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First and foremost, I am grateful for the kindness, patience, and acceptance shown to me by the administration, faculty, staff, and students at Washington Elementary. It was my pleasure to work with two caring teachers and two classes of wonderful children. I hope that in some small way this study does justice to the complexities of their experiences with one another at school.

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Chapter One: Defining the Problem and Introducing Washington Elementary

Issues of conduct, discipline, and social control are ubiquitous and ongoing in our nation's public schools. In the year 2000 alone, there were more than three million suspensions and 97 thousand expulsions (Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace, & Bachman, 2008). In addition, in 2012, nearly 40,000 K-12 students were subjected to physical restraint and 25,000 more were secluded in public school buildings (Civil Rights Data Collection, 2012). Contentious relationships are amplified in urban schools where there are often cultural incongruities between teachers and students (Ferguson, 2000; Gay, 2006; Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010), leading to what Monroe (2005) has termed "the discipline gap" (p. 46), or the overrepresentation of black, male, and poor students in indices of school discipline. The gap appears to be widening, with increasing rates of suspension and exclusion for black students between 1991 and 2005 (Krezmien, Leone, & Achilles, 2006; Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace, & Bachman, 2008). Quantitative reports suggest that black males are two to five times more likely to be suspended than their white peers (Irvine, 1990). What's more, most of the behaviors that lead to school sanctions are not what we might think of as severe or threatening, but rather involve quotidian acts of disrespect and noncompliance (Skiba, Peterson, & Williams, 1997).

Discipline is an external manifestation of particular forms of inter-subjective relations, namely power relations. That is, behavioral sanctions are products of articulations of force—sometimes realized, often not—between two or more social actors. In this study, I attempt to understand such expressions of force via a relational conceptualization of power, which will be adumbrated shortly, at an urban elementary school serving predominately poor students of color. I believe examining power relationally—that is, as moments of exchange with both histories and futures—offers new ways of looking at discipline. In particular, I believe this vantage helps

broaden our view of school discipline from mechanistic moments of student transgression to nuanced social events undergirded by relations of power.

The original purpose of this study was to examine power relations in two classrooms, focusing specifically on school common areas such as hallways, the cafeteria, and the playground. While the reader will still find this focus in this dissertation, it will also be noticed that the research expanded beyond its original terrain. In particular, many compelling relations of power that occurred in classrooms—during instructional tasks and routines—were pervasive and could not be ignored. Nevertheless, the purpose of this study remained the same. This study seeks to address the lack of attention to manifestations of power in school contexts, in intersubjective exchanges between school actors. In exploring this topic, the following questions guided my research:

*What are the mechanisms through which teachers attempt to regulate student conduct, and, relatedly, what are the techniques that students employ to limit and channel the actions of their teachers? In other words, what are the **technologies of power** at my research site?*

How do teachers and students respond to these technologies of power? That is, do they accede, negotiate, contest, or in some other way manipulate power?

How, if at all, do power relations shape student and teacher subjectivities—i.e., understandings of self that are constituted by school experiences?

The significance of this study lies primarily in the fact that it will add to our understanding of power relationships in schools—relationships that are of inestimable importance in the daily lives of both students and teachers, yet are poorly understood. As Gore (1998) has argued, perhaps the primary reason that the feel and ethos of school—the beam of a

child's face following a nod of approval, the pervasive tension that accompanies the examination—has remained little changed over time and space has to do with microlevel power relationships, the focus of this study. As she has stated,

It is my contention that the apparent continuity in pedagogical practice, across sites and over time, has to do with power relations, in educational institutions and processes, that remain untouched by the majority of curriculum and other reforms. With the exception of Bernstein (1975, 1990), Bourdieu and Passeron (1977), and a handful of others who have drawn on their work, educational researchers have paid little attention to the microlevel functioning of power in pedagogy. (Gore, 1998, p. 292)

This is, indeed, a study of small things. It is an examination of micro-sociality—of evanescent phrases, gestures, movements. It is not, with hope, merely bagatelle, but rather an exposition of flecks of culture that accrete into larger movements and patterns. But it is, at any rate, what Rist (1970) termed a “micro-analysis” (p. 412) of an educational institution. Following Gore, I will suggest that power is a significant site for study because, although microscopic, it touches on nearly all aspects of students' and teachers' experiences at school. In the words of Pace and Hemmings (2007), “The character of teacher-student authority relations has great bearing on the quality of students' educational experience and teachers' work” (p. 4). As such, I believe this topic is significant and deserving of sustained scholarly attention.

A caveat should be offered before proceeding and kept in mind throughout this study. This is a study of power, or of how people limit the behavior of each other. Moreover, it is a critical study insofar as it seeks to expose patterned relations which we often take to be given, transhistorical, and requisite conditions of the experience of school. Neither of these facts, however, means that this is a negative study, that my worldview is bleak, or that I believe the

students in this study to be universally oppressed by draconian teachers. A vast majority of the student participants in this study readily identified positive aspects of their school and teachers. My objective, too, in exposing power relations is something more modest than to suggest alternative arrangements or prescriptions for practice. To identify an instance of power, in other words, is not to intimate that the actors involved in such an instance are at fault and that some pattern of “correct” behavior is discernible and should supplant another, “incorrect” pattern. I do not wish to make evaluative statements regarding the people whom I write about herein. To suggest that power permeates social intercourse is not to suggest that the participants are somehow blameworthy of something. Rather, it is merely to provide a way of seeing into forms of sociality that all people find themselves in at some point in time. This study provides an account of how one community of people articulated and negotiated power as they went about the business of schooling.

Washington Elementary

On the southern edge of downtown, 17th street rises up and loses its edge. Trees begin to line either side. To my right is a corner grocer, with a sign out front advertising tamales by the dozen. Across the street, at a restaurant called *Southside Bistro*, a twenty-something with streaks of green in her hair places dishes on outside tables. Continuing down 17th, modern condos pop up between older Victorians and then, after maybe a quarter mile, is Washington Elementary, a sprawling brick building off to my right, with a half dozen buses snaking through the drive out front.

Oppressive heat hits my face as I step out of my car. There’s a breeze, but it’s gentle and doesn’t do much to cut the heat. I hustle across the street, the scent of coffee from the coffee shop across the street accompanying me. I make my way up the sidewalk and join a veritable current of children stretching from the buses to the front doors. A little girl tugs uncomfortably at

her backpack. A small boy's eyes round into full moons as he holds his mother's hand and walks toward the front door. The children are as nervous as I am. It is the first day of school. Just inside the front doors, a young man with lines shaved in his hair commands the children, "Stay right, on the blue line."

I go into the office first, where I sign in for the day and pick up a visitor's badge. This is required protocol for all non-employees at Washington. I run into Dr. Smith, the principal, who was my boss for a year when I taught in the building. He flashes a toothy grin in my direction. He moves closer, quickly, buzzing with an energy that comes from drinking ten diet sodas a day.

"Matt, how are you?" he says.

"Doing good, Mark. So excited to be doing my research here in your building. Thanks again for letting me do it."

"Absolutely. Well, I've got bus duty, but we'll catch up later. Good to see you."

"You, too."

My first visit on this first day is to Ms. Maldonado's second grade class. Ms. Maldonado is the second grade teacher with whom I'll be working. She is an old friend, and I look forward to seeing her again. She is a diminutive Hispanic woman with endless supplies of energy. She is warm and talkative, with adults and with her children. Early in life, she married a lawyer, with whom she had and raised three children. Her two boys were diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder and Auditory Processing Disorder during school, and she agonized over the struggles they had. So, when her children left home, she decided to return to school to acquire a teaching degree in elementary education. She was fifty years old at that time, and she has taught for ten years, all at Washington. In her time at Washington, she has taught kindergarten and first grade,

and is currently in her first year of teaching second grade. She also worked as a paraprofessional in a special education room for a few years.

Ms. Maldonado and I spend a few minutes talking. Actually, she talks as she flits around the room preparing for the children, whom she will pick up shortly, and I do most of the listening. Since I will be spending the morning in her room, I decide to briefly say hello to Ms. Barber, the sixth grade teacher with whom I'll be working. Ms. Barber is an imposing black woman who possesses an incongruently disarming smile. "Mr. Lewis!" she exclaims when she sees me, her voice lilting upwards. Ms. Barber exudes a quiet calm and a certain indescribable strength, as if there is no situation too daunting for her. Born to musical parents—her father was a musician in a popular jazz band from the 1930s, her mother was a piano teacher—she began her teaching career as a music teacher. Following that, she taught one year of freshman English, then two years of eighth grade math. In the 1970s she left teaching as a result of a "messy" situation between the teachers' union and the school district. During her hiatus, she taught piano. Then after fifteen years away from the classroom, she went back to school and received an elementary degree. All of her teaching has been in the same urban district in which Washington resides, and she is the most senior teacher at Washington. As she is fond of saying, "I came with the building."

After visiting with Ms. Barber for a few minutes, I head back to Ms. Maldonado's classroom. It is nearly time for school to begin. Every day begins with an all-school assembly in the gym, so it is there that Ms. Maldonado and I head to meet and pick up her children. The gym is a maelstrom of activity. Parents clutch their little ones along the walls. Some children whimper, while others cry quietly, and still more sob as if their lives are about to end. The more intrepid have begun little impromptu games of tag and catch. Teachers' faces curl in nervous

anticipation. I feel my own heartrate accelerate a few ticks. This is Washington Elementary on the first day of school and the beginning of my research. The dissertation that follows picks up the studied scene as it transitioned from this ostensibly haphazard and arbitrary arrangement to a patterned, ordered environment.

A few other qualities of the school will help to contextualize this study. To begin with, Washington Elementary is a pre-kindergarten through sixth grade school located in a major Midwestern urban center. The school serves neighborhoods that suffer extreme poverty, and nearly 94 percent of its 282 students qualify for free-and-reduced lunch. The school's demographics have changed over the past few years. As recently as 2010, Hispanic students were the majority at 60.9 percent. By 2013, however, the Hispanic population had decreased to 36.9 percent, whereas the African American population had grown markedly, from 28.1 percent in 2010 to 46.9 percent in 2013. In the school year prior to my research (2013-2014), Washington did not make adequate yearly progress (AYP).

Overview of the Chapters

In the eight chapters that follow, I will frame my research problem, explore the relevant literature on the topic, explicate my methodology, and present and discuss my findings. As a roadmap of sorts, I'd like to briefly sketch the terrain of each chapter, as a way of orienting the reader to that which follows.

Chapter two sketches the theoretical orientation of this study. In this chapter, I pursue three interrelated objectives. First, I delineate the broad contours of Michel Foucault's understanding of power in a global sense. From there, I explore his understanding of disciplinary power in particular, primarily via an investigation into work from his middle period of writing.

Finally, I examine the work of Michel de Certeau as a way of conceptualizing responses to power, especially student resistance.

In chapter three, I offer a review of literature that is germane to my area of investigation. I explore two currents of literature in order to situate my own study within qualitative studies of power—namely, works that conceptualize power as authority and those that conceptualize power as transactional exchange. In the process, I identify four critical gaps in the literature: 1) that “power as authority” obfuscates a more nuanced understanding of power as a dynamic, inter-subjective exchange between two or more social actors; 2) that the Foucauldian tradition has tended to overemphasize the role of surveillance to such an extent as to equate it with power generally; 3) that qualitative studies of power have not adequately theorized (indeed, not even adequately addressed) resistance; and 4) that qualitative studies tend to be imbalanced, giving short shrift to either the teacher’s or the student’s position in a given relation of power.

In chapter four I offer a commentary on my methodological orientation. I begin by explicating my epistemological positioning, illumining my beliefs about knowing and the nature of knowledge. I then position my inquiry as a form of *critical ontology* borrowing from the work of Michel Foucault. Finally, I delineate the strategies for data collection and analysis that were drawn upon in this study.

Chapter five begins a series of four results chapters—the bulk of this study. In this chapter, I examine how the teachers in my study employed particular strategies of power that delimited the contours of student subjectivity. First, I explore how teachers drew upon strategies to effectuate still, silent student bodies; then, I explore how teachers managed the details of student bodies. With respect to the first theme, I suggest that repeated injunctions for silence in both classes were constitutive of discourses of silence that positioned teachers as users of

language and students as passive recipients. Moreover, I argue that students experienced an ethos of silence—a generalized environment of silence—that shaped their experiences of school. In addition, I suggest that students engaged in extended periods of sitting—that is, stationary activity that regulated movement, disciplined bodies, and coded bodies as still, quiet, and productive.

With respect to the second theme (that is, managing details), I demonstrate that both teachers divided classroom tasks, linked bodily articulations with constitutive parts, and, thereby, established a bodily ideal to which student conduct had to conform. I argue that repeated training of the body resulted in a school habitus that became part of how students came to know themselves as students. This was especially evident in line behavior, which is explored in some detail.

In chapter six, I discuss four categories of power that relate to pedagogy or pedagogically related concerns. To begin with, I examine instructional practices. Here, I argue that both teachers segmented and rationalized their lessons, with a concomitant transmogrification of work into the following of a series of steps.

I also discuss how the teachers in my study formed student language. I argue that the teachers incited their students to speak in prescribed ways and to, thereby, come to know themselves as certain sorts of subjects—namely, as passive recipients, rather than expressive users, of language. The mechanisms by which the teachers did so varied, as Ms. Maldonado used sentence frames, recitation of important information, and correction of solecisms, whereas Ms. Barber used only sentence frames.

Both teachers in my study manipulated time as a technique of power. Ms. Barber demarcated and monitored an official rendering of time, in which students with their own

agendas were defined as behavioral problems and students who conformed to classroom time were called “scholars.” Ms. Barber also set time limits in order to increase individual productivity, and she suspended activities to regain control of time. While Ms. Maldonado also set time limits and declared moratoriums, she did not establish official time in the same way Ms. Barber did.

Finally, I argue that both teachers in my study utilized surveillance, call and response, and inscription. These techniques of power are discussed together because they share the quality of being mechanisms of monitoring that surround teacher-student interactions. In their own way, they each normalize certain forms of behavior, identify others as improper, and reposition the student so that teaching can continue.

In chapter seven, I examine the relationship between space and power. I begin with a general description of how each teacher in my study conceptualized and arranged space, namely looking at therapeutic spaces (sites for technologies of the self) and prohibited spaces in both rooms. From there I analyze two specific techniques, *isolation* and *movement*, with several permutations. I conclude chapter seven by examining the confluence of gender, space, and power at Washington. I document several teacher-imposed examples of sex segregation in second grade, as well as several instances of student-imposed segregation in sixth grade. I argue that it is important to think about the ways in which places are gendered in school settings, and I present several examples of this at my research site.

In chapter eight, I examine the idea of resistance, drawing upon the work of Michel de Certeau and Michel Foucault. Five categories of resistance are explored: 1) tactics using the body, 2) tactics using objects, 3) spatial practices, 4) group tactics, and 5) technologies of the self.

Tactics using the body are quick, ephemeral moments in which the body is used in a tactical way. They occurred in the context of the disciplinary apparatus, specifically through lacunae in the grid of discipline in the classroom. Tactics using sound and ironical tactics in the context of pedagogy are explored as two examples of tactics using the body.

Tactics using objects refer to tactical interventions in disciplinary contexts that, in the course of their expression, alter the original use of a given object. In second grade, I found that such tactics tended to be less serious and more playful in nature, whereas in sixth grade they tended to be more agonistic. Such was the case with tactics in general.

In spatial practices, the body applies itself to space or to objects in space. Like other forms of tactics, spatial practices rely on disciplinary gaps that serve as the foundation for their articulation. As with tactics using objects, spatial practices tended to be less serious in second grade, more agonistic in sixth grade.

Group tactics were found only in second grade, and I argue here that they are a form of mimesis. Insofar as much of the school day involves repetition and imitation, group tactics were ways of holding up these practices to inspection and critique. Group tactics imitate and parody the naturalized rhythms of the school.

Finally, I argue for using *technologies of the self* as a construct for understanding the self-directed, transformative operations of the children in my study. More common in sixth grade, these practices were noteworthy for their transformative potential—for affording opportunities for reconceptualizing and re-forming the self. In second grade they tended to be individual affairs; in sixth grade, they often involved groups.

Chapter nine concludes this dissertation. It includes, first of all, a brief recapitulation of the major findings of this study. Moreover, it offers a discussion of the study's implications and limitations.

With the preceding in mind, I would like to sketch the theoretical framework for this study. In particular, I would like to offer a discussion of some of Michel Foucault's prominent writings on power and how they orient and inform the present study.

Chapter Two: A Theory of Power and Responses to Power

Marshall and Rossman (2011) have defined conceptual frameworks as “funnels or lenses for viewing the topic of interest” (p. 64). Although this somewhat straightforward and simple definition belies the complex, iterative process of conceptualizing, developing, and rethinking theory, it nevertheless underscores the importance of a solid theoretical basis in establishing the contours for a study and interpreting its findings. In this study, I drew upon the work of Michel Foucault as a way of interpreting and understanding particular sorts of social interactions between students and teachers at Washington Elementary. However, in the course of my research it became evident to me that a strictly Foucauldian framework would ultimately prove incomplete for my purposes. In particular, although Foucault acknowledges freedom and resistance as conditions of power, he does not adequately theorize them,¹ providing little delineation of what these practices look like in daily social intercourse. Foucault’s work, then, was a bit too deterministic for interpreting the lived realities of the students and teachers at Washington. In light of this, I turned my attention to the work of Michel de Certeau and his analysis of everyday practices as ways of operating within a grid of disciplinary power. De Certeau’s work, which will be reviewed below, affords a framework for understanding how individuals exist within a disciplinary society without being reduced to automata. Thus, it was of inestimable importance for conceptualizing and interpreting the actions of teachers and students in this study.

¹ Several scholars have argued that Foucault’s work presents power as a complete and totalizing force that leaves little room for human agency (e.g., Brotherton, 1996; Dews, 1987; McCarthy, 1994; Schrag, 1999), whereas others have noted that Foucault’s ultimate locus of inquiry was the human subject, that his work demonstrates a perspicuous link between power and resistance, and that his latter period focused almost exclusively on self-transformation or what Foucault (1988) called *technologies of the self* (e.g., Butin, 2001; Gallagher, 2008; Mayo, 2000). In building a backdrop for this study, I wish to chart a middle course. I will suggest that Foucault’s work—especially work from his middle period, which is my primary focus here—opened up a space for but did not ultimately theorize the connection between power and agency.

In this chapter, I will pursue three interrelated objectives. First, I will offer a nuanced discussion of Foucault’s writings on power, specifically from his middle period.² Second, I will evince Foucault’s understanding of disciplinary power—for it is ultimately this concept that is most relevant to my study—via a brief exegesis of his most influential (and misunderstood) work, *Discipline and Punish*. Third, I will sketch Michel de Certeau’s distinction between *strategies* and *tactics*, and I will discuss why this distinction is a germane (indeed, in my view, necessary) frame for understanding relations of power. But before proceeding, I would like to offer a brief note on Foucault, as I am cognizant that his work tends to be polarizing. In this work, I would like to eschew the rampant tendency in both educational and social science research to either vilify or apotheosize the work of Foucault (Baker & Heyning, 2004). My purpose here is to suggest that Foucault’s work on power relationships offers a useful, but certainly not exclusive, lens for understanding particular forms of sociality in schools. Moreover, I want to underscore that Foucault’s (1978/1990) *locus classicus* “Power is everywhere” (p. 93) cannot stand alone as some kind of claim that power is absolute, totalizing, and oppressive. As several scholars have noted (e.g., Gallagher, 2008; Mayo, 2001; McLeod, 2001), Foucault’s conceptualization of power is not the over-determined, over-theorized trap that it is often conceived to be, but rather that it allows room for—indeed presupposes—freedom and agency. This point will be clarified and expanded below. For now, however, I would note simply that

² As Arnold Davidson (1986) has noted, three domains of analysis are discernable in Foucault’s work, which roughly divide his career into early, middle, and late periods. Each period was defined by a specific focus and method of analysis. His early (or archaeological) period concerned analyses of systems of knowledge, focusing on isolating discursive practices that enabled the production of certain kinds of statements in sundry domains, and was exemplified by such works as *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and *The Order of Things*. His middle (or genealogical) period was defined by investigations into modalities of power, emphasizing the connections between systems of truth and power, and typified most clearly in *Discipline and Punish*. Finally, his late period was concerned with ethics, or, in Foucault’s rather idiosyncratic understanding of the term, “the self’s relationship to itself” (Davidson, 1986, p. 221). This concern was developed in the second and third volumes of *The History of Sexuality*, as well as in various writings that were unfinished at the time of his death.

Foucault spent much of his life eschewing “a tendency to reduce the complexities of power to simplistic relations of domination and exploitation” (Allen, 2012, p. 4).

Foucault and Power

It should be noted at the outset that Foucault offers his readers nothing like a coherent theory of power. Indeed, as he has stated, “when I examine relationships of power, I create no theory of power. I examine how relationships of power interact. . . . I am no theoretician of power. The question of power in itself doesn’t interest me” (Foucault, 1989/1996, pp. 360-361). However, as Michael Gallagher (2004) has noted, it is nevertheless possible to cull from Foucault’s work a series of theorizations of power that were articulated in singular contexts—that is, within the contexts of his historical inquiries—with the proviso that such theorizations will always be tentative, partial, and historically contingent. Quite simply, this is because Foucault “is a staunch nominalist, rejecting the idea that human and social phenomena have essential, unchanging essences” (Gallagher, 2004, p. 53). As such, in this chapter my primary objective will be to disinter Foucault’s conceptualization of power from a variety of sources.

It should also be noted that Foucault’s investigations into power constitute part of a larger project examining the limits of human subjectivity. Foucault (2000a) has quite clearly articulated his objective:

I would like to say, first of all, what has been the goal of my work during the last twenty years. It has not been to analyze the phenomena of power, nor to elaborate the foundations of such analysis. My objective, instead, has been to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects. (p. 327)

In another piece, Foucault (1997/2007) described his work as “a historical investigation into the events that have led us to constitute ourselves and to recognize ourselves as subjects of what we

are doing, thinking, saying” (p. 113). Thus, we need to be clear about what exactly it was that Foucault was trying to do in his work. He was not, for instance, investigating (at least not primarily) a form of exclusionary power that separated the sane from the mad in *Madness and Civilization* (1965/1988) but, rather, the practices through which sane and mad individuals came to know themselves as particular sorts of subjects at a particular moment in time. Likewise, *Discipline and Punish* is not primarily a tale of penal power but, rather, an investigation into the formation of delinquency as a discernable and knowable subject position. Of course, power was implicated in both cases: conditions and relations of power, after all, constitute the conditions through which knowledge of others and self-knowledge is constituted. In short, then, we may conceptualize Foucault’s work as a series of critical investigations into how human beings come to know themselves, what he termed “the historical ontology of ourselves” (Foucault, 1984/2010, p. 49). In order to investigate such subjectivity-formation, Foucault (1984/2010) positioned “three axes whose specificity and whose interconnections have to be analyzed: the axis of knowledge, the axis of power, the axis of ethics” (p. 48).³ Insofar as the present study involves an investigation into the second axis, it is necessary to sketch Foucault’s understanding of power in some depth. The remainder of this chapter, then, will be devoted to this project.

³ It should be underscored that these three axes were inextricably bound together in Foucault’s work. Indeed, Foucault believed that relations of power formed the preconditions of knowledge or truth about ourselves by setting the limits of truth—that is, relations of power were tantamount to a politics or a regime of truth that defined the types of statements that might be counted as true or false, the mechanisms and processes for making truth claims, the positions of those charged with saying what counts as true, and so forth (Foucault, 1980a, p. 131). In short, the relationship between power and knowledge was so indispensable to Foucault’s analysis that he coined the portmanteau word Power/Knowledge to delineate the relationship. It is within this nexus of power/knowledge that the third axis must be understood, as Foucault’s understanding of ethics consisted of a series of inquiries into processes of self-creation and self-transformation, or what he termed “technologies of the self” (Foucault, 1988).

Power, in Foucault's view, is not a disembodied thing: it is not something one *has*, but rather something one *does*; it is not a noun, but a verb. In one of his lectures, Foucault (1980b) suggested that power be understood as

something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localized here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organization. (p. 98)

In the first volume of his *History of Sexuality*, Foucault (1978/1990) echoed the aforementioned statement: "power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society" (p. 93). As such, for Foucault "debates or skirmishes within society are not intrinsically about who has power, but rather about the contested terms of the deployment of power" (Jones & Brown, 2001, p. 715). Power is not an essentialized or thingified social phenomenon; it is, rather, a contextual expression of force that interpolates and reveals itself via a social exchange between subjects.

The morphology of this exchange is that of a limiting transactional situation in which a subject (or group of subjects) engages in particular strategies (or, in Foucauldian parlance, *technologies*) that constrain or limit other actions in a field of social intercourse. The form of power, then, is "an action upon an action, on possible or actual future or present actions" (Foucault, 2000a, p. 340). It is crucial here to underscore that although these actions have an aim that in most cases involves regulation or limitation (Foucault, 2000a), this does not make power tantamount to oppression or domination. In fact, Foucault (1977/1995, 1978/1990, 1980a, 1980c, 1984, 2000a) adumbrated power relations in terms of exchanges in which force is deployed via

myriad, twining channels, where it is negotiated and transformed but never fully realized. To state it another way, power for Foucault implies, indeed presupposes, freedom, for we cannot have a power relationship—one, remember, in which power invests the interstices between social actors—if one subject involved in the relationship is reduced to an object. In the absence of freedom we do not have a field in which one's actions are limited, but rather a field in which one cannot act at all. "Power," Foucault (2000a) has written, "is exercised only over free subjects, and only insofar as they are 'free'" (p. 342). And, in an even more evocative statement, he has suggested that "At the very heart of the power relationship, and constantly provoking it, are the recalcitrance of the will and the intransigence of freedom" (p. 342).

To further evince the idea of a power relationship, Foucault (2000a) examined it vis-à-vis a "relationship of violence," which "acts upon a body or upon things; it forces, it bends, it breaks, it destroys, or it closes off all possibilities" (p. 340). In the context of this study, the teacher who reduces—through verbal castigation, intimidation, or restraint—the child to a state of complete passivity is not exercising power but, rather, engaging in overt domination. I recorded several examples of domination in my fieldnotes, although, it should be noted, no examples of physical domination. These will not be presented here as part of my findings. From my vantage, recording moments of domination—insofar as they tell us decidedly more about one person's actions than about social exchange—reveal little about social dynamics. So, I have eschewed here a discussion of domination and focused instead on relations of power. Foucault's comments during an interview in 1984 bear significantly on this distinction, and it is for that reason that I shall quote him at length:

Power is not an evil. Power is strategic games. We know very well indeed that power is not an evil. Take for example...the pedagogical institution. I don't see where evil is in the

practice of someone who, in a given game of truth, knowing more than another, tells him what he must do, teaches him, transmits knowledge to him, communicates skills to him. The problem is rather to know how you are to avoid in these practices—where power cannot not play and where it is not evil in itself—the effects of domination which make a child subject to the arbitrary and useless authority of a teacher. (Foucault, 1987, p. 129)

In addition to presupposing freedom, Foucault also argued that power should not be conceptualized as merely a repressive, prohibitive force. Rather, he emphasized the productive nature of power. In his words,

We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it “excludes”, it “represses”, it “censors”, it “abstracts”, it “masks”, it “conceals”. In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production. (Foucault, 1977/1995, p. 194)

So, then, in examining power it is important to remain cognizant of its singular position: its difference from violence, domination, and arbitrary authority; its cyclical relationship with knowledge; and its position as a productive, inter-subjective force that is integral to how we understand ourselves as human beings.

In this study, Foucault’s framework of power was drawn upon as a way of cognizing exchanges between teachers and students, exchanges that limit in some way the actions of one or more social actors but also, as we will see below, increase and eventually exhaust “productive service from individuals in their concrete lives” (Foucault, 1980a, p. 125). That is, Foucault’s understanding of power was adopted as a way of understanding the actions of all participants in my study and remaining vigilant to the idea that power is not merely a repressive force but a

productive one as well. Foucault clearly saw forms of school discipline as instances of power. In his words,

. . . power had to be able to gain access to the bodies of individuals, to their acts, attitudes and modes of everyday behavior. Hence the significance of methods like school discipline, which succeeded in making children's bodies the object of highly complex systems of manipulation and conditioning. (Foucault, 1980a, p. 125)

Thus far in this chapter, I have sketched the broad contours of Foucault's conceptualization of power as a limiting exchange. However, in order to fully elucidate the framework for interpreting the results of this study, it is necessary to offer a more precise and nuanced discussion of a particular sort of power that Foucault (1977/1995) suggested was characteristic of disciplinary institutions such as schools. As such, I will turn my attention now to a brief exegesis of Foucault's magnum opus, *Discipline and Punish*.

Disciplinary Power

This study adopted Foucault's (1977/1995, 1980a, 1980c, 1980d) concept of *disciplinary power* as a frame for understanding particular forms of regulatory social exchange at Washington Elementary. To understand disciplinary power, we must turn our attention to *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault's most elaborate exploration and statement of disciplinary power, where he defined it as follows:

"Discipline" may be identified neither with an institution nor with an apparatus; it is a type of power, a modality for its exercise, comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets; it is a "physics" or an "anatomy" of power, a technology. (Foucault, 1978/1995, p. 215)

A way of exercising power, a modality, a technology—the emphasis here is on the operation of an infinitesimal power (a “micro-physics”) that invests and works upon the individual in “uninterrupted, constant coercion, supervising the processes of activity” in order to produce subjects that are at once both docile and useful (Foucault, 1978/1995, p. 137). So, disciplinary power is diffuse but architectonic, implying *a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets*; and it is minute, articulated at the level of the individual, and intended as a force to concomitantly increase docility and utility.

The site of application for disciplinary power is the body of the subject. As Foucault (1980d) has written,

In thinking of the mechanisms of power, I am thinking rather of its capillary form of existence, the point where power reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday lives. (p. 39)

This emergence of disciplinary power at the level of the body—or *biopower*, as Foucault, (1978/1990, pp. 140-144) termed it—in such domains as education, medicine, and the military in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Western Europe developed to meet the concomitant needs of productivity and compliance in an capitalist, urban society. Such a power insinuated itself into social life via sundry practices (e.g., military coordinations, pedagogical arrangements), forming a “machinery of power” that could explore, know, break down, and rearrange the body. As Foucault (1977/1995) wrote in *Discipline and Punish*, “discipline produces subjected and practiced bodies, ‘docile’ bodies” (p. 138). In sum, then, disciplinary power is a micro-force that reaches into and directs the body in predetermined ways, rendering the individual simultaneously more productive and more docile. One might think, for instance, of

the practiced activity elicited in a factory—how an assembly task is divided into its constituent parts, the parts of assembly are linked with workers’ actions (such that the individual performs the same action time and time again, thereby maximizing the productivity while minimizing the possibility of interference), and the workers’ actions, the details of her body, are supervised and managed. To state it another way, the disciplinary technology of the factory increases efficiency and docility simultaneously. This is the goal of disciplinary power. In Foucault’s (1977/1995) words, “discipline increases the forces of the body (in economic terms of utility) and diminishes these same forces (in political terms of obedience) (p.138).

The contours of disciplinary power have been established. However, additional associated concepts informed this study and should, as such, be discussed here. In particular, I would like to explore some of the mechanisms through which disciplinary power is articulated. These mechanisms are significant insofar as they describe the workings of disciplinary power and serve as sites for potential negotiations, contestations, and redeployments of power. I will discuss two related fields through which disciplinary power—as a relational, infinitesimal, micro-expression of ramified force—finds expression, viz., the body in space and time.

Mechanisms of disciplinary power. According to Foucault (1977/1995) disciplinary institutions work on space through four interrelated techniques, which together produce a “distribution of individuals in space” (p. 141). The first of these is *enclosure*—that is, to simply close off a space and, thereby, create a sphere of discipline, a “protected place of disciplinary monotony” (p. 141). However, discipline works on space in a much more flexible and detailed way. It does this, first of all, through *partitioning* an enclosed space, carving it up in such a way that “each individual has his own place; and each place its individual” (p. 143). The objectives here are to know where and how to locate individuals at all times, to encourage certain forms of

communication and discourage others, and to be able at each moment to supervise conduct. In Foucauldian parlance, the aim is to develop “an analytical space” (p. 143) wherein individuals can be known and, if necessary, corrected. In short, partitioning makes possible a knowledge of space, a knowledge of individuals in space, and a constant supervision that facilitates assessment, comparison, and correction.

Enclosure and partitioning refer to processes of dividing up a space, but this divided space can be coded in any number of different ways. The third technique, *the rule of functional sites*, refers to the process of coding a space in a particular way, namely as useful. In Foucault’s words, “places were defined to correspond not only to the need to supervise, to break dangerous communications, but also to create a useful space” (pp. 143-144). Stated differently, if enclosure and partitioning represent a machinery of observation and supervision, then defining functional sites represents a move toward defining a useful space and increasing individual productivity. Foucault (1977/1995) provides the example of the hospital at Rochefort, arguing that a series of interventions—placing medicines under lock and key, systematizing and recording patient comings and goings, entering each individual treated in a register which had to be consulted by the doctor, and so forth—effectuated a functional and useful environment. In his words,

Gradually, an administrative and political space was articulated upon a therapeutic space; it tended to individualize bodies, diseases, symptoms, lives and deaths; it constituted a real table of juxtaposed and carefully distinct singularities. Out of discipline, a medically useful space was born. (Foucault, 1977/1995, p. 144)

The final way discipline works on space is through demarcating the form of distributions of individuals, or by establishing *ranks* and locating individuals in a “network of relations” (Foucault, 1977/1995, p. 146). Establishing ranks, in other words, means creating groups through

which individuals pass in succession; the individual here is fungible, the rank she belongs to permanent. Foucault wrote about ranks in educational institutions:

In the eighteenth century, “rank” begins to define the great form of distribution of individuals in the educational order: rows or ranks of pupils in the class, corridors, courtyards; rank attributed to each pupil at the end of each task and each examination; the rank he obtains from week to week, month to month, year to year; an alignment of age groups, one after another; a succession of subjects taught and questions treated, according to an order of increasing difficulty. And in this ensemble of compulsory alignments, each pupil, according to his age, his performance, his behavior, occupies sometime one rank, sometimes another. . . .It is a perpetual movement in which individuals replace one another in a space marked off by aligned intervals. (1977/1995, pp. 146-147)

In short, then, discipline works on the body through applying itself to space: first, through enclosing a space architecturally; second, through dividing the enclosed space and assigning each individual to a place; third, through coding space in such a way as to maximize production, efficiency, and use; and fourth, through establishing ranks. As we will see in subsequent chapters, the articulation of power onto space was evident at Washington Elementary, albeit the depth and range of my data belies somewhat Foucault’s tidy systematization. In other words, Foucault’s understanding of discipline is hardly isomorphic with the results of this study.

In addition to applying itself to space, disciplinary power regulates time via five strategies that take control of activity, break it up and rearrange it. The first strategy is the *time-table*, or the general temporal framework for an activity. We are used to this device in our daily lives, in the forms of schedules, itineraries, or any other routine division of time. In addition, the division of activity and annual schedules are nearly ubiquitous in our nation’s schools (Rury,

2002/2013). Foucault (1977/1995) argued that the division of time in disciplinary institutions becomes increasingly minute, as the objective becomes the constitution of a totally useful time, a disciplinary time—“a time without impurities or defects; a time of good quality, throughout which the body is constantly applied to its exercise” (p. 151). But the time-table is a rather crude strategy, and discipline proceeds in a much more nuanced way.

To begin with, discipline organizes the body’s activity through a *temporal elaboration of the act* (Foucault, 1977/1995, p. 151). That is, discipline imposes from the outside a program on the body, delineating how an action is to be accomplished in time via an articulation of a series of gestures to which the body must conform and correspond. For instance, Foucault has noted that in the early seventeenth century, French soldiers were accustomed to marching in rhythm to a drum. However, by the mid-eighteenth century, when the military had acquired a disciplinary ethos and organization, four different sorts of marching steps were identified, and a veritable gymnastics of detailed movement (specifying step type, duration, sequence, and so forth) was prescribed for marching. Between these two instances, we see “another degree of precision in the breakdown of gestures and movements, another way of adjusting the body to temporal imperatives” (Foucault, 1977/1995, p. 151).

Next we find in disciplinary institutions a *correlation of the body and the gesture* (Foucault, 1977/1995, p. 152), meaning that a disciplinary power organizes the best—i.e., the most useful, productive, and efficient—relation possible between an individual’s gesture and the overall position of her body. In Foucault’s words,

The act is broken down into its elements; the position of the body, limbs, articulations is defined; to each movement are assigned a direction, an aptitude, a duration; their order of

succession is prescribed. Time penetrates the body and with it all the meticulous controls of power. (1977/1995, p. 152)

Discipline, moreover, defines and organizes the relation between a body and its object of manipulation, what Foucault called *the body-object articulation* (1977/1995, p. 152). This consists of defining the part of the body to be used, specifying the parts of an object, and then delineating the gesture the body must execute to manipulate the object properly. Foucault (1977/1995) wrote of rifle maneuvers in the military as an example of *body-object articulation*, arguing that “Over the whole surface of contact between the body and the object it handles, power is introduced, fastening them to one another” (p. 153). And the final technique for taking control of activity is *exhaustive use* (Foucault, 1977/1995, p. 154), meaning that disciplinary power extracts the most from time by breaking it down into ever more productive units and arranging it in a non-linear, concurrent fashion. The goal is to “intensify the use of time” (Foucault, 1977/1995, p. 154). Here again we see Foucault’s understanding of power as a productive force.

Surveillance. Disciplinary institutions and the strategies found therein were of necessity plagued by the problematic of observation and supervision. That is, there had to be invented a mechanism, a machinery, for ensuring that the techniques delineated above were successful at producing certain sorts of subjects. Foucault, of course, was interested in the Panopticon, an architectural design that consisted of a circular prison structure with a central guard tower, enabling a concatenation of cells and prisoners who are always (at least potentially) seen and yet cannot see their overseer. Foucault understood the Panopticon as both a model and a metaphor for the disciplinary society, and as the apotheosis of surveillance, which he saw not simply as the watching of a person, but rather as a nested series of gazes—what he termed *hierarchical*

observation—in which an individual, at any given position in the hierarchy, felt the force of being watched whether she was under scrutiny or not. As such, over time the individual began to self-police her conduct:

In contrast to that you have the system of surveillance, which on the contrary involves very little expense. There is no need for arms, physical violence, material constraints. Just a gaze. An inspecting gaze, a gaze which each individual under its weight will end by interiorizing to the point that he is his own overseer, each individual thus exercising this surveillance over, and against, himself. (Foucault, 1980c, p. 155)

This mechanism of force allows the gaze to take hold of the body, to know and correct it, without resorting to violence (Foucault, 1978/1995, pp. 170-176). Qualitative studies of surveillance in school contexts abound (for recent examples, see Bushnell, 2003; Gallagher, 2011; Pike, 2008, 2010; Richards, 2012; Welland, 2001). But I believe we need to remain cognizant of the fact that surveillance is but one technique among many. That is, we cannot make surveillance tantamount to disciplinary power, for there are other technologies such as continuous registration (i.e. taking stock of an individual via inscription), perpetual assessment, and classification (Foucault, 1978/1995, p. 220). And those are simply the additional techniques identified by Foucault. The results of this study will suggest still more techniques that are relevant to the lived experiences of teachers and students at Washington Elementary. In addition, they will indicate that while surveillance was evident at my research site, it was hardly ubiquitous and total. That is, it would be an egregious exaggeration to describe Washington Elementary as panoptic in the way that much qualitative research—research which will be explored below—has described schools. In order to use Foucault’s work, then, especially in qualitative educational studies, we must acknowledge but move beyond surveillance.

We must also take up the knotty issue of the individual subject. Foucault's critics have often argued that he presents a totalizing and deterministic view of power. Francis Schrag (1999), for instance, has called Foucault a structural-functionalist whose work leaves little room for the individual. While I would urge caution here—Schrag's account, after all, is based solely on a reading of *Discipline and Punish*, ignoring the fact that Foucault's later work focused almost exclusively on practices of self-construction and self-transformation—it nevertheless remains true that Foucault's writings on discipline often contain a subtle steely ethos in which power seems deterministic and inevitable. Foucault did little to discourage such a reading, once referring to power as a “machine working by a complex system of cogs and gears” (1980c, p. 158), with ostensibly little room for human agency. So, to expand this conceptual framework to account for individual agency, I would like to discuss briefly the work of French social theorist Michel de Certeau.

Everyday Practices: Strategies and Tactics

De Certeau (1984) has defined his work as an “investigation of the ways in which users—commonly assumed to be passive and guided by established rules—operate” (p. xi). As such, his work centralized the everyday practices of the subject mired in a rationalized, disciplinary society. In particular, he sought to analyze the creative improvisations of “consumers” in a cultural economy—their ways of organizing cultural material for their own purposes, of resisting discipline, and of making “clever tricks of the ‘weak’ within the order established by the ‘strong’” (p. 40). In doing so, he sought to elevate the study of “everyday practices, ‘ways of operating’ or doing things” so that they “no longer appear as merely the obscure background of social activity” (p. xi). His work, then, challenges our notions of what counts in social inquiry and makes a case for practices that are often ignored. Moreover, his work

suggests that these practices have a clear political dimension, or in other words a connection to power. In his words, “The tactics of consumption, the ingenious ways in which the weak make use of the strong, thus lend a political dimension to everyday practices” (p. xvii).

De Certeau wrote clearly about the expansion of discipline and the necessity of understanding how the individual survives and makes do in a disciplinary society:

If it is true that the grid of “discipline” is everywhere becoming clearer and more extensive, it is all the more urgent to discover how an entire society resists being reduced to it, what popular procedures (also “miniscule” and quotidian) manipulate the mechanisms of discipline and conform to them only in order to evade them, and finally, what “ways of operating” form the counterpart, on the consumer’s (or “dominee’s”?) side, of the mute processes that organize the establishment of socioeconomic order. (de Certeau, 1984, p. xiv)

To understand these procedures and “ways of operating,” he posited a distinction between *strategies* and *tactics*. Insofar as I have adopted this distinction as a way of framing the present study, it is necessary to explore it in some depth here.

Simply stated, strategies are forms of institutional power that are legitimized and normalized in the goings-on of a singular place. This place, which de Certeau called a *proper*, serves as a means for establishing relations with external agents, and it describes the institutionalized relations of force between the strong and the weak. The strategic, in short, can rely upon a place—and, as such, a base of power—that, as we will see, the tactical cannot. De Certeau defined a strategy as follows:

I call a “strategy” the calculus of force-relationships which becomes possible when a subject of will and power (a proprietor, an enterprise, a city, a scientific institution) can

be isolated from an “environment.” A strategy assumes a place that can be circumscribed as *proper* (*propre*) and thus serve as the basis for generating relations with an exterior distinct from it (competitors, adversaries, “clienteles,” “targets,” or “objects” of research). Political, economic, and scientific rationality has been constructed on this strategic model. (1984, p. xix)

In the context of this study, strategies are instances of institutionalized force that can rely upon a proper—viz. Washington Elementary as a physical environment. As we will see in later chapters, the disciplinary practices of teachers have a strategic component insofar as they have both a singular proper and actuate relations with a distinct exterior (i.e., students).

Conversely, tactics are individual, silent productions lacking a place of their own. In De Certeau’s words:

I call a “tactic,” on the other hand, a calculus which cannot count on a “proper” (a spatial or institutional localization), nor thus on a borderline distinguishing the other as a visible totality. The place of a tactic belongs to the other. A tactic insinuates itself into the other’s place, fragmentarily, without taking it over in its entirety, without being able to keep it at a distance. It has at its disposal no base where it can capitalize on its advantages, prepare its expansions, and secure independence with respect to circumstances. The “proper” is a victory of space over time. On the contrary, because it does not have a place, a tactic depends on time—it is always on the watch for opportunities when it must be seized “on the wing.” Whatever it wins, it does not keep. It must constantly manipulate events in order to turn them into “opportunities.” The weak must continually turn to their own ends forces alien to them. This is achieved in the

propitious moments when they are able to combine heterogeneous element. (de Certeau 1984:xix)

We can think of *tactics*, then, as “improvisational...spontaneous moments of creativity” (Kuntz, 2012, p. 5). As an example of the tactical, de Certeau (1984) offered the shopping trip, for in shopping the individual confronts and combines heterogeneous elements—what one has in the refrigerator, the tastes of one’s family or guests, the prices at a particular store vis-à-vis previous prices or known prices at other venues, and so on—yet does so on another’s turf. The shopper, in short, makes use of an environment that does not belong to him; he manipulates that which he did not create; he invents himself “by poaching in countless ways on the property of others” (p. xii).

De Certeau’s work is germane in the context of this study for two reasons. First, his centralization of quotidian and miniscule social practices provides a lens for understand such practices at Washington Elementary. They help us cognize and interpret social exchanges at a micro-interactional level. Second, his distinction between strategies and tactics helps us to eschew a deterministic, unidirectional understanding of power relations by drawing our attention to how individuals function within a disciplinary environment. That is, his work affords us a way of understanding human agency, which, as we have seen, many analysts suggest is absent from Foucault’s work. As such, de Certeau’s theorization of everyday social practices augmented a strictly Foucauldian lens in this study and was drawn upon, in particular, as a way of understanding students’ actions at Washington.

Summary

In this chapter I have attempted to offer a conceptualization of power and the individual, quotidian social actions that occur within contexts of disciplinary power. In doing so, I pursued

three interrelated objectives. First, I limned Foucault's understanding of power as a relational, transactional phenomenon. Second, I delineated his understanding of disciplinary power in particular—a microscopic form of power that operates on the body through a coding of space and a control of activity. Finally, I briefly explored the work of de Certeau, especially his understanding of everyday social practices and his distinction between strategies and tactics, which revealed tactics as improvisational ways of operating that are tantamount to responses to disciplinary power.

The question of how my study fits within and augments empirical studies of power still remains. As such, in the next chapter I will review the literature that is germane to this study. In particular, I will review two currents of literature: studies of power emanating from a Weberian framework and studies adopting a Foucauldian conceptual lens.

Chapter Three: Review of Relevant Literature

The question of how power is deployed, taken up, and contested in schools has a deep history in educational research. More than eighty years ago, Willard Waller (1932/1961), commenting on issues of discipline and regulation, defined the school as “a despotism in a state of perilous equilibrium” (p. 10). And power and authority have remained issues of interest to the present day. During this time period, power has been conceptualized and investigated from a variety of conceptual positions. For example, neo-Marxist studies of the late 1970s and early 1980s (e.g., Anyon, 1980; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Willis, 1977) theorized schools as sites where social antagonisms surface and argued that schooling practices reinforce class distinctions and reproduce extant socio-economic inequalities (Sadovnik, 2011). Choosing a conceptual focus, then, both sharpens and occludes one’s vantage, opening up certain apertures while closing others. To be sure, this is true of studies investigating power, as different conceptions of power will result in divergent findings (Hoy, 1986, p. 124). As Lukes has written,

I would maintain that power is one of those concepts which is ineradicably value-dependent. By this I mean that both its very definition and any given use of it, once defined, are inextricably tied to a given set of (probably unacknowledged) value-assumptions which predetermine the range of its empirical application. (1974/1989, p. 26)

At any rate, it is necessary to choose, while at the same time acknowledging that my choice represents certain underlying assumptions about sociality and schooling and sets certain parameters for my findings. My decision to situate this study in Foucault’s work reflects my interest in a particular sort of power—viz. those subtle, ubiquitous micro-negotiations that interpolate transactional social exchanges—what Foucault (1977/1995) has termed a “micro-

physics of power” (p. 26). And while this focus illuminates micro-forms of interactional power, it perhaps obfuscates broader, macro-forms of force. As such, this study, as we will see in later chapters, is undergirded by data on micro-sociality—a subtle glance of disapproval, a fleeting reprimand from a teacher—and not by more macro forms that would illuminate broader, organizational behavior and practices. This, I would suggest, is not a weakness in the current study, but rather represents the purposive and sustained use of a theoretical framework.

A full genealogy of power and power relationships in educational research is beyond the scope of this study.⁴ Rather, my approach here will be to situate the current study within recent qualitative studies of power in educational institutions. The two currents of literature that will be explored are studies examining power as authority and studies of power as transactional exchange. In doing so, I will demonstrate for the reader how my study builds upon and fills four critical gaps within the current literature. First, I will demonstrate how the “power as authority” tradition obfuscates the dynamic nature of power by conceptualizing it as a discrete, objectified phenomenon that is possessed by one individual and exercised on another. Second, I will suggest that the Foucauldian tradition has privileged the place of surveillance over other techniques of exercising power. Third, I will argue that Foucauldian qualitative studies have not adequately theorized resistance. And, finally, I will suggest that qualitative studies in the Foucauldian

⁴ I concur with Michael Gallagher’s (2004) division of Foucauldian studies in education into three strands: works of theory that explore how Foucault’s work might be used in education; works of history, or genealogies of various educational technologies; and empirical work employing a Foucauldian lens. For the purposes of this review, I will focus my attention on empirical works with a Foucauldian bent. This is not to suggest that the other literatures are not important or worthy of sustained scholarly attention, nor to imply that these works cannot inform empirical research. However, I review the third strand of literature here insofar as my own work demonstrates the most affinity with qualitative studies, and it is thus within said studies that I situate my own. Incidentally, works of theory (e.g., Baker and Heyning, 2004; Ball, 1990; Peters and Besley, 2007; Popkewitz and Brennan, 1998) are numerous and have a longer history than empirical studies. The historical work, which explores how dominant modes of thinking about educational issues and posing educational problems became taken for granted, is perhaps even more wide-ranging, including genealogies of the rise of schooling (Jones & Williamson, 1979; Hunter, 1996), or more specialized histories such as the history of the examination (Hoskin, 1990), the rise of educational psychology (Woolridge, 1995), the history of school uniforms (Dussel, 2001), and so forth.

tradition tend to be imbalanced, overemphasizing either teachers or students in their accounts but rarely giving equal attention to each.

Power as Authority

One way that power has been conceptualized in educational research is under the rubric of authority. Much of this scholarship (see, for example, Metz, 1978; Grant, 1988; Pace, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2006; Pace & Hemmings, 2007) has emanated from the work of Max Weber (1925/1947), who articulated a taxonomy of power with three heuristics delineating the sources of power—viz. powers based in tradition, charisma, and rules or policies. In this tradition, the relationship of power is tantamount to a superordinate with legitimate authority and a subordinate with an obligation to consent. As Mary Haywood Metz (1978) has written,

Authority is the right of a person in a specified role to give commands to which a person in another specified role has a duty to render obedience. This right and duty rest upon the superordinate's recognized status as the legitimate representative of a moral order to which both superordinate and subordinate owe allegiance. (p. 27)

According to Pace and Hemmings (2006), when any one of these three criterion (i.e., legitimacy of the superordinate, consent of the subordinate, or shared values) is not met, authority as such is missing (p. 5). At first blush, this prescriptive understanding of authority seems incongruous with the sketch of power offered above. However, as we will see via an examination of the empirical work, often the distinction between authority and power is more lexical than semantic.

Wills's (2006) study, for example, of the relationship between classroom authority and knowledge production in a fifth grade classroom evinced a situation in which both a teacher and her students were able to influence content in the classroom and, as such, shape the dominant discourse of history. Within this classroom, Mrs. Knight, a veteran, business-like teacher, tightly

controlled the process of knowledge production through, for example, the use of directives; clear, enforceable rules; and immediate sanctions for misbehavior. Moreover, she set the academic agenda, the expectations, and held students responsible for learning. Importantly, however, Mrs. Knight did not enact power as a form of repressive prohibition, but rather as a productive force to increase learning—as a “process of knowledge production—as a form of positive control” (p. 42). These expressions of power were effective, as students responded to them with efficient, focused work. While Mrs. Knight’s lessons—a form of methodical outlining which consisted of students taking turns reading from their texts while Mrs. Knight constructed a chapter outline on the board—were tightly structured, students had space to reflect upon, question, and extend course content, thereby shaping the discourse of history that flourished in the classroom. In short, the students were able to respond to power and exert some control over how history was practiced in Mrs. Knight’s room. This classroom setting, then, describes clear relations of power, wherein all classroom subjects were involved in shaping (limiting) the actions of others. Thus, while Wills interpreted his data through a framework of authority, the social practices revealed at least a modicum of intersubjective exchange. In short, his study denuded relations of power in a specific context.

Similar to Wills’s study Judith Pace’s work (2003a, 2003b, 2006) in two high school classes explored the relationship between teacher authority and student consent. Her work in a lower-level, eleventh-grade history class (Pace, 2003a), revealed a teacher, Mr. Clark, who employed humor and ambiguity to maintain class control. In particular, Mr. Clark created a relaxed and informal environment, wherein he would pepper his lectures with personal anecdotes and humor, and countenanced a range of student behavior such as sitting with friends, bringing food to class (albeit this was against school rules), and occasional cursing. In addition, Pace

found Mr. Clark's classroom to be a highly ambivalent and ambiguous environment, as the teacher often fostered a flippant relationship with students, demeaned school curricula, and treated disturbing, and potentially inflammatory, historical topics in a glib fashion, thereby blurring—perhaps erasing—the line between serious learning and superficial fun. In Pace's analysis, this allowed Mr. Clark to obviate potential problems and maintain control. Mr. Clark's view of teaching is, perhaps, best captured by his own words:

“I see it [teaching] as performance art. And they're your audience. And you gotta keep their butts in the seats...If you co-operate we can have fun. We can yuk it up, we can make fun of these crazy people in the past. We can wrestle with real issues.” (Pace, 2003a)

In the figure of Mr. Clark, then, Pace defined authority as something that is acquired via personal qualities. Her study is significant insofar as it identifies specific mechanisms through which power is exercised in one classroom.

In another classroom setting, Pace (2003b) found that a high school AP English teacher, Ms. Goodman, used strategies similar to Mr. Clark (e.g., personal qualities), but also appealed, primarily, to bureaucratic forms of authority in order to ensure compliance. Ms. Goodman, for example, adopted a linear, concrete pedagogical approach oriented toward the accumulation of technical skills; moreover, she emphasized grades (and the threat of poor grades) as motivating factors, the importance of mechanical rules and authoritative manuals of style, and facile reading checks focusing on recall as a large portion of student grades. These strategies had the unintended effect of suppressing critical discussions of moral and social issues in assigned texts, rendering class discussions superficial and discouraging participation. Students responded to Ms. Goodman's exercise of power in a variety of ways: doing the minimum amount of work required

to receive a desired grade, displaying Cliff's Notes in class, coming to class late, expressing resentment at being manipulated by reading checks, and so forth.

These studies are relevant to my study in several respects. At the most immediate and yet foundation level, Pace (2003a, 2003b) and Wills (2006) have demonstrated that issues of regulation and force, regardless of the terminology employed to describe them, interpolate the relations between teachers and students; that power is neither totalizing nor repressive; and that power is a productive, indeed necessary, force in schools. In addition, Pace's (2003a, 2003b) work has documented some specific ways that power is enacted through strategic relationships, and has suggested that these experiences impact the daily lives of both teachers and students. At the same time, as a result of a conceptual grounding in legitimized forms of power, these studies bifurcate moments of intended regulation into a deployment strategy and a response—that is, we have a situation in which a teacher mobilizes authority and a student either assents or does not. Either way, power is concretized and invested in the person of the teacher; it is a univocal and unidirectional force with which consent is realized. However, dynamic moments of inter-subjective exchange involve multiple negotiations, tactical improvisations, and sundry re-directions and permutations of power (de Certeau, 1984; Mansfield, 2000, p. 122). The failure of the authority perspective to account for these elements of power relations is a critical oversight that the current study addresses via an understanding of power as a polymorphous, multidirectional force that impinges upon the actions of others. It is to research in this tradition that I will now turn my attention.

Power as Limiting Exchange

As Gallagher (2004) has noted, qualitative studies of power relationships in schools employing a Foucauldian framework are few in number and tend to be based on a rather

superficial reading of Foucault's magnum opus, *Discipline and Punish*. Moreover, it has been argued that the applications of Foucault to educational problems to date has been severely inadequate, causing some scholars to feel "somewhat grumpy and surly, dissatisfied, about how Foucault has most frequently been read and used to date in education" (Scheurich & McKenzie, 2005, p. 842). Nevertheless, power relationships between students and teachers have garnered a modicum of attention from qualitative researchers in education (see, for example, Dussel, 2004; Gallagher, 2004, 2011; Hammerberg, 2004; Kirk, 2004; Pike, 2008, 2010; Richards, 2012). In the remainder of this chapter, I would like to review some key empirical works that investigate power from a Foucauldian perspective. I will elucidate how these works have informed my own study and delimit the lacunae they have left open, gaps that are addressed in the present study.

One gap in the literature is suggested by the fact that nearly all empirical research on power relationships in educational contexts has examined Foucault's concept of surveillance (relevant counterexamples will be discussed below), ignoring other articulations of power (see, for example, Bushnell, 2003; Gallagher, 2011; Pike, 2008, 2010; Richards, 2012; Welland, 2001). As we saw previously, *Discipline and Punish* marked Foucault's most elaborate and detailed articulation of surveillance, an instrument of force that came to prominence in disciplinary institutions such as schools, factories, and the military. To briefly recapitulate, Foucault did not conceptualize surveillance as merely the watching of a person, but rather as a series of nested gazes—or *hierarchical observation*—in which an individual, at any given position in the hierarchy, feels the force of being watched whether or not she is in fact under surveillance. Given this, over time the individual begins to internalize surveillance and self-police her conduct. This mechanism of force allows the gaze to take hold of the body, to know and correct it, without resorting to violence (Foucault, 1977/1995, pp. 170-176). Surveillance, to

be sure, is an important mechanism of power, and my results will show evidence of surveillance at Washington Elementary. However, it is not the only (or even, at least in the context of this study, the most important) technique of power. The centralization of surveillance, then, to the exclusion of other forms of power, represents, in my view, a misapprehension of power as it is experienced in schools. To further illustrate this point and illuminate this pitfall in the literature, I will now turn my attention toward qualitative studies in education that focus on the phenomenon of surveillance.

Mary Bushnell (2003), in an interview study with New York teachers, has found evidence of this system in the surveillance of teachers by administrators, parents, school boards, and politicians. She has argued that surveillance in the form of rigid curricular standards, inflexible and scripted pedagogies, standardized tests, and loudspeaker interruptions effectuate docile, de-professionalized teachers who have little control over how they are held accountable. In her words, “Inappropriate and externally constructed surveillance interferes with that autonomy as it perpetuates teachers’ subordinate status, restricts their pedagogical choices, and dampens their intellectual freedom” (Bushnell, 2003, p. 253). Bushnell’s teachers, in short, were subjected to ceaseless surveillance from many different sources, which had the effect of severely and egregiously circumscribing their positions and professional practice.

While Bushnell has noted some practices of resistance, her analysis leaves little room for human agency, finding the teachers in her study to be complicit in their own subordination and control. In her words, teachers’ resistances were “superficial, providing only the illusion of change without challenging existing relationships of power” (p. 268). Thus, Bushnell’s work, while providing some evidence of power in the form of surveillance, provides an overly deterministic and unidirectional portrait in which resistance is equated with complicity and

superficiality. What's more, her study, as Gallagher (2004) has noted, fails to examine how the surveillance of teachers is replicated farther down the school hierarchy, namely in relations between teachers and children.

Like Bushnell, Trevor Welland (2001) has drawn upon Foucault's work to examine the workings of surveillance. In particular, Welland conducted ethnographic research at a seminary to ascertain how both the timetable⁵ and the gaze regulate the conduct of theological trainees. Through participant observation and informal, semi-structured interviews, Welland found that surveillance was a constant force in the lives of the theological trainees. In this context, surveillance from faculty and from other students produced a disciplinary environment of ceaseless appraisal, normalization of conduct, and correction. In Welland's words, "The enclosed and bounded nature of the training environment rendered them [i.e., the trainees] very visible and vulnerable to the appraisal of others living in the community" (p. 128). Indeed, so pervasive was this sense of being in the gaze of others that one of Welland's informants described his position as "like living in God's goldfish bowl" (p. 128).

Welland found techniques of resistance from the trainees, especially absenteeism and transgressing moral boundaries, and suggested that trainees "were not passive recipients of their formal curriculum" (p. 131). At the same time, he eschewed theorizing resistance and provided but a cursory treatment of how resistance functioned in the theological institution he studied. Thus, while his study provides a more expansive conceptualization of power, it articulates a rather narrow conceptualization of responses to power. Moreover, the faculty in this account

⁵ Identifying the timetable represents an expansion of power *qua* surveillance, yet the timetable is, as Foucault (1977/1995) writes "an old inheritance" (p. 149) that should not be construed as a defining aspect of disciplinary power. Indeed, in Foucault's words, "other methods are more characteristic of the disciplines" (p. 151).

emerge as little more than a generalized gaze; as such, force is ultimately unidirectional and incomplete.

Closer to my own interests, research on power relationships in elementary schools have demonstrated the ubiquity of surveillance. Research has indicated that teachers and staff employ surveillance tactics to discern and correct improper conduct in classrooms (Gallagher, 2011), lunchrooms (Pike, 2008, 2010), and on playgrounds (Richards, 2012). Interestingly, Gallagher (2011) has argued that surveillance is much more than a visual technology in schools. Studying a primary classroom in a suburban Scottish school, Gallagher found that power interpolated aural relationships between teachers and students. The teacher and students in this study engaged in complex aural techniques and negotiations in order to preserve a culture of quietness in their classroom. These included both techniques of aural surveillance (e.g., the teacher's eavesdropping to identify children who were not working) and the production of sound (e.g., the children's leading a "countdown game" to quiet themselves).

Although many studies, as we have seen, frame power in such a way as to make it fungible with surveillance, there are salient examples of studies that conceptualize power in a more nuanced way. For instance, Jones and Brown (2001) utilized a Foucauldian framework in a qualitative study of a nursery classroom located in an inner-city primary school. In elucidating their theoretical position, these two researchers have argued that we may draw from Foucault "productive insights into the manifestations, developments, and realizations of power relations" (p. 715). In addition, they have noted that Foucault's work has challenged our understanding of subjectivity as a universal, transhistorical, and fixed phenomenon. Their argument, then, reflects the methodological and theoretical orientation of this study—viz., that Foucault may be used to

denude commonsense social practices and to understand discipline and subjectification in educational contexts.

To understand power in the nursery classroom, Jones and Brown (2001) drew upon Foucault's notion of discursive power. While it is beyond my purpose here to fully explain the idea of discursive power, it should be noted that Foucault's conceptualization of discourse transcended the commonsense notion of discourse as a linguistic or semiotic system. Rather, Foucault saw discourse as belonging to a wider network of power relations, as constitutive of certain forms of historically specific subjectivity, and as constantly in circulation with other discourses. In his words,

Discourses are tactical elements or blocks in the field of force relations; there can exist different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy; they can, on the contrary, circulate without changing their form from one strategy to another, opposing strategy. (Foucault, 1978/1990, pp. 101-102)

In their study, Jones and Brown (2001) identified moments of play as examples of how children enter into specific discourses and discussed how these discourses specified certain relations of power and subject positions. For example, they told the story of two girls and two boys engaging in a bit of domestic play to demonstrate how heteronormative discourses of the household (e.g., of the roles available, the expectations for each role, and the negotiations between the principle actors) made possible certain actions while discouraging others. In the examples of play, "it was possible to discern how different discursive practices worked at restricting and inhibiting as well as realizing individual action" (p. 720). In sum, they argued that engaging in discursive play had the effect of imposing and policing categories of difference (e.g., "dad," "baby," "grandma," and so forth) that, to their way of thinking, "render us docile" (p. 721).

Jones and Brown (2001) also provided an analysis of an interaction between a little boy named Ashley and his teacher, which focused on a T-shirt the student had worn to school that read “Ashley—Born to be Wild.” The argument here focused on how a narrow reading of “wild”—and, in particular, the association of this word with a rigid and stereotypical discourse of boyhood—served to locate Ashley in a particular subject position and to shape the dynamic between he and his teacher. In their words,

the word “wild” stood in for and was representative of an essentialist notion of Ashley’s identity, which in turn results in a deterministic reading of his behavior. Thus, in our view, “wild” was equated with a hegemonic notion of “power” and the wearing of the T-shirt and its slogan symbolized or represented a statement of fact about masculinity: men are born to be indomitable and they cannot be restrained. In short, they are born to be wild. (Jones & Brown, 2001, p. 722)

To be sure, Jones and Brown have provided a nuanced examination of discursive relations within a nursery classroom, and their insights proved invaluable to my study. In particular, their examination of how power works through discourse attuned me to discursive exchanges, many of which will be explored below, at Washington Elementary. At the same time, in my view Jones and Brown have focused on discourse—and as such on a “logic of abstraction” that privileges meaning and interpretive prowess over material contexts of being (Kuntz, 2012)—to the exclusion of non-discursive ways of acting. As de Certeau (1984) reminds us, not all social practices belong to the realm of discourse. In fact, everyday forms of sociality—many of which I will be exploring below in a specific context—resist our hermeneutic desires to extract meaning, thereby revealing themselves to be non-discursive in nature.

Like Jones and Brown, Dennis Atkinson (1998) drew upon the work of Foucault in undertaking research on student subjectification. Atkinson's work looked specifically at how teachers' assessment practices within the art curriculum effected "the production of the pupil-as-drawer" (p. 27). In particular, Atkinson argued that teachers' feedback to students about their artwork established certain relations between teachers and students, and, insofar as teachers' comments reflected paradigmatic understandings of art conventions, they positioned students as particular kinds of drawers. While this work is compelling and theoretically sophisticated, its singular focus on curricular matters occludes an understanding of how other social practices constitute subjectivity. Moreover, it fails to account for the ways in which assessment practices shape the contours of teacher subjectivity.

Studies in this tradition (i.e., power as a limiting transactional exchange) share three common features that have informed this study and influenced my thinking about relations of power. First, they demonstrate the ubiquity of power, providing empirical evidence that multiple actors enact power in complex ways. Second, they instantiate particular techniques of power in school contexts, such as playtime discourses and the arts curriculum. The current study builds on this work by offering data of myriad additional techniques that are unexplored in this literature. Third, they acknowledge, albeit do not fully explore, the interactional nature of power. The view of power adopted in this study—that is, micro-articulations that limit the actions of others—grows out of this interactional focus found in Foucault's work and the secondary literature.

At the same time, there are serious gaps in this literature, many of which are addressed in this study. To begin with, disciplinary power is about much more than surveillance, yet only a few studies explore other dimensions of power relations (Atkinson, 1998; Gore, 1998; Jones & Brown, 2001). Gore's (1998) examination of eight disciplinary techniques in four distinct

contexts is a notable example that moves us beyond a strict focus on surveillance. At the same time, her study—which examines a feminist reading group, a women’s discussion group, a high school physical education class, and a cohort of teacher educators—does not address how power invests the social lives of children. Given the normative understanding of the child-adult relationship, this process is ostensibly quite distinct from how power interpolates the lives of adolescents and adults.

The current literature has also failed to explore in a nuanced way the mechanisms through which students exercise power. Research suggests that students resist power through passive means such as ignoring teachers’ requests or failing to show up for class (Pike, 2010; Welland, 2001), but there is little understanding of how students may actively employ tactics of power.⁶ One notable exception to this tendency is Chris Richards’s (2012) ethnographic study of a primary school in London, which examined how surveillance affected playground behavior. He found that surveillance was far from a totalizing or deterministic force on the children in his study, but rather that it was something children responded to in sundry creative ways, such as making supervisors into an imagined audience for performances that drew upon popular entertainment discourses, and turning away from supervisors to engage in closed-in, clandestine games. However, Richards privileges the experience of the child in relations of power to such an extent that we lose how teachers are engaged in the process, save as an unarticulated, penumbral backdrop of surveillance.

⁶ The dichotomy passive/active is not as precise as I would like it to be, so I would like to pause briefly to clarify. By “passive” forms of resistance I mean to connote self-directed actions which may or may not influence a social other. For example, the student who sits quietly during a lecture, refusing to learn as a form of resistance, may, by her behavior, influence the actions of her teacher. Then again, she may not. Her actions, regardless of the impetus for them, are ultimately self-directed. Conversely, by “active” forms of resistance I mean to connote other-directed actions which will almost certainly influence a social other. To return to the student above, should she decide, as a form of resistance, to engage in an incessant fit of coughing, her actions would become “active.” That is, they would have become externalized and other-directed, and should they continue unabated, they will ultimately demand a response from one or more social others.

Julie Allan's (1996, 1997) work provides another example of Foucault-inspired qualitative research that examines how students exercise power in schools. In particular, Allan has examined the integration of students with special needs into a mainstream school in Scotland. After group interviews with mainstream students, individual interviews with students with special needs, and observations of student interactions, Allan (1997) argued that the mainstream pupils in her study constituted a regime of governmentality (Foucault, 1988) that channeled the conduct of students with special needs. According to Allan, this regime of governmentality involved three defining criteria. First of all, the mainstream students would exercise a *pastoral power* (Foucault, 2000a), or a sort of paternal benevolence that reduced students with special needs "to a generalized 'them'" (Allan, 1997, p. 185). Second, the regime gave mainstream students a *pedagogic role*, in which they took partial responsibility for the social and academic experiences of students with special needs. Finally, the regime was *transgressive*, allowing rules about physical contact between students to be breached in the case of students with special needs.

Allan's work, like Richards's, provides a detailed and substantive portrait of how power interpolates the relations between students in schools.⁷ In particular, it demonstrates how the actions of mainstream students shaped the conduct of students with special needs. However, students with special needs are not forgotten in Allan's study. Rather, she presents evidence that demonstrates that students with special needs resisted power at times. The strategies employed

⁷ It should be noted that these studies (i.e., Allan, 1996, 1997; Richards, 2012), which provide at once some of the clearest and most nuanced treatments of student power relations in schools, were conducted in the U.K. Thus, while they certainly afford valuable insights, the limitations of generalization should be noted. While this is not the place to get into a discussion of external validity, I will note that many scholars have expressed reservations about generalizing from qualitative work (Peshkin, 1993). Generalizations across a cultural divide—such as, in the case in question, from the U.K. to the U.S.—are even more riddled with complications. In the next chapter I will discuss these methodological issues in greater depth, noting my own view on the situational, local, and context-specific nature of the knowledge produced in this study—and on the perils and possibilities of transferability.

by students with special needs included remaining silent around mainstream students, minimizing the impact of oppression in their lives, and even feigning physical difficulties (Allan, 1997). This work afforded a perspicuous account of how power relations between students were deployed and contested in one particular context. At the same time, there are two definite shortcomings that should be underscored. To begin with, although Allan notes a few resistance strategies, she does not adequately theorize resistance, failing to present her reader with an account of what constitutes resistance and how it might be thought about, nor does she present a sustained account of what resistance looks like in the context of her study. Second, her avoidance of the teacher is even more egregious than Richards's. The image her account provides is tantamount to a social life of schools that includes students only, and this is a critical omission. This imbalance is indicative of the literature in general. As we have seen, most studies focus solely on either teachers or students, which, I would argue, has the effect of distorting our understanding of power as a dynamic, inter-subjective, strategic force that is deployed and negotiated without being possessed. My own study builds upon the current literature insofar as it both theorizes and presents empirical data regarding student actions, and examines power relations *between* students and teachers in an attempt to avoid privileging either side.

Chapter Summary

Before continuing on, I would like to pause briefly to summarize the major points raised in this review of germane literature, and to reiterate how they have informed this study. The first current of literature that I reviewed conceptualized power as an essentialized capacity, as something possessed by one individual (the superordinate) in relation to her social others (the subordinates). Studies in this tradition (e.g., Grant, 1988; Metz, 1978; Pace & Hemmings, 2007) have revealed that regulation and force—whatever terminology one employs to describe them—

are ubiquitous in the social lives of schools. Moreover, they have established that power is neither totalizing nor totally repressive, but can rather be a productive force in the school lives of teachers and students. The sources in this tradition, many of which were reviewed above, have influenced this study inasmuch as they have sketched the contours of power. At the same time, they alone cannot complete the rendering, for power is a much more dynamic and fluid phenomenon than these studies suggest.

The second current of literature I reviewed were sources that conceptualized power as relational, as a transactional limiting exchange between social actors. Although many of the studies in this tradition have focused on surveillance (e.g., Bushnell, 2003; Richards, 2012; Welland, 2001), a few notable exceptions have revealed specific techniques of power on the part of either teachers or students (e.g., Atkinson, 1998; Gore, 1998; Jones & Brown, 2001). These studies share the belief that power is an interactional deployment of force that pervades the relations between people. They have, as such, filled in the portrait of power adopted in this study, as well as provided a window into specific techniques of power in schools.

My study builds upon the literature reviewed and fills in lacunae suggested in the discussion above. In particular, the extant literature leaves at least four gaps that the current study addresses. First, many sources, from a vantage of power *qua* authority, understand force as concretized in the person of the superordinate. To be sure, this view occludes seeing power as a multi-directional articulation of force that emanates from many actors engaged in social intercourse. Second, most empirical studies employing a Foucauldian framework have made power tantamount to surveillance, thereby failing to explore the phenomenon in its full complexity. The results of my study suggest that surveillance is significant but far from the only technique of power at work in schools. Third, although a few of the studies reviewed focused on

how students exercise power, none offered a nuanced account or a theorization of resistance such as that offered in the second chapter of this dissertation. Finally, studies in the Foucauldian tradition were markedly imbalanced, either overemphasizing the roles of teachers (e.g., Bushnell, 2003) or students (e.g., Atkinson, 1998; Welland, 2001) but rarely giving equal attention to all. The present study, with chapters on both teachers' strategies and students' tactics, is offered as a corrective for this imbalance.

Chapter Four: Methodology

As the philosopher of science Sandra Harding (1987) has reminded us, methodology consists not only of strategies for data collection (i.e. methods) but also of the interpretive structures that frame a study. This framework, to be sure, consists in a dialectical relationship with one's theoretical position—that is, hermeneutic concerns inform theory and vice versa. But the framework is more than that as well. In particular, methodology encompasses epistemology, or theories of knowing, and thus I feel compelled to offer some comments regarding how I envision this study as responding to questions of how we know.

In an influential essay, Michel Foucault (1984/2010) delineated a way of doing philosophy (he termed it an *ethos* or an attitude of philosophizing) that he termed *critical ontology*. Critical ontology consists of an intervention into current practices of subjectivity formation, and it asks three questions: 1) How are we constituted as subjects of our own knowledge? 2) How are we constituted as subjects who exercise or submit to power relations? 3) How are we constituted as moral subjects of our own actions? (p. 49) The purpose of such questions, Foucault argued, is to orient our investigations toward “the contemporary limits of the necessary” (p. 43)—that is, to ferret out the singular and the contingent in that which we take to be universal, necessary, and obligatory. I want to suggest that this form of inquiry need not be limited to philosophizing about subjectivity. As an example, Kenneth Wong (2013) has drawn upon critical ontology to argue that relations of power have constituted our understanding of childhood through a developmental framework that has set the limits for knowledge claims regarding children in our schools. Foucault's work in critical ontology has also informed the production of knowledge in this study.

To begin with, I envisioned this study as an investigation into particular forms of school sociality between students and teachers, and I saw the study as a way of recording and, through recording, denuding particular interactions that have acquired a sense of inevitability in our schools. This sense of inevitability was confirmed early in my field research, as the two teachers in the study frequently commented on how certain social arrangements were necessary and obligatory. Commenting on her bathroom routine, for example, Ms. Maldonado emphasized how her specific routine of allowing a few boys and girls into the restroom at one time—and of monitoring their progress while they were in there—was necessary and inevitable. Alternatives to this routine had ostensibly not occurred to her, for she told me the procedure had to be as it was as we stood together in the hallway one day. This was the case for many school practices that will be explored later in this dissertation.

Part of my methodology, in short, consisted of denuding social relationships in schools, revealing them not as matters of course but as contingent, negotiated arrangements of power. Moreover, I wanted to examine the interstices of power and subjectivity—that is, I wanted to evince how particular relations of power formed those involved as singular sorts of subjects. As such, my methods, which will be explicated shortly, focused on observing and recording instances of power, and on interrogating the connection between power and subjectivization.

As a final note, I would underscore the fact that after seminal works in the philosophy of science (see, for example, Hanson, 1958; Kuhn, 1962/2012; Quine, 1960), we are very much aware of how what we think we know is constrained by the scope of our knowing. In other words, our knowledge is constructed within parameters that by nature limit its form. As Gergen (1994) has suggested, the crisis in representation has questioned the isomorphism between the objective world and the language through which we make knowledge claims about it, thereby

rendering science relational, positional, and perspectival. I cannot claim, therefore, a complete methodology or exhaustive methods. This is a situated account—one that attempts to reinvolve the happenings of a particular time and place, from a particular framework and vantage.

Settings, Participants, and the Role of the Researcher

Some research questions are site specific, whereas others can be explored in numerous settings (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 100). Given that the focus of this study was power relations—a general phenomenon characteristic of all schools—there were literally thousands of potential research sites that would have been appropriate for my study. My choice to conduct research at Washington Elementary, then, requires some justification. To begin with, since I reside rather close to the school and, as mentioned previously, taught there for four years, my selection involved *convenience sampling* (Merriam, 2009). That is, considerations of time, money, location, access, and so on figured into my choice. At the same time, convenience was not the sole, or even the most important, reason for my choosing Washington. Quite simply, I wanted to understand power and influence in an urban elementary school. Although Washington Elementary is in many ways particular, it also, to my way of thinking, represents a *typical sample* for the phenomena I sought to understand (Merriam, 2009), for three significant reasons. First, like many urban schools, it has a predominately white teaching staff serving a majority-minority student population. Second, it is a high-poverty school, with all students qualifying for free-and-reduced lunch. Third, it is characterized by high rates of reported behavioral incidents.

In 2013, the school district in which Washington resides had a building discipline incident rate⁸ of more than four times the state average (DESE, 2013). The district is rather

⁸ Building incident rate measures rather significant behavioral infractions which lead to students being removed from their classroom settings, either through in-school or out-of-school suspensions, for ten or more consecutive days. Admittedly, these extreme examples don't tell us much about the more mundane, daily forms of power that

typical in this regard, for, as research has demonstrated, one unfortunate reality of large, urban school systems is that they tend to be plagued by agonistic teacher-student relations and disproportionate behavioral issues (Ferguson, 2000; Gay, 2006; Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010). Washington Elementary, one of 19 comprehensive elementary schools in its district, had a building discipline rate of more than 4.5 in 2013, well above the state average of 1.5. In fact, Washington, whose incident rate has been increasingly steadily since 2010, had more behavior incidents in 2013 than all but one elementary school in its district (DESE, 2013). These figures further influenced my decision to conduct research at Washington. To my mind, they suggested that Washington was an appropriate site to study the power relations that undergird school discipline, for a couple of reasons. To begin, the social climate at Washington was not aberrational; rather, it was what one would expect to find in an urban elementary school. As such, the findings of this study could, perhaps, produce local knowledge with broader implications. Second, the high frequency of behavior incidents at Washington, as well as the increase in recent years, indicates a clear problem that this study will be able to address.

Classroom Participants

My original plan was to conduct participant-observation research in both a kindergarten and a sixth grade class. As will be explained presently, this proved to be an impossibility, as neither of the two kindergarten teachers at Washington were interested in participating in this study. In a subsequent section, I will explain in detail the process of recruiting the two teachers for my study. At the moment, I would like to explain my rationale behind choosing a primary teacher, Ms. Maldonado, and a sixth grade teacher, Ms. Barber. My reasons for studying a primary room and an intermediary room were multiple. That is, my choice reflected a congeries

have garnered my attention. However, the prevalence of such incidents does suggest school social climates in which power relations are relevant and ubiquitous.

of interests and commitments, both theoretical and practical. To begin, I did not believe it was feasible to study the entire school in the period of time that I had available to conduct my research. Issues such as obtaining informed consent from the parents of nearly 300 students, scheduling interviews with the entire school staff, and finding time to observe more than twenty classrooms would simply have spread me too thin and vitiated the trustworthiness of my data. Conversely, concentrating on two classrooms provided an opportunity for depth of understanding. Following Patton (2002), these two classes represented a minimum sample size based on an “expected reasonable coverage of the phenomenon” in my study (p. 246). In addition, I believed studying a primary and an intermediate classroom would afford comparative understandings that would not have been available were I to focus on just one classroom. That is, examining the two proposed classrooms allowed me to understand power relations between teachers and students over the course of elementary school, especially how relations change as students age. Finally, as evidenced in my literature review, the research on power focuses almost exclusively on adolescence and adulthood. This is, in my estimation, a critical oversight. We know very little about how power works among children, and this study was an attempt to address this gap in understanding. Focusing on a second-grade room and a sixth grade room, then, was a way of producing new data on the school lives of young children and their teachers.

Role of the Researcher

I was a teacher at Washington Elementary for four years. During that time, I became active in the school community, and I still retain friendships with many teachers, students, and parents. As a teacher in the building, I became interested almost immediately in the tacit aspects of schooling—the unspoken, the taken-for-granted, the seemingly natural—what has been referred to in the literature as the hidden curriculum of schools (Apple, 1982; Bowles & Gintis,

1976; Jackson, 1968; Willis, 1977). At the same time, I became interested in the work of Michel Foucault, and I believed that Foucauldian studies could offer a new lens for understanding issues of power and regulation in empirical contexts. In addition, I knew that I wanted to do research on the experiences of urban school teachers and students, and that my project, given the Foucauldian influence, would likely have something to do with power, subjectivity, and disciplinary contexts. Out of these constellations of interests, the present study grew.

Conducting research at a site where one works—or, in my case, where one used to work—entails epistemological, methodological, and ethical dilemmas that must be considered (Labaree, 2002). Merton (1972) conceptualized researcher positionality in terms of an insider/outsider dyad that has epistemological consequences. Since his time, several benefits of an insider perspective have surfaced in the literature, including greater access and more immediate rapport, especially during the early stages of research (Labaree, 2002; Ohnuki-Tierney, 1984); access to privileged data (Jones, 1970); and a deeper understanding through shared relationships (Zinn, 1979). Conversely, it has been argued that insider researchers' relationships with their participants work against data collection and skew the researchers' findings (Preedy & Riches, 1988; Schulz, 1971). I stand with the many scholars (e.g., Mercer, 2007; Labaree, 2002; Narayan, 1993; Surra & Ridley, 1991) who reject a simplistic dyad in favor of an identity continuum. Labaree (2002), for example, has noted that researchers are complex and multiple, embodying penumbral and amorphous domains of insiderness and outsidersness. Similarly, Narayan (1993) has argued that we might better conceptualize the researcher

in terms of the shifting identifications amid a field of interpenetrating communities and power relations. The loci along which we are aligned with or set apart from those whom we study are multiple and in flux. Factors such as education, gender, sexual orientation,

class, race, or sheer duration of contacts may at different times outweigh the cultural identity we associate with insider or outsider status. (p. 672)

I concur with Narayan. In the course of my research, I often found myself negotiating the perils of identification—my position shifting and encompassing a whole host of subject positions: friend, researchers, classroom helper, and critic to name but a few. That is, the boundaries and markers of identity that define me as either an insider or outsider blurred and shifted depending upon whom I was speaking with, the context of the moment, the task at hand, and so on *ad infinitum*. However, these are, in my view, ineluctable issues that would pervade any research site. Moreover, I do not believe issues of identity should be the researcher's primary focus.

Narayan (2002) goes on to write,

What we must focus our attention on is the quality of the relations with the people we seek to represent in our texts: are they viewed as mere fodder for professional self-serving statements about a generalized Other, or are they accepted as subjects with voices, views, and dilemmas—people to whom we are bonded through ties of reciprocity and who may even be critical of our professional enterprise? (p. 672)

Again, I agree wholeheartedly. To transcend potential methodological, epistemological, and ethical issues associated with insiderness, I attempted to maintain trusting relationships by remaining open about my research agenda, holding myself accountable through triangulation and member checking (delineated below), and representing participants with care and accuracy.

Given my position along the continuum of researcher identity, I believe I was uniquely suited to study Washington Elementary, to oscillate between what Geertz (1983) termed experience-near and experience-distant perspectives.

To further provide the reader with an understanding of my position in the classrooms I studied, I should note that I often found myself in the rather unenviable position of having my allegiance tested by both teachers and students. Ultimately, I made the decision to align myself closely with the students in my study. Part of this was theoretical. Foucault (2000a), after all, tells us that if we want to understand power we need to examine how it is resisted, how relations of power become disassociated (p. 329). And part of it happened naturally as a result of the strategies I chose to understand the experiences of children. In the classroom, I strove to approximate a “least adult” (Mandell, 1988) stance, meaning that I cast aside many of the markers of adulthood, including, at times, proper conduct. For example, in my time at Washington I engaged in a rubber band war, an unsanctioned paper airplane flying contest, hallway transgressions, and so forth. The point of this behavior is that I wanted to live and thereby understand student school life—at least to the extent that this is possible. While I kept my disruptions to a minimum—and I never, it should be noted, instigated a disruption or engaged in one during instructional time—there were times when one of the teachers would cast a suspicious look in my direction, at which point my behavior would cease.

My strategies were quite effective with the children, and I developed genuine friendships with many. I received farewell cards on my final day at school, and tears on both sides were shared. Even the sixth graders, for whom showing sincere emotion is nearly anathema, threw me a party that culminated with an enormous whole-class bear hug.

This commentary is offered to provide the reader with some sense of how I negotiated insider/outsider status as well as the dual demands of being respectful and responsive to the needs of both students and teachers. I fear that, despite my best efforts, I have not been entirely successful.

Access and Informed Consent

In the summer of 2014, I contacted Dr. Mark Smith, principal at Washington Elementary, to see if he would be amenable to my conducting research at his school. I outlined the project for him in a general way over the phone, and he agreed to my proposal, pending approval at the district level and the IRB at my university. Following my conversation with Dr. Smith, I began a rather long process of gaining access to two classrooms at Washington Elementary, and of acquiring informed consent from study participants. The first step was to have my study approved by the IRB at the University of Kansas, which it was with only one stipulation—that after receiving district approval for my project I submit a letter demonstrating such. Next, I completed the school district's permission to conduct research form (Appendix 1) and submitted it to the Director of Assessment and Research. The district required that I make one significant change to my methods. I had originally asked for three or four days in the classrooms each week, but it was believed that this would be too much of a distraction. As a compromise, we settled on two half-days each week.

Once I had received permission to conduct my research, I needed to recruit participants. Dr. Smith agreed to allow me to address all potentially interested teachers following a professional development day on August 4, 2014. Following an intercom announcement, eight teachers met with me in the library to discuss my project. I explained the project and, to gauge the teachers' level of interest, passed around a recruitment flier (Appendix 2). Of the eight teachers present, four expressed interest in the study, three were unsure but indicated that I could contact them to discuss it further, and one declined outright. As mentioned, my original study design called for a kindergarten teacher and a sixth-grade teacher. A sixth-grade teacher, Ms. Barber, expressed interest, and thus was a natural choice. But no kindergarten teachers came to

my recruitment meeting. Therefore, I had to change my original design somewhat, as I chose to work with a second-grade teacher, Ms. Maldonado, since she was the only primary teacher who volunteered for the study. Having recruited teachers for the study, I met with each to explain the project in more depth, and to acquire informed consent for interviews and observations (Appendix 3). At that time, I explained to the teachers that participation in the study was completely voluntary, and that they could withdrawal at any point with impunity. Both teachers gave consent willingly.

After receiving consent from the teachers, I began the process of acquiring consent from the parents and the children in the study. I began by sending home a consent for observation form (Appendix 4), affording me permission to observe the children in the classroom and to write about them. All parents agreed to this level of participation. After conducting six weeks of participant observation in the two classrooms, I identified six students from each for formal interviews. These children were chosen to represent a range of attention from their teacher. That is, in each classroom, I chose one boy and one girl who received a lot of negative attention from their teacher, one boy and one girl who received a medium amount of negative attention, and one boy and one girl who received a modicum of negative attention. These children were identified through two primary mechanisms. To begin with, I kept a checklist, on which I marked the frequency of negative attention (in the form of comments regarding behavior) that students received from their teachers. These checklists revealed a picture of who was receiving negative attention, with small groups of students occupying the two polar extremes and the vast majority receiving a medium amount of attention. I then checked these lists with the teachers to see if they corresponded with their experiences, which they did in both cases. Following my selections, I sent home a consent for interview form (Appendix 5) to all twelve of these students' parents. The

parents of all six sixth-grade students agreed to the interviews. However, two of the six parents of the second grade students declined. Thankfully, plenty of children in Ms. Maldonado's class fit my criteria for interviews, so it was not difficult to find two additional children.

It has been recognized that adult consent is inadequate for a child's participation in a study (Kirk, 2007) and that children possess the competence to decide whether or not they would like to participate in a research task (Morrow & Richards, 1996). It has, moreover, been recognized that when working with children informed consent is a *process* that should be frequently revisited (Kirk, 2007). As such, obtaining assent from the children in my study was an important methodological and ethical step. For observational consent, I requested and received permission to address both classes regarding my presence in the classroom and my intended purposes there. Sample scripts, which closely approximate what I said to the children, are attached to this study (Appendix 6). In addition, for students whom I asked to participate in interviews, I pursued another level of assent. In particular, I asked children if they would be willing to participate in particular research tasks, ensured them that research tasks were not activities with "correct" answers, and periodically checked for continued interest. Sample scripts for interview assent are also attached to this study (Appendix 7). While conducting interviews, I also remained open to non-verbal forms of dissent—such as, for example, unexplained and prolonged silences, irritation, fidgeting—that perhaps signaled a potential revocation of consent. There was one incident with a sixth grader in which I cut the interview short because I believed I was receiving signs of dissent. In particular, this student was providing short answers of no more than a few words, and he was fidgeting quite a lot in his seat. In no other cases was this an issue, nor did any students fail to provide assent to be interviewed. Following Thomas and O'Kane (1998), I gave children the opportunity to withdraw participation at any point and to not be audio

recorded should they so choose. Again, no children objected to being recorded. In fact, nearly all were giddy at the prospect and curious to hear their voices played back over my recording device.

Methods and Procedures

In this study, I utilized a basic qualitative research design, the most common design in educational research (Merriam, 2009). My research strategies, which will be delineated below, emanated from and were congruent with this choice. With hope, they aided in the production of rich data, enabled thick description, and remained responsive to the singular demands of working with children. However, before I describe my chosen research strategies, I believe it would be instructive to offer some commentary on how I approached research with children, especially the singular ethical concerns that accompany this sort of research. Insofar as these concerns influenced the strategies that I pursued for collecting data, it seems warranted to discuss them in some depth here.

Traditionally, children were conceptualized as objects of research rather than active participants (Fargas-Malet, McSherry, Larkin, & Robinson, 2010; Mayall, 2000). However, with the emergence of the sociology of childhood (Christensen & James, 2008; James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998; Mayall, 2008), this view of children has shifted such that they are now assumed to be competent social actors who possess definite ideas about their lives and can participate in research that concerns them. This conceptual shift has galvanized a methodological one, entailing more participatory methods and often the creation of innovative strategies to account for children's life experiences and unique competencies (Fargas-Malet, McSherry, Larkin, & Robinson, 2010; Punch, 2002). Although this project included "traditional" qualitative methods

(observations, interviews), it also drew upon strategies that were mindful of this conceptual shift and responsive to the unique experiences and needs of children.

In my estimation, the central ethical problematic of research involving children centers around how the researcher positions herself among her study participants. Following socialization and developmental models that envision children as empty, partial, or unfinished, researchers have often underestimated children, failing to consider them competent social actors who experience the world on their own terms (Curtin, 2001; Kirk, 2007; Tammivaara & Enright, 1986). Morrow and Richards (1996) have delineated the situation as follows:

In everyday social life, we (as adults, parents, or researchers) tend not to be respectful of children's views and opinions, and the challenge is to develop research strategies that are fair and respectful to the subjects of our research. (p. 91)

As such, the present discussion will focus on how I attempted to obviate potential ethical dilemmas through strategies and methods that were, I believe, responsive to the needs of all research participants, especially the children involved in my study. My comments will focus on two areas that are often discussed in the literature on research with children: protection from harm, and disparities between the researcher and her participants. A third area (i.e., informed parental consent and child assent) was discussed previously.

As with social research generally, research with children must address issues of protection from harm and confidentiality (Kirk, 2007; Morrow & Richards, 1996). To begin with the latter, confidentiality was ensured through the use of pseudonyms for all study participants and for Washington Elementary. In addition, in certain instances I have altered identifying characteristics—e.g., sex, race, age—of my study participants to protect their identities. I have also withheld the name of the school district and the city in which the school district lies in order

to further protect my participants. Disguising the identities of the teachers in my study proved more difficult than disguising the identities of students. Nevertheless, several measures were taken to ensure confidentiality. To begin with, as mentioned, pseudonyms were assigned to both teachers in this study. In addition, I altered many identifying characteristics to make the teachers more difficult to identify. Finally, the teachers' identities have been further protected by the tendency of teaching assignments to vary from year to year at Washington Elementary. That is, neither Ms. Maldonado nor Ms. Barber currently teaches the grade level that she did during the course of this research, thus ensuring an added layer of confidentiality.

In reflecting upon my methods, I do not believe I have caused any undue stress or harm to either teachers or students. The one minor exception to this could be when I occasionally asked participants to respond to stressful situations, such as teacher-student conflicts. However, in these situations I remained vigilant and checked often for signs of discomfort, which I rarely witnessed. In fact, in the course of my research, there was only one situation where I felt I was receiving signs of distress, and that was in my interview with Warren. In light of Warren's disengagement, I altered the course of the interview, truncating it significantly. This decision, I believe, speaks to my desire to remain responsive to my study participants and to avoid causing them stress or harm. Moreover, students and teachers in the study were asked to do things—draw, talk, respond to images—that were not terribly far removed from the sorts of tasks they engage in on a daily basis. As such, it seems unlikely that these strategies caused any degree of harm for my participants.

Researchers must be cognizant of disparities between themselves and research participants, especially differences in status and authority. These issues, of course, are accentuated when the research involves children (Kirk, 2007; Morrow & Richards, 1996). In my

estimation, the particular ethical moves one makes (or does not make) in the field are motivated by one's theoretical and methodological orientations. As such, I think it is warranted to briefly review my conceptualization of children and childhood, and how these views shape the ethical considerations that bear upon this study.

Allison James has identified four conceptual models that give rise to distinct heuristics of “the child”: the developing child, the tribal child, the adult child, and the social child (as cited in Morrow & Richards, 1996, p. 99). My own understanding corresponds to that of the social child. That is, I envision children as “social actors with their own distinctive abilities to understand and explain their world” (Thomas & O’Kane, 1998, p. 338). This has sundry theoretical and practical implications for my work. To begin, it means that I see children as competent social actors and participatory research subjects rather than as objects of exploitative research. Pragmatically, this means offering children opportunities to engage in interactive tasks—fun, child-friendly activities that allow for maximum participation and reduce exploitative relationships (Kirk, 2007; Punch, 2002). It will be recalled that this project drew upon visual methods—photography and map-making in particular—for precisely these reasons. In short, my research involved ongoing reflection about my beliefs of children’s competence, which, if left unexamined, can be one of the primary impediments to research with children (Curtin, 2001).

I also utilized several concrete strategies in interacting with and interviewing children in order to minimize differences in authority. These strategies were drawn from the literature, and will be briefly explicated here. To begin with, I asked questions that were indirect, concrete, personal, and connected to emotions (Tammivaara & Enright, 1996). I avoided complex language and “big words” (Curtin, 2001), as evidenced by the readability scores on my interview guides. Perhaps most important to my research, I changed my demeanor when interacting with

children; that is, I did not act like a typical adult. I attempted to become an “out-of-the-ordinary” adult (Tammivaara & Enright, 1986) or a “least-adult” (Mandell, 1988). This means, among other things, not being authoritarian or judgmental, and neither directing nor correcting children’s actions (Curtin, 2001; Mandell, 1988). This meant that children would often “test” me to see what they could get away with, and I often was privy to illicit, albeit rather innocuous, behavior—cursing, making and throwing paper airplanes, flicking rubber bands, and so forth. The children did these things in front of me, often with sly smiles on their faces, signaling their view of me as a non-threatening, non-judgmental adult.

In the context of interviews, I expressed to participants that there were no right answers and it was okay to not have an answer to a question (Curtin, 2001). I ceded control over topics and progress, avoiding directing behavior or talk (Tammivaara & Enright, 1986). Rather, I adopted an accepting attitude (Parker, 1984), meaning that interviews often meandered to unexpected places. I also utilized the strategy of “playing dumb,” or intentionally acting ignorant or confused to elicit data (Tammivaara & Enright, 1986). This occurred, for example, when I acted silly in the hallway so that the second graders would correct me, thereby demonstrating for me expected hallway practices. In addition, I used concrete materials (Tammivaara & Enright, 1986) in my interviews. In particular, I asked the children to create something and bring it to the interview setting, so that the conversation could always begin with the object and, thus, on the child’s terms (Parker, 1984). Finally, when asking questions, I often suggested alternative responses to avoid the slanting effects of a question with just one response (Parker, 1984). I could go on, as I learned and employed many strategies for interacting in ethical ways with children. To distill my approach into one pithy statement, however, would be to aver that I recognized children as experts about their own lives and accepted them as competent social

actors (Mandell, 1988). This conceptualization of children informed my choice of research strategies, which will now be discussed in some depth.

Participant and Qualitative Observation

Although sometimes assumed to be synonymous with fieldwork, Dewalt and Dewalt (2010) take a narrower view of participant observation, defining it as a singular and specific method “in which an observer takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of the people being studied” (p. 260). In keeping with this idea, I engaged in participant observation at my school site as much as possible. In particular, in my attempt to understand power relationships, I was present at places and involved in activities wherein those relations often occurred. I visited with the children in their before-school program, observed their classrooms during instruction, ate lunch with them, and so forth. However, there were limits to my participation. I did not, for instance, live in the community where my school site is located, nor did I spend years in the field. These limitations should be kept in mind when considering the results of this study.

Natural limitations on participant observation meant that I supplemented this strategy with qualitative observation, which, as Patricia Adler and Peter Adler (1994) have noted, “occurs in the natural context of occurrence, *among the actors* [emphasis added] who would naturally be participating in the interaction, and *follows the natural stream of everyday life*” [emphasis added] (p. 81). In short, at times when I could not participate actively in the lives of the teachers and students at my school site—such as, for example, in the context of direct instruction—I was still among them, observing in a more passive role.

I employed observational strategies because I believed they were the most appropriate means of studying power relations and addressing my research questions. Power relations are

evanescent inter-subjective exchanges, fleeting moments of sociality between two or more social actors. To be sure, it is possible to inquire about these exchanges after the fact—as, indeed, I did—but witnessing them as they unfold is inarguably the best way to understand such nuanced moments. As such, this study rests upon the premise that participant observation research is the most appropriate method for addressing all three research questions in this study—that is, for understanding how teachers and students strategically used power, how they responded to deployments of power, and how dynamics of power shaped subjectivity formulation.

During all periods of observation I kept *scratch notes* (Sanjek, 1990, p. 95) or *jottings* (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995, p. 19)—i.e. abbreviated notes that were later fleshed out as fieldnotes. I did not attempt to keep a running commentary with my scratch notes. Rather, a particular note consisted of “a mnemonic word or phrase to fix an observation or to recall what someone has just said” (Clifford, 1990, p. 51). Following periods of observation—typically later in the same day, or the following day—I expanded my scratch notes into fieldnotes, which served as the primary source of data for this study.

Interviews

As Patricia Adler and Peter Adler (1994) have noted, observation “produces especially great rigor *when combined with other methods*” (p. 89). As such, I attempted to produce richer data by utilizing interviews (both formal and informal) with teachers, students, and the school principal, Dr. Smith. In the beginning phases of my research, I conducted six weeks of participant observation prior to identifying children for interviews. My reasoning for adopting this sequence was that I wanted my emerging understandings of the school lives of children to inform the questions that I asked in interviews. This sequence has the advantage of making interview

questions congruent with the personal assumptions and expectations of interview participants. As Tammivaara and Enright (1986) have written,

By observing groups over time, ethnographers can discern interaction patterns, cultural concepts, and folk terms that can then serve as a basis for creating questions that begin with assumptions that are at least tentatively in line with those of the local community. (p. 221)

In selecting children for interviews, I employed a purposeful sample, which has long been a method of choice for qualitative researchers (Merriam, 2009, p. 77). A purposeful sample suited my desire for depth of understanding of power relations at a particular location at a particular moment in time. My sentiments are reflected in a statement from Merriam (2009), who suggests that “In qualitative research, a single case or small, nonrandom, purposeful sample is selected precisely because the researcher wishes to understand the particular in depth, not to find out what is generally true of the many” (p. 224). At the same time, given my focus on understanding everyday—i.e., not exceptional—power relations between school participants, my sample may also be thought of as typical, which Merriam (2009) defines as reflecting “the average person, situation, or instance of the phenomenon of interest” (p. 78). That is, the children whom I chose to interview represented typical students—at least in the context of Washington Elementary—involved in daily relations of power with their teachers. However, my sample did involve variation as well. As mentioned earlier, I interviewed six children from each classroom, and these children were chosen because they represented a range of attention from their teachers. Interview guides for second grade (Appendix 8) and sixth grade (Appendix 9) are appended to this dissertation. However, given that this range was not the primary sampling rationale, I would

hesitate to label my strategy *maximum variation sampling* as identified by Glaser and Strauss (1967).

Interviews with students, in short, began six weeks into my research and lasted until it concluded in late January. Interviews focused on students' subjective understanding of classroom rules and issues of power, and further on how, if at all, relations of power shaped the daily, subjective experiences of the interviewees. That is, the interviews were conducted to elicit data to address research questions one and three, which focused on ascertaining the extant technologies of power in the two classrooms and the impact of power upon student subjectivity.

Like interviews with students, interviews with teachers afforded me an opportunity to triangulate observational data by providing an additional source of data (Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Merriam, 2009). I interviewed each teacher two times over the course of my project—once in the beginning phases of my research, and a second time near the end. I crafted a general interview guide (Appendix 10) for the first interviews, in order to ascertain teachers' philosophies of and approaches to management issues in the classroom. Subsequent interviews focused on particular things that occurred during my time in the classrooms. These interviews necessitated individualized interview guides for Ms. Maldonado (Appendix 11) and Ms. Barber (Appendix 12). All interviews were recorded, transcribed in full by the researcher, and analyzed through a process that will be explicated below.

In addition to formal, sit-down interviews that were arranged ahead of time, my study involved countless conversations that were just as integral to the research process. Bogdan and Biklen (2006) have suggested that these conversations are interviews in their own right. Their comments on this matter are trenchant and apropos of my own study, so I shall quote them at length:

In participant-observation studies, the researcher usually knows the subjects through interacting with them before interviewing so the interview is often like a conversation between friends. Here the interview cannot easily be separated from other research activities. When a subject has a spare moment, for example, the research might say, “Have you got a few minutes? I haven’t had a chance to talk with you alone.” (p. 103)

Much of my data was produced in these spare few minutes—sitting with the sixth-graders before school in the gymnasium, playing tag with the second-graders on a sunny day, chatting with one of the teachers during her planning time. The data that was produced in these spare moments proved invaluable to this study—to understanding and denuding power relationships in the two classrooms I studied.

As my time at Washington was coming to a close, I interviewed the principal of the school, Dr. Mark Smith. My interview with Dr. Smith focused, among other things, on his overall philosophy of discipline, any guidelines to which all teachers must adhere, and the reasons most children are sent to his office. The interview guide for that interview is also appended to this study (Appendix 13).

Visual Methods

Research suggests that visual methods can be especially efficacious in yielding rich data with children (Morrow, 2001; Pike, 2010). It has been argued, for example, that photo elicitation interviews can ameliorate many of the problems associated with interviewing children, such as verbal language limitations, unfamiliarity with interview structures, and power disparities between the adult interviewer and the child interviewee (Epstein, Stevens, McKeever, & Baruchel, 2006). What’s more, these methods do not appear to simply duplicate data gleaned

from other strategies, but can rather afford the researcher an opportunity for new, complimentary insights (Darbyshire, MacDougall, & Schiller, 2005).

In the beginning phases of my research, I had planned to draw heavily upon visual methods. For example, I had planned to utilize several visual techniques associated with the Mosaic approach in childhood research (Clark, 2004; Clark, 2010; Clark & Moss, 2001). The aim of this approach is to bring together participatory strategies—viz. visual and kinesthetic—with observation and interviews in order to render a composite of children’s lives (Clark, 2010, p. 117). I had planned, then, to ask children to photograph their school while taking me on a guided tour. In a more structured way, I had planned to ask children to photograph school places with both positive and negative associations—for example, places where they had had fun in the past and also those where they had experienced conflict. However, the school district stipulated that my research not interrupt instructional time. As such, there was little time for extended visual procedures. It was difficult enough to try to squeeze formal interviews into lunch and recess breaks. In short, most visual methods were impractical given district specifications and the structure of a school day. However, in order to understand places of silence in the school, I was able to lead the second graders through a map-making activity in which they delineated places where it is important to be silent. I also incorporated photo elicitation (Epstein, Stevens, McKeever, & Baruchel, 2006; Merriam, 2009) into my interviews, asking both second and sixth grade students to respond to researcher-generated photographs of various physical places in their school. My reasoning behind using photo elicitation was that I believed it could provide particularly rich data regarding how students subjectively and affectively experience power situations. That is, I believed the visual methods delineated above could help disentangle the relationship between instances of power and subjectivity, the focus of my final research question.

Believing, with Jane McGregor (2004), that space is much more than a neutral backdrop for social activity, but rather “is continually organized to maintain power relations” (p. 13), I believed these methods would yield data regarding whether or not (and how) students *feel* power in the spaces of the school—that is, if power relations with social others become inscribed in the subjective experience of physical space. Moreover, I believed these methods could potentially yield data regarding the impact of relations of power on constructions of the self. Although I was initially sanguine about the data that this strategy might produce, in the end the children had difficulty speaking about the images beyond a surface level. To be sure, my interest in how power was concretized in physical space was in a distinct register from the children’s concerns with the places in question. As such, my findings on space derived more from observations and via discussions with teachers.

Material Data

Merriam (2009) uses the umbrella term *document* to refer to “a wide range of written, visual, digital, and physical material relevant to the study at hand” (p. 139). For the purposes of this study, I collected sundry documents that buttressed my understanding of power relations at Washington Elementary. I gathered a range of materials, including commercial classroom-management materials, teacher-generated recording sheets for behavior, curricular materials, student drawings, letters from the school, and so forth. All of these documents did not end up being included in the final version of this dissertation. Nevertheless, they collectively informed my understanding of power relations, especially how teachers use power in the context of their classrooms. In particular, documents informed this study in four ways. First, Ms. Maldonado contributed several artifacts—calendars, daily checklists, lists of behavioral transgressions—that clarified and concretized her rather involved way of inscribing student behavior. In this instance,

material data directly influenced my understanding of a strategy of power. Second, I kept all daily notes that went home from teachers and administration. While these documents didn't directly inform my analysis, they did keep me abreast of school happenings. Third, I compiled a collection of written learning objectives from Ms. Maldonado's class, which the students had to copy onto their papers prior to doing their work. These documents galvanized my thinking on how curricula can be conceptualized as a technology of power, albeit this category did not make the final analysis, as the data did not support the establishment of a category separate from pedagogy and power. Finally, I collected many artifacts that the children made for me insofar as they established growing levels of trust and rapport with the children in both classes.

In sum, this research employed a basic qualitative design. I utilized several strategies to understand power relations among teachers and students. My primary method of data collection was observation during a prolonged period of engagement at my research site. In addition, I conducted both formal and informal interviews, and drew upon visual methods to understand the subjective dimensions of power. Finally, I gathered material data to further address gaps in understanding.

Analysis

The process of analysis for this project occurred concurrently with the process of data collection. Prior to entering the field, I had developed some general themes—viz., strategies of power and strategies of resistance—based on reading the theoretical literature on power. However, these themes were far from static. Rather, following the advice of Miles and Huberman (1994), I looked at these themes as something to be added to through the process of data collection—as a baseline and a framework for organizing and sharpening my observations.

The development of themes, then, reflected an ongoing engagement with the theoretical and empirical literatures, and local knowledge gathered through the methods delineated above.

For both fieldnotes and interview transcripts, I made multiple passes at the data, with subsequent engagements reflecting increasing analytical distance. First, I simply read through my fieldnotes to acquire a general sense of the data. I then reread the notes while engaging in a process of *open coding*, or writing in the margins notes, comments, ideas, observations, queries, and so forth (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995; Merriam, 2009). At this level of analysis, I tried to remain extremely expansive, coding all text that *might* in some way be useful to my study. Each new set of fieldnotes was treated in this manner—i.e. subjected to close reading and open coding. Moreover, after each new set of fieldnotes, I reread the complete corpus of notes to gain a sense of the landscape and vicissitudes of the field experience over time (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995, p. 142). Even at the early phases of data collection, I began to group codes according to conceptual categories reflecting emerging commonalities, a process of *axial coding* (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Moreover, I began utilizing the constant-comparative method (see, for example, Glaser, 1978; 1992) to explore and elucidate cross-entry categories. That is, I looked for connections across sets of fieldnotes. Throughout data collection, I pursued this inductive process of developing in vivo codes. The number of categories were expanded or reduced throughout data collection, as I frequently returned to the data, rereading my notes and transcripts and fitting the data together new ways. I also found it organizationally and conceptually prudent to return to the literature often, especially the theoretical literature on power relations, from which I derived “theory-generated codes” (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Thus, the final thematic categories presented here represent a confluence of my experiences in the field and the literature on my topic. However, the categories should not be confused as a

typology (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 211), or clusters that bear little resemblance to the lived realities of my research participants. In order to obviate this potentiality, I shared a coding summary with teachers and students whom I interviewed, asking for their reactions. Moreover, as categories began to solidify toward the middle of my research, I began to search for negative instances (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 207) in an attempt to buttress the trustworthiness of my data.

As my research progressed, I developed a visual codebook, or an organized lists of codes (Ryan & Bernard, 2000, p. 781). In the beginning, I attempted to keep such a book in written form, but this ultimately proved unworkable for me. Although a written text had the advantage of convenience, I found that I would often confuse codes when relying on a written index. Therefore, I developed a visual schema that projected emerging codes onto an office wall. Through data collection, then, as I continued to code and compare codes across individual fieldnote entries and interview transcripts, I was able to develop the categories or themes that subsume my findings. The categories and subcategories that represent my final analyses are included in this dissertation in the results chapters.

Memoing was a significant part of the analytical process. As Miles & Huberman (1994) have noted, memos are conceptual in intent—that is, they do not simply report data, but rather tie together different pieces of data into clusters. Memoing, in short, is one way of beginning to establish relationships between pieces of data, and as Glaser (1978) has noted, they can be as short as a sentence or as long as a few pages. In general, my memos were short and embedded as analytical commentary within my fieldnotes. However, I also wrote longer memos as well. The process of memoing was, for me, a process of discovering—of learning, to paraphrase Geertz (1973), what I believed my participants believed they were up to. My sentiments on memoing

are reflected in a statement from Laurel Richardson (2000), who suggested, “I write because I want to find something out. I write in order to learn something that I did not know before I wrote it” (p. 924). In short, the results of this study were informed by sustained reflective and analytical writing.

Trustworthiness

Merriam (2009) has suggested that all qualitative research must adequately address questions of trustworthiness, and that trustworthiness is achieved “to the extent that there has been some rigor in carrying out the study” (p. 209). I utilized several strategies to ensure that my data were trustworthy and credible. To begin with, I triangulated my data insofar as I drew upon multiple sources of data and data collection methods, all of which were described above. In addition, I utilized sundry sorts of member checks. These member checks provided participants the opportunity to review and refine their previous statements, thus ensuring at least partial contribution to the process of interpretation (Thomas & O’Kane, 1998). Believing, as I do, that reviewing and refining one’s statements involves a process of interpretation and reinterpretation, my strategies afforded participants some measure of control over the research process, as well as opportunities for expression, genuine participation, and interpretation on the participants’ terms. All interviews with teachers and sixth-graders were transcribed in full, returned to study participants, and, in some cases, revisited at a later date for purposes of clarification. For second-graders, I created interview summaries (see Appendix 14 for a representative example), which I then returned to participants. I also shared emerging findings with teachers in order to elicit their feedback. The data summaries that I created for the teachers are appended to this study (Appendix 15). Finally, my results, with hope, demonstrate rich, thick description, enabling my readers to assess whether my descriptions match the research context.

Maxwell (1992) approaches the issue of validity from a realist perspective, which sees “the validity of an account as inherent, not in the procedures used to produce and validate it, but in its relationship to those things that it is intended to be an account *of*” (p. 281). In other words, validity cannot rest solely on the logic or coherence of the account. Rather, there must be a plausible relationship between the account and some external other. Despite some philosophical problems with this viewpoint—particularly from a post-structuralist perspective—Maxwell does provide a useful typology of different sorts of validity, from which the researcher may anticipate threats to her study. In particular, Maxwell posits *descriptive validity*, or the factual accuracy of the account; *interpretive validity*, or a study’s position as an emic account; *theoretical validity*, or the ability of an account to function as an explanation of the phenomenon in question; *generalizability*, or the extent to which inferences may be drawn from the account to new situations and contexts; and *evaluative validity*, or validity questions about evaluative statements made about study participants. Of the proceeding, the first three types of validity are most germane to this study—indeed, in Maxwell’s estimation, most germane to qualitative research in general—so I would like to just briefly address them before concluding this chapter.

I have attempted to maintain descriptive validity through rich, thick description throughout this dissertation. As the reader will see, my results rely heavily on fieldnote and interview excerpts, which are laden with the actual words of the participants in my study. In addition, as was just described, I returned interview transcripts to study participants. As such, all study participants had an opportunity to challenge the descriptive validity of this dissertation. To address interpretive validity, I attempted to ground my analysis as much as possible in the words and concepts of my participants. This is always noted in the text, such as, for example, in the next chapter in which I delineate how the concept of corporeal power (or a power over the body)

was partially derived from statements made by Ms. Barber. However, I feel like it is important to note that there is hardly an isomorphic relationship between participants' words and some sort of universal, transhistorical truth. As Maxwell (1992) himself writes, "Accounts of participants' meanings are never a matter of direct access, but are always *constructed* by the researcher(s) on the basis of participants' accounts and other evidence" (p. 290). Finally, this dissertation attains theoretical validity by moving beyond description and interpretation. In the results chapters to follow, the reader will find an increasing analytical depth, such that the particulars of this account are arranged into composites with theoretical and explanatory value.

Chapter Summary

In the preceding chapter, I have offered a discussion of critical methodology, qualitative research methods, and analysis techniques. I began by offering some comments on how my study responds to questions of knowing and the partial, perspectival nature of social inquiry. I drew parallels between my methodology and Foucault's *critical ontology* insofar as my study attempted to identify social processes in education that have become normalized.

A background to the study was offered, including the researcher's unique position as a former teacher at Washington Elementary, and the process of negotiating access and obtaining informed consent from study participants was discussed. I discussed my methods and procedures, including participant and qualitative observation, interviews, visual methods, and documents. I explicated, for each strategy, my rationale for choosing it, how it was employed, and the nature of the data it produced.

I discussed how this study responded to questions of ethics, especially protection from harm and disparities in authority. In addition, I described my process of analysis, which, as mentioned, occurred concurrently with data collection. In particular, I delineated the process of

coding and categorizing data, and described my use of memos as an analytical device. Finally, I addressed questions of trustworthiness and validity.

The next chapter marks the first in a series of four substantive chapters that represent the results of this study. In this next chapter, I will discuss how power targets the body in a process of subjectivizing students in particular ways.

Chapter Five: Power and the Body

In the chapters to follow, I will present and discuss several forms of power employed by teachers as well as students' responses to teachers' actions. A basic point should be kept in mind throughout—viz. that teachers' actions shaped the contours of student subjectivity, individuating students in singular ways. Foucault (2000a) has referred to such processes as “dividing practices,” wherein the “subject is either divided inside himself or divided from others” (p. 326). So, as a foundational claim moving forward, I would like to suggest that the strategies of force employed by the two teachers in my study had the effect of producing specific sorts of students. In particular, both teachers wanted to help students become independent, self-disciplined, and productive. Ms. Barber spoke to this point in an interview:

Lewis: Do you think you're a good classroom manager?

Barber: Ahh [long pause]

Lewis: I'm asking you and no one else.

Barber: [laughing hard] To some degree. Not for the way I would like for it to be, because I think it should extend outside the classroom.

Lewis: Tell me what you would like it to be.

Barber: I would like for my students to be independent of me. Like when, after I assign something to them, I would like to be strictly a facilitator. Ahh, after I assign them something—after I teach it, of course, and assign it—and then I would like for my students to be able to work and then the ones who (and I'm not doing that; I should be)—a piece of paper for them to say, I got the idea or I got this; I need some more work, you know. I would like for them to be able to do that, and I would like to get them set up to work. They can go ahead and get something else that can keep them (for whatever the level they're on, you know) independent of me. Umm, I would like for them to be able to walk to any support service without me being with them.

Lewis: Is that the goal as you move throughout the year...

Barber: Yes.

Lewis: ...for them to become independent of you?

Barber: Independent, yes.

In a similar way, Ms. Maldonado spoke often of the importance of producing self-disciplined, independent students. Take, as an example, the following excerpt from my fieldnotes, capturing a conversation I had with Ms. Maldonado as her students played outside:

I ask a question that I'm not sure how to phrase, but a question that I want the answer to nevertheless. I say, "What do you want to achieve with your behavioral management techniques? What kind of children do you want?" Maldonado responds as if she'd been waiting on the question. "I want them to enjoy learning. And I want them to be self-disciplined. These children are always told what to do. I want them to be independent and self-disciplined, so that they don't have to come to me with every single little thing."

Moreover, in an interview with Ms. Maldonado she spoke about the importance of self-discipline and its connection with individual productivity, with knowing what to do and getting it done:

Lewis: Okay, so let me rephrase to make sure I understand. Discipline helps children be responsible?

Maldonado: I think of discipline as their...

Lewis: As what now?

Maldonado: They're disciplining themselves, their responsibility. Not me saying...

Lewis: Discipline is theirs. You mean, discipline as...

Maldonado: I don't see discipline as the parent or the teacher saying, umm, "You did this and this. I'm taking away your recess." I think discipline is self-discipline. They know what they have to do, and they're going to do it. Does that make sense?

Lewis: It does, yeah. It makes a lot of sense.

Maldonado: Not me saying, "You're, you're chewing gum. Throw it in the trash and go sit in the whatever—other room or time-out chair."

Lewis: Well, where do you think that self-discipline comes from?

Maldonado: Me showing them what's expected.

In short, both teachers in my study saw independence, self-discipline, and individual productivity as goals of their disciplinary strategies. In the remainder of this chapter, I will discuss two categories that describe the mechanisms employed by each teacher to effect these ends—viz. strategies for creating still and silent bodies, and a managing of detail. I would reiterate here something that I addressed in the introduction. In particular, while this chapter seeks to denude practices of power that target the body, it is not intended as an indictment of those engaged in power relations. Indeed, in light of the "grammar" of schooling (Tyack & Tobin, 1994)—i.e., the institutionalized aspects that are so difficult to change—it might be suggested that others, in the place of the actors herein, might have behaved similarly. As such, it is not my primary intent to

offer a critique of practice, but rather to ferret out instances of power, illustrate their various permutations, and demonstrate their linkages with subjectivity formation.

Still, Silent Bodies

Both Ms. Maldonado and Ms. Barber enacted strategies to effect still and silent student bodies, albeit their mechanisms for doing so were slightly different. Ms. Maldonado's efforts were directed mainly at controlling students' voices and less concerned with regulating student movement. On the other hand, Ms. Barber's strategies emphasized the regulation of both voice and movement. For organizational purposes, I will present the data here by grade level, beginning with the second grade.

Teacher's actions surrounding students' voices—when and where they could be used, the appropriate levels for given tasks—were constitutive of a discourse of silence. That is, teachers' reminders and injunctions were not isolated statements without effect. Rather, they were part of a system of meanings that extended beyond the classroom into nearly all areas of the school. Before looking specifically at teachers' discursive strategies, we should take a moment to clarify the meaning of "discourse." Ball (1990) has defined it as follows:

Discourses are . . . about what can be said, and thought, but also about who can speak, when, where and with what authority. Discourses embody meaning and social relationships, they constitute both subjectivity and power relations . . . Thus, discourses construct certain possibilities for thought. (p. 17)

Discourses, then, define the relations of power between social actors, shape the contours of subjectivity, and construct the "given" of a particular social moment.

In Ms. Maldonado's room, repeated injunctions for silence were far from isolated snippets of language, but rather constitutive of a discourse of silence that positioned Ms.

Maldonado as a user of language and students as passive, silent recipients. Injunctions for silence occurred both in the classroom and beyond; before, during, and after work; at the individual and group level. Indeed, so pervasive were such orders to get quiet or listen, that highlighted examples here run the risk of seeming arbitrary. Of course, during classroom work the expectation was for total and complete silence, as suggested by the following fieldnote excerpts:

I spent the morning with the second graders. I walked into the room late, around 9:30, and when the children saw me there was a brief frisson of activity, as they called out, “Mr. Lewis! Mr. Lewis!” Immediately, Ms. Maldonado reminded them that they were working on something very important, and that they could make no mistakes. So, she told them, they needed to be completely quiet, with absolutely no talking while they were working. And just like that the room became totally quiet, as some children worked with paper and pencil while others worked on the computers.

It’s 10:30 and we’re back in the room. With the Pearson consultant visit and music, it is now two and half hours into the school day and the students are still working on their do-it-now work, the daily morning work that is supposed to take fifteen minutes. Ms. Maldonado, perhaps sensing that the day is getting away from her, projects a digital stopwatch onto the smart board and sets it for 12 minutes. “The timer is going,” she says. “There it is. You need to finish before it gets to zero.” So the children begin to write quietly, as Ms. Maldonado circles the room, peering down at the papers. “I should not hear any talking if you’re working.”

These statements from Ms. Maldonado, indicative of a broader discourse of silence, speak clearly to the students, defining the conditions of language—that is, what sort of statements can be made and by whom—and, as such, the relations of power and contours of subjectivity. The students are positioned as workers, and workers need to be quiet. I recorded countless instances of Ms. Maldonado’s words and actions suggesting that work and talk were incompatible in the context of the classroom—that silence and listening were requisite states for learning and working. In the following excerpt, Ms. Maldonado reminds her children that preparing for work—that is “getting ready”—involves silencing one’s voice:

At 11:25 Ms. Maldonado gathered the students’ attention by clapping out several rhythms with her hands, which the students repeated gleefully. She then had the children clear everything from their tables—everything, that is, except a hundreds chart, if they chose to

use one (and Ms. Maldonado suggested they use one)—for some mental math. She began, “I’ll know you’re ready when you’re quiet and your hundreds chart is showing. But you know what, guys? Right now, I’m not seeing people getting ready. I’m seeing and hearing talking.”

Ms. Maldonado also reminded her children that talking and learning were incompatible:

After she’d finished speaking to the class about the new closet routine, Ms. Maldonado offered a brief reminder about the importance of listening, adding, “We had problems yesterday. There was a lot of talking and not much learning, I think.”

However, it was not simply in the context of work that this admonition held. Rather, children were also told to be quiet before work had begun:

At 9:10 it was time for a spelling test. Until that time, most of the children had been sitting quietly, with a few hushed conversations piercing the silence. Ms. Maldonado reminded her children that they all needed sharpened pencils and folders to make shields for their work. Then, Ms. Maldonado began to pass out the test papers, and conversations began to grow louder. “Excuse me,” Ms. Maldonado said, “but let’s keep it down. You are preparing for a spelling test, so your voice should be off, and you should take out folders and a pencil.”

Ms. Maldonado also articulated an expectation that children would remain quiet during nonacademic times. In the following fieldnote excerpt, we are preparing to go outside to recess when something unexpected happens:

Just before we’re to go outside, the bird jumps into the guinea pig’s cage, and all the children rush over. They cannot contain their excitement and begin talking to each other in excited tones. In a moment, the bird flies out. “You cannot be quiet,” Ms. Maldonado tells the children. “That was a good opportunity to see what would happen next, but it got cut short because you couldn’t control yourselves.”

Ms. Maldonado’s discursive actions, then, defined fields of silence—both academic and social—that positioned the students not only as silent workers, but as passive listeners as well. This general point is exemplified in the previous example, in which children were scolded for being unable to control themselves—that is, for using their voices. Here, there is a clear link between power and subjectivity formation, as the children learn, via repeated injunctions, how to see themselves as students. The expectation is that students will remain passive and quiet for many

parts of the day. This is further exemplified in a note describing how the children were punished because they were too talkative and uproarious:

I'm outside Ms. Maldonado's room, just about to walk in, when I hear Ms. Maldonado clap a five-beat rhythm and the children echo it back:

Clap, clap, clapclapclap!

Clap, clap, clapclapclap!

I walk in the door. "Four minutes of absolute silence," Ms. Maldonado says. The children are sitting on the carpet, in front of their desks and tables. "Sitting criss-crossed," she adds. I ask why the children are sitting quietly on the floor, and she tells me that they had been talkative prior to my arrival and she wanted them calm before lunch.

Repeated injunctions, in short, carry discursive weight: we find in them an ethos of silence (more on this idea below) that positions speakers, establishes relations of powers between speakers, and shapes the contours of subjectivity in specific ways (i.e., by defining students as quiet, docile workers in the classroom).

Ms. Maldonado drew upon several other strategies to regulate students' voices. To begin with, she referred to appropriate voice levels for given times, voice levels which were posted all around the school building, including on Ms. Maldonado's front door:

Voice Levels

0—Off

1—Whisper

2—Six-inch voice

3—Sharing

4—Recess

So, for instance, Ms. Maldonado counted down and specified an appropriate level in preparing her students for library:

Walking in, I cannot discern what the children are up to, so I ask Ms. Maldonado and she tells me that they are either studying for their spelling test or reading books. Most of the

children, it seems, are quizzing each other, which seemed like talking when I first arrived. After a time, Ms. Maldonado signals for quiet by counting down:

“Five, four, three, two, one. Voice to a two. You have only about ten minutes left until library, so you should be working quietly, with a voice level two.”

Specifying appropriate voice levels is a more specific strategy than general discursive calls for silence. Indeed, it seems to me that the repeated injunctions explored earlier in this chapter describe a general environment of silence, and it is within this environment that more specific strategies can be articulated. In other words, the students in Ms. Maldonado’s class were confronted with repeated injunctions that were constitutive of a global experience of silence—which, as we will see presently, they were quite cognizant of and could readily express—and then more specific strategies that were deployed at specific moments to effectuate quiet students.

Two additional specific strategies that Ms. Maldonado employed were “the quiet song” and “heads-down.” These were whole-group strategies that she used when the students became too loud. For instance, one day when the children had difficulty lining up for lunch Ms. Maldonado used the quiet song to prepare them:

At 11:50 the children tried to line up for lunch but were quite loud. So, Ms. Maldonado led a song that I had heard her sing on several occasions, with the children joining in after just a few beats:

Here I sit, like a bird in the wilderness,

Bird in the wilderness,

Bird in the wilderness.

Here I sit, like a bird in the wilderness,

Waiting for you to get quiet.

The children were quieter after the song, but talking could still be heard, so Ms. Maldonado led a second singing of the song and then, following that, a third. At that point, all the children were silent, facing forward with hands in proper places, ready to enter the hallway.

Like the quiet song, Ms. Maldonado used the heads-down strategy to regulate voices at the level of the whole group. This was a last resort, something to turn to when injunctions at the individual and group level had proved ineffective:

I walk toward Amanda's table as Ms. Maldonado continues giving directions for a reading assignment. I hear someone humming. So, too, does Ms. Maldonado. "Can whoever is humming please stop while I give directions?"

The humming continues. It is Zora. Ms. Maldonado walks over to her, leans down, and says something into her ear. As she does so the class breaks into a frisson of activity: conversations, Claudia begins to walk around, Tionne motions for me to come listen to her read.

"Okay, enough," Ms. Maldonado says. "Heads down. Have a seat and heads down now. Don't wait, don't put anything away. Put your heads down now."

Most of the children have their heads down now, and the room is quiet.

This is a simple strategy—perhaps, too, a common one—yet one to which we devote little thought or attention. Here, as a disciplinary strategy, the teacher compels the child's body to execute a patterned movement. The child becomes demonstrably passive, submissive—her field of possible actions reduced to sitting perfectly still. And, of course, there is the expectation that voices will silence as heads go down:

The children have finished their work and Ms. Maldonado is picking up their journals to grade. As she does so, several conversations begin and, after a time, there's activity all around me. "Heads down," shouts Ms. Maldonado. Most of the children put their heads down, but Lily has to be reminded. "Lily, heads down! Right now you should not be doing anything except heads down, voices off."

Ethos of Silence (Grade Two)

The expectation for silence extended beyond Ms. Maldonado's classroom to many areas of the school. Children were expected to be quiet when lining up and walking in the hallway, in the lunchroom and restrooms, and in their support classes. During the course of my research, I became so interested in this idea of a ubiquitous ethos of silence, that I had the second graders engage in a drawing activity to map out quiet places in their school. I told the students simply to draw a place (or multiple places) where it was important for them to be quiet in the school. The following places were drawn: whole school (eight times), classroom (eight times), library (ten times), hallway (1 time), computer room (eight times), the office (one time), and the cafeteria (one time).

It is important to underscore that four places stood out—the classroom, the library, the whole school, and the computer lab. Moreover, taken together these places describe much of the school, especially considering the frequency at which the entire school was drawn. There was, in short, a veritable landscape of quietude at Washington (at least for the second graders in Ms. Maldonado’s class), with a pervasive ethos of silence that shaped students’ experiences of the school. For instance, in my six interviews with second grade students, all emphasized the importance of being quiet at school. Zora, a precocious black child with curious eyes, told me about her teacher in the context of an interview:

Lewis: Do you ever get sad or mad about your teacher?

Zora: [shakes head]

Lewis: Never?

Zora: Well, she just tells me what to do. I listen to her.

Lewis: What kind of things does she tell you what to do?

Zora: To be quiet, ahh, and stop singing, and... But I love singing, though.

Lewis: You like to sing.

Zora: Mhmm (positive)

Lewis: You like to hum. I’ve noticed that about you.

Zora: I like to hum, rap, make beats, and sing.

Lewis: Really? So sometimes do you do that in class and Ms. Maldonado has to say to stop.

Zora: Mhmm.

Lewis: How does that feel?

Zora: Sad.

Lewis: It does. How come?

Zora: Well, she just tells me to stop and I stop. I just like singing, that’s all. Do you like to sing?

Zora, in short, identified Ms. Maldonado as someone who, first of all, tells you to be quiet. In addition, when I asked Zora to draw a picture of something fun at school, she created a picture of her listening to a story and told me, “I like to learn when my teacher reads me a story, and I can sit quietly on the carpet, with my mouth closed.” Similarly, Lily, a Hispanic girl of slight stature and shy temperament, described her teacher as someone who calls on you when you are quiet:

Lewis Tell me about your teacher. What do you really like about your teacher?

Lily: She calls on me whenever I sit quietly.

Lewis: Okay. She calls on you to answer questions? Is that what you mean?

Lily: Uh-huh [positive]

Lewis: Okay. What if—you say you have to be sitting quietly for her to call on you?

Lily: Uh-huh, I can't even go like [in an excited tone], "Oh, I know! Oh, I know!"

Lewis: If you do that what does she do?

Lily: She doesn't call on me.

Remaining quiet, then, was a requisite state for experiencing the classroom in a positive way and, as suggested by Lily's words, for participating in classroom practices. De'Andre, a black child with a shaved head and a penchant for standing up at his desk, echoed the words of his classmates in our interview:

Lewis: What do you like to do at school?

De'Andre: Play recess, eat lunch with my friends, and listen to the teacher when she asking me. And don't talk when the teacher is talking. And don't get in trouble.

Lewis: What does getting in trouble mean? How do you get in trouble?

De'Andre: Like, the, the teacher's talking and you're talking, you get in trouble. You hit somebody, you get in trouble; or you bite them, you get in trouble.

Lewis: What about in the classroom, what are you supposed to do in the classroom? You told me a couple things. You told me don't talk while the teacher's talking, right? What else?

De'Andre: Don't talk to your friends when the teacher's talking too.

Lewis: I see. What else is there? Is there anything else?

De'Andre: Don't talk. If the teacher says "come here" and you don't come here, umm, you, that's a bad thing to do.

Lewis: It is. Okay . . . well tell me about the hallway now. What are you supposed to do in the hallway?

De'Andre: There's people working in the classroom, and you have to be quiet. You can't whisper, either.

Here, again, we see a student emphasizing the importance of silence, as De'Andre tells me about the importance of not talking both in the classroom and in the hallways. Other examples could be provided, but the point would remain the same: repeated calls for silence throughout the school were constitutive of a discourse of silence that positioned speakers and listeners, defined particular arrangements of power, and sketched the contours of student and teacher subjectivity.

Remaining Still (Grade Two)

A final strategy Ms. Maldonado employed to still and quiet her children was asking them to engage in prolonged periods of stationary activity at their desks. This strategy was not, as we will see shortly, as prevalent in Ms. Maldonado's room as it was in Ms. Barber's. Nevertheless, there were many instances of children sitting for long periods of time. Often, I became aware of such periods through reflecting on my own body, as suggested in the following fieldnote excerpt:

At this point in the day, I became very aware of my body, as I had been sitting in a hard, plastic chair for the entire morning. The children, of course, have sat too, save putting away their things in the coat closet. The homework routine took nearly an hour and a half.

Or, again, in a note from another day, when the children were working at their individual computers, which they did with greater frequency as the year wore on:

Ms. Maldonado walks over to me, and I ask her how long the children will work on the computers. She tells me until 10:30, when she has a meeting regarding Jackson, and the children will have to go to another classroom. The children stare at their screens attentively. There is little talking now. At 10:30 the children will have worked for 2 hours and 15 minutes—the entire morning—at their seats, with very little talking. I must admit I feel badly for them. As I become tired of sitting, I am able to walk around and stretch my legs a bit, but the children are not afforded this luxury.

Sitting for extended periods had the effect of regulating movement and disciplining student bodies for long periods of individual work, primarily, as mentioned, at their computers. It should be pointed out that Ms. Maldonado believed the students were required to remain stationary for too long during the day, but she felt compelled to have them do so because of mandated numbers of minutes on the computers each day.⁹ One morning, when the children had passed nearly the entire time at their computers, I asked Ms. Maldonado how much time the children spent on

⁹ Both teachers in my study frequently commented on practices that were mandated from “downtown,” or the district's central office. In addition, both were cognizant of the ways in which managing a classroom tends to become patterned and rote over time. For instance, Ms. Barber told me in an interview that managing a classroom is something that one doesn't even think about after several years of teaching—that it becomes part of the normal cadences of the classroom over time. As such, we might tentatively suggest that much teacher behavior is constrained by broader institutional and social normative expectations for practice.

them each day, and she told me that it could be several hours, adding, “It’s too long.” Even so, Ms. Maldonado did expect her children to sit at their desks most of the time, especially in the context of individual work:

As the children worked, they became talkative. Ms. Maldonado did not let this pass, telling her students that she would set a timer for three minutes, after which time they would have to stop. She then set two egg timers for three minutes and sat them on two of the students’ tables.

“Zora,” Ms. Maldonado said, stopping briefly. “I’m going to remind you you’re working quietly because you already have two checkmarks.”

De’Andre got up from his seat to walk to the trashcan and throw away a used tissue. Ms. Maldonado frowned largely and shook her head at me as we locked eyes.

Here we have the smallest of gestures—a frown followed in quick succession by a shake of the head—yet ones that are telling, demonstrating, as they do, the profound expectation to sit and the disapproval one is met with when this expectation isn’t upheld.

Ethos of Silence (Grade Six)

Like Ms. Maldonado, Ms. Barber issued constant reminders for silence to her students, statements which accreted into a discourse of silence in the classroom and beyond. The following two examples are representative of the sorts of statements she made on a daily basis:

At 9:40 the students had returned and were participating in a whole-group lesson on irregular plural nouns. The lesson consisted of a worksheet that they were completing together. Ms. Barber called on about 10 children to recite what endings (viz. /sh/, /ch/, and /x/) necessitated an –es ending rather than a simple –s ending. The students repeated each other, time and time again, with the same answer. Following that, they completed the worksheet independently.

Ms. Barber inaugurated the work with gentle reminders: “Doesn’t require talk. Relax. Work.”

The class worked quietly from that moment on.

“I say it every day,” she begins in a stern voice, “and I will continue to say it every day. There is a right way to talk and a right way to behave. And first and foremost, you have to be quiet and listening. We need to improve our listening skills. It might even save your life one day—who knows. You would be amazed.”

In my first of two interviews with Ms. Barber, she described her philosophy of classroom management and the importance of being in what she termed “the listening mode”:

Barber: Umm, classroom management, what the expectations are is that—I guess I’m old school—so that if the children cannot learn, umm, they can only learn when they’re in the listening mode and ready to work and produce.

So, for Ms. Barber listening (and, by extension, silence, for it was evident in her room that silence was a necessary component of listening) was a requisite for work. She saw a connection, in other words, between a quiet body and a productive, efficient body. This point will be clarified and expanded below. It should also be noted that Ms. Barber, like Ms. Maldonado, expected her children to be quiet in nearly all areas of the school, especially the hallways. For example, one day, following a trip to the restroom, Ms. Barber addressed her children about their talking in the hallway. “What is the rule since day one?” she asked them. “Wait, I take that back—since kindergarten? You have been taught, over and over, to walk and not talk!” Ms. Barber’s words suggest that the expectation to remain quiet in the hallway is something shared by all teachers in the building. Her repeated reminders, moreover, were not isolated, meaningless statements; rather, they were constitutive of a discourse that demarcated authorized speakers from unauthorized ones, established relations of power between the agent and the recipient(s) of discursive deployments, and effectuated certain kinds of subjects—viz., quiet workers and a watchful teacher.

Lectures (Grade Six)

In addition to repeated injunctions constitutive of a discourse of silence, Ms. Barber utilized lectures to effect quiet students. These were extended periods (often twenty to thirty minutes) of teacher talk which left little room for student voices. In the following excerpt, Ms. Barber addresses her class about homework:

Before the morning meeting could begin, Ms. Barber launched into an extended lecture on homework. She told the students that failing to do their homework at home would lead to their having to do it during their support classes; as a result, their support grades would go down. In the middle of the lecture, Sally said something that I could not make out. Ms. Barber addressed her. “I’m talking. Not at this time. It must wait, Sally. I come first.”

Then, Ms. Barber caught Perry in the closet. “Come out of my closet!” she bellowed. “I’m not doing that. You’re not going to keep saying I forgot this, I forgot that. It’s November, and you’re too big. Get a bigger memory. Everybody else knows how to take everything out in the morning like you’re supposed to. So you do it then—not while I’m talking.”

The lecture continued. She emphasized the importance of establishing a homework routine, and told them about her homework space under the bed in her childhood home, which was the only place she could find quiet away from all the musicians in her family. Sometimes she had to go to a friend’s house to do her homework. So they have no excuse; they can always find someplace to work if they look hard enough. And she emphasized that she will keep them to get it done if they don’t do it at home. So, yes, she said, their grades in support would drop if they have to miss often to finish their homework.

The lecture lasted fifteen minutes. I looked around to the students as Ms. Barber was speaking, and all of them were sitting quietly, still and passive. Perry, Ana stared blankly at the teacher. Isabella worked her nails. Diego rested his head on his table. The lecture did not leave time for the morning meeting, as it lasted right up until art. “I talked up the time,” Ms. Barber said. “It was needed. It was needed because I have a long list every day of students who didn’t do homework.”

I would underscore here the children’s actions—Sally speaks, Perry makes his way into the closet—and how they briefly interpolate Ms. Barber’s lecture. But the interruptions are brief.

Ultimately, the students are talked into a torpid state, where they simply look on quietly. An additional example demonstrates this point, showing the disciplinary monotony established by the extended lecture:

At 9:45 Ms. Barber announced that they would begin the morning meeting. Before she could get it started, however, she launched into a lecture: “Your little personalities,” she began, “get in the way of learning. You are here for your education. You are here to take in knowledge. There is no other reason why you are here. Not here to see your itty bitty issues and problems. Lately, I mean, it’s like pulling hen’s teeth (That’s an old expression. Do hen’s have teeth?) to do work—to read and answer questions. I need you to understand how sixth graders are supposed to work and produce, how you’re supposed to interact with each other. Don’t talk bad. That’s in the streets.”

The lecture continued. I looked over to the children, who sat with disaffected expressions. Alejandro stared into space, head in hand. Phoenix, too, examined the cosmos. Gloria and Camila shared a quiet joke and a laugh.

The lecture continued. She reviewed the job of checkers, and told the children that she didn't see checkers doing their jobs. She told them that she hears too much small talk. She chided the quiet captains for failing to tell their groups to get quiet. And she castigated the focus keepers for failing to keep their group members on task. When you help each other, she said, everybody grows.

At 9:55 the lecture was interrupted by a phone call. With Ms. Barber's attention diverted, Maya and Sofia turned in my direction, looking frustrated.

"What's wrong?" I asked.

"We are three weeks behind in reading," Sophia said.

"Why?" I asked.

"Because all we ever do is math. And she blames us."

"Because she's always talking," Maya added. "She blames us, but she's just always talking." She made a motion with her hand to indicate a profusion of words emanating from Ms. Barber's mouth.

Again, Ms. Barber takes control of classroom discourse, which has the effect of rendering the children still and quiet. The children, it should be noted, were quite cognizant of this. Maya, an excellent student and leader in the classroom, suggests that the class is behind in reading because of Ms. Barber's tendency to monopolize classroom discourse. This is, to be sure, an egregious instance of power insofar as it is limiting the students academically. In short, while I do not doubt that Ms. Barber's intentions were positive, her extended lectures had the effect of rendering the students docile and stultifying academic growth. As such, her actions were, to my mind at least, problematic and averse to the spirit of education. This is, to clarify, an indictment of how power is deployed, not the user of power as such.

Maya's aforementioned statement was typical of those made by students during interviews. Indeed, four of the six sixth graders I interviewed spoke about Ms. Barber's lectures and how they affected their experience of the classroom. For instance, Liliana, a Hispanic girl with a quick smile and a sharp wit, spoke about how her teacher is always talking:

Liliana: Like she says, umm, [impersonating her teacher], "You guys are taking my time and lalala." And she's the one talking. That makes no sense. She says, "You guys are taking my time, wasting my time." And she's, like, talking, talking, talking, talking, talking, talking.

Later, Liliana added that the talking “gets on my nerves, and I just want to listen to music.”

Perry, too, told me about Ms. Barber’s lectures and what it’s like to listen to one. Perry is a talented basketball player and a popular sixth grader, who is a leader among the boys. I began by asking him about a lecture that had just occurred that day, one that had been interrupted by an exaggerated yawn from Gloria:

Lewis: Like we just saw that, right? Since that just happened, okay, I want to ask you about it. What was it like sitting there listening?

Perry: Well, it’s not something that I haven’t seen before. I’m used to Gloria talking back to Ms. Barber.

Lewis: What did she actually do? I didn’t see. Did she yawn?

Perry: Yeah, she like makes blurt-outs when Ms. Barber’s talking. She like yawns loudly and stuff. But, umm, it’s happened before, so it’s not really surprising. But when I first saw her go off, umm, I think I remember it. It was because I think Ronald was talking when he wasn’t supposed to, and we were getting ready to take a test, and after she was done talking about it—because other people were doing the same thing Gloria does when she’s talking—so it took up at least a good thirty minutes, or twenty. So we didn’t really get to do the test. And when it first happened I was kind of happy because I didn’t really feel like taking the test. But now it’s just, it’s not really like an event. It’s just something that usually happens every one or two days.

Lewis: You’re just used to it, that’s what you’re telling me?

Perry: Yeah.

Perry suggests that lectures in the classroom are a repeated exercise—something that “happens every one or two days,” and that’s “not really like an event.” This illustrates the degree to which a limiting form of power permeates the everyday life of the classroom, leaving the students feeling, as David, a diminutive boy with a penchant for joking, told me, “bored and sleepy.” Power, in short, targets the body, rendering it useful and docile. Ms. Barber, after all, frequently emphasized in her lectures how she needed the children “to understand how sixth graders are supposed to work and produce.” It is important to point out that this disciplinary strategy was far from totalizing, and indeed students responded, as the previous excerpts suggest, in myriad, creative ways. Students’ actions, however, will be explored in a later chapter for the sake of organization. For the moment, it is necessary to underscore that discourses form particular sorts

of bodies and selves. Haraway (1989), for one, has traced the cultural and material processes involved in “biomedicine’s productions of bodies and selves” (p. 204), illuminating how we come to know ourselves through medical discourses. Similarly, Ms. Barber’s extensive discursive deployments represent instances where power attaches itself to the body, helping to form certain forms of bodies and selves. The student, in short, becomes someone who is still and silent. These meanings are inscribed onto the student body, and they become a primary mechanism through which the student comes to know herself. The reader is likely asking herself at this juncture why I have invoked the student body as a site of power, rather than simply writing of the student herself. There are a couple of reasons for this. To begin with, I concur with Sue Ellen Henry (2013) that “Bodies matter” (p. 1). Henry goes on to write,

How one moves physically through the world—gestures, gait, hold of the hands, frame of the face, gaze of the eyes, our “bodily techniques”—has an impact on one’s experience of the world as well as the constitution of the world itself. (p. 1)

At the same time, educators and researchers often ignore the body. And schools are cogito-centric institutions, which focus on developing the mind and powers of reason. Bodies, in this context, are what sociologist Chris Shilling (2003) has called an “absent presence” (p. 17)—simultaneously there and not there as well. As such, my emphasis on the body reflects, first of all, my desire to center the body as an important site of qualitative research. Moreover, the actions of the teachers in this chapter clearly move the body—stilling it for a lesson, straightening it in line, etc.—in ways that impel me to suggest that the body is an object for micro-articulations of power.

There was a parallel strategy to prolonged periods of teacher talk in Ms. Barber’s classroom, and that was extended periods of sitting quietly, during which the students would

either work or engage in classroom practices and procedures. It was not unusual, in fact, for the children to sit for many hours at a time, which is reflected in the following fieldnote excerpt:

Watching the students work—or, in some cases, refuse to work—on story problems, I realize that they have been sitting the entire morning. They have sat through the morning meeting, computer class, and now through the literacy lesson. Trying to remain true to the dictates of participant observation, I have sat with them the whole time, and I must say that I am tired and hungry. As the room begins to fill with conversation, I surmise that the students are likely feeling the same way.

And again, on another occasion:

By 12:45 I am mentally exhausted. Ms. Barber's class has been working on either computers or geography packets for nearly two hours now. This is, of course, not out of the ordinary for this classroom. They often work independently, quietly, for long periods of time.

Notes such as those above were recorded on a daily basis, as Ms. Barber's class spent long hours working silently at their desks. In addition, the children would often remain in their seats for prolonged periods of time while participating in nonacademic tasks. The following two excerpts speak to this point:

It was time for math. Ms. Barber called the materials monitors to gather materials, and then she asked the class to take out their math journals and write as a heading "Adding Unlike Decimals." Before they could begin working, however, several students told Ms. Barber that they needed to sharpen their pencils. So, Ms. Barber went to the pencil sharpener and called a group at a time to bring their pencils to her; the students were to read as Ms. Barber sharpened. By the time she had finished, it was five minutes until lunchtime, and so Ms. Barber decided to just have them continue reading and begin math after lunch. So, I spent the entire morning with sixth grade, and they have done no academic work. It was a morning filled with procedures and routines.

The morning today was spent on routines, lectures, the morning meeting, and twenty minutes of seat work. Only support class (it was music today) had interrupted the sitting. I traded goodbyes with Ms. Barber. On my way out the door, she said to me, "Didn't see much academics today." Not knowing exactly how to respond, I just said, "No, that's okay."

In short, one disciplinary strategy—disciplinary in effect, if not by intent—in Ms. Barber's classroom consisted of having students sit still for long periods of time, which they would do

whether or not they were engaged in academic work. Moreover, my data suggests that Ms. Barber saw a clear connection between a still body and a productive body. That is, in Ms. Barber's view, making the body still and quiet was tantamount to making the body useful and productive. On several occasions, she made statements such as, "A quiet body means your mind can start functioning and working and thinking." Ms. Barber spoke to this connection between a still body and a productive mind in our interview:

Lewis: I've also heard you tell students that a quiet, still body is important for thinking. I wrote that down several times. Tell me about that. Why is that important?

Barber: Umm, in my experience of teaching for several years, umm, the students that are—it could work both ways, but normally the average student. When they're standing quietly, then their minds begin to work. They begin to think. Their bodies are quiet, and then they can begin to concentrate, they can begin to focus. And they can keep the focus. So, actually when we're going to the restroom and they're standing quietly, I tell them, "Feet slightly apart." You know, their hands—they have two places to put their hands. And just stand and relax yourself and just, ahh, and just quiet. Then, their bodies are becoming relaxed. They're ready, when we come back to the class, they're ready to go ahead and take in the knowledge. And they have calmed down to where they can focus.

Lewis: So it's sort of a prerequisite for learning for you?

Barber: Yes, yes.

Stilling the body was one way that students' bodies were known within the classroom. In other words, out of the myriad ways the body could be coded, it was coded in a singular way—viz. as working and thinking body—via the disciplinary strategy of stilling the body. Stilling the body, to state it slightly differently, was both a corporeal and a cultural practice—a way of disciplining the body and mapping subjectivity. Moreover, it should be noted that this analysis emanated directly from the categories (i.e., quiet body, thinking mind) that Ms. Barber employed to understand her students and her classroom. Thinking about the body, then, is neither arbitrary nor theoretical. Not merely a disconnected academic exercise, it was something recognized by the participants in this study.

My observational and interview data suggests that students were quite aware of the ennui of sitting for extended periods of time and that, moreover, they found it quite limiting. This was evident, for instance, in a conversation I had with Diego, Isabella, and Tabitha, while the three of them were completing some independent math work:

During independent work, I sat with Diego, Isabella, and Tabitha for the first thirty minutes. They were much more interested in talking to me than in doing their work. Diego asked how long it takes to get a doctorate and if I ever got bored coming to school. After I told him that I didn't, he told me that he would get bored because school is boring. I asked why, and Isabella jumped in as if she'd been waiting for this opportunity:

"We don't have any freedom here," she said. She spoke briskly, almost breathlessly. "Like, if you get up and run around in the halls, you're going to get expelled, and we hardly ever have recess. We are happy in the morning, though."

"Why are you happy in the morning?" I asked.

"Because we have support and lunch, so that's fun—that's okay, I mean. But then in the afternoon we're bored; we're always just sitting in the classroom. It would be fun if we could have class outside where there's nature and everything, but we just have to stay here and be quiet all the time. I wish we could have show and tell so we could bring our pets."

"Yeah," Tabitha said, her face beaming. "I could bring my five cats."

"It would be cool," rejoined Isabella, "if we could take them to recess. We like recess because it gives us some freedom. And lunch is okay, except when the food is bad. We don't even have freedom after school because we have to go to Swope [an afterschool program], and all you can do there is read all the time."

Perry expressed similar sentiments in a one-on-one interview, as he commented on how he believes the school is structured from an adult's point of view:

Perry: Yeah, I think they should, they should let us, they should give us more responsibility. Like, they have us in the classroom for half the day. I think they should let us, like, move around. Like if we go outside with a clipboard, and just like walk around and work at the same time; that would keep kid's attention.

Lewis: That's interesting. You get tired of sitting down in class for long periods of time?

Perry: Yeah. Well, the least she can do is like let us change up our groups every now and then, like switch people to different groups and stuff.

Isabella and Sofia also told me about what it's like to sit for extended periods of time:

Lewis: One thing I've noticed is you guys do a lot of sitting in the classroom.

Sofia: She doesn't like us standing up because, apparently, because she's in charge so she don't like nobody standing up while she's talking. Because she's in charge and she doesn't like somebody over her.

Lewis: What does it feel like to sit for that long?

Sofia: It hurts.

Isabella: Sometimes my legs get all [inaudible]

Lewis: Your legs get what? I didn't hear you.

Isabella: My legs get all shaky and I want to run.

Nadia: She don't let us do nothing. She'll be like, "Sit down!"

The students in these excerpts all identified sitting in the classroom as a negative thing, and they identified various forms of movement (the freedom of recess, working outdoors with a clipboard, the desire to run) as more appealing alternatives. This suggests an embodied form of learning, and the body as a site of power, wherein the children had come to an understanding of schooling as something that limits movement, restricting one to sitting in the classroom for long periods of time. It further suggests that the children in my study perceived an incongruity between the inclination of the body and the demands placed upon it by the strictures of schooling.

It would be a mistake, however, to assume that children simply sat passively without any sort of response. This can be seen, for instance, in the following note describing the beginning stages of a prolonged work period:

Before the groups can begin working on their ancient civilization projects, Ms. Barber must record their project topics, which she does by calling out names and writing down topics. As she does this, my group begins to have a rubber band war. Montrell has a package of those small rubber bands that are used with braces, and he begins to shoot them at everyone at the table, including me. We all collect them and fire back. I don't mind participating in this bit of rebellion, but I do not want Ms. Barber to see me, so I keep one eye on her as I fire at the students. I notice that the other groups begin to get loud and playful as well. Finally, Ms. Barber has had enough. She blows a whistle loudly, then asks the class, "Is this your time? Waiting for you!" She then launches into a lecture on talking—about all the "unnecessary" talking they have been doing. The students become silent as she speaks. Only a few are occupied with other things. Camila messes with her nails. Shaun and Montrell have made fish lips with their rubber bands. Then, Montrell gets caught taking another rubber band from his desk.

"Put that away," Ms. Barber says. "I have told you before and I'll keep telling you: quiet hands mean good thought processes."

Here is a moment in which the students (and the researcher) engage in mundane forms of rebellion that actuate a response from their teacher. Interestingly, after Ms. Barber responds with

a lecture the activity is quashed. Thus, we see the dynamic, transactional nature of power, with a resulting production of mostly still, mostly quiet bodies. We see resistance and a subsequent application of power onto the body itself: quiet hands, after all, mean good thought processes. I will return to the topic of resistance and discuss it in greater depth in a subsequent chapter.

Managing Detail

We have already seen how disciplinary strategies in both rooms focused on eliciting quiet and still bodies. When students did move, however, it was often in prescribed ways, suggesting regulatory strategies at the level of the body. A clear managing of detail was a strategy that was evident in both teachers' classrooms, albeit it was most evident in Ms. Barber's. This is something, moreover, that was evident in many different domains. Regardless of where (or under what conditions) this process unfolded, however, the strategic workings of the practice was the same. In short, this practice involved dividing a task into its constituent parts and associating each part of the task with a bodily response. The body, in other words, was not allowed its own path toward the realization of some end goal, but rather made the object of rationalized instructions that insinuated into the body, establishing a bodily ideal and a set of corporeal maneuvers the execution of which was tantamount to the performance of goodness on the part of students.¹⁰ For instance, Ms. Maldonado set up an extremely specific morning routine with constituent parts to which students' actions had to correspond. Part of this routine was entering and exiting the coat closet, which had to be done in a specific way:

Maldonado: Until I got to know them. And then I came up with a plan, and the plan was these five boys go in, and they're 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. They go in and out that way, or maybe there was six. Maybe there was six. But they go in, and they come out. Usually the rule is teachers have them go in—everybody goes in and comes out this way. So, mine was those six go in that way.

¹⁰ Another reason for writing about the body has to do with the level at which power is articulated in, for instance, the aforementioned statement. When the body becomes divided—i.e. segmented and associated with particular divisions of a task—it becomes a relevant object of social analysis.

Lewis: And why didn't you want them back there for the first three weeks?

Maldonado: Because—to see who had self-control, who was paying attention, who... in trying to build a relationship with them so that I could trust them to go back there. You know, because a lot of times they come in and I might be talking to a parent, and they're going to go in there, you know. I don't like them being, umm, where they're not—what do you call it?—watched, but you know...

Lewis: Visible?

Maldonado: Where I need to be watching them to see what's going on there. So then the girls, they had their... All the girls, almost all the girls, went in the closet, they put their stuff, and they came out this way. And then there was a set of boys that went in this way, in and out, and came out that way. So I had a group of boys that go this way: "Go get your things." Get it; they're out. Group of boys that go that way: "Go get your things." In and out, they're back. "Girls, go get your things." They walk in... The girls were pretty nice about it, but there was some girls that were not allowed to go into the closet.

Ms. Maldonado directed closet traffic in such a specific way that her description of it is somewhat convoluted. Her description here highlights two distinct routes for boys and girls (boys go in and out the entrance, girls go in the entrance and out the exit), and the idea that managing this movement is tantamount to managing conduct. But the managing of detail did not end there. Each morning, the students would enter the closet in this way, drop off their backpacks and coats, take their homework to the homework tray, and then check the board for an assignment that they had to complete right at that moment. Students would perform these actions daily, and over time they would require very little instruction from Ms. Maldonado, as their bodies began to bear the imprint of their training. In an interview, Ms. Maldonado spoke about how the children got to a point where their morning work was automatic:

Maldonado: They know that they need to do things. If they come in the morning and there's stuff written on the board, they know they do that first. And so, now we've, umm, been told that they're to get on Success Maker: every student, every day, reading and math, for forty-five minutes. Well, the programs are only set up for twenty minutes each, so they're only going to get twenty minutes. So that they know then now I've started setting it up and they come in the morning they're, some of them get on. It's on the board, you know. Some people might get on Success Maker while I'm working with a small group on something they didn't understand in math or reading from the day before. And then some people might be working on a small project. So they come in—sometimes on the board I'll have stuff written, typed up; it's a do-it-now.

Lewis: I've seen those before.

Maldonado: And if it's red they know they don't write that. That's just a direction. So they read the direction and then do the do-it-now. And so now we've been instructed—a do-it-now every day.

The morning, in short, was a divided time during which students performed certain actions that over time developed into a disciplinary pattern. This was evident in many other domains as well. For example, preparing for tests (which the students did with surprising frequency) was similar to the morning routine insofar as it involved segmenting a task into constitutive parts with a corresponding bodily action for each part. In the following excerpt from my fieldnotes, Ms. Maldonado and the children demonstrate this pattern while preparing for a reading test:

The students then prepared themselves for their reading test. Ms. Maldonado walked them through the process:

“Marvin,” she said, “tell me the first thing you need to get out.”

“The first thing we need to get out is our pencil,” Marvin said. There was a brief pause while the students took out their pencils. Then, Ms. Maldonado began again.

“De'Andre,” she said, “what is the second thing you need to get out?”

“A folder,” De'Andre replied.

Ms. Maldonado corrected him. “The second thing we need to get out...”

“The second thing we need to get out is our two folders,” De'Andre said. With that, all the children began taking out two folders and arranging them into a barricade around their test papers.

The children, then, were taught how to prepare for a test through executing particular movements associated with a divided task.

This level of organization and systematization was also evident in how Ms. Maldonado had her students arrange their belongings after they had switched from group tables to individual desks, a change that will be explored later in this study. I recorded the following observation in my notes:

Once the new seats had been arranged, the children needed to organize their things. Ms. Maldonado stood at the board, writing down where everything should be in their new desks. She made two columns—“chair jacket” and “desk”—and wrote things under them. Here is what it looked like:

<u>Chair Jacket</u>	<u>Desk</u>
Homework folder	Reading book

Jackson's conduct as transgressive in the normative and ideal configuration of bodily conduct. Just as one keeps books in the desk and not in the chair jacket, one carries a chair and does not drag it. The application of power in this case is singular and specific—targeting the smallest actions of the body, rationalizing the body's output for efficiency, managing how the body engages a particular task.

Similar instances of managing the details of the body were observed in Ms. Barber's classroom. Like Ms. Maldonado, Ms. Barber demonstrated a tendency to carve up a task into its constituent parts and then associate each part with particular student actions. This was evident, for example, in Ms. Barber's morning routine of passing out and reviewing papers to go home:

At 8:35 morning routines began. Ms. Barber, as usual, sat at her table near the coat closet, counting out papers to go home that evening. Then, she called the materials monitors from each group to her, and the materials monitors picked up the papers and passed them out to the members of their group. Then, Ms. Barber scanned the room to make sure the students are ready. She led the class through each paper, reading aloud as the children followed along from their desks. After a time, Ms. Barber noticed that Shaun did not have his papers out and asked him about it. He told Ms. Barber that he had already read these papers in his other class, and she told him that that didn't matter; he needed to follow along anyway. When they finished reading the papers, they put them away in their backpacks and took their backpacks to the closet. Ms. Barber reminded them, "You make take your backpacks to the closet, but don't forget to take everything out because I'm not going to let you back there again. Walk in, walk out."

This routine occurred daily, as the students gathered, reviewed, and put away papers they would take home that evening. In the representative example above, Ms. Barber specifies what the body should do at four instances: she calls the materials monitors, makes certain the class is ready and reads aloud as the students follow, corrects Shaun's behavior when it doesn't conform, and reminds the students to take out everything they need from their backpacks. In other words, a task (sending home papers) is segmented into parts that must be performed each morning. Over time, as we will see presently, directing the body reached a state wherein the body performed independently of instruction. In other words, a daily application of power to the body's gestures

had the cumulative effect of dividing the body against itself—of rendering it a series of externally imposed directives that obviated its ability to move wholly or of its own accord.

A detailed managing of bodily action was not just evident in the passing of morning papers. Indeed, it was evident in nearly all practices in Ms. Barber's classroom. For example, getting ready to work evinced this same pattern, and all of Ms. Barber's lessons commenced in the same fashion:

At 10:10 Ms. Barber told the students to log off their computers and take out a sheet of paper for a division lesson. She called the materials monitor from each group to her table, where they collected a worksheet that the students would work from. This is the same process I have seen many times. The children work problems from a worksheet, but they do so on a blank sheet of paper, leaving the worksheet unmarked. Maya asked Ms. Barber why they couldn't just learn this from the computer, and this caused Ms. Barber to become visually upset. Ms. Barber told her it was her job to teach the material, that everybody learns a different way, and that sometimes the human touch makes all the difference. When Ms. Barber had finished talking, Maya grunted in frustration, which caused Ms. Barber to call her into the hallway. Maya began to walk toward the hallway, but she was stopped by her teacher's voice, calling her back to her desk to push in her chair and to close her laptop screen to a forty-five degree angle. They were in the hallway only a few minutes.

At 10:15 Ms. Barber stood at the board and began the math lesson. She had the students head their papers "Division with fractions" and then number them vertically down the left side of the page. When the children had completed this task, they raised their thumbs in the air, and Ms. Barber counted them off until all had finished. Then, Ms. Barber copied the first problem onto the board and the lesson began.

Notice the specificity of preparing to work. The students must collect and pass out papers in a particular way; they must work on a blank piece of paper; they must keep chairs and laptops in the proper positions; they must head their papers and number them vertically. It may seem, at first blush, that I am making too much of this. However, Ms. Barber's concern over the practices of the body, which I witnessed on numerous occasions, suggests otherwise:

At 10:50, approximately two hours and forty minutes into the school day, we finally began math. The materials monitors came to Ms. Barber's table to gather worksheets that they then distributed to the members of their groups. Then, Ms. Barber began to call out directions:

“Get out a blank sheet of paper. Head your paper—adding mixed numbers. Please write the problems vertical instead of horizontal.” The children then began to work on worksheets that occupy them until lunch.

Ms. Barber walked around to see if everyone had headed their papers and copied down the first problem. She stopped to correct Isabella for not writing on the lines.

Then, she said to Sofia, “You don’t have your heading. What’s going on? What’s going on?” Then, upon seeing Montrell’s paper:

“I said to write it how,” she said to Montrell.

When he couldn’t answer, she asked everyone: “How did I say to write it?”

“Vertical!” everyone shouted in unison.

“Got to write it like I said,” Ms. Barber said. “We are slow today. Let’s get going!”

Ms. Barber’s concern over the minute details of the task corroborates my general argument here.

In other words, it demonstrates that a managing of detail was significant at both an emic and an etic level. Indeed, her managing of the details of a task and her coordination of the task and the body made corrections such as those above something that happened regularly. That is, dividing a given action into its constituent parts facilitated the detection and correction of the body on the spot. The following instance occurred as we were lining up one day:

We lined up for gym in the usual way. Ms. Barber looked around the room, then looked back at the class with a displeased expression. “Who said the computers are to be closed?” she said, referring to the fact that nearly all of the students had closed their laptops. “Who changed it? The computers are to be at a forty-five degree angle. Those are the instructions and I’m not deviating from that. It has to be forty-five degrees.” She went on to tell them that everyone would have to return to their seats, open their laptops to a forty-five degree angle and turn them around.

Already beginning to move toward her desk, under her breath, Tabitha said, “Jesus Christ.”

And another example that occurred during lining up:

She told the children they needed to wash their hands before recess, but the children had trouble calming down enough to line up. “I’m waiting,” Ms. Barber said, and then she blew her whistle twice. “Okay, now my runners line up. Okay, everybody else, stand up, push in your chair, stand quietly. Once you’re in line there is no talking. We need to be facing forward and quiet.”

Montrell was reading a baseball book, and Ms. Barber asked him to put it away in the closet before lining up. “But I wasn’t done reading,” he mumbled. Ms. Barber had him come over to her and repeat what he had said before going to the closet to put away his book.

I recorded many similar instances of managing the body in Ms. Barber's room, but the point is likely perspicuous at this juncture. The specificity of bodily actions for a given task—their association, in a one-to-one manner, with aspects of the task—created a bodily ideal to which students' behavior had to conform. When it did not—when students had difficulty performing correctness—Ms. Barber was able, as a result of the segmentation of the task and coordination of the body, to make immediate corrections such as those seen above.

Before moving on, I would like to explore a final domain in which managing the details of the body was quite evident—lines. In both classes, getting the children to line up and walk in line involved a series of prescriptions for the body—prescriptions which were mapped onto the body such that over time they traced the contours of the self. In my first interview with Ms. Maldonado, she spoke of the importance of lines, of teaching children “where your hands are supposed to be, where your feet are supposed to be, where your eyes are supposed to be.” She went on to say, “I used to in kindergarten have them practice, and it's just like, but then they get used to me and then they just do it. We've got more compliments in the hallway.” The execution of line behavior, then, may be thought of as a sort of training of the body. The reader is likely wondering what's wrong with teaching children how to walk in line. The answer, at least in the context of my study at Washington, is that it represents an instance of egregious regulation that, I would argue, stems from its status as an urban school. Although I did not study a suburban, affluent school for comparative purposes,¹¹ such studies have been completed in the past. In particular, Anyon's (1980) work examined five schools of various socio-economic standings.

¹¹ The fact that I did not study a suburban school (or, for that matter, multiple urban schools) limits what I can say regarding the degree to which Washington's status as an urban school influences the practices described herein. Except in cases where the literature allows for a direct comparative point, other conclusions would seem to be little more than conjecture and are avoided for that reason.

Her comments on the “Executive Elite School,” the most affluent of the schools she studied, are instructive and worth quoting at length:

In the classroom, the children could get materials when they needed them and took what they needed from closets and from the teacher’s desk. They were in charge of the office at lunchtime. During class they did not have to sign out or ask permission to leave the room; they just got up and left. (p. 86)

To my way of thinking, movement in the classroom and in the hallways represent issues of equity, and we see clear differences in the way that urban schools are organized vis-à-vis more elite institutions. Let’s take a moment now to explore what this training of the body looked like in Ms. Maldonado’s class.

Ms. Maldonado assigned her students a line order, with each student occupying a specific location in the line. Then, she trained the students to form a line, a process that I recorded in my fieldnotes:

Ms. Maldonado calls the students to line up once, but they are too talkative, so she asks them to sit back down so she can go over her expectations with them. She tells them that when the line leader gets up to take her place in line, the next person should already be getting ready—then the person after that, and so on until everyone has lined up smoothly. If someone isn’t ready, you are supposed to skip that person—that is, you are to go ahead and line up in their spot.

Ms. Maldonado’s line, then, was formed via a patterned, choreographed movement in which students moved to specified places in line by following one another. Over time, this procedure became so ingrained that students would simply estimate their spot in line and walk to it:

It’s almost time for gym, so Ms. Maldonado calls the students by table to line up for the restroom. I notice that, since the students have a line order, they do not simply line up one after the other. Rather, they go to a spot in the room, estimating how much space will be needed for the requisite number of students to fill in around them. It is almost perfect.

Walking in the hall also involved a series of corporeal directives. First of all, students were required to walk on a path-like queue of blue tiles that ran throughout the school. Moreover, the line leader had to learn and be able to perform a series of predetermined stops at various places

in the school. I asked Ms. Maldonado about how students learn where they're supposed to stop, and she told me she has to "train them," adding:

I walk with them and I said, "This is going to be," (you know, first day) "this is going to be our stopping point." So whoever's the line leader, you know when we come to here, you stop. And this is second grade, so. Now, a line leader now knows if we're moving kind of slow and I'm waiting, he'll look at me before he leaves and he says, "Stop one or stop two?" And I'll say, "Stop one." And if we're ready, we're ready to roll, he'll say "Stop one or two." I'll say, "Stop two."

Ms. Maldonado trained her line to stop at specified places in the school, and, interestingly, she saw line conduct as something necessary that had to start at the very beginning of the school year. As she told me, when I commented on her line one day:

Watching Ms. Maldonado's students filter in and out of the restroom—two lines standing stock still—I am impressed by the coordination of the practice. I tell Ms. Maldonado that it's amazing how coordinated this activity is.

"Has to be, you mean," she corrects.

"Yes, they know exactly what they're supposed to do," I say.

"That's just it," she says. "You have to show them from the very beginning."

Line conduct did not end with occupying particular spots in line, walking on the blue line in the hallway, and stopping at particular places in the school. Indeed, each individual had to perform actions constitutive of proper hallway behavior. In my interviews with students, these actions surfaced repeatedly. Lily, for instance, brought up proper line behavior when I asked her about how a good second grader acts:

Lewis: Here's the thing: I don't know how to be a very good second grader. Can you tell me how to be a good second grader?

Lily: [chuckles] In line?

Lewis: Okay, that's the first thing I was going to ask you. How do you be a good second grader in, when you're in the hallway? What do you have to do?

Lily: You have to stand quietly.

Lewis: Okay.

Lily: If you don't have to go to the restroom—if you want a drink, you just go. You don't have to ask her. And you have to face forward; you can't be talking. And stand on the blue line.

Lewis: You stand on the blue line, you're quiet, you're facing forward... Is that all?

Lily: And don't touch the walls, and don't lean.

Lewis: Okay.

Lily: And don't be making noise, like humming or something.

Lewis: What are you supposed to do with your hands, then?

Lily: You can put them on your side, in your pockets, or behind your back.

Lewis: So you have three different places you can put them that's okay?

Lily: You can't put them up here [places hands on head], you can't put them right here [crosses arms], you can't put them right here [places hands on stomach], you can't put them right here [places hands on shoulders].

Lily's comments were echoed by the five other second graders I interviewed, including Louis, a

Hispanic boy with a spiked blue haircut and a ready, slightly mischievous smile:

Lewis: What about in the hallways? What do you have to do as a second grader in the hall?

Louis: Follow the blue line; you can't get off the blue line. And you can't talk. And you can't—when you're walking on the blue line, you can't be like this [swings arms wildly].

Lewis: Okay, so you can't move your arms around like that. What about—can you move your head around like this [rolls head around a few times]?

Louis: No.

Lewis: So your body has to be still?

Louis: You can put it in your pockets.

Lewis: Put your hands? Do you have to put them in your pockets?

Louis: Or you can just leave them like this [put arms down at sides].

Lewis: At your side.

Louis: Or you can put them behind your back.

Lewis: Okay, and so let me make sure I understand. When you're in the hallway, you have to walk on the blue line, you have to be quiet, and you have to be still with your hands—your hands have to be, you said three places: behind your back, at your side, or in your pockets. Is that right? Did I get it all right?

Louis: [Nods head]

Lewis: Thank you for helping me understand that.

Observational data corroborated what students told me in individual interviews. This became

especially clear in the context of my frequent and purposive transgressions of hallway conduct:

I have been reading about the strategy of “playing dumb” in order to elicit data with young children. The line to the bathroom presents a perfect opportunity. I tell Ms. Maldonado that I need a spot in line order because I haven't been given one yet so I'm not sure where to be. The children snicker. After she gives me a spot, I begin to goof off a little: I lean against the wall; I put my hands on my head; I turn around the wrong way. The students laugh like crazy, as if this is the funniest thing they have ever seen before. But, importantly, they correct me. They make a circle motion with their hands: I should turn around. They place hands demonstrably behind their backs: I do so as well. They

wave me away from the wall: I stand up straight. They have made the expectations clear for me.

There was, in short, a series of bodily maneuvers that was expected of all the second graders in Ms. Maldonado's class, and we may conceptualize the process of inculcating such corporeal movements as a training of the body—a training that began on the very first day of school. There was a single way of being in line, and over time this way of being became embodied. That is, students began to move automatically, without (or with increasingly less) explicit direction from their teacher. Ways of being in line, then, were tantamount to *body techniques* (Mauss, 1992) or a *habitus*—that is, a “durable training” of the body (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977, p. 31) that reveals itself via repetitive practices bearing the traces of a prolonged period of inculcation. It is important to recognize that this bodily disposition, this ideal, was established through practiced repetition. Sometimes this occurred during recess, such as in the following example from my fieldnotes:

Zora, Amanda, and Tionne begin to walk on a line that traces a large circle around a metal pole in the center of the blacktop. Ms. Maldonado tells me that they are practicing walking because they didn't show they could do it “the second grade way” in the hall.

At other times, the threat of practice was sufficient:

At 12:55 the second graders try to line up for recess, but the line is too loud for Ms. Maldonado. “Sit down,” she says, “we're trying it again.” After a moment of sitting, they rise and line up for a second time, but it's still too loud. “Have a seat,” Ms. Maldonado says. “This may be our recess, practicing following directions.” She then has them try again, adding, “This will be the last time we try. Line up quietly.” Thankfully, they are able to line up quietly this time.

Line conduct, in short, was a body technique that was inextricably tied to the idea of how to be a second grader. It consisted of minute prescriptions for how one should use the body in line, and over time these prescriptions were embodied, such that the body moved independently of

instruction. We might say, then, that these details of the body became a permanent part of the second-grade habitus. Let us explore this general idea with specific examples.

Student line conduct towards the end of my time at Washington Elementary—after, that is, a prolonged period of training—offered several instantiations of the theoretical premise that corporeal training was embodied and performed by students in Ms. Maldonado’s class. For instance, one day Eduardo, a shy, incredibly bright Hispanic boy, was leading the line through the hallway when I made the following observation:

On the way to computers—the support class for the day—I noticed something interesting about the line, particularly about the line leader. I noticed that Eduardo, the line leader, stopped at the top of the stairs, and then looked back at Ms. Maldonado before proceeding. He would only walk again once Ms. Maldonado had given him a silent signal, pointing onward with her finger. Eduardo did the same thing at the bottom of the stairs, and then on the way back as well. I asked Ms. Maldonado about this after we’d dropped off the children.

“Tell me,” I asked Ms. Maldonado, “how the line leader knows when it’s time to walk.”

“Well, one of our hallway rules is no talking, so we use hand signals,” she said. “And the line leader is always watching me, and I give him the signal to go.”

“But the line leader isn’t always watching you. The line leader will stop, right?”

“Right. I’ve already taught them where to stop.”

“They have predetermined stops.”

“Right, and then he’ll look. I’ll give him the signal to go.”

As an additional example, consider the following note that I recorded after I had led the line through the hallway in the absence of Ms. Maldonado:

Ms. Maldonado asks if I will walk the children back to class from the Plaza Room. (She has a bad knee and finds it much more comfortable to take the elevator.) So I assent. I walk, in line, with the children back to class. I am amazed at their behavior. They walk quietly, always on the blue line. They stop after each flight of stairs and look back in my direction, seeking approval to move on. They stop outside the classroom and stand in line until Ms. Maldonado comes and tells them all to enter the room. The children have been trained. They could probably walk around the school without adult supervision and be just fine.

Instances of embodied conduct occurred at the level of the individual student as well. For example, one day I walked with the children in line to the office. Afterwards, I made the following note:

Going down the stairs, I was walking in line with my hands in my pockets. Tionne reminded me that I had to have my hand on the rail, so for the rest of the way down I dragged my hand along the cold metal. She reminded me again, incidentally, on the way back to class.

The internalization of conduct, in other words, revealed itself via an enjoiner to the researcher delineating a precise and proper bodily action—that of placing the hand upon the rail. Moreover, as we saw previously, the children would often remind me of proper hallway conduct when I engaged in purposive transgressions. Finally, there were several instances of my being alone with children—beyond the purview and corrective gaze of the teacher—when they acted as if they were being supervised, such as the example of the line discussed above. An additional and telling example occurred one day while I was hanging out with Ms. Maldonado during hallway duty, and Tom approached—a slight child of Vietnamese descent with a predilection for jokes and pranks.

After dropping off my things in her room, I joined Ms. Maldonado for hallway duty. (The teachers have to serve, on a rotating basis, bus duty and hallway duty. Both roles welcome the students to the school each morning.) We hadn't been there five minutes, when Tom walked up slowly, his head down and his eyes filled with tears. Both Ms. Maldonado and I walked over and asked what the matter was, but Tom didn't want to talk about it. Ms. Maldonado asked if he wanted to walk with me to the classroom and he said yes, so we walked to the classroom together. Actually, Tom walked ahead of me slightly, on the blue line the whole way. Every so often he would look back for me, and I would acknowledge him with a nod of the head, at which time he would continue his walk. We walked in this manner to the classroom and, after he'd dropped off his backpack, to the cafeteria where he would have breakfast.

Additional examples could be provided, but the point would remain the same. Instantiations of embodied learning were revealed through the exhibition of patterned, repetitive actions that occurred, in the initial phases of my research, alongside teacher injunctions and, in the final

phases of my research, in the absence of explicit directives. The examples discussed above reveal a biopower over the student body: a power that divides the body against itself, channeling it in a particular way. In other words, this power, as mentioned previously, obviates the student's ability to move wholly and of her own accord. Over time, this power is mapped onto the student body, and the body—in stopping at predetermined places, staying to the blue line, crossing the hands behind the back, leveling the head, and so forth—reveals the permanent imprint of its training. A managing of bodily detail, then, is realized insofar as comportment is mapped onto the very gestures of the self.

Similar to Ms. Maldonado, Ms. Barber began the year by regulating student movement in line with injunctions specifying particular corporeal actions. In her class, students were most often in line when they walked to class in the morning, or when they took a restroom break. The following excerpt is typical of the notes I took describing restroom lines:

At 10:45 the students stopped working for a restroom break. Ms. Barber spoke to her students before they entered the hallway. "No one should know you're in the hallway. When you're waiting for your turn, you're in a relaxed position. Relax yourself, but no talking." Then, it was time to go. "Okay, stand up." All the students stood. "Push in your chairs. Stand behind your chair. Now, quietly line up." When the children had lined up and were quiet, Ms. Barber continued: "Let's see if we can get twelve points. You have ten minutes. Okay, go ahead and stop at the end of the turquoise line." The students followed the blue line, walking quietly by classrooms on both sides of the corridor. Then, Ms. Barber called out, "Okay, stop at the bathrooms please." Once the line had stopped at the bathroom, she provided additional instructions. "If you only need a drink, take one step to the left and go to the water fountain. Both lines: make sure you have space between you—one foot. You don't need to be squished like sardines. And make sure your hands are good." Several students took a quick drink and then made a return line to class. I looked at the lines—both the one leading to the restroom and the return line back to the classroom—as the children filed in and out of the restroom. The students were stock still and completely silent. Feet were forward, on the blue line. Arms were at sides or, occasionally, in pockets. Heads faced forward.

Getting ready for the restroom—standing and moving in the restroom line—is emblematic of a broader system of disciplining the body. It works through dividing the task in question and

linking the body's movements to its constituent parts. Students do not go to the restroom when they need to; they don't even execute the activity *in toto*. Rather, they stand up; they push in their chairs; they stand behind their chairs; they line up quietly; they walk to the end of the blue line; they stop at the bathrooms; and so forth. The body becomes a series of actions, and it is evaluated (given points) based on how well it executes the series. The body, then, is defined and given meaning (as either proper or improper) based on the performance it gives, how well it aligns with a bodily ideal established through repeated practice. Ms. Barber also directed the body in the context of the morning line that entered the classroom:

Ms. Barber's class begins the same each day. Today, as always, she asks the students to stand in the gym and to face her. She then tells them to walk on the blue line to the classroom, where Sofia, who leads the line, stops just outside the door. The five students at the end of the line break off and form a second line on the opposite side of the hallway. Ms. Barber no longer has to tell the children to do this; they do it automatically. Then, Ms. Barber walks in between the two lines, saying "Good morning, my class!" The students respond, "Good morning, Ms. Barber." Then, on Ms. Barber's command, the students enter the classroom, where they have two minutes to turn around their desks, remove everything they'll need for the day from their backpacks, and then take their backpacks to the coat closet.

The morning line reveals the characteristic features of the restroom line: the students walk quietly on the blue line, they stop at predetermined places, and so forth. The task is divided; the body conforms through a series of minute practices, establishing an ideal. This ideal was something that Ms. Barber spent a lot of time and effort cultivating, especially in the beginning phases of my research:

As the students are filing into and out of the restrooms, I look over to Ms. Barber, who leans against the wall as she gives directions to her students. "I need everybody to look like a scholar. Return line is looking pretty good, but we need to make sure we have our foot distance." Then she stopped to address Shaun. "Shaun, you're not supposed to talk in line, so you're going to have to work on that. I'll repeat it: I need everybody to look like a scholar."

This ideal was something that students readily identified and articulated in my many conversations with them. Star is a tall Asian girl with the habit of snickering after nearly every sentence, a sort of shy laughter that fills the silent spaces in a conversation. She is an excellent student and receives little negative attention from her teacher. In my interview with her, I asked her to describe line conduct for me:

Lewis: What are you supposed to do with your hands [in line]?

Star: You put them in your pockets or fold them.

Lewis: Okay, what about behind your back.

Star: [shakes head]

Lewis: No, that's no good? What's wrong with that?

Star: She said because people can mess with your hands or something.

Lewis: Oh, okay.

Star: And we have to be like a foot distance from each other.

Lewis: Okay, how do you know if you're a foot distance?

Star: Your feet.

Lewis: [laughing] Okay, so it's an estimate. You're supposed to be about one foot from the next person?

Star: Yeah.

Later in our conversation, Star described the morning line for me:

Star: We have to walk, and then we have to leave a space for Ms. Barber. And then we have to walk in the other line. And Ms. Barber says good morning to us, and then we say it back to her.

Lewis: How do you split the line? Is it boys and girls?

Star: No, it's like there's this little spot right there [pointing to a researcher-generated photograph], right there in that little space, and everybody else has to go over there.

Lewis: So as soon as you get there you split off? And then Ms. Barber says good morning?

Star: Yeah, and then we walk in, and then the other side walks in.

Star's words were typical of those of the students I interviewed from Ms. Barber's class, all of whom articulated a detailed managing of bodily action in line and a division of movement into minute corporeal enunciations.

Over time, Ms. Barber gave fewer directions to her students in line, as directions were embodied in the way that they were in Ms. Maldonado's class. Ms. Barber spoke to this general

point in our second interview. When I asked how it was that students would oftentimes act without explicit directions, she looked at me with a surprised expression. “By sixth grade,” she said, “don’t you think they should know how? And they should.” She went on to tell me that by the time students are in sixth grade they are used to walking in the hall—that “they already know to do it automatically. I just reiterate it.” In other words, students in sixth grade have embodied a corporeal ideal and are able to perform it. My observations suggest that they often did so in the absence of explicit directions. For instance, in the following fieldnote excerpt Ms. Barber and her charges have just finished eating lunch:

I met the sixth graders outside the cafeteria. Their lunch period had just ended, and the line outside the lunchroom door still held the residual animation of lunchtime conversations with friends. Ms. Barber cast a look over the line, then just said simply, “The line looks weird.” And the students corrected themselves: they all stood straight, became quiet, spaced themselves appropriately, and placed their hands in the proper place. Ms. Barber was pleased with this and told the children that they looked much better.

Notice here that the children do not have to be told *how* to correct their bodies; they are told simply that the line “looks weird.” The directions for how the body should perform in the hallway have been embodied, becoming part of what makes a successful sixth grader in the hallway. On another occasion, the students performed proper behavior in Ms. Barber’s absence:

After the children had lined up successfully, Ms. Barber asked them if they thought they could walk to gym unaccompanied, to which they gave a resounding “yes.” I walked in line with the students, and they walked as if their teacher were following closely behind—that is, they walked quietly, on the blue line, with everyone facing forward and hands in the proper place.

This observation came towards the end of my time at Washington Elementary, at a point in time when corporeal directives had accreted over the course of five months and become embodied as part of what constituted a successful sixth grade student. It is important to note that line conduct was not always perfect, and examples of this will be explored later in this dissertation. Moreover,

although countless other examples could be provided, the general point would remain the same. In the course of students' bodies performing independently of direction, we see the force of past injunctions interpolating the body itself, impelling it to move automatically. The body here is divided from singular, individual promptings that might cause it to move of its own accord.

Chapter Summary

In the preceding chapter, I have argued that both teachers in my study employed particular strategies of power that delimited the contours of student subjectivity. First, I explored how teachers drew upon strategies to effectuate still, silent student bodies; then, I explored how teachers managed the details of student bodies. With respect to the first theme, I suggested that repeated injunctions for silence in both classes were constitutive of discourses of silence that positioned teachers as users of language and students as passive recipients. Moreover, I found that students experienced an ethos of silence—a generalized environment of silence—that shaped their experiences of school. In addition, I found that students engaged in extended periods of sitting—that is, stationary activity that regulated movement, disciplined bodies, and coded bodies as still, quiet, and productive.

With respect to the second theme (that is, managing details), it was suggested that both teachers divided classroom tasks, linked bodily articulations with constitutive parts, and, thereby, established a bodily ideal to which student conduct had to conform. I argued that repeated training of the body resulted in a school habitus that became part of how students came to know themselves as students. This was especially evident in line behavior, which was explored in some detail.

In the next chapter, I will turn my attention to pedagogy and pedagogically related concerns. We will find in this examination further evidence of power at Washington Elementary, and additional specific techniques in both teachers' classrooms.

Chapter Six: Power and Pedagogy

In the previous chapter, I examined strategies employed by both teachers in my study to regulate and coordinate students' bodies and movement. In this chapter, I will turn my attention to an examination of how Ms. Barber and Ms. Maldonado managed student conduct through a manipulation of pedagogy and pedagogically related concerns. In this regard, I will discuss techniques of power under the following four categories: 1) instructional practices; 2) student language; 3) time; and 4) surveillance, call and response, and inscription.

Instructional Practices

I previously discussed how Ms. Maldonado and Ms. Barber managed the details of students' bodies as one technique of power. A related technique was found in the pedagogical actions of each teacher, albeit to a larger extent in Ms. Barber's classroom. In both classrooms, I observed a segmentation of work into its constituent parts—a rationalization of work in which performing correctness was tantamount to following steps. This finding is similar to that observed by Anyon (1980) in working-class schools, wherein “work is following the steps of a procedure” (p. 73). These practices had the effect of establishing an instructional ethos that nurtured disciplinary monotony in the classrooms.

In general, Ms. Maldonado's instructional practice was much more interactive and variegated than Ms. Barber's. Nevertheless, there were many occasions in Ms. Maldonado's room in which a learning experience was rationalized, divided, and managed through an emphasis on following a specified sequence of steps. For example, Ms. Maldonado taught a lesson on the friendly letter that demonstrated many of these features:

The rest of the morning was spent on a lesson on the friendly letter. Ms. Maldonado began the lesson by having the children copy the heading, “Key Features of a Friendly Letter,” and under it six criteria (actually five criteria and one fact) to be written vertically down the page: “has the date,” “a greeting,” “body,” “closing,” “signature,”

“body=message.” Ms. Maldonado then said, “Okay, you can put down your pencil and sit up.” She read aloud the friendly letter projected on the smart board. When she had finished, she called a series of students to identify the parts of the friendly letter. Amanda came to the board and underlined the date. Ms. Maldonado took a moment to review the three parts of the date. The class chanted in unison: *year, month, and day*. Then she returned to the friendly letter lesson, calling Katherine to the board to circle the greeting. Tionne and De’Andre numbered the paragraphs, and then the class read the letter aloud. After that, Mario was called to the board to underline the closing. Mario is a diminutive boy who smiles almost constantly and has difficulty expressing himself in English. He stood for a long time, his smile shifting from confused to embarrassed and back again. Ms. Maldonado tried, in both English and Spanish, to provide enough scaffolding for Mario to identify it correctly—asking him various questions, throwing out a number of clues—but she finally had to go to the board and help. As her back was turned to the class, I looked over at the students and saw Zora twisting a flower hair tie, Charles and Jackson playing with their pencils.

There are many ways to teach children how to write a letter. The students might, for instance, record their voices and then dictate their words as they listen to the recording. They might, moreover, begin by writing more freeform prose and then translating it back into a letter form, using the appropriate conventions. As such, Ms. Maldonado’s method represented but one of many. Importantly, it also represented a highly regulated and managed way of channeling student learning. Notice in the above excerpt that there are several junctures—copying down the heading and the six criteria, putting down one’s pencil, sitting up, coming to the board to identify features, etc.—at which Ms. Maldonado issued an injunction, which had the effect of dividing the lesson into a series of easily manageable units.

There were also examples of independent work with similar features as this lesson on the friendly letter. One day I recorded the following observation as the students were working independently:

At 11:00 Ms. Maldonado had finished giving the math lesson, and the children were working as a whole group on a worksheet called *What’s Missing?* The worksheet contained several math frames with missing addends, requiring the children to count by tens to find the answer. Ms. Maldonado read the problems aloud; then, Ms. Maldonado and the children counted them out together and filled in the answer on their individual sheets. I scanned the room as the children were working. Claudia and Jackson weren’t

working. Jackson had one of those paper fortune tellers that kids make, and he was working it back and forth, in and out with his fingers. Claudia got my attention, then showed me how she could spin her paper quickly around the point of her pencil.

This example demonstrates the workings of a disciplinary activity—the way a skill is segmented and the work (both our *idea* of work and our assessment thereof) becomes a process of correspondence. The second graders must listen, count, and record—time and time again, without variation. Although there are multiple ways of deriving the answer, only one way is offered and practiced. It is, in this way, a form of training—a pedagogical maneuver that closes off mathematical apertures, the possibility of creative work. It is, thus, a form of power, a limiting academic transaction. These comments are equally relevant to the use of technology in the classroom, which, in my experience, equated with completing digital worksheets:

At 11:30 the children were still doing seat work, but most of them were now on their computers. I watched over Jackson's shoulder as he worked a series of addition problems requiring him to input the sum, essentially an online worksheet. The children continued this work until 11:50, when it was time for lunch.

Technology was not employed to manipulate numbers—to afford children opportunities to increase their theoretical understanding of numbers and operations—but rather in a highly mechanistic way. This was through no fault of Ms. Maldonado—for she was implementing a district-adopted software package—and it warrants repeating that Ms. Maldonado's lessons were fairly varied over the course of the semester.¹²

Ms. Barber's lessons, on the other hand, were highly consistent. That is, the morphology of her pedagogy remained the same throughout my time in her classroom. Take, as an example, the following extended excerpt from my fieldnotes:

¹² I would reiterate here a point that was made in the previous chapter, namely that teachers often face external constraints beyond their individual control. Thus, Ms. Maldonado's specific use of technology is not an indictment of her professional practice, but rather meant to expose how power operates in concrete, real-world contexts in which individuals' choices are limited, even as they limit others. Power here operates as a reticulated network with many interconnected nodes.

Ms. Barber stood at the board and began a math lesson. She had the students head their papers “Division with fractions” and then number them vertically down the left side of the page. When the children had completed this task, they raised their thumbs in the air, and Ms. Barber counted them off until all had finished. Then, Ms. Barber copied the first problem onto the board: seven divided by one-third. She asked, “What do we do first?” Mateo, a quiet boy who hardly ever speaks, surprisingly answered that she needed to circle the divisor, which she did and then asked, “Why do we circle it?” David answered, “Because we’re going to flip it over on the other side.” Ms. Barber executed the appropriate changes to the problem, making it seven times three. “We are ready to multiply,” Ms. Barber said before writing the number twenty-one on the board. She then began a second example problem, writing seven divided by one-half on the board and saying, “First step, tell me.” The children had mostly continued on to work the problems independently, and so Ms. Barber was having difficulty eliciting participation. “Somebody talk to me,” she said in a booming voice. “What must I do next? Come on, what’s my next step? What do I do next?” The lesson continued and repeated in this fashion, with Ms. Barber asking for each step, the students providing it orally, and Ms. Barber copying it onto the board. The process, in total, consisted of a series of six steps: 1) circling the divisor, 2) bringing over the whole number, 3) writing the whole number in fraction form, 4) writing a multiplication sign, 5) turning over the divisor, and 6) multiplying to get the answer. The students then completed the remainder of the worksheet independently. By 10:25 the room was again quiet as the students worked.

At 10:35 Ms. Barber repeated the exact same instructional routine she had just used to teach dividing mixed numbers with fractions.

As you can see, Ms. Barber’s pedagogy in this instance was tantamount to teaching a series of predetermined steps. The work, for the students in her class, equated with following the steps as they were given. The importance of following the steps is suggested not only by Ms. Barber’s teaching, but also by her response when the children begin to work ahead on their own: she becomes impatient, visibly upset. The children must, in the end, follow the steps and stay with her. This lesson, in short, demonstrates how an instructional practice is divided and how work is transmogrified into the completion of constituent parts. This establishes an instructional ethos that augments and extends the disciplinary monotony that results from managing the body’s details, which we discussed in depth in the last chapter. The students learn little about math as a conceptual or creative endeavor; rather, they learn how to execute steps that are predefined and

doled out to them in easily digestible bits. As such, pedagogy in this instance represents an instance of limiting power.

The math lesson discussed above was hardly an isolated, unrepresentative example. Indeed, its general formula was repeated daily—and not simply for math. As the following excerpt suggests, Ms. Barber’s pedagogy conformed to this repetitive, rationalized, and divided instructional practice in other subjects as well:

When we return from the bathroom, it is time for a history lesson. Before it can begin, Ms. Barber has everyone remove everything from their desks except their history books, journals, and something to write with. Liliana is not moving quickly enough. “Don’t make me throw your stuff away,” Ms. Barber says. “You’re right in the front where everyone can see you.”

Ms. Barber has everyone copy the section title from their books into their journals: “Studying the distant past.”

“You have two minutes,” she says. “Write it down. Write the date—today’s date is October 7, 2014. To the right, write your name, first and last name.”

Then she calls on Nicholas to read the first paragraph aloud. The class comes to a highlighted vocabulary word, *anthropology*. Ms. Barber addresses her class. “Please write the word *anthropology*; please put a dash beside it because you’re getting ready to write a definition. So write *anthropology, dash*. Don’t write *is*. Now copy down the definition from your text.” Then after a time she adds, “Now skip a line, write the word *archaeologist* and a dash. Please do not write a capital *a*.”

The students, as they finish, hold up their thumbs, and Ms. Barber says, “Thank you, I see you,” to each.

Liliana reads the next paragraph, but she stumbles on the word *anthropology*. She tells Ms. Barber she cannot pronounce it, but Ms. Barber has the class practice it together, saying each syllable at a time:

“An-thro-po-lo-gy.”

Liliana says it quickly, not following the slow pace of the class.

“Liliana,” Ms. Barber says, “why are you saying it so fast? Maybe that’s your problem.”

After the next paragraph has been read, Ms. Barber leads them through the same process for all subsequent words. First the class reads the text. Then, they skip a line and write out a key word and a dash. Finally, they copy the definition from the text. Each time, they hold thumbs high when they have finished, and Ms. Barber says, “Thank you, I see you.”

Just as it was with the math lesson, this history lesson involves a conceptualization of work as a precise following of predetermined steps. It is a rationalized process that vitiates multiple ways

of knowing and stems intellectual curiosity. Moreover, it is a way of teaching that recognizes only one way of being a student—viz. becoming a student via following the steps of the work.

As Ms. Barber told me herself in the second of our interviews, this is most important criterion for becoming a “scholar”:

And so for a student, a scholar, a scholar realizes that—okay, we’re supposed to start at such and such a time, so therefore, ahh, if Ms. Barber said take out your journal or your math, or whatever, take out your book, take out your pencils, be ready, head your paper. They know to do it at that point in time, then. And so, therefore, umm, umm, that’s what a scholar does—they follow directions.

Thus, we find here a clear linkage between power relations and subjectivity formation. That is, a student individuates herself as an exemplary student (as a “scholar”) not through academic perseverance or excellence, but rather through a sedulous following of pedagogic direction and detail.

Student Language

As we saw previously, Ms. Maldonado and Ms. Barber regulated students’ voices through a discourse of silence, which consisted of frequent injunctions for quiet. Here, I would like to explore how both teachers often positioned student language as a site of power, limiting student speech in particular ways. Part of this emanated from the teachers’ views of the children in their classrooms. In our first interview, Ms. Maldonado told me bluntly, “Okay, well what I’ve noticed is children that come from poverty—I mean, really poverty—they are not very nice to each other.” Ms. Barber expressed similar sentiments, saying, “Many times students do not know how to talk to each other, how to get along with each other, because of—I guess because of environmental reasons.” In light of this, one way that teachers regulated students’ speech was

through encouraging students to speak in school-sanctioned ways.¹³ In sixth grade, the following exchange was typical:

At 9:50, Ms. Barber has the students engage in some silent reading, while she goes over to adjudicate a problem between Liliana and Phoenix. At the time, I do not know what this disagreement is about, but later I learn because I ask Liliana about it in the hall. She tells me that Phoenix called her fat, so she hit him in the face and he scratched her on the arm. She also tells me that Ms. Barber never listens to her and always takes the other person's side. This does indeed seem to be the case, for as Ms. Barber talks to Liliana about the incident, Liliana tries to interject at several points, but is cut short each time by her teacher.

"Liliana, I'm trying to give you the words. What will you say back? What will you say back? What will you say back? Because you cannot hit. You're going to have to develop a thick skin because people are going to say things. Next year in middle school, they're going to say things. They're going to call you 'baby,' so what will you say back?"

"But he..." Liliana begins.

"You're not hearing me, Liliana."

Liliana remains quiet throughout the rest of the exchange, as Ms. Barber continues to make the point that she has to use the words she is giving her to avoid confrontation.

Indeed, Ms. Barber spent a great deal of time teaching the children how to talk to each other. Ms. Maldonado, too, focused on teaching her children how to speak to one another. This was evident, for instance, in a moment in which Geraldo, one of Ms. Maldonado's students, had a conflict with a student from Ms. Tueksberry's class:

As we were leaving the library, we were held up for a moment by Ms. Tueksberry, who needed to speak with Geraldo. Geraldo is a Mexican American child in Ms. Maldonado's class, who is known as a talker and a raconteur. After Ms. Tueksberry had finished talking with him, Ms. Maldonado called him over.

"What was Ms. Tueksberry on you about? she asked.

Geraldo's head flagged, and he began to cry quietly.

¹³ Delpit (1988), for one, has argued that directly teaching linguistic codes (i.e. school-sanctioned ways of speaking) to children outside "the culture of power" is a potentially empowering act, and, further, that teachers who refuse to teach such codes because they see doing so as a hegemonic denial of students' own language are committing a disservice to their students. My own purpose here is more modest, and I do not wish to get involved in a discussion of what is empowering and what is not. However, I will say that I see no problem in a teacher with a greater range of knowledge and experience actually *teaching* her students. My purpose here is to denude the limiting aspects of teaching—what is set aside in practices that we have come to see as ineluctable, indeed natural—and to open up spaces for interrogating these practices. To my way of thinking, this interrogation—a questioning or provocation of pedagogical actions surrounding language—must precede any sort of final determination regarding whether teaching accepted codes empowers or subordinates students.

“Geraldo, listen, I still love you, but I’m going to find out. Don’t you think you ought to be the one to tell me?”

Ms. Maldonado continued for a time, explaining to Geraldo how it takes courage to be honest and that she knows he has courage. Eventually, it came out that Geraldo had told one of Ms. Tueksberry’s students, Michael, that he was wearing a girl’s shirt.

“Don’t you think you ought to tell him you’re sorry?” Ms. Maldonado said.

Geraldo cried some more.

“Geraldo, don’t you think you should say you’re sorry? All you need to say is, ‘Michael, I’m sorry I said that about your shirt.’”

It went on like this for a time before Ms. Maldonado was able to coax a soft “sorry” from Geraldo, to which Michael responded with “thank you.”

The first interpretive point to be made here is that both Ms. Barber and Ms. Maldonado fostered a logocentric environment in their classrooms, in which students learned appropriate ways of speaking to one another. But this is not the only—or even the most noteworthy—point concerning a power over language. Indeed, both teachers also used idiosyncratic strategies to form student speech. In particular, they both incited students to speak in prescribed ways and, thereby, to come to know themselves as certain sorts of subjects, as users of forms of language sanctioned by school and broader society. As such, both teachers ostensibly envisioned language not as an expressive system of meanings, but rather as a functional, mechanistic set of tools for deployment in specific situations. Ms. Maldonado, for instance, revealed this viewpoint via her repeated use of sentence frames with the students in her classroom. I noticed this tendency on my very first visit, when Ms. Maldonado had the following interaction with Charles, a quiet, Black child who is something of a loner:

Ms. Maldonado asks each group what number they would like their table to be. Charles, speaks up: “110!”

Ms. Maldonado asks, “Charles, how high did we learn to count last year?”

“110!” Charles answers enthusiastically.

“Awp,” Ms. Maldonado says, voicing a little corrective sound. Then she begins to frame the sentence she wants for Charles. “Last year...”

Charles repeats, “Last year...”

Ms. Maldonado frames the next part of the sentence. “We learned to count...”

Charles repeats, “We learned to count...”

Ms. Maldonado finishes the sentence. “To two hundred.”

Charles repeats, “To two hundred.”

Before moving on, Ms. Maldonado addresses the whole class. “This year Ms. Maldonado expects you to speak in complete sentences.”

I recorded myriad examples of sentence frames in my fieldnotes.¹⁴ The following example occurred in the context of completing the morning calendar:

The class did calendar at 8:40. Zora was called on to be the calendar helper, meaning that she got to affix the date to the calendar on the wall and then say the date aloud. She had no trouble with the first part of this task, but the second part proved elusive. In particular, Zora kept having trouble saying the date.

Ms. Maldonado gave her a sentence frame, “Today’s date is _____.”

Zora said, “Today’s date is 11, 13...”

Ms. Maldonado interrupted. “No, you need to say the word, the name of the month.”

Zora tried again. “Today’s date is 11, 13...”

“No, Zora, listen: today’s date is November the thirteenth, two thousand fourteen. Can you say that back to me?”

“Today’s date is November the thirteenth, two thousand fourteen.”

“Class?”

And then the class responded, in unison, “Today’s date is November the thirteenth, two thousand fourteen.”

In addition to framing student language, Ms. Maldonado also had her students recite and repeat important information as a way of forming language. For instance, the following recitations occurred just before a spelling test:

When we returned to class, Ms. Maldonado told the students it was time for the spelling test. She added that she was going to allow them to use colored pencils, which made the class giddy with excitement. She reviewed what to do if your colored pencil breaks—that is, use your regular pencil—and then asked several students in a row to repeat the direction verbatim:

“If my colored pencil breaks, I will use my regular pencil.” Zora, Amanda, Tionne, and Sophia say this in turn—practicing their teacher’s words, without any variation whatsoever.

¹⁴ Again, I would not go so far as to suggest that a sentence frame, or, for that matter, a highly directed intersubjective linguistic exchange, represents a hegemonic denial of student language. However, there is no doubt that such practices limit student language insofar as they supplant student forms of language with sanctioned, valorized forms. As such, they position certain sorts of speakers and they define language as a functional, rather than an expressive, system of signs.

In short, the children in Ms. Maldonado's room were frequently required to conform their language to a sentence frame or to practice preformed language. It is my contention that such practices had the effect of limiting children's language in expected ways. In particular, these practices stultified children's efforts to use and manipulate language for expressive purposes. Take, as an example, the following group share activity, in which we all sat in a circle and shared something interesting from our weekend:

We passed around a stuffed dog as we shared. Only the person who was holding the dog was allowed to speak. However, Tionne spoke out three times, so Ms. Maldonado sent her back to her seat, where she put her head down and began to cry. One student (I cannot recall who) began her share with "A fun time I had with my family was..." and thereafter nearly everyone began this way. Ms. Maldonado addressed this.

"You know what Ms. Maldonado learned—that you're used to somebody telling you what to say or write about. So, in your journals today you're going to practice writing all your own ideas." At this, all the children groaned as if they'd just been punished. We continued to share until everyone, including me, had a chance. Just as a joke, I began my share with, "A fun time I had with my family was..." The children and Ms. Maldonado broke into laughter.

The language practices in Ms. Maldonado's room (following sentence frames, repeating key information verbatim) groomed certain forms of language users—users who, as the previous example demonstrates, were much more adept at using language as a formalized system of prescriptions, rather than as a set of expressive signs constitutive of a shared symbolic order. To be sure, this is a form of power insofar as it involves a circumscription of student language in the classroom.

A final way that Ms. Maldonado channeled student speech was through the correction of solecisms. This happened repeatedly in the classroom, so let the following two excerpts stand as representative examples:

After leading the students through the closet routine, Ms. Maldonado asked for everyone with picture money to raise their order forms high in the air.

Tionne called out, "I gave you mines."

Ms. Maldonado corrected her. "I gave you *mine*."

“I gave you *mine*,” Tionne repeated.

Claudia raises her hand and says, “I don’t got one.”

“Fix your sentence,” Ms. Maldonado says.

“I don’t got that,” Claudia says.

“Fix one word.”

“I don’t have one.”

Ms. Maldonado smiles and says, “Look at how smart you are!”

Let me pause to address an objection that I anticipate from the reader—viz. *What’s wrong with a teacher wanting to improve her students’ grammar?* The answer, of course, is that there’s nothing at all wrong with this, and in fact the question misses my purpose here. There are many different ways that grammar might be taught to a child, many that do not begin with a child’s solecism and correct her in front of her peers. It is my objective—one realized through an emphasis on micro-social exchange—to denude this practice, this pedagogical moment, as one extremely specific way of teaching grammar, yet one among many. I wish to suggest that it is a moment defined by an articulation of power, for it is a method that limits the child’s present, and perhaps future, expression. After all, in both cases above students are limited in what they may say. As such, we have here limiting relations of power that are, perhaps, also unnecessary. To be sure, there are other forms of teaching grammar that expand, rather than restrict, autonomy and growth. In other words, it is not in the material taught that power resides—at least not the relational power that is the focus of this study—but rather in the way that such material is imparted.

Ms. Barber did not exhibit as many specific strategies for limiting student language as did Ms. Maldonado. She did, however, frequently use sentence frames to channel student speech. For instance, each morning Ms. Barber would hold a morning meeting in which the children would say good morning and tell the class how they were doing. I made the following note on my first visit to her classroom:

At 11:50 the children are back in the room and Ms. Barber begins morning meeting, which has to be so late in the day because the students are in support classes during the morning. Morning meeting occurs because, as Ms. Barber says, “I need to know how you’re doing.” It consists of students completing the following sentence frames:

Good morning. My name is _____.

I feel like a ____ because _____.

In the second frame, students say 4 if they are feeling outstanding, 3 for regular, 2 for sad, and 1 for angry. Ms. Barber writes all this on the board.

Each morning the class would complete these frames—moving from one student to another with a palpable cadence—and they would often do so perfunctorily, with the commonest answer being “I feel like a three just because.” Thus, while the reasoning behind the morning meeting was commendable, it can also be conceptualized as a technique of power applied to student language insofar as it had the effect of channeling speech in predictable ways.

Ms. Barber would also draw upon sentence frames in the context of assignments. In the beginning of the year, for example, Ms. Barber had her students complete autobiographies about which I made the following note:

At 10:20 the students begin presenting the “autobiographies” they have been working on, which involved filling in answers to stock questions or sentence frames. The presentations go like this,

My name is _____

I was born _____

My favorite colors are _____

My favorite foods are _____

My favorite movies are _____

My favorite TV shows are _____

My favorite subjects are _____

My hobbies are _____

When I grow up, I want to be a _____

Ms. Barber goes over the rules with the class. Only one person will present at a time. The presenter is to stand up straight (not lean against the board) and hold their autobiography with two hands. They are to speak up and enunciate. As for the audience, they should be quiet, sitting up straight and tall, have their hands folded on top of the desk, and maintain eye contact with the presenter.

In this example and the one previous, students are asked to make personal statements: in the first, they check in with their teacher, letting her know how they're doing; in the second, they articulate their autobiographies. These ostensibly are—or at least should be—moments of personal reflection and sharing. Yet something else is going on here as well. In both instances, students' speech is highly delimited. Students are being groomed as certain sorts of subjects, as users of predefined language. As in Ms. Maldonado's class, language here emerges as a functional, mechanistic system.

Framing student language occurred in the context of Ms. Barber's teaching as well. In a typical lesson, for example, she circumscribed student language by providing frames for linguistic exchanges:

After the rereading, the children are to look at the picture that adorns the first page of the story. Ms. Barber tells them that she wants them to describe the picture to her, and she adds that she wants, "Sixth-grade answers, in complete sentences." She tells them she wants them to provide more than just a single detail. Maya, who frequently volunteers to go first, begins, noting that she sees a city scene with a train. Then Ronald begins to add something, but he does not begin his sentence correctly. Ms. Barber reminds him how to begin a rejoicing comment. He must begin, "I would like to add on to what Maya said." So, repeating his teacher, he corrects himself, "I would like to add on to what Maya said." Several other students add to the description. They each begin their sentences, "I would like to add on to what _____ said."

To briefly recapitulate, both teachers in my study positioned students' language as one site of power. Ms. Maldonado exhibited more specific techniques in this regard, as she drew upon sentence frames, had students repeat key information verbatim, and corrected student solecisms. For her part, Ms. Barber delimited student language through the use of rigid sentence frames that did not allow for individual expression. All of these strategies had the cumulative effect of establishing a linguistic ethos in which language became a mechanical, functional system that students would use in predefined ways, in predetermined contexts.

Time

One strategy of power employed by the teachers in my study consisted of temporal regulation. Again, however, the teachers demonstrated idiosyncratic ways of controlling time. To begin with, Ms. Barber produced an official rendering of time to which she expected all students to conform. Indeed, in our first interview, she identified a student who did not conform as a primary behavioral issue in the classroom:

Lewis: [Can you provide] an example of the kinds of behavioral problems that you see?
Barber: Oh, sure. Okay, umm, a student that has their own agenda. That means that, umm, when I'm talking they decide they'd rather write instead. Umm, at the wrong time, at the wrong time. Or if, umm, they, umm, pretty much when I... and transitions, you know, moving from one subject to another. And, ahh—but that's everybody. But they're taking a long time to, to make the transition, and they want to continue to write and finish the work. So then I call their name, "Blah, blah, we're through with that, I need for you to put up the books." "Well you told me I need to do this." "Yes, but not at this time. I'll give you time next time." "Oh my God!" You know, so one of... "It's not necessary to do an outburst. I understand you're focused, but right now we need to move on; we're on a schedule." [Makes long groan, a sound of frustration, for about two seconds.] Okay, that type of thing. And it will go on, it will persist, and in this person's case, this student will go ahead and start doing back talk. "Well, I don't care. I'll do it whenever I want." "No, you're not going to do it whenever you want." "I, you know, I don't know why you keep picking on me." "No, I'm not picking on you." And then they'll start [her hands shuffle back and forth across the table]. "You know, that's not necessary."

For Ms. Barber the student with behavioral problems is the student who has trouble staying on and keeping up with the official timetable of the classroom. Conversely, she defined "a scholar" as being a student who is "ready to go," who realizes "okay, we're supposed to start at such and such a time," and who is ready to begin work "immediately—not ten minutes later, not fifteen minutes later." The student who does things immediately, who follows directions without delay—in other words, the student who follows dutifully the recurring rhythms of the official rendering of time—is given the distinction of "scholar."

Within the context of official time, Ms. Barber spent a lot of effort policing student transgressions, which typically took the form of reminding students that they were on her time.

The following excerpts are typical:

Sally is up at the front table talking to some friends. Ms. Barber notices and reminds her, “You’re on my time now.”

Maya was out of her seat. She was talking over some matters pertaining to the recently created Branch of Education with a few of her colleagues. When Ms. Barber saw this she addressed her student: “Maya, you cannot do that right now. Not on my time! We’re getting ready for morning meeting.”

The class is preparing for a lesson on the universe, and all students are supposed to have turned to a page in their reading texts. Ms. Barber tells everyone that she is going to start giving out group points to all those who are “sitting like a scholar.” Montrell does not have his book open to the correct page. Instead, he has out markers and is working on something else. “This is my time,” Ms. Barber tells him. “You shouldn’t be working on that. Not the right time.” She then calls out Perry for having paper out on his desk, and he tries to object, telling his teacher that he is working on something. “We’re not doing that, though,” Ms. Barber says. “It’s the wrong time, wrong time.”

Before the morning meeting could begin, Ms. Barber launched into an extended lecture on homework. She told them that failing to do their homework at home would lead to their having to do it during their support classes; as a result, their support grades would go down. In the middle of the lecture, Sally said something that I could not make out. Ms. Barber addressed her. “I’m talking. Not at this time. It must wait, Sally. I come first.”

These excerpted notes evince Ms. Barber’s view of classroom time as something that belongs to her. Moreover, they demonstrate her efforts to reposition students when they stray off into marginal temporal zones characterized by unsanctioned behaviors such as talking or working on other things. In interviews with students, I learned that they were quite cognizant of this official conceptualization of time. For instance, in a conversation with Perry he told me that he liked to play around a lot in class, which led to the following exchange:

Lewis: Why do you play?

Perry: I honestly think, because like I would tell Dr. Smith, because he’s, he’s, he’s doing the schedule of teaching from, ahh, umm, from an adult’s point of view. I think they should take some of the kid’s advice.

Lewis: Okay, so what would it be?

Perry: Umm, we should have breaks every now and then because Ms. Barber says we don't have enough stamina. She should let us, like, get five, five minutes just to do whatever we want for a second, and then get back to learning.

Liliana also mentioned that Ms. Barber expressed the idea that class time belonged to her, and that she frequently complained when she believed the students were wasting her time:

Liliana: She yells all the time.

Lewis: So what kinds of things does she yell about?

Liliana: Like she says, umm, [impersonating her teacher], "You guys are taking my time and lalala," and she's the one talking. That makes no sense. She says, "You guys are taking my time, wasting my time," and she's, like, talking, talking, talking, talking, talking, talking. And then she looks at the clock and, like, see what time is it. And then it's almost lunchtime, so.

I further learned about Ms. Barber's conceptualization of time from Sophia, an outspoken girl who nearly matches me in height, and Isabella, a Francophile who often wears Eiffel Tower bracelets. One day we were sitting together in the gymnasium before the morning assembly had begun. I asked the two, "What does it mean to be on Ms. Barber's time?"

Sophia responded, "Ms. Barber means that—let's say if we brought our own project from home, she won't let you, she won't let you do it in her class because it's her time to teach and learn."

"Okay," I said.

Isabella added, "I really don't know what that means."

I said, "You don't know what that means."

Isabella reiterated, "I don't know what that means."

I responded with another question. "Okay, so if that's Ms. Barber's time, what is your time? Do you have time?"

Sophia, always taking the lead, answered quickly, "Recess, break—that's all."

Official time, then, is a pedagogically pure time, free of all adulterants, in which the children apply themselves to Ms. Barber's tasks. It is a time that can be manipulated, segmented, and ultimately exhausted. Student behavior is sharply circumscribed, as all manner of extraneous practices are verboten: talking, playing, creating special projects, etc. are all things that the students must do on their own time.

This situation was not found in Ms. Maldonado's classroom. Indeed, when I asked Ms. Maldonado about time, she told me that "time is shared in my classroom—it belongs to both me and the students." For the most part, my observations corroborated her statement, as the students in her classroom seemed to have a great deal of freedom to utilize time—to harness and bend it to their own purposes—in singular ways that were undirected by Ms. Maldonado. At the same time, Ms. Maldonado admitted to me that several of her students "do not have any conception of time," and to illustrate this point, she told me a story about Jackson, who would only work when she sat right beside him. In her words,

And so he sat, as long as I was here, he did that first one, but then I had to go take scores off the computer and see what everybody did. And so, he did nothing. He did maybe one word.

Jackson works when he is monitored, but is much slower and inefficient when he is not. This statement, then, belies somewhat the initial one about time being shared. Indeed, for Jackson to have no conception of time and to be viewed as unproductive when not monitored presupposes an official time from which he deviates. Nevertheless, Ms. Maldonado never made direct statements redolent of those made by Ms. Barber ("You're on my time now"), and she rarely policed the limits of official time. Ms. Maldonado did, however, initiate a rather complex process of managing conduct and time through the use of sticks with numbers written on them, which were prominently displayed in a pocket chart in the front of the room. She explained the process to me in our first interview:

Maldonado: I don't think it's fair to them at the end of the day to say, "You've had a horrible day, you're getting a two." You know, they have to know what they're doing. So, what I do is I'll just look at them, check mark, and I made a master list and I'll just put it under whatever. And I'll let them see it throughout the day.

Lewis: So they know at each moment, moment by moment...

Maldonado: Right, and what I did was you get three warnings about something before you lose a stick. So they have 1 through 5 sticks there. And if they have three

checkmarks, then they know I'll look at them, *pull a stick*, they know they've had three chances, and they go and pull the five. So then their number right now is a four.

Lewis: They get three more before they drop down to a three, then?

Maldonado: Right, right.

This is a rather compelling procedure. Ms. Maldonado affords an opportunity for temporal divisions that are limitless, for a child can quite literally check her conduct every second if she feels the need to do so. Ms. Maldonado, then, has symbolized and reified conduct through numbers that are prominently displayed for all students, and she has encouraged an environment where children can monitor their conduct at any time they'd like—or, for that matter, continuously. Thus, we have an instance of power applied directly to both the body and to time, an articulation of power onto time (time conceptualized as the vicissitudes of the school day) and conduct.

Setting limits on time was another strategy employed by both teachers. Ms. Maldonado, for instance, demarcated time as a way of producing efficient, productive students. It will be recalled that Ms. Maldonado believed one of her students, Jackson, had no conception of time, and that she had to sit with him in order to get him to complete his work. Near the end of my time in the classroom, after Jackson had failed to produce on a given assignment, Ms. Maldonado told him, "I'm going to start setting a timer for you because you have done nothing and you've had thirty minutes." In other words, using a timer to establish official temporal parameters for an activity was a way of maximizing the efficiency of the moment. Without limits, Jackson's time was his own, and Ms. Maldonado, as we have seen, was displeased with how he chose to utilize it. Hence, a limit was set. Setting limits to increase productivity, however, was not always a strategy directed at a single student; sometimes the entire class was subjected to the limits of the clock. The following two examples from Ms. Maldonado's class are typical:

At 10:35 the writing lesson has resumed. Ms. Maldonado calls out, “1,2,3—” and the children respond “eyes on me.”

“Look at the clock,” she begins.

Claudia, interrupting, asks, “What time do we go to lunch?”

“Excuse me. It’s 10:36 now. By the time that big hand gets to the 8 you should be finished writing your objectives. I’m going to set the timer because I see people who should be working, but they’re not.” She paused for a moment to set the timer before continuing, “Okay, the timer is going. If I were you, I wouldn’t use my time for talking.”

It’s 10:30 and we’re back in the room. With the Pearson lady and music, it is now two and a half hours into the school day, and the students are still working on their do-it-now (i.e., morning) work. Ms. Maldonado, perhaps sensing this as well, projects a digital stopwatch onto the smart board and sets it for 12 minutes. “The timer is going,” she says. “There it is. You need to finish before it gets to zero.” So the children begin to write quietly, as Ms. Maldonado circles the room, peering down at the papers. “I should not hear any talking if you’re working.”

Notice the clear connection between (in)efficiency and time. The children are reminded, as the timer is set, that certain forms of conduct are incongruous with strictly delimited classroom time—e.g., “If I were you, I wouldn’t use my time for talking.” In setting limits, then, the objective is to carve out from the day a period of totally useful time, in which the children may apply themselves to their tasks without delay or interruption. Ms. Maldonado spoke to this point in our second interview, when she told me why she uses a timer:

Maldonado: Well, because if not they have no conception. Some of them will sit there and not do anything, and maybe fifteen minutes have gone by and they haven’t written their name on their paper. And so, they need to focus in on, okay, a lot of them will look at it like beat the timer. I’m going to get my work done before that goes off. And so that works.

Setting time limits, in short, is a strategy of power that effects a certain kind of student—viz. one who is efficient, productive, and attuned to the sanctioned timetable of the classroom.

Demarcating chunks of time was something I observed in Ms. Barber’s class as well. She would, for instance, dole out chunks of time in order to expedite preparation for work. In the following excerpt, the students are preparing for a lesson over the popular story, *Old Yeller*:

“Take out your writer’s notebooks,” Ms. Barber says suddenly. “And write as your heading ‘Old Yeller.’” She looks at her watch. “I’ll give you thirty seconds. It shouldn’t take you long; you’ve been doing it since first grade... Okay, now skip a line, then write ‘action phrases,’ and make sure your handwriting is neat because it reflects you. I want to see uniform letters, and I want you to please make sure to use beginning and end quotation marks.”

On another occasion, I recorded a similar note:

Ms. Barber has everyone copy the section title from their books into their journals: “Studying the distant past.”

“You have two minutes,” she says. “Write it down. Write the date—today’s date is October 7, 2014. To the right, write your name, first and last name.”

So, Ms. Barber employed time limits in order to prepare her children for work, and she also employed them as a way of keeping her students working. In the following excerpt, for example, she uses time to impel her students to complete their work:

As the children were becoming talkative, straying from their work, Ms. Barber addressed them as a group: “Better be done because I’m only going to give you ten more minutes. Okay, I’m setting the timer. Ten minutes!” With that, she set a small kitchen timer in the likeness of a pig to ten minutes, and the seconds began to tick away.

The students began working, and they were doing a fairly good job of it in Ms. Barber’s estimation, for she awarded three points to all tables for being engaged and focused. When there were two minutes left, she alerted them. Then, when the timer rang out, she gave them five additional minutes because they had been working diligently.

Being within the time limits demarcated by Ms. Barber is tantamount to occupying a subject position characterized by efficiency, productivity, and, insofar as one is awarded points for adherence to the schedule, obedience as well. Thus, we may identify the setting of limits as an unambiguous application of power to time, the body and personhood, and, of course, conduct.

A final temporal strategy teachers used was to suspend an activity in order to regain control of time. This would occur when children were engaged in an improper activity for a certain time—such as, for example, talking during a lesson. It was often made manifest through the teacher telling her students directly some variation of *I’m waiting on you*. Ms. Barber

suggested to me that telling students she was waiting on them meant that “they’re taking too long. They’re taking too long.” This phrase performs the function of a temporary socio-academic moratorium. It is a moment when adulterated time is made pure once more:

Ms. Maldonado’s line to recess was loud and rowdy. So, Ms. Maldonado told us that she was going to wait until we were ready for the hall. After a few moments of silence, we moved along.

At 1:25 the group has become too talkative for Ms. Maldonado’s liking, and she says, “I’m going to wait until everyone has settled down and is listening.” A couple seconds later, she began again.

Ms. Maldonado also used combinatory temporal strategies, as we see in the following instance of group sharing:

At 8:35 Ms. Maldonado called all the children to the carpet. Apparently, several children had been asking Ms. Maldonado if they could share things with the group. “So, we’ll share,” Ms. Maldonado said, “and then we can start our day.” The children sat in a circle on the carpet. Amanda sat beside Tionne, and when Ms. Maldonado noticed she addressed the situation:

“Can you tell me why that might not be a good spot for you?”

“Because I’ll talk,” Amanda said, already standing to move.

“Thank you.”

Before we began to share, Ms. Maldonado reminded the students about the class party on Friday, and everyone became talkative, swapping remarks about what kinds of candy and games would be available. Ms. Maldonado, her face screwed into a frown, scanned the group of children.

“I’m waiting on you,” Ms. Maldonado said and then paused briefly. “This should take us only fifteen minutes. If you’re not in a place where you think you can be quiet and listen, use this time to move.”

It is noteworthy, first of all, that Ms. Maldonado tells the children that they may have a moment for sharing, “and then we can start our day.” To be sure, this signals a way of conceptualizing time and activity—as the children’s concerns occupy a marginal space outside the official school day, with its legitimized tasks. Then, as the group becomes talkative, thereby engaging in an activity that is incongruous with official time and work, Ms. Maldonado employs two strategies. First, she suspends the official rendering of time (“I’m waiting on you”) and then, in the

interregnum, reestablishes fairly exact temporal contours by delimiting a boundary (“This should take us only fifteen minutes”).

At other times, Ms. Maldonado’s suspension of time operated at the level of the individual and had a more punitive tenor. For example, one morning in early December, after Ms. Maldonado had had an argument with Claudia (the argument stemmed from a conflict between Claudia and Tionne), she sent her student to sit alone on a small step beside the classroom door. I recorded the following in my notes:

Claudia sat on that seat for the rest of the morning, 2 hours and 15 minutes total. During that time, the other children worked on checking homework and on their new devices, but Claudia just sat. At 8:40, Claudia was still crying loudly. “Claudia, you need to stop!” Ms. Maldonado said. “It doesn’t even sound real. We cannot work if you’re fussing. If you keep it up, I will have to send you out of the room.”

At 8:50 Claudia has stopped crying. She raises her hand high, trying to get the attention of the teacher, but it takes three minutes before Ms. Maldonado notices her. Claudia asks if she can go back to her desk, to which Ms. Maldonado replies, “I’m sorry. I had to wait quite a while on you. Now you’ll have to wait on me.”

Another example was both typical and similar to the aforementioned:

Following the read aloud, Ms. Maldonado asked the class questions about the book. She had to move Mario and Jackson, who sit next to each other in the horseshoe, twice, creating more distance between them. Then, she sent Sophia and Tionne to the carpet because they were talking while she was discussing the book’s main idea with the class. The two girls sat there, criss-crossed and quiet, as the class discussed the story.

From 1:35 to support time, the children took out their computers to take a test. Sophia asked if she could go back to her table. Ms. Maldonado said, “You know, I’m not very happy with the two of you right now. You’re just going to have to wait.”

Just as she did with Claudia, Ms. Maldonado deployed a strategic moratorium at the level of the individual—this time with Sophia and Tionne. In short, the children have to wait because, as Ms. Maldonado tells them, she had to wait on them. She is taking back time. This is a much more involved and serious effort than simply pausing for a beat to recapture pure classroom time. In these cases, children are sent to a different area of the room where they “wait” for the teacher. These instances—and countless others like them—offer pellucid examples of young children

learning obedience to the timetable and patience for the capriciousness of an adult with authority over time.

Ms. Barber also suspended activity to regain control of time. I would like to present several short fieldnote excerpts without commentary as a way of illustrating the frequency at which this strategy was employed and the similar form it took on many different occasions:

At 12:30 the room grew loud with conversation. Ms. Barber stood leaning against the board, wearing a frown. "Waiting on you!" she said. Ms. Barber outlined the afternoon for her class. For the remainder of the school day, they would complete two worksheets on multiplying fractions and then work on their PowerPoints on ancient civilizations. As she was explaining this, the room grew talkative again. "I'll wait," Ms. Barber said. "I'll wait. Waiting! For! You!"

The students begin to hold up thumbs as they finish copying the heading into their math notebooks. When all thumbs have been raised, Ms. Barber writes the first problem on the board: $2 - 7/8$. Conversation begins to fill the air as she writes. "Okay, I'll wait," she says, and then stands quietly at the board for ten seconds.

At 10:20 we have the morning meeting. The room soon fills with talk, and Ms. Barber says, "I'll wait, no sidebar." Then, when it is her turn to share, the room again becomes animated with conversation. "I'll wait," she says again.

These excerpts were culled almost at random from my fieldnotes (such was the frequency at which they occurred in Ms. Barber's classroom). The discussion of this strategy in the context of Ms. Maldonado's room is germane here as well, so I will not reproduce it here. Suffice it to say that Ms. Barber, as we have seen, established a perspicuous understanding of official time in her classroom, an understanding that her students reiterated in interviews. Moreover, when unsanctioned conduct threatened this official schematization of time, she was quick to suspend time for a moment, clearing it of its impurities and freeing it for socio-academic exchanges commensurate with her purposes.

Ms. Barber also combined several temporal strategies. The following is a representative example of how she would employ multiple strategies in quick succession:

We had recess inside because the gym was occupied by classes and it was too cold to go outside. Before beginning, Ms. Barber told the students they would only have five minutes for recess because it had taken too long to finish up their work, take out the recycling, and wash their hands. As she was speaking, several students had taken out their snap cubes. “Stop playing with the blocks,” she said. “I’m talking. You can do that on your own time.”

A moment later, and their own time had arrived, and indeed several students did play with snap cubes during recess. I played multiplication Bingo with a group of students—Sally, Montrell, Tabitha, Phoenix, and Walter—in the back of the room near the closet.

After recess, the transition back to class time is rough. Ms. Barber calls out, “Waiting on you!” Then, after a moment, “Still waiting.” Another moment. “Who’s ripping paper?”

The whole class answered. “Liliana.”

“Not at this time,” Ms. Barber said.

“You don’t have to say it out loud,” Liliana said.

“You’re not going to tell me what I can say and cannot say. I’m saying not—wrong time! I am the adult, and I’m trying to show empathy, but I am still the adult here.”

Here we have a fairly complex example of regulating time in the form of a combinatory temporal strategy. First, Ms. Barber defines time in the classroom as her own by telling students that they can play with blocks on their own time. The children’s activities—despite the potential academic value of “play” in general and “play” with snap cubes in particular—belong to another time that lies outside official time. Then, after recess has concluded and the children have trouble transitioning back to Ms. Barber’s understanding of time, Ms. Barber suspends time briefly. Finally, she chastises Liliana for transgressing normative temporal arrangements. Like Ms. Maldonado’s combinatory strategies, this strategy has the effect of positioning children in relation to time. That is, in sedulously following the dictates of official time—and in being subject to temporal manipulations and interregnums—students are positioned as passive and obedient. They become, through relations of power that target time and the rhythms of the school day, inured to arbitrary temporal interventions. Additional examples could be provided, but they

follow the same general pattern as the combinatory strategy above. As such, it seems unwarranted to explore them here.

Surveillance, Call and Response, and Inscription

As mentioned previously, Foucault used the panopticon as a metaphor for the disciplinary society, in which subjects have internalized external surveillance to such a degree that they constantly police their own behavior, whether under scrutiny or not. The idea of total surveillance has surfaced in a number of qualitative studies of educational and social institutions (see, for example, Blackford, 2004; Bushnell, 2003; Welland, 2001). However, my observations suggest (and I will explore this subject in greater depth in an upcoming chapter on student resistance) that while there was evidence of surveillance at Washington Elementary, it would be egregious and erroneous to call it panoptic, for I found evidence of gaps in surveillance—gaps through which students articulated creative forms of response.

Both teachers and other school staff were concerned with surveillance to some degree. For instance, all the children of the school gathered each morning in the school gymnasium, where surveillance was clearly a concern, as the children sat in rows with their classmates and the teachers presided over their charges. These gatherings always had a decidedly panoptic feel, as suggested by the following note that I recorded in early September:

When I got to the gym, Dr. Smith was already into morning announcements. For whatever reason, the uniformity of the morning scene really impressed upon me today. Thirteen distinct rows stretched the width of the gym, Dr. Smith standing before them in address. Teachers dotted the gym, standing still over their students, at the rear of the lines. The students, too, sat still—almost all of them anyway—with their legs crossed, their hands in their laps, and their eyes facing forward. This is really quite a remarkable scene when you stop to regard it as a neophyte might. The level of coordination and order is impressive. There are also multiple levels of surveillance here—from Dr. Smith eyeing the teachers and students, to the teachers scanning their lines with their heads down.

Surveillance was also a concern in the classrooms. For instance, both teachers had specific routines and strict rules for entering the coat closets (which at Washington are shielded from the rest of the classroom by large walls) because of the problematic of surveillance. Ms. Maldonado didn't allow her students to use the coat closet for the first three weeks of the school year, and when I ask her why she responded:

Maldonado: I don't like them being, umm, where they're not—what do you call it?—watched, you know...

Lewis: Visible?

Maldonado: Where I need to be watching them to see what's going on in there.

When I asked Ms. Barber about the restrictions on her coat closet, she told me simply “I can't see them. I don't know what's going on back there.” So, in short, there was—as one would expect—a concern on the part of both teachers in my study to observe their students, especially in areas where they believed conduct might become an issue.

Ms. Maldonado extended surveillance beyond the walls of her classroom—indeed, beyond the walls of the school proper—to encourage monitoring from parents. Each day she sent home a calendar marked with a number signifying a given student's behavior for that day. As Louis told me, “We have fives, and if you get a five that's good. If you get a four, that's kind of good. But if you get a three it's not good. And there's twos and ones and zeros.” In addition, Ms. Maldonado made frequent phone calls and sent text messages to caregivers. Zora spoke to this in our interview:

Lewis: What happens in your class if you don't follow one of the rules?

Zora: I'll sit by myself, and I'll go in a buddy room, and I'll get in trouble.

Lewis: Okay, I saw you...

Zora: [interrupting] Wait, and she'll call my mom.

Similarly, De'Andre told me about the signifying power of Ms. Maldonado's numbers—the way in which the numbers specified conduct and, thereby, normalized behavior—and about the extension of surveillance via text messages:

Lewis: At the end of the day you get a number?

De'Andre: Uh-huh. We have to show it to our parents. That's why she be mad or happy.

Lewis: Is it? So you're happy when you get what kind of numbers? What kind of numbers are good numbers?

De'Andre: Five, four. Bad numbers, you get threes, ones, twos, or zeros.

Lewis: Those are the bad numbers?

De'Andre: Uh-huh.

Lewis: Okay.

De'Andre: That's why our behavior chart is in our room.

Lewis: That's why you have a behavior chart in your room? So does everybody—when you start the day in the morning, you're at a five?

De'Andre: Some people earn fives; some people don't because they're not doing good. Some, some text, umm, but my teacher text my momma a lot.

In short, Ms. Maldonado utilized three techniques for extending surveillance beyond the classroom into students' homes: daily signifying numbers, telephone calls, and text messages. All three techniques had the effect of both monitoring and normalizing conduct. Ms. Barber did not employ similar strategies.

Call and response was a strategy employed by both teachers to quickly get students' attention, often at times in which misbehavior was occurring. Moreover, it was a means of establishing an evaluative milieu in which misbehavior could be easily detected; after all, when all students are chanting, it is easy to ascertain if some are engaged in unsanctioned pursuits. Ms. Maldonado used oral chants to realize these aims, of which the following are typical:

As Ms. Maldonado continues to read, the children begin to chatter in hushed tones. To curb the talking, Ms. Maldonado shouted out, "Uno, dos, tres!" To which the students responded, "Olé, olé, olé!"

Ms. Maldonado resumes the writing lesson, but several children are occupied with other things and just generally not paying attention. Ms. Maldonado calls out, "1, 2, 3—" and the children respond, "Eyes on me!"

She also utilized kinesthetic rhythms in a similar way:

The children are very loud—a cacophony of voices reaching all corners of the room—so Ms. Maldonado claps a five-beat rhythm, which the children echo back to her: *Clap, clap, clapclapclap! Clap, clap, clapclapclap!* Then she tells them, “It is time to use the restroom, and then it will be time for lunch.”

At 9:25, Ms. Maldonado claps a five-beat rhythm that the children repeat:

Clap, clap, clapclapclap!

Clap, clap, clapclapclap!

“Okay,” Ms. Maldonado says. “We need to have a voice level zero right now. I need you to get your books for library, and we’ll have time to use the restroom first.”

Call and response, then, in addition to getting attention and ferreting out misbehavior, is also a means of halting social intercourse and establishing attentive, passive student subjects. After all, in both instances above the call is followed immediately by what Lyotard has termed “prescriptions.” Of prescriptions, Lyotard (1984) writes,

Here, the sender is clearly placed in a position of authority . . . : that is, he expects the addressee to perform the action referred to. The pragmatics of prescription entail concomitant changes in the posts of the addressee and referent. (p. 10)

The change in the addressee has been mentioned—the student subject moves from an active, expressive position to a passive, receptive one. And the referent moves from a prescription to an immediate performance, as the students follow the directions provided by the teacher.

Ms. Barber only utilized one form of call and response—the Whoop, Whoop! chant.

Nevertheless, it functioned in a similar way to all of Ms. Maldonado’s calls. For instance, one day in early September, the class became loud during a math lesson on decimals:

Ms. Barber says loudly, “Whoop, whoop!” The class answers, “Whoop, whoop!” Ms. Barber says again, “Whoop, whoop!” And the class answers, “Whoop, whoop!” Then Ms. Barber tells everyone to put down their pencils while she explains the final part of the lesson—a short test, which consists of explaining how to write a decimal and writing a decimal number.

A similar thing occurred in early November, during an English Language Arts lesson:

The class is working on a worksheet on irregular plural nouns, but several students are talking. Ms. Barber regains control with a call I've heard many times:

Ms. Barber: "Whoop, whoop!"

Class: "Whoop, whoop!"

Ms. Barber: "Whoop, whoop!"

Class: "Whoop, whoop!"

After that, the students were quiet, and Ms. Barber told them it was time to move on.

I would underscore here that the morphology of Ms. Barber's calls is isomorphic with Ms. Maldonado's. That is, the call enables the teacher to regain attention, identify misbehavior, and quell sociality. Moreover, it repositions the student subject from an active, expressive position to a passive, receptive one. Finally, it reconfigures the referent into sanctioned behavior, a performance of goodness.

Inscription refers to ways of writing down student misbehavior, of keeping a record and, one might be inclined to say, of "making a case." This is something that was encouraged by the principal, Dr. Smith. As he told me in our interview:

Smith: I urge them [the teachers] to write up anything they feel like they've done with the student, so we can keep a trail. And they, so they put it in the computer system as a write up, so we can see, yes, this student—we can have a paper trail, we can talk with a parent: "Your student on this date did this, on this date did that, on this date did this. And the teacher either handled it themselves, talked with you, put them in a buddy room."

At the classroom level, Ms. Maldonado and Ms. Barber had markedly different ways of inscribing student behavior. Ms. Maldonado did so at the individual level—that is, she recorded the misconduct of individual students rather than groups—and she did so in a rather involved way. To begin with, she kept a pocket chart at the front of the room, and each student in the class had a pocket with her name on it and five popsicle sticks in her pocket. Ms. Maldonado kept a master list of the sorts of behaviors she might see on a given day. Each time a student would demonstrate one of those behaviors, she would receive a checkmark on this master list, and after receiving three checkmarks, she would lose a stick from her personalized pocket. Losing a stick

would lower a child's number (for example, from a five to four), and, as mentioned previously, a child's number would be sent home to parents each day on a calendar. This method had the effect of normalizing conduct. First of all, it reified student conduct—and, by extension, the students themselves—by symbolizing and projecting it for everyone to see. A student in this room would constantly know the number of checks she had received and her current number. Moreover, this system created a behavioral ideal (a number five) against which students could measure themselves, and which Ms. Maldonado could use to quickly ascertain the position of a given student at any time. In short, this method of inscribing normalized student conduct, creating individual “cases” that could be measured against both an ideal and one another. This method traced the contours of the individual subject, as students came to know themselves at least partially through the normalizing system detailed above. As Zora told me about another student: “Lily—she's so good. She never get bad numbers. All she do is just get fours and fives on her sheet.” In other words, the students know themselves through these numbers, and they measure themselves via observable lacunae between themselves and their peers.

Ms. Barber's method of inscription was quite different from Ms. Maldonado's. In her room, inscription took the form of awarding or taking away points at the group level. There weren't set criteria for earning or losing points; in interviews students told me that you get them when you're doing the right thing and have them taken away when you're not. Take David's words, for example, when I asked him about how Ms. Barber awards and rescinds points:

David: Okay, well, like, we have, each of our groups we have, like, a certain goal we have to get by the end of the week to get, like, popcorn and popsicles.

Lewis: Is the goal the same for all groups?

David: Yeah, so you have to get over 100 points, and if you do good, you get points. But if you do bad, you like lose points. And every time you, like, okay, and we do the same thing with the bathroom, too. Like, if you use the bathroom on time—and, like, get everybody out—then you get twelve points, everybody.

Sara told me something similar about how a group earns points:

By the end of Ms. Barber's lecture, the children have been sitting and listening to lectures on conduct for 45 minutes. Following that, the children are to choose topics for a civilization project by drawing pieces of paper with civilizations written on them from a large container. Ms. Barber calls them one at a time to draw a slip of paper, while the others sit and wait their turns. It isn't long before the students become unruly, and Ms. Barber begins giving out points for groups that are sitting quietly. I am sitting beside Sara, at a table with Shaun, David, and Montrell. I ask Sara about the points, and she tells me they get them "when they're doing the right thing."

Star's words were nearly identical to Sara's:

Umm, like, when you're in your group, all your, like, your friends in your group has to do the right thing. And she'll give you, like, five points or three. And then she takes away five points if you're not doing the right thing.

In interviews, when I would push students to define what it meant to do the right thing, there was little consistency in the responses. Behaviors that were mentioned included being quick in the restrooms, not talking back to the teacher, working assiduously, being quiet at the appropriate time, and so forth. I'm left to conclude that doing the right thing or the wrong thing were amorphous (and potentially ever-changing) concepts left up to the discretion of the teacher. Moreover, the criteria for earning points were nebulous and ultimately the province and prerogative of the teacher.

While the details of Ms. Barber's system were distinct from Ms. Maldonado's, the function was ostensibly similar. Writing down positive and negative behavior inscribes and normalizes a version of the student that the teacher wants to see. It establishes a mark against which conduct can be assessed and, if need be, punished. Removing points marks a space between the individual as she is and as she should be.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I discussed four categories of power that relate to pedagogy or pedagogically related concerns. To begin with, I examined instructional practices. Here, I argued

that both teachers segmented and rationalized their lessons, with a concomitant transmogrification of work into the following of a series of steps.

I also discussed how the teachers in my study formed student language. In particular, I suggested that the teachers see part of their work as teaching the children how to speak to one another. Moreover, I argued that the teachers incited their students to speak in prescribed ways and to, thereby, come to know themselves as certain sorts of subjects—namely, as passive recipients, rather than expressive users, of language. The mechanisms by which the teachers did so varied, as Ms. Maldonado used sentence frames, recitation of important information, and correction of solecisms. Ms. Barber was found to only use sentence frames.

Both teachers in my study manipulated time as a technique of power. Ms. Barber demarcated and monitored an official rendering of time, in which students with their own agendas were defined as behavioral problems and students who conformed to classroom time were called “scholars.” Ms. Barber also set time limits in order to increase individual productivity, and she suspended activities to regain control of time. While Ms. Maldonado also set time limits and declared moratoriums, she did not establish official time in the same way Ms. Barber did. Rather, she was more flexible with time, albeit she did utilize a process of symbolizing conduct with sticks, which represented minute divisions of time (time defined as activity and the vicissitudes of the school day) and created opportunities for students to regard themselves (and each other) moment by moment.

Finally, I argued that both teachers in my study utilized surveillance, call and response, and inscription. These techniques of power were discussed together because they share the quality of being mechanisms of monitoring that surround the pedagogical moment. In their own way, they each normalize certain forms of behavior, identify others as improper, and reposition

the student so that teaching can continue. With respect to surveillance, I suggested that while Washington Elementary could not be labeled a panoptic institution, teachers did evince some concern with watching their students. This was especially evident with Ms. Maldonado, who in addition to visual surveillance also used numbers, telephone calls, and text messages to extend monitoring beyond the school walls, into students' homes. Call and response was used by both teachers to quickly get attention, identify sources of misbehavior, quell sociality, and reposition the student from an active to a passive state. In addition, both teachers revealed forms of inscribing or writing down improper conduct, thereby sketching and normalizing the contours of student subjectivity. In the next chapter, I would like to turn our attention toward an examination of the confluence of power and space at Washington Elementary.

Chapter Seven: Power and Space

In the previous chapter, we examined how the teachers in my study applied power via pedagogy and in pedagogically related contexts. In this chapter, we turn our attention to how Ms. Maldonado and Ms. Barber used space as a technique of power. At the outset, it should be noted that these strategies represent ways of transforming a neutral environment¹⁵ into a polysemous one—a process in which certain social actions and deployments of transactional force produce a landscape where ramified (and sometimes disputed) meanings are mapped onto physical space. In essence, I will examine how “space is continually organized to maintain power relations” (McGregor, 2004, p. 13). This examination will not focus solely on physical places, but rather on the dynamic between physical places and the social relationships that impart meaning to them.

I will begin this chapter with some general comments on how both teachers defined space in their classrooms. From there, I will discuss two specific strategies, *movement* and *isolation*, related to power and space that were employed in both classrooms. In doing so, I do not intend to suggest that these categories are comprehensive or completely mutually exclusive, but rather to provide a framework for understanding social practices that seemed to cluster together around these two poles. I should note, moreover, that these practices—i.e., movement and isolation—were representative of other teachers in the building. That is, teachers were expected to have areas in their rooms where students could be isolated from others, and “buddy rooms,” where they could send their students for disciplinary reasons. As such, my teachers’ actions were not aberrant, but rather reflected common, daily strategies of power. There was, in other words, a

¹⁵ A possible objection here might be that there is no such thing as a “neutral environment”—that all physical spaces have been written upon by social activity. I do not disagree. However, what I intend to connote through the word “neutral” is a sort of arbitrariness wherein places lack inherent meanings and can, therefore, be coded in a number of different ways. Part of the goal of this chapter, then, becomes tracing the mapping of meanings onto physical places in and beyond the classroom.

normative environment that nurtured the strategies of movement and isolation, and this was supported by the school principal.¹⁶ At the end of this chapter, I will discuss the interstices of gender, space, and power, for these three phenomena came together in compelling ways at Washington Elementary. For organizational purposes, I will begin my discussion with the second grade and culminate with the sixth grade.

Defining Spaces

One way Ms. Maldonado defined classroom space for her students was through the construction of a therapeutic landscape, which afforded children opportunities for self-work. These spaces were reserved for children under some kind of emotional distress. Ms. Maldonado described them for me in our first interview:

Maldonado: If you have a bad day in the morning, you come in and you're having a hard time focusing—something happened and you just can't concentrate—I will have them, a little corner for them, where they, before they, before they could read in kindergarten they would come in and pick a book on tape and sit and relax for ten minutes, listen to a story. Umm, if something [coughs] happened at home, and they're sad, they can go to this part of the room and they can make a card for their mom or dad or whatever, you know, whatever situation, they can draw it, talk about it, write it. So I try to put out those fires before they...

Lewis: [interrupting] Proactive.

Maldonado: Before they start. Right.

A couple comments are warranted. First, this is clearly a move toward establishing spaces where students can engage in what Foucault (1988) has termed “technologies of the self,” or self-practices that

permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and ways of

¹⁶ The expectation to use isolation and movement predates the current principal, Dr. Smith. It was something that was present in the building prior to his tenure, which he did not alter. As such, these strategies represent entrenched, institutionalized norms.

being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality. (p. 18)

That is, Ms. Maldonado constructed spaces where distraught children could work through their problems, especially their “thoughts, conduct, and ways of being.” This was an important part of the social world in Ms. Maldonado’s second grade classroom, for students often utilized these spaces in order to work through personal issues. Second, this definition of space can be understood as a management technique, a practice of power. After all, Ms. Maldonado states that she uses these spaces to “put out those fires” before they can turn into something more serious. Returning to Foucault’s understanding of power for a moment, it will be remembered that power is less about antagonism than it is about structuring a field of possible actions. That is, “the exercise of power is a ‘conduct of conducts’ and a management of possibilities. Basically, power is less a confrontation between two adversaries or their mutual engagement than a question of ‘government’” (Foucault, 2000a, p. 341). Ms. Maldonado’s actions, insofar as they were intended to structure a possible future field of actions (i.e., to limit and reduce the likelihood of problematic conduct) reveal themselves to be techniques of power. In short, the spaces she defined can be conceptualized both as sites of self-work and as a confluence of power and space—that is, as a means of using space to govern the classroom.

Beyond the therapeutic landscape of the room were a few verboten areas. In particular, Ms. Maldonado enacted spatial prohibitions in two areas—the coat closet and her desk. The prohibition on the coat closet was inexorable, as can be seen in the following fieldnote excerpt, in which Jackson wishes to go into the coat closet to retrieve his lunch:

At 11:50 it is time to line up for lunch. Jackson has forgotten his lunch in the coat closet. Ms. Maldonado asks the class what the rule for the closet is, and Lily answers, saying that they have to go in in the morning and take everything out. Ms. Maldonado then asks the children why the closet is closed except for the morning, and after a few students

answer unsuccessfully, she tells them, “Safety. I need to be able to see you all of the time.”

She asks the class, “Should I let Jackson go get his lunch?”

The class, in perfect unison, answers, “No!”

“That’s right,” says Ms. Maldonado. “Because that is how we learn.”

Ms. Maldonado also placed a prohibition on her desk, and she enforced it just as vigilantly. The following exchange between Amanda and Ms. Maldonado illustrates this point:

As the second graders are preparing for their day—taking their backpacks to the closet and putting them away, readying their pencils for morning work—I witnessed an interesting interaction between Amanda and Ms. Maldonado. Amanda began to return a stapler—I have no idea why she had it in the first place—to Ms. Maldonado’s desk, but she was halted by the teacher’s voice: “Excuse me,” Ms. Maldonado said sharply. “You are not to be near my table. Put it over there,” she finished, pointing to the “data” table (i.e., the table where children’s data folders are kept; it occupies a mid-portion of the room, a spot near the windows overlooking the parking lot).

In defining the places of the classroom, Ms. Maldonado has transformed a neutral space into a social one. She has engaged in the constitution of what Frankenberg (1995) has termed a *social geography*, or a physical place that is occupied by humans and defined through social processes. She has, moreover, defined a social geography that undergirds power relations in the classroom. The children, after all, are not allowed in the coat closet or near Ms. Maldonado’s desk; in the case of the coat closet, Ms. Maldonado has issued a prohibition because the closet occludes surveillance of her students. To be sure, this bespeaks a concern with governing or structuring a field of possible actions.¹⁷

¹⁷ These are critical comments, but it is not my intention here to gratuitously cavil Ms. Maldonado’s choices. In my estimation, there is little wrong with defining classroom spaces where children cannot be. Rather, I wish to identify these spaces, their transformations, and their linkages with power. To state it differently, a prohibition of space is an instance of power insofar as it forecloses any social activity that might have, in another configuration of space, occurred there. This relationship between space and power, especially how they channel social intercourse, is an aspect of schooling that we rarely think about, yet to my way of thinking they are sufficiently institutionalized to belong to the “grammar of schooling” (Tyack & Tobin, 1994). I would also underscore that while I wish to avoid evaluating these practices, it is noteworthy that the children lacked a voice in the production of official spaces (albeit they did, as we will see in the next chapter, transform official spaces through use).

The comments above are germane to the situation in Ms. Barber's classroom as well. Her closet prohibition was made perspicuous through the immediate and vehement way she dealt with children who went into the coat closet. For instance, notice how she handled a closet situation with Perry:

Next it was time for gym, so the students lined up in the typical fashion—groups excused one at a time to fill in between the two runners—except for Perry, who returned to the coat closet. As I have noted many times before—and as many students have told me—Ms. Barber only allows students in the closet first thing in the morning and at dismissal. So, when she saw Perry, Ms. Barber grabbed his backpack and pulled it out of the closet. She added, “You know you can’t go in my closet without permission!” Perry carried his backpack to his desk and sat it down there before getting in the line for gym.

Or consider how she dealt with Montrell, when he dallied in the coat closet in the morning:

At 8:25, Montrell was still in the closet, and Ms. Barber noticed.

“Montrell, why are you still in there?” she asked.

Montrell began to explain. “I forgot...”

But he was interrupted by Ms. Barber: “Come out, come out, come out!”

And, then, a few moments later, she had another confrontation with Perry:

Ms. Barber caught Perry in the closet. “Come out of my closet!” she bellowed. “I’m not doing that. You’re not going to keep saying I forgot this, I forgot that. It’s November, and you’re too big. Get a bigger memory. Everybody else knows how to take everything out in the morning like you’re supposed to. So you do it then—not while I’m talking.”

To be sure, Ms. Barber transformed a space without an inherent meaning into one that undergirds power relations between the teacher and her students. In defining the coat closet as verboten, she has limited how the children interact with physical space in the classroom. She has, to repeat a point made earlier, foreclosed the possibility of social activity that might have occurred in a different arrangement. She has, moreover, imbued the closet with a quality and ethos that the children perceive immediately. Indeed, for the most part children steered clear of the closet. It is a place that gets you into trouble.

In my time at Washington, I never saw a student behind Ms. Barber's desk, although the students were well aware of its prohibited status. Sofia and Isabella readily articulated it as one place where they were not to be during a conversation that we had one morning before school:

Lewis: Are there places in the classroom where you guys are not supposed to be?

Isabella: Yes.

Sofia: The closet and behind her desk.

Lewis: Are those the only two?

Isabella: Oh, and in the doorway. She doesn't like us being in the doorway.

Ms. Barber's social practices in this regard are similar to Ms. Maldonado's. She defines the spaces in her classroom, mapping on particular arrangements of power, which then in turn encourage certain forms of intersubjective exchange. The place, in other words, mediates the dynamic between Ms. Barber and her students—and it does so in predictable ways that are known to all parties. As we have seen above—and as we will see in the next chapter as well—these social meanings and arrangements of power are not fixed or static, and indeed were contested on a daily basis. It is in the resistance to the prohibition that the prohibition reveals itself as such.

Isolation and Movement in Space (Grade Two)

Isolation. Meet De'Andre, Amanda, Zora, and Tionne. De'Andre is an active child—always moving and frequently standing at his desk. Amanda is a raconteur, who talks incessantly, often when others have stopped listening. Zora is a budding musician who loves singing and rapping. Tionne delights in joking around and is one of the warmest, most social, and precocious children I've ever met. These four individuals occupy a unique space in Ms. Maldonado's classroom because they sit alone. In Ms. Maldonado's words, following a meeting about the students in question:

Before Ms. Maldonado resumes the writing lesson (as the children are taking their things from their chair jackets) I ask how the meeting went (she had a meeting with the team

that decides whether to refer children for special services). She says, "I told them: 'I've got one facing north, south, east, and west, so I need some help.'" She is referring to the desk positions of De'Andre, Amanda, Zora, and Tionne.

Of these children, Amanda in particular was identified by her teacher as someone who required isolation. Ms. Maldonado tried several isolation strategies with Amanda, beginning with moving her around a lot.

I noticed, as I spoke with Ms. Maldonado, that Amanda's desk had been moved again. Last time I was here she was over by the door; before that it was near the horseshoe table; before that it was the northwest corner area of the room. Who knows how many moves she has made total. I asked Maldonado why she had been moved this time. "I was fed up," Ms. Maldonado said.

When isolation in particular areas of the room didn't work, Ms. Maldonado used various mechanisms to try to restrict Amanda's movement. She began with a filing cabinet.

On the way out the door to pick up the students, Ms. Maldonado mentioned that Amanda was driving her crazy, and she pointed to her new seat. She now sits in a solitary desk at the back of the room, and right in front of her desk is a four-foot high filing cabinet. I asked Maldonado about the filing cabinet, and she told me she had put it there because Amanda had been scooting her desk all around the room; she wouldn't be still.

She also placed tape on the floor to circumscribe Amanda's desk.

As the children sit quietly, their heads down on the table, I look around. No one moves. Today Amanda's desk is unoccupied, as Amanda hasn't come to school. I notice that although the desk is in the same place over near the windows, a line of tape has been put down on the floor; it runs along the front edge of her desk. I move over near Lily, and I ask her why there is tape on the floor. She, Louis, and Tamara all answer my question, talking over one another. From them, I learn that the tape is there to keep Amanda from moving her desk. The children tell me that she likes to move her desk around but that the line marks a point beyond which she cannot move. The line, in short, is something of an invisible anchor.

I asked Ms. Maldonado about the tape in our second interview together, and she explained why she has used tape with a few of her students. (Incidentally, I never observed tape being used with any student other than Amanda.)

Lewis: Well, so what did the tape do, if anything, then? And why did you get rid of it?
Maldonado: Well, that was there really for like De'Andre before he had medicine.

Lewis: What did it do, though?

Maldonado: It, that's your area. Because that desk would be pushed all the way over, or he would be up in the chair there; Tionne the same way. If they were ever sitting there—and Amanda the same way—the tape was, *Hey, you are confined to this. You cannot push that desk.*

A few points should be mentioned here. To begin with, the isolation of children codes space in particular ways—viz. marking negative space, or marginal classroom places. Second, the restriction of movement marks an articulation of power directly onto space and the body. It further defines some spaces in the room as “bad” spaces. This is something that became clear to me through a conversation with Amanda and Tionne:

I walk over to where Amanda and Tionne sit, in single desks over beside the window that looks out to the parking lot. They have moved spots since last time. I ask them why they're sitting over by the window.

“Because we're special,” says Amanda with a sly grin.

“Because you're special?” I ask.

“No, because we be bad so we sit by ourselves all day,” Tionne says.

The children recognized themselves as “bad” and identified sitting by oneself as something that one does because they are bad. In this instance, both the child and the place acquire a negative valence, reinforcing one another in a cycle of evaluation.

Isolation on the Playground. The playground was a place where many children faced the prospect of isolation. Amanda told me that she most often had to sit out at recess because of not listening or failing to return her homework from the previous night. And my observations corroborated this, as I often saw children sitting out for not listening and even more often for not returning homework. The following fieldnote excerpt speaks to this point:

Then it is time to collect homework from the previous night. Ms. Maldonado does this one subject at a time. First, she chooses Katherine to go around and pick up all the students' writing homework. Once Katherine has turned in all the homework, Ms. Maldonado makes all the children who didn't finish their writing homework raise their hands. “I'll see you at recess,” she says, copying down names.

Children who were denied the opportunity to play had to sit on the periphery of the playground.

This punishment often resulted in emotional responses from the children, as evidenced by the following notes:

Marcus and Amanda sit on the periphery of the play area, on the curb that is reserved for children who must sit out. Ms. Maldonado tells me that they have to sit out because they didn't bring back their homework. About five minutes until line-up time, she releases them to go play, but Marcus just sits there, dejected. When we line up to go back to class, he refuses to join the line, and only moves from his spot once it becomes evident that Ms. Maldonado is leading the line indoors with or without him. All the way back to class, he trails at a distance of about thirty feet.

After making our way quietly through the halls, we emerged to a sunlit autumn day, the trees along the far fence beginning to fade and drop their leaves. The children picked up their pace once the front of the line hit the outdoors, with everyone scurrying through the fence and lining up along the curb that runs the west side of the playground. Ms. Maldonado announces that Tionne, Amanda, and De'Andre have to sit out on the curb; everyone else can go play. Amanda immediately begins to sob. After a beat, Tionne joins in.

The curb where children sat was a known place, a pernicious space in the life of a child. It was a place of quiet despondency, or, on other occasions, visceral emotional outbursts. In the cultural life of the school, the curb was a space of delinquency—a place for the paddocking of wrongdoers. It was also, as mentioned, a place that elicited sundry sorts of negative responses as certain children sat and watched while others played. In short, it was a cultural space insofar as it was mapped with meanings that were known to both teachers and students. These meanings, it could be argued, became inscribed over time onto certain student offenders, for in my time at Washington Elementary it was the same students who sat out time and time again. As Amanda told me:

Lewis: Why do you have to sit out at recess?

Amanda: Because, because sometimes I do bad stuff.

Lewis: Like what? What's bad?

Amanda: Like I don't listen sometimes.

Certain students sat out almost daily at recess. Sitting out was a practice that accompanied the designation of certain students as “bad,” and it coded the place where it occurred as “bad” as well. The place, in turn, reinforced the original designation. There were, in short, endless cycles of evaluation involved in sitting out at recess, with a physical space structuring relations of power between one who evaluates and those whom are evaluated.

Isolation in the Lunchroom. Isolation in the lunchroom was similar to isolation on the playground both in form and meaning. The children repeatedly told me about two sorts of lunchroom punishments—standing on the wall and sitting at the back table. Louis addressed both in my interview with him:

Lewis: Is there anything else that they do when you get—and I’m not talking about you—if a second grader gets in trouble at lunch?

Louis: You have to sit out at the wall.

Lewis: You do. What wall?

Louis: Anywhere.

Lewis: Do you sit or do you stand?

Louis: You stand on the wall.

Lewis: You go stand on the wall. What if you’re still eating?

Louis: Then you’ll probably stand up if you’re big. And if you’re, if you’re in trouble and you’re still eating, you would just go to the table. And when you’re done, you stand up on the wall.

One has to stand on the wall, or, if she happens to still be eating, have a seat at “the table,” a long table at the rear of the lunchroom reserved for children whom have gotten into trouble. So, the form of the punishment—just like recess punishment—was isolation. The meaning—also like recess punishment—was an isomorphic negative evaluation of both the child and the place. As

De’Andre told me when I showed him a picture of the lunchroom:

De’Andre: Ahh, sad place.

Lewis: Why?

De’Andre: Because I don’t like to get in trouble a lot.

Lewis: You get in trouble at lunch a lot. What for?

De’Andre: Sometimes. And sometimes I eat by myself.

Lewis: Where do you sit if you eat by yourself?

De'Andre: Umm, at the back table. And the rest of the people sit up there.

De'Andre clearly and quickly identified the lunchroom as a sad place. More specifically, he spoke about getting in trouble and having to eat at the back table. Here, the back table acquires a negative valence and so, too, does De'Andre. The child constitutes, through his transgressions, the table as a "bad space." But the table, as a holding area for children found guilty of various wrongdoings, establishes the child as "bad" as well. This practice, in short, represents a cycle of power. As Marcus told me when I asked him one day why Amanda was sitting at the back table, "Because she's always bad so that's where she sits."

Movement. In addition to isolation, Ms. Maldonado would also utilize movement techniques to manage her classroom. At a relatively benign level, Ms. Maldonado would often move children to different areas of the room to deal with behavioral infractions. The following two examples are typical:

When we got back to class, Ms. Maldonado announced that we had to get quiet so that a few students could finish their tests. If we were not taking a test, then we were to read silently. Tionne asked if I could read a book to her, and thinking it would probably be okay, I said yes. As soon as I did, however, Tom and Claudia swarmed me, and then all three children began to discuss to whom I would read. When Ms. Maldonado heard us, she sent Tionne back to her table for talking, but the other two were allowed to remain on the carpet. Tionne put her head down and cried for the next ten minutes.

Following the read aloud, Ms. Maldonado asked the class questions about the book. She has to move Mario and Jackson, who sit next to each other in the horseshoe, twice, creating more distance between them. Then, she sent Sophia and Tionne to the carpet because they were talking while she was discussing the book's main idea with the class. The two girls sat there, criss-crossed and quiet, as the class discussed the story.

These two excerpts demonstrate how Ms. Maldonado would send children to different areas of the room (often back to their seats, but to other places in the room as well) to discipline them.

This was a quick strategy: something that could be done immediately, without delay, to deal with the problem at hand, which was often, talking out of turn, as the two excerpts demonstrate.

For more serious problems, Ms. Maldonado had a plastic step beside her front door. She did not often send children to the step, but it was always a possibility, as the following fieldnote excerpt suggests:

At 8:30, just minutes into the school day, Claudia and Tionne had a conflict. Tionne was trying to tell Claudia something, but Claudia didn't want to listen, and just kept saying Tionne's last name over and over. Well, this frustrated Tionne, who began to cry and told Ms. Maldonado what had happened. Perhaps realizing that she was going to get in trouble, Claudia apologized, but Tionne did not want to listen to her. At this point, Ms. Maldonado intervened. She told Claudia that just because she had apologized that didn't mean the problem was solved—that sometimes you have to go back and make it right. Claudia just kept repeating that she had already said sorry, and this frustrated Ms. Maldonado, who kept telling her that she wasn't listening and that she didn't appreciate the arguing. In fact, Ms. Maldonado told her, "It's 8:30, Claudia. I only argue at 3:30 with parents here." When Claudia would not stop crying and telling the teacher she had already said sorry, Ms. Maldonado sent her to the step beside the front door, where children are sometimes sent when they get in trouble. This is supposed to be a "thinking" area, and there's even a sign that reads "I'm thinking." Claudia sat on that seat for the rest of the morning, 2 hours and 15 minutes total.

The step, insofar as it was coded as a negative place for children (negative in spite, it might be added, of its stated purpose as a "thinking" spot), supported particular arrangements of power in the classroom. It also helped to define how children interacted with the physical places surrounding them. In particular, it functioned to silence student speech and restrict movement, as students were required to sit silently until Ms. Maldonado had decided they could come back and join the class again.

From time to time, Ms. Maldonado would send students to another classroom, a "buddy room"¹⁸ where they would either sit quietly or work until Ms. Maldonado decided they could

¹⁸ Buddy rooms were prearrangements and typically there was a reciprocity involved whereby teacher A would send her students to teacher B, who would, in turn, send her students to teacher A. This was not always the case, however, and Ms. Barber, for instance, had arrangements with several teachers, so that she could, if necessary, send multiple students out of the classroom at the same time. Teachers would typically, albeit not always, send work with the students, and all classrooms had specified areas where students from other rooms would sit. Students without work were instructed by their homeroom teachers to sit quietly until they were invited back into the classroom. While my primary focus here is the power relations that underlie the buddy-room strategy, the dynamics of the buddy room (and the dynamic between the buddy room and the home room, the boundary-making aspects involved, etc.) is a compelling topic of investigation. Unfortunately, I was unable to observe buddy

return again.¹⁹ This was a last resort, something to be utilized when the teacher’s frustration level had reached its acme.²⁰ Although it was rarely employed, it was a strategy that ostensibly had a profound impact on the children, for all six of my interview participants mentioned being sent to a buddy room as a possible form of punishment. Zora, for instance, answered my question about what Ms. Maldonado does when she doesn’t follow a rule by saying, “I’ll sit by myself, and I’ll go to a buddy room, and I’ll get in trouble.” Amanda told me that children are sent from the room “Because they act as bad as me.” Being sent from the room, according to Amanda, marks a student as “bad,” and by extension, it marks the place where they are sent as “bad” as well. The potentiality of being sent from the room identifies a strategic relationship between teacher and child, undergirds the dynamic of power between them, and makes a negative evaluation of the student in question. That is, it identifies the teacher as superordinate and the child as subordinate; it defines who can limit the actions of others (namely the teacher, in sending a child from the room); and it traces the contours of student subjectivity, delimiting her as a wrongdoer who demonstrates improper conduct.

Throughout the course of my time in her classroom, Ms. Maldonado rearranged the seating arrangements often as a way of obviating potential behavioral problems. She began with small tables that sat four students each, then moved to having the students sit in pairs. Following

room placements insofar as I only received district approval to conduct observations in two classrooms and support classes (i.e., library, art, gym, computers, and music). As such, my analysis must unfortunately end with a given student’s departure from her home room.

¹⁹ Ms. Maldonado told me that after other strategies had failed—isolation in the room, for example—she would sometimes send a student to a buddy room with instructions for the receiving teacher to either send the student to the office if her behavior escalated or to return her to the room when she had calmed down. Some teachers, she told me, used time—that is, sending kids out of the room for, say, ten minutes—but that she had never utilized this approach.

²⁰ In my conversations with Ms. Barber and Ms. Maldonado, both frequently expressed that moving students to another room was a way of getting a break. Movement, in other words, was not solely for the sake of the classroom, as indeed there was a measure of psychic restoration involved as well. While this relationship between power, space, and teachers’ well-being is ultimately beyond my scope here, it is doubtless deserving of future scholarly attention.

that, she had some students sitting in individual desks and others at tables. Then, she had all the students sitting in individual desks, with the desks arranged first into a horseshoe and then into a double horseshoe. Finally, she arranged the desks into two parallel rows with a shorter perpendicular row shooting off from one end. According to Ms. Maldonado, the nearly constant rearrangements were to provide the children with their own desks, which would serve as places for their personal things; to reduce arguments; and to cut down on talking. It should be mentioned that the shorter, perpendicular row contained the children that Ms. Maldonado had the most difficulty with in the classroom. She spoke about this row in our final interview:

And they're all the lower ones—Tionne, De'Andre, Amanda. Jackson's smart, but they took him and said, "Yes, he's probably ADD, but he has some kind of learning disability because he can't read the vowels, you know, he can't read. Things that are read to him, he picks it up just like that. So, and Zora—same thing. She's just, she cannot be quiet. Even when she's reading she reads to herself out loud, which is distracting. The four of them sitting here together. Geraldo, Geraldo is very impulsive. He doesn't think before he does or says something. But he has come so far, really far. And they just; they're fine. And I give them enough space.

Ms. Maldonado says that these children have come a long way, and that "they're fine." But the physical arrangement of the room belies her comments. All the "problem kids" sit in the same row. The other two rows are normalized, while the short perpendicular line is defined by how it deviates.

Movement in Space (Grade Six)

Ms. Barber didn't utilize isolation as a form of power, but she did enact several spatial techniques, including moving children in the classroom, sending them to other classrooms, and, in three severe cases, permanent removal from the classroom. In the beginning of the year, all the movement I observed was confined to the classroom, as Ms. Barber revealed a tendency to move children toward her. Take, as an example, the following exchange in August between Ms. Barber and Shaun, who had just been shooting paper baskets into a goal he'd made with his notebook.

Eventually, Ms. Barber catches Shaun. “I see that, okay. I see you Shaun.”
Shaun is turned, his back toward Ms. Barber.
“Look at me,” she says, but Shaun doesn’t turn.
“Look at me!” she says. She repeats this five times, with increasing volume,
before Shaun turns. “I want you to come sit close to me.”
Shaun mouths “fuck” toward his table.
“Do you understand?”
“Yes.”
“Yes, Ms. Barber.”
“Yes, Ms. Barber.”
With that, Shaun stands, shoves his chair in, and moves to a chair close to Ms. Barber.

Or the following exchange, also from August, when Ms. Barber was frequently moving children toward her:

At 2:10 the class returns to the reading assignment. As the class continues to look up synonyms, Diego and Dimitri push Liliana’s desk out from the others. Liliana walks over—she is still sitting at the reserved middle table—and moves her desk back to its original location. She says, “My desk goes here and you don’t need to touch it.” Then she returns to the middle table, but Dimitri pushes it back out again. Liliana walks back over. “Didn’t I tell you to leave it,” she yells. “You have no reason to move my desk.”

Ms. Barber says, “Dimitri, turn your desk around to face mine.”

Dimitri turns his desk about an inch. “More,” says Ms. Barber. Another inch. “More,” says Ms. Barber. Another inch. This continues for some time until Dimitri’s desk sits at about a 45 degree angle from Ms. Barber’s. He begins to write on his seat with his eraser.

Ms. Barber tells everyone to put their heads on their desks while she reads aloud from the story they have been studying. As she reads, Dimitri turns his desk back a few inches and begins to kick Liliana’s desk. Liliana squints at him from the center table.

In addition to moving children closer to her—a proximal manipulation resulting from conduct issues—Ms. Barber also twice moved a student to a different location in the classroom. Both times it happened, it happened to Liliana.

In the beginning phases of my research, Ms. Barber didn’t send children out of the classroom, but she began to after a couple months. In late October, I recorded the following note regarding her decision:

I also had an opportunity to chat with Ms. Barber prior to the school day. She told me it had been a rough week, and that she had had to send children to different classrooms for

the first time this year. She had set up several “buddy rooms” to take students for a while when they had behavioral issues in class.

There were instances when Ms. Barber sent children out of the classroom for serious infractions, namely for fighting and for incessant and vehement teasing, but most of the time movement to another room was preceded by rather innocuous instances of wrongdoing. In my second interview with Ms. Barber she identified *disrupting learning* as the primary criterion for being removed from the classroom.

Lewis: Okay, also at the beginning of the year, I didn't notice that a lot of kids were out of the room, but then maybe a couple months in, students started getting sent out of the room. Can you explain to me what happens when a student—why you send a student out of the room?

Barber: Absolutely. That goes back to cooperating and following the rules. Umm, without following much would not get done. Umm, if they're—if, if I had no rules in place it would pretty much be chaotic in here. Ahh, we have a lot of work to do. Umm, they have—I've been assigned to this classroom to teach whatever the state and the district tells me to teach, and in order to do that everyone must cooperate. Ahh, if someone is disruptive, ahh, that's preventing the other students from learning. If I'm having to talk with them too many times and they're not, they're preventing others from learning—they have to go. They have to leave to a buddy room, and so we can continue with the learning for those who do want to learn.

Lewis: So primarily, then, it's when you feel like a kid is getting in the way of learning.

Barber: Absolutely. That's the only name of the game—learning.

My observations were only partially congruent with Ms. Barber's comments. While she certainly did send children out of the room for disrupting learning—talking, playing, etc.—she also sent them out for reasons that had little to do with learning, including sending Gloria out for a parodic yawn and Walter for refusing to do some work. Regardless of the reasoning, sending children out of the classroom—where, it should be added, they either work or simply sit—is an immediate amelioration of a problematic situation. It is recuperative—reestablishing order—and it normalizes certain forms of behavior in the students who remain in the room. Thus, removing a child from the classroom is a way of reinforcing forms of conduct in those who remain, and as

such, a way of subjectivizing students as well. *Staying in the classroom or leaving the classroom* becomes part of how students come to know themselves *qua* students.

In the most serious cases, a student would be permanently moved from the classroom. This occurred three times during my time in Ms. Barber's room. First, Shaun was moved for general, chronic misbehavior, then Warren, by the administration, for fighting:

There was an intercom interruption at 11:20, calling Warren to the office. Later in the day, I will learn that, as a result of his fight the previous week with Gloria, Warren has been given a new instructional arrangement. He will no longer be a student in Ms. Barber's class, as the administration didn't feel he should be in the same class as Gloria. So, he will spend his days under the care and tutelage of the special education teacher, Ms. Lee. I need to find out more about this arrangement next time. The information I have came from Ana. I'll need to verify what she told me with Ms. Lee.

I later did verify that Warren would not return to his classroom; he would spend his days with Ms. Lee. Finally, Liliana was sent to Ms. Kinkle's room in exchange for Shaun, albeit the reason for the move was uncertain. Ms. Barber told me that she believed Ms. Kinkle could help Liliana academically, but Liliana insisted that it had to do with behavioral reasons. Regardless of the reason, Liliana spent the remainder of the semester in Ms. Kinkle's room, Shaun in Ms. Barber's.

While three children may seem insignificant, it represented thirteen percent of the class that was permanently moved at some point in the year. Moreover, to my knowledge not a single student from another classroom at Washington was permanently moved during my time there. I would suggest that Warren, Shaun, and Liliana were subjected to what can only be described as stigmatizing moves. The analytic points made for temporary movement to another classroom bear repeating here. To begin with, these movements marked permanent solutions to what the teacher perceived as problematic situations. That is, Ms. Barber employed a spatial manipulation to deal permanently with issues in the classroom. It is important to underscore that this is clearly a technique of power. In these instances, Ms. Barber obviated certain forms of social intercourse

in her classroom—that is, the potential amalgam of sociality represented by the children—and opened up other forms in other classrooms. As such, she limited the field of possible actions of her students. In short, power and space reached a confluence, impelling certain students toward new forms of conduct and new social arrangements. Moreover, the moves normalized certain forms of behavior—namely, legitimizing the behavior of those who stayed and delegitimizing the behavior of those who left—and subjectivized students in predictable ways. The reputations that Warren, Shaun, and Liliana acquired following the moves—the negative comments that I frequently heard about these students—bespeaks the subjectivizing power of the moves themselves. As mentioned previously, both staying and leaving the room sketches the contours of student subjectivity; it becomes part of how students understand themselves as students.

Gendered Spaces

Students in both classes in my study spent significant amounts of time in same-sex arrangements. In second grade, these were typically imposed by the teacher, whereas in sixth grade the students had ostensibly internalized gender expectations and would segregate themselves. It is my contention that such segregation is about more than just boys and girls aligning themselves with others of the same sex and gender. Rather, I would like to suggest that same-sex segregation involves the construction of a social landscape wherein places are coded in gender-specific ways.

Gender Division (Grade Two)

There were many examples of same-sex segregation in Ms. Maldonado's classroom, several of which were teacher imposed. Her coat closet routine, for instance, had divergent procedures for boys and girls so that the two would never intermingle. In our first interview, Ms.

Maldonado suggested that one reason she kept the boys and girls separate was because the girls were becoming enamored of the boys:

Maldonado: Last year some of these girls—they were focused way too much on boys. And even...

Lewis [interrupting]: In first grade?

Maldonado: Yeah. Oh, yeah. They were talking about boyfriend and girlfriend and, you know, so you kind of did it that way.

And then there were group games, which always seemed to occasion an arrangement of girls versus boys. I made numerous mentions of such games in my notes, of which the following are representative:

The presentation is punctuated by a vocabulary activity that momentarily catches the children's interest. The activity requires them to choose a word that will correctly complete a sentence frame, and they play with that tried-and-true arrangement of elementary school—boys versus girls.

Gaining the children's attention momentarily, Ms. Maldonado explained that they're going to play a game involving mental math, and she asked the children if they'd rather make it boys versus girls or tables versus tables. Hearing shouts of both, Ms. Maldonado said they would vote. She had all the students close their eyes and raise their hands to indicate their choices, and boys versus girls won in a landslide. The children cheered wildly at the result. The only detractor was Jackson, who was despondent, saying, "I don't like boys versus girls." Jackson's six-year-old sister is a transgender girl. Immediately, I think that Jackson doesn't like boys versus girls because he is uncomfortable with those categories. Perhaps his protest is political. I tell Ms. Maldonado my thoughts, and she thinks I'm reading too much into it. Children don't think that deeply, she assures me. I'm not certain I agree.

In addition to these arrangements, there were distinct play areas for girls and boys on the playground. In particular, the boys claimed a large expanse of grassy area where they could play soccer, while the girls were left with a blacktop area, where they chased one another around or chatted in small groups. The boundaries of these areas were policed by the teachers:

A few of the girls from Ms. Maldonado's class run to the grassy area where Ms. Tueksberry's boys are playing soccer, but they are sent back by Ms. Tueksberry. Only the boys are allowed to play soccer, she tells them. The girls must find something to do on the blacktop, which means that most of them run around playing various versions of chase and tag.

There was also gender division at lunch—with distinct girls’ and boys’ tables—albeit it was not imposed by Ms. Maldonado or the lunchroom staff, but rather something that the boys and girls did themselves. However, given the normative gender expectations in other areas of the school, the self-segregation in the lunchroom is hardly surprising. Indeed, the expectation to eat, play, and work in gender-specific groups was inviolable: not once during my time at Washington did I observe, say, a boy eating at the girls’ table, or a girl playing soccer with the boys. These gender-normalizing forms of work and play have the effect, in the end, of creating gendered spaces, of separate spheres of work and play for boys and girls. And, as we shall see presently, this process only intensifies in sixth grade.

Gender Division (Grade Six)

Ms. Barber did a commendable job of integrating girls and boys in the classroom, but outside the classroom the students segregated themselves by sex and gender. Perry told me about this in our interview:

Perry: The playground. Umm, well, like my opinions will change as I get older. Like, when I was little in like first grade and second, third, I thought the playground was awesome. It was big. There was so much you could, you could do on it; there was a lot of activities. And now I don’t really go to the playground over there. But I still think it’s pretty cool.

Lewis: What do you do instead of go to the playground?

Perry: Play basketball or football in the field.

Lewis: Okay, so you get to play other things during your break?

Perry: Yeah.

Lewis: Do any of your classmates ever use the playground anymore or is it just for little kids?

Perry: The girls, they like chat on the slide or swing.

Lewis: So when you go outside it’s divided by girls and boys most of the time?

Perry: Umm, well there’s like Warren and some of the boys, if we can’t go there, we like play tag in the park or something.

The girls, Perry suggests, engage in the passive activity of talking while the boys play basketball or football on the field. The strict boundaries between genders are only crossed if the boys are

not allowed on the field or the basketball court, at which point a few of the boys will play tag with the girls. The boys and girls, then, occupy “two worlds: one of boys in action, the other of girls’ inaction (Sadker & Sadker, 1995, p. 42). The tendency for boys to occupy the best play areas in school is something that is well documented (Best, 1983; Sadker & Sadker, 1995). Indeed, in the typical schoolyard, the boys’ play area is ten times larger than the girls’ (Sadker & Sadker, 1995, p. 60). My research at Washington lends further credence to these general points. However, what I want to suggest here goes further. In particular, I want to suggest that spaces become gendered in the same way children do. The policing of boundaries, after all, suggests that there is something worthy of being policed—that is, that there is a meaning attached to the place in question. This was the case during indoor recess as well, as the boys and girls occupied different areas of the room:

During the break, the boys and girls played separately. There is absolutely no mixing. A big group of boys—Diego, Terrell, Walter, Montrell, Alejandro, and David—play Connect 4 in the center of the room. They are loud and rowdy. Surrounding them are other smaller groups of children. Phoenix and Mateo play a game called *Headbands*. Tabitha and Maya talk. Ana, Star, Sofia, Sara, and Camila form a second group of girls, talking. Isabella and Lucia play UNO.

Another note speaks to this arrangement during indoor recess:

At 2:15 Ms. Barber gave the children an indoor recess that lasted until dismissal. I spent some time with all the children during recess—both girls and boys, albeit the groups did things separately, with absolutely no intermixing. The boys occupied a large group arrangement in the center of the room; they were playing Connect 4 and talking loudly. A small group of girls—Star, Camila, and Ana—sat talking underneath the smart board, and the rest of the girls were in the hallway working on Branch of Education business.

What I was witnessing was a colonization and a semiotization of space. The boys took the good spaces, and they gave them meaning. The large grassy expanse, for instance, could have been anything, but it became a soccer/football field through the social actions of the boys and the teachers policing the boundaries of the field.

Another area of sex segregation in sixth grade was the lunchroom. The following notes describe the typical arrangement:

At lunch I sat with Warren and Diego. The class sat in perfect gender division, with boys at one table and girls at another.

As I observed earlier, the sixth graders sit with perfect gender division. Today there are two girls' tables and two boys' tables. No one crosses gender lines.

There was, in other words, a clear line of demarcation between the girls and the boys at lunchtime, and this line was protected through students' efforts at boundary maintenance. Sofia spoke to such maintenance in our interview:

Lewis: Okay. And the last one [shows picture of lunchroom].

Sofia: Ooohhh, it's loud in the cafeteria. It is LOUD. It's the loudest part of the school besides the gym.

Lewis: Do you like that?

Sofia: No. Sometimes, umm, kids here, they can get mad at each other and starts riots. Like usually there'll be kids sitting in the tables and boys sitting across from them, like, the girls' table and the boys' table.

Lewis: Yeah, is that, did somebody give you a boys' and girls' table, or is that just the way you sit?

Sofia: That's just the way we sit.

Lewis: Why is that?

Sofia: I don't know.

Lewis: I've noticed Warren is the only boy that ever sits with girls.

Sofia: [laughing] Me and Gloria.

Lewis: Sometimes, yeah.

Sofia: Yeah, he stopped doing that because somebody was making fun of him.

The tacit admonition to sit with the same sex, then, was quite powerful—so powerful, in fact, that transgressors were punished with teasing. In this case, Warren was teased to such an extent that he eventually conformed and sat for the rest of the year at one of the boys' tables. In fact, teasing occurred often among the sixth grade students and was employed as a mechanism of power, a way of defining particular places in gender-specific ways and ossifying an unyielding boundary between the girls and the boys. I would reiterate that this was not often an issue in the classroom, where Ms. Barber ensured that boys and girls were integrated, but rather in the non-

instructional areas discussed above. These were the places where the students would transform the physical environment, as they engaged in the application, vigilant observance, and zealous protection of gender-specific meanings.

Chapter Summary

In the preceding chapter, I have examined the relationship between space and power in two classrooms at Washington Elementary. I begin with a general description of how each teacher in my study conceptualized and arranged space, namely looking at therapeutic spaces (sites for technologies of the self) and prohibited spaces in both rooms. From there I analyzed two specific techniques, *isolation* and *movement*, with several permutations.

Isolation removes a child from the social environment of the classroom. It was found in second grade only and in a variety of places, including the classroom, the playground, and the lunchroom. As we have seen, isolation was a way of both sketching the contours of student subjectivity and a way of coding space in a negative way.

Movement takes an offending child and relocates her. In Ms. Maldonado's room, we saw that movement was a means of restricting behavior and speech, and that one could be moved to a different area in the room, to a specified "thinking spot," to a "buddy room," or to a different location in a reconfigured seating arrangement. In Ms. Barber's room, we saw that she began the year by moving children closer to her when they misbehaved, then started sending them to "buddy rooms," and finally had three children permanently removed from the classroom. As an analytic point, I suggested that all movement has the effect of normalizing behavior and subjectivizing students, and we looked at examples of this from both classrooms.

Finally, I concluded this chapter by examining the confluence of gender, space, and power at Washington. I documented several teacher-imposed examples of sex segregation in

second grade, as well as several instances of student-imposed segregation in sixth grade. I argued that it is important to think about the ways in which places are gendered in school settings, and I presented several examples of this at my research site.

In the next chapter, we turn our attention directly to the students in Ms. Maldonado's and Ms. Barber's classrooms. In particular, we will look at how students function within disciplinary environments. Broadly speaking, it will be argued that disciplinary strategies are never total—that they always contain gaps within which creative manipulations by students may be articulated. Several examples of student resistance will be presented and discussed.

Chapter Eight: Student Tactics

I listened in as the 17th Street Scholars (a cooperative group consisting of Alejandro, Perry, Gloria, and Ana) told Ms. Barber that their problem behavior was talking while she was talking. Gloria told her teacher that they talk because they're either mad or bored, and Alejandro added that sometimes they just don't want to learn. –MTL fieldnotes, 12/15/14

In the previous three chapters we have primarily examined teacher's actions: their attempts to regulate and form students' bodies; their use of pedagogy and pedagogically related contexts as strategies of power; and their manipulation of space to form particular sorts of places and subjectivize students in singular ways. In this chapter, we turn our attention to the students in the classrooms I studied, looking specifically at the forms of resistance²¹ I encountered at Washington Elementary.

This chapter takes its inspiration from Michel de Certeau's (1984) seminal work *The Practice of Everyday Life*. In particular, all the collected forms of antidisipline²² in this chapter reveal qualities of one of Certeau's better-known concepts—that of *tactics*. It will be

²¹ Some readers may question my use of the term “resistance” insofar as it is a word that carries a negative valence and represents something of an interpretive gloss on my part. This is true: I do interpret the student actions in this chapter as resistance, and I believe my characterization is valid for four reasons. These reasons are found in this chapter but warrant some attention from the outset. First, the actions that I label resistance occur in disciplinary contexts. That is, they do not materialize out of nowhere, but require gaps in power such as, for example, a breakdown in surveillance. Second, the student responses emanate from attempts to *enforce* discipline, so we see things such as an eraser-toss game as Ms. Maldonado tries to keep all her children's heads on their desks. Third, resistance occurs in a dialectic with power. That is, we see a typical pattern in this chapter of a deployment of power, followed by a student response, and then a second deployment of power. This is to say that resistance has an object, and it is through the identification of this object that the contours of resistance are partially sketched. Finally, the students, while they did not explicitly use the term, spoke of how their actions were direct responses to instances of power. So the reader will find, for example, a sixth-grade student popping a plastic fork sleeve in order to break the disciplinary monotony of lunch. For these reasons, I believe my use of “resistance” is appropriate. However, one qualification should be made. I argue here that students are resisting daily school practices, exchanges, and the like—that their resistances are microscopic and contextual. I make no claims regarding how these practices might be construed as resistances against broader, structural relationships. This topic is beyond my purposes here.

²² Antidisipline is a term used by de Certeau to describe an analogous and contrary concept to Foucault's idea of discipline, which we have already explored in great depth. It is analogous insofar as it is a microscopic articulation of force, and contrary insofar as it involves a response to a large system of discipline. In de Certeau's (1984) words, antidisipline refers to the dispersed, tactical, and make-shift creativity of groups of individuals already caught in the nets of ‘discipline’ (p. xv).

remembered from chapter two that *tactics* represent the response efforts of any subordinated individual or group who lack an established place from which to base their efforts. Lacking a space, the subordinate must poach time on another's turf, and so tactics often take the form of tricks, ruses, and silent disobedience—evanescent victories of the weak over the strong. De Certeau argued—quite rightly to my mind—that social scientists had ignored these forms of sociality and that they were deserving of sustained scholarly attention. This chapter is an incipient effort to address this lack of attention. However, while de Certeau frames this chapter, he does not define or determine it. The many permutations of the tactical found in this chapter extend far beyond the theoretical outline offered by de Certeau, while at the same time lending it empirical credibility. At the same time, I did not feel compelled to fit my results into any sort of preestablished de Certeauan taxonomy (indeed, nothing of the sort exists in the first place), nor did I feel limited by de Certeau's original conceptualization. This is another way of saying that I have taken some liberties with de Certeau.

In this chapter I will discuss five categories of resistance: 1) tactics using the body, 2) tactics using objects, 3) spatial practices, 4) group tactics, and 5) technologies of the self. At the outset, I would like to make one distinction. I will argue that the first four categories are all forms of tactics. They represent students taking advantage of the fleeting opportunities of the moment. Technologies of the self, however, are more sustained and focused on self-enhancement. They are, as noted earlier, forms of self-work identified by Foucault (1988), which have a transformative effect on the individual who engages in them.

Tactics Using the Body (Grade Two)

One day in August, Ms. Maldonado was telling me about De'Andre, whom we have met several times, and the following occurred:

“De’ Andre, I had him tested. The doctor said there’s a 99% chance he has ADHD.” Her lip curls downward. “Mom says they’re going to do therapy. So I told mom...”

As if on cue, De’ Andre falls from his chair.

“Do you know how many times a day that happens?” Ms. Maldonado says with a chuckle.

Here we have a quotidian event—De’ Andre’s falling from his chair—and one that in a different context might’ve seemed inadvertent. But Ms. Maldonado suggests (and I would go on to observe) that this event happens with some frequency. De’ Andre is a child who, as I have intimated, often challenged the official logic of the classroom, the engrained daily practices and interactions. As a result, during my time in Ms. Maldonado’s classroom, he was often being reprimanded, moved around, and so forth. He was, then, at least behaviorally, something of a marginal figure in the social life of the class. Occupying this position, he lacked what de Certeau (1984) has termed a *propre*, or a solid foundation from which to articulate a response to the normalized and naturalized practices of the classroom, and as such was left to utilize what was at hand. I would argue that his falling to the floor—time and time again—is a form of resistance, with the effect of interrupting, however temporarily, classroom proceedings. Perhaps, they have the effect of interrogating them as well. I will have more to say on this subject in just a little while.

One feature of corporeal (and other) tactics is that they represent a momentary breakdown in the grid of discipline, allowing the tactical to slip through. This feature is suggested by the following extended excerpt, which reveals a breakdown, first of all, in surveillance, and, secondly, in an instructional task. In it, Ms. Maldonado has just played a rap song focusing on subjects and predicates.

After the song has played through once, Ms. Maldonado quizzes the students on the material, but the students are not very engaged. She has them remove everything from the tops of their tables. Ms. Tueksberry then enters the room and begins to give Ms.

Maldonado directions for how to login to her reading program so that children can read decodable books on the computer. As she is doing so, the children do several things:

Zora is humming, then singing in her solitary seat near the board.

Tionne, also in a solitary seat near Ms. Maldonado's desk, stares out the window.

Tom, in a seat by himself in the back of the room, leans down with his head between his knees.

Zora continues to sing, running her fingers in random traces over the surface of her desk, then folding her hands together, making a steeple.

Ms. Maldonado finally says, "You know, everybody needs to be sitting up. This is important or we wouldn't be doing it."

She then plays the subject-predicate rap again. Most of the children dance or bob their heads, but Zora is singing a different tune. Tionne is still staring out the window, and now De'Andre is too. Tom is still hugging his feet. Amanda appears to be talking to herself.

A subject and a predicate

A subject and a predicate

That's the rule that must be met

A subject and a predicate.

Here we see sundry student tactics, all preceded by a breakdown in the disciplinary arrangement.

To begin with, Ms. Maldonado becomes preoccupied with Ms. Tueksberry, occluding her senses and allowing the children to engage in tactics. Surveillance breaks down in this moment.

Moreover, the lesson is not particularly effective, representing a secondary breakdown in pedagogy, a strategy of power that we have explored in some depth.

At the confluence of power and pedagogy, tactics often acquired a parodic tenor. This occurred in both classrooms, but was much more common in sixth grade. Nevertheless, there were examples in Ms. Maldonado's classroom, such as the following incident with De'Andre:

By the time the class has finished the assignment, they have already missed ten minutes of recess. Right before recess, Ms. Maldonado asks the class to read aloud the homework assignment: Write 5 question sentences. She writes an exclamation mark on the board and asks if it is a question mark. "Nooooooo!" shouts everyone, except De'Andre. De'Andre says "yes" over and over, trying to get others' attention. I don't think he really believes it's a question mark; he seems to just want to distinguish himself.

"Yes?" says Ms. Maldonado. "Okay, I want you to stand up if you think that's a question mark." Only De'Andre stands.

"Well, De'Andre, you stand alone," Ms. Maldonado says.

In my estimation, De'Andre does not genuinely believe his position, even as he protests. His move is ironical, holding up the classroom exercise to mocking inspection. It is a fleeting opportunity for De'Andre to seize control, and he does so. His actions trace the responses of a child who occupies a marginal position in the classroom.

Tactics using the body in second grade often took the form of tactics of sound. The following two excerpts from my fieldnotes elucidate tactics of sound:

I walk toward Amanda's table as Ms. Maldonado continues her directions. I hear someone humming. So, too, does Ms. Maldonado. "Can whoever is humming please stop while I give directions."

The humming continues. It is Zora. Ms. Maldonado walks over to her, leans down, and says something into her ear. As she does so the class breaks into a frisson of activity: conversations, Claudia begins to walk around, Tionne motions for me to come listen to her read.

In this second example, the children are listening to a presentation by well-known book publisher's consultant:

The children do not appear to be engaged by this presentation. Paris has begun to play an air trombone, making the sound as she slides it in and out. Zora is muttering something under her breath. Claudia says, "Ms. Maldonado," but is quickly given the hush sign.

These tactics occurred, it will be noticed, in the context of disciplinary monotony—the delivering of directions, the expatiating of a consultant. In these contexts, the children had little control over their school lives, as they were expected to sit idly. Their responses, however subtle and fleeting, may be conceptualized as forms of resistance—as ways of interrupting and interrogating classroom practices. The child humming or playing the air trombone questions the legitimacy of the dominant classroom order and, at least momentarily, articulates an alternative classroom reality—one characterized by spontaneity, levity, and play.

Tactics Using the Body (Grade Six)

The following exchange between Ms. Barber and Dimitri occurred in early August:

At one point in the morning meeting, Dimitri begins to talk to his neighbor. Dimitri is small for his age, with a partially dyed fade. Ms. Barber stops the meeting. “Who is that talking,” she said. “Sit up, sit up! Am I boring you?” Dimitri answered that she was not. “Good, because I was about to say ‘tough.’ I’m as tough as a two-dollar steak, and I’m going to help you learn how to respond appropriately to an adult. How to act and take care of yourself.” While he is no longer talking, Dimitri begins to bend his fingers and catapult them along the side of his desk.

To be more precise, what interests me here is what follows the exchange, when Dimitri has stopped talking. In particular, he begins to make catapults with his fingers, smacking them along the side of his desk—loud enough to have its effect, quiet enough to be done with impunity. Tactics are like that: they are seemingly innocuous measures, ephemeral movements that are easy to miss. And, I would add, easy to ignore, to explain away as haphazard and, ultimately, inconsequential. Yet I would counter by suggesting that that their positionality—their tendency to emerge from the interstitial spaces of disciplinary arrangements—and their ubiquity in the classrooms I studied bespeak their social importance.

Just as in second grade, sixth-grade tactics appeared in disciplinary gaps. Take the following example, wherein Ms. Barber’s class is going to the office to retrieve some fruit as a holiday gift:

I walked in line to the office, and I walked in line back to the classroom. On the way back, as Ms. Barber walked ahead with her back turned to the end of the line (where I was), Shaun kept hiding behind corners, jumping out, and trying to scare me; he also darted around—this way and that—and managed to sneak over and get a drink without being seen.

Then, back in the room, Ms. Barber dismissed tables to the closet to put away their fruit, telling everyone not to eat any of it right now. A moment later she had to go into the closet to settle a dispute, and while her vision is occluded Walter eats an apple and Terrell does a dance for everyone.

Here, we have two breakdowns in surveillance, and they actuate two forms of tactical response—goofing off on Ms. Barber’s time, dancing when she has to go to the coat closet. A breakdown in surveillance is not the only disciplinary context in which tactics occur, however. Indeed, in Ms.

Barber's room they often occurred in the course of lectures, a strategy of power explored earlier, especially when the lectures were lengthy. The following excerpt speaks to this idea:

The class became very still and quiet all of a sudden. I was sitting beside Sara, so I asked her what was going on, but all she knew was that Walter had done something with his jacket. Ms. Barber began to lecture the children.

"I'll tell you what school is about. You listen, you learn, you write a lot, you do computations." Her lecture was just getting started when Terrell's mom appeared in the doorway. She hovered for a moment, unsure of whether she ought to enter. When Terrell saw his mother, he immediately turned away, then put his head down on his desk, covering the sides of his face with his arms. Ms. Barber told Terrell's mother that he was doing fine and, satisfied, she left a moment later. Then, Ms. Barber spoke for another twenty minutes on the importance of mothers—about how not everyone has a mother, and that you should always be proud and never embarrassed of your mom. Sally played with her hair during the lecture. Alejandro chewed his nails. David splayed the fingers of one hand then jabbed the spaces between them as quickly as he could with the index finger of the other.

The tactics in this example are about more than a lack of surveillance. Their context is an extended lecture by Ms. Barber, one that produced ennui among the students. The tactics, then, are responses to a situation in which one has but a modicum of control. In fact, the students in this example demonstrate the power of the body in an environment that belongs to another. The children's actions at this moment in time are limited, as they are impelled to sit quietly and listen. The body responds in the only way it can: lacking a space, it steals time from another. Twisting one's hair or chewing one's nails seem insignificant precisely because more profound forms of resistance lack a base of deployment. As such, they are small but significant actions.

As we saw earlier, ironical performances were common in second grade in the context of instructional tasks. This was true in sixth grade as well, albeit to an even greater extent. These were, of course, small, quotidian affairs: Warren mocking the saying of the pledge each morning; Sally, in the role of "focus keeper," admonishing her group to "Stay focused, you guys! Stay focused!"; Diego mimicking his teacher's posture as she writes on the board, his hand resting on a hip that juts out hyperbolically. As suggested previously, these tactics both interrupt and

interrogate dominant classroom practices. They usher in the briefest of interregnums, during which regular classroom proceedings are held up for mocking inspection.

One incident in sixth grade revealed a compelling quality of tactics. Ms. Barber's group had just returned from a fieldtrip to a local college, and it hadn't gone particularly well. Here is an excerpt from my fieldnotes for that day:

After the restroom break, Ms. Martin, the school counselor, visits the room to discuss something that happened yesterday when the sixth grade was on a field trip to City College. Apparently, during presentation from an admissions officer, Terrell and some of the other children became talkative, and the presenter had to ask Terrell to leave the room. Ms. Martin tells the children how embarrassed she was and how embarrassed they should have been as well. She asks them to imagine what would've happened if the state governor, who was in town that day, or the president of CC had been present. Moreover, she asks them to look at themselves and think about what sorts of behaviors they would change for next time.

As she speaks, she addresses Terrell directly from time to time, and he is clearly embarrassed by this, as he cocks his head back and wears a smile to save face. Ms. Martin addresses this as well, telling the children that people often misread smiles—that smiling when you're being reprimanded can lead to more trouble. During the lecture, Montrell has his head down on his desk. Ms. Martin asks Montrell to repeat a question she has just asked—ostensibly wanting to catch him not paying attention—and he is able to repeat the question verbatim. Nevertheless, she tells him, he should have his eyes on the speaker so that it looks like he is listening.

In this example, Ms. Martin expects the two boys to demonstrate decorum—to perform it, so to speak. She expects Terrell to wear a dolorous expression, and Montrell to sit up with his eyes on the speaker. But the tactics—smiling, resting one's head—violate and reverse this explicitly voiced hierarchy of seeming over being. In their actions, they question the logic of camouflaging one's feelings, as Ms. Martin asks them to do.

Tactics Using Objects (Grade Two)

Using objects in tactical ways involve manipulating them and altering their original use or purpose. In second grade, this process most often took the form of creative manipulations of everyday, at-hand objects:

Amanda and Tom have sat down on either side of me, and Tionne is sitting across the table. They're all doing much more playing than eating. I ask Amanda if she likes her chicken sandwich and she informs me that it's not chicken but a crabby patty from the popular television show, *SpongeBob Squarepants*. Tom has eaten away parts of his chicken so that it resembles a throwing star. He stands for me and pretends to throw it toward an invisible enemy. Tionne gets my attention and shows me how she can make lipstick with the ketchup, then blows an exaggerated kiss in my direction.

At one o'clock, in the middle of his test, Louis looks at me, closes one eye, and swings his pencil at me like a sword. I scrunch up one eye and swing my pen, and from there it's a full-fledged duel. We play for maybe a minute in this way.

In both examples, objects transmogrify: chicken patties become fantastical cartoon fare and throwing stars, ketchup becomes lipstick, pens become swords. There would seem to be little doubt that these transformations represent in part the individual creativity of the children in the classroom. But they also represent resistance to dominant classroom practices, and it is in the context of their articulation that we find evidence for this claim.

To begin with, tactics tended to occur in disciplinary contexts identified earlier in this dissertation—pedagogy, for instance. The following excerpt speaks to this point:

The children, with the exception of the four isolated ones, are listening to directions for a group activity in which they will answer questions about a story they have read earlier. De'Andre is playing catch with his book—tossing it up, catching it, and tossing it up again.

De'Andre interrupts the incunabular portion of what would become a group literacy lesson, transforming a book into something he can play catch with. Tactics with objects also occurred in the context of Ms. Maldonado's attempts to enforce discipline. As we saw earlier in this study, Ms. Maldonado would occasionally have her children put their heads down on their desks as a means of enforcing discipline. This had just happened when the following tactical behavior emerged:

I then move over to the table where Eduardo sits. He is writing in a small Spiderman notebook; he shows it to me and says he is doing research, too. At his table, nobody has their heads down. Instead, they are playing an eraser-toss game, bouncing an eraser back

and forth to each other across the table. Then they play keep away with a pencil. Somehow, before I really know what is happening, the children begin ruffling my hair and beard. Sophia, Courtney, Amanda, and Tionne all join in. Ms. Maldonado sees this after a few moments and gets fairly upset at the girls. She has everyone who was playing with my hair raise their hands, and then tells them that it's inappropriate. It didn't bother me, of course; it just seemed like some harmless play.

Improvisational games, little moments of subterfuge that take as their object the dominant configuration of space and the regulated rhythms of social exchange—tactics, *par excellence*! In this case, all objects are transformed, even the researcher, as the children articulate their desires, their resistances against the backdrop of the dominant disciplinary arrangement of sitting with heads down.

Tactics Using Objects (Grade Six)

The following classroom scene illustrates the tactical use of objects in the sixth grade:

Ms. Barber tells the students to take out their reading texts and turn to page twenty-four. As the class begins to read aloud, I see that Perry has surreptitiously pulled an elastic sticky hand from his desk and is yo-yoing it up and down. Warren is sharpening his pencil over the wastebasket, watching one peel after another fall effortlessly into its contents. And Walter has invented a catapult game with his ruler and a wad of paper; he is trying to flick the paper into a goal. Terrell furtively checks an iPhone, but quickly puts it away when he sees me watching him.

There are, in short, some similarities to what we saw in second grade. In particular, the students' actions here transform objects, reconfiguring their original uses and purposes; there is a material transformation via tactical interventions. While the purposes in second grade tended to be playful, in sixth grade they veered more towards agonism. I will return to this point in a moment. For now, I'd like to make some comments regarding the contexts for tactics in sixth grade.

The tactical forms that I observed occurred in the context of the forms of power identified in the three previous chapters. What's more, there was a sort of dialectic at play, with strategies of force engendering tactical responses, which often galvanized further strategies of force. Strategies of force were never absolute or totalizing, but rather a reticulated net through which

students articulated forms of resistance. Take, as an example, the following exchange between Liliana and Ms. Barber:

Most students are reading quietly. Liliana is not reading, albeit she is sitting relatively quietly, scanning the room.

“Liliana,” Ms. Barber says, “you need to be reading.”

“I was reading my book.”

“No, you were looking around.”

Liliana takes her book, which had been lying flat on her desk, and opens it up. She places it in front of her, so that it occludes Ms. Barber’s vision, and she smiles. She continues to scan the room.

This is a pedagogically related context—one involving little direct instruction, but an academic task nevertheless, and thus an activity that carries the residual marks of instruction. Liliana scans the room, avoiding the task she has been given, but Ms. Barber spots her (from, it should be noted, a strategic spot in the middle-rear of the classroom). But Liliana is quick to hide behind her book and avoid surveillance. Her tactics—her silent response in the face of the roving eye—thus required a breakdown in the disciplinary arrangement in order to come to fruition. The same could be said for a situation involving Perry that happened one day at lunch. In the excerpt that follows, Mr. Corl, the music teacher, has just returned Perry and Liliana to the classroom:

Mr. Corl then brings Perry and Liliana back. He is not finished with Perry, and he begins to articulate his displeasure to Ms. Barber and me. I cannot write while he is talking, so I key on particular phrases to help me recall his diatribe. After he leaves, I scribble furiously. Here is the gist:

“Ms. Barber, they take that little plastic that the fork comes in and they blow it up and pop it. Perry popped that mess after I’d already been fussing at him. I turned my back and I heard, ‘pop, pop.’”

“Behind your back,” Ms. Barber said.

“Yes, mam.”

“Okay, not good.”

Perry’s tactics (popping the plastic sleeve for his fork) occur at lunch, not during class, but their logic remains the same. In particular, we find that the tactics rely on a slippage in surveillance. As Mr. Corl turns his back, Perry is momentarily emboldened to take action. According to Perry,

this action was indeed tactical in nature, for when I asked him later why he popped the sleeve, he said, “I don’t know. Just to do something, I guess. Lunch is pretty boring.” His action, in short, was a tactical response to the disciplinary monotony of lunch. But it wasn’t just a breakdown in surveillance that elicited tactical responses. As we see in the following excerpt, pedagogical breakdowns had the same effect:

In the course of the lesson, Ms. Barber receives a phone call. While she is on the phone, Perry and Terrell take dice from their desks and begin rolling them on the floor, playing craps. I am sitting right beside Terrell, and he flashes a sly smile in my direction before tumbling the dice on the hard carpet.

Additional examples could be provided, but the main points would not change. In particular, as the examples we have examined have shown, disciplinary power is never total, final, undifferentiated, or unidirectional. As such, one prominent feature of tactics is that they seek out holes in the disciplinary apparatus. We have seen this to be the case in both classrooms I studied at Washington Elementary.

Tactics using objects in sixth grade tended to be more inter-subjective and combinatory than in second grade, often involving more than one student. Tabitha and Sally, for instance, manipulated their personal computers in a tactical way:

By 8:30 the children had entered the room, taken out their things for the day, and were working at their computers. The room was quiet. The children were at their desks, working on math on *Success Maker*, a district-approved software package. I sat down at Tabitha’s table. After a moment, I noticed that Tabitha was IM-ing with Sally. Tabitha typed out a quick message and then signaled Sally with her hand when she had sent it. Sally looked down and, a few moments later, signaled to Tabitha, at which point I saw Tabitha minimize her math program and read Sally’s message.

This is an extremely creative manipulation of classroom practices for personal purposes, and, it will be noticed, one that involves coordinated effort from more than one student. In addition, while sixth grade tactics with objects often involved others, they also often took on a teasing tenor, such as the following exchange between Maya and Dimitri:

When all the groups have finished, Ms. Barber stands at the board with the teacher's manual and the group begins to generate synonyms for selected words. I am sitting behind Liliana's group, and I notice that Maya and Dimitri are off task. Maya is wearing arm coverings with holes for her fingers, and Dimitri takes one, tries it on, then flips it back to her. Maya briefly takes off a shoe, shakes something out, then puts it back on again. Then Dimitri takes another one of the arm things, but this time he won't give it back when Maya wants it. She tries to grab it several times, but Dimitri pushes her arm away. Maya stares at Dimitri, her eyes wide, and when he still fails to return it, she rubs her face with the palm of her hand. Finally, Maya has had enough and she raises her hand.

Ms. Barber sees Maya's raised hand. "Excuse me," she says, "I won't have it. You're sixth graders. I'm not going to solve your itty-bitty problems."

After a few minutes Dimitri seems to tire of the game; he wads up the arm covering and throws it at Maya.

In the context of a breakdown in pedagogy, Dimitri begins to use Maya's arm coverings in a tactical way. In his actions, he both seizes on and questions this breakdown, offering a rather silent response to the official agenda. It seems plausible as well that Dimitri is teasing Maya, taking an opportunity to make her an object of power. In other words, tactics may trace the lines of resistance while being combined with other forms of power. Here, Dimitri is both resisting classroom practices and exercising force over Maya.

Spatial Practices (Grade Two)

Spatial practices are a form of a tactic, a type of resistance in which the body applies itself to space or objects in space. Like tactics in general, they tended to be preceded by forms of power—more specifically, by lacunae in the disciplinary apparatus—that served as their context for articulation. They were articulated vis-à-vis these forms of power, and in second grade they tended to be less overtly agonistic than in sixth grade. Rather, in second grade, students tended to “play” with space—tentative rebellions that warrant some attention here.

Let's take a look at two examples of spatial practices in second grade. The first involves De'Andre and an anatomico-spatial protest to his teacher's efforts to make him return to his seat:

De'Andre is standing over near the door. Ms. Maldonado sees him and asks him where he is supposed to be, to which the boy says he doesn't know. He continues to stand near the door as Ms. Maldonado begins the read aloud. . . Following the story and the discussion thereof, it is time for math. All the children return to their tables except Amanda, who sits at her desk, and De'Andre, who is kneeling over near the bookshelves. (De'Andre has been over there all through the story.)

Ms. Maldonado says to him, "De'Andre, if I were you I would get where you're supposed to be." At that, De'Andre begins to move *slowly* toward his desk: he shuffles his feet over the hard carpet—as if dragging himself to his destination—as he picks at his fingers. Ms. Maldonado takes a picture of him with her phone. "Your mother will love this," she says.

The second example also involves an anatomico-spatial protest, this time from Marcus:

Marcus and Amanda sit on the periphery of the play area. Ms. Maldonado tells me that they have to sit out because they didn't bring back their homework. About five minutes until line-up time, she releases them to go play, but Marcus just sits there, dejected. When we line up to go back to class, he refuses to join the line, and only moves from his spot once it becomes evident that Ms. Maldonado is leading the line indoors with or without him. All the way back to class, he trails at a distance of about thirty feet.

A few points should be underscored here. First, the student actions in both cases are, in my estimation, tactical in nature, for they occur directly in response to a moment of power. As Ms. Maldonado tries to hurry De'Andre along—thus demarcating an officially sanctioned concatenation of movements—he responds by dragging himself. He utilizes his own body and the space around him to resist. Similarly, Marcus trails the line as Ms. Maldonado tries to lead him back to class. In doing so, he uses his body in combination with the space around him to silently remonstrate against his treatment at recess.

Spatial Practices (Grade Six)

In sixth grade, spatial practices tended to be somewhat agonistic—that is, they were often defined by struggle between two parties, often Ms. Barber and one of her students. Even so, they still involved the manipulation of the environment in some way as a response to an instance of power. Ms. Barber described a student engaging in such an agonistic posture during our first interview:

I tell them, “Sit yourself back down. I’m not going to chase you, but when you walk out that door, I’m calling the office.” And then the reply is, “I don’t care what you do.” You know. But they come back and make a lot of noise. The group at this time is trying to calm the student down; the student will not calm down. The worst it got was, I said, “Okay, I will time you out in Ms. Jones’s room. I need for you to chill, you know. I need for you to calm down.” “I’m not getting out of the classroom. The President of the United States can’t yank me out of this chair.” Okay, make a phone call to mom, and then they’ll talk to mom.

In this particular situation, the student refuses to leave the room and implies that someone will have to literally “yank me out of this chair.” The student here lacks a proper space of her own—Ms. Barber can ostensibly send her anywhere she’d like—but that does not stop her from defining a temporary space of resistance and articulating a response to Ms. Barber. There were additional instances in which students ended up leaving the room, but not before they’d engaged in spatial practices that expressed their displeasure with the situation.

Ms. Barber called the buddy room teacher so she could remove Shaun from the classroom for the rest of the day. Shaun was upset when Ms. Barber got off the phone and told him to go to the buddy room. He shoved his seat back, popped up, and said, “No.” Ms. Barber remained calm, told Shaun to push in his chair, and waited while he contemplated his next move. After considering his options, Shaun decided to leave, but before he left he pulled back his desk (instead of pushing in his chair), leaving his desk and chair askew from those around it. Shaun then left the room, and a moment later members of his group moved his desk back to its original position.

As the following fieldnote excerpt demonstrates, these resistances were often highly agonistic in nature:

Just before eleven o’clock, the intercom comes through with an announcement: “Warren Cain, report to the office. Warren Cain, report to the office.” Warren, of course, is one of my prime informants in Ms. Barber’s class. So I make my way to her classroom to find out what happened. I just have a feeling that this isn’t some routine office visit. Halfway there I run into Phoenix, Maya, and, lagging behind them, Warren. Phoenix tells me that Warren has “blown up,” and Maya adds that he has thrown Lincoln logs all over the closet. I ask Warren what happened. He tells me that he went to the closet to put away his back snacks and that Ms. Barber took his book bag. Well, he got mad because he thought she was being rude, so he threw the Lincoln logs. Later, Ms. Barber fills me in, giving me her side of the story. She tells me that Warren was in the coat closet without permission (no students are allowed in the closet after the morning, and everyone knows this) and so she took his backpack and was going to take it to his seat so he could put away his back

snacks there. He said she was just being rude, so he began to throw things (including the Lincoln logs and the back snacks, too) and then left the room without permission.

Shaun pulls out his desk; Warren throws things around the room. In both cases, the students end up leaving the room, but not before they are able to engage in small protests, micro-resistances. To be precise, they are small in effect. Ultimately, their efforts are unlikely to have any lasting effect upon the structure or dynamic in the classroom. Nevertheless, they are successful insofar as they leave an imprint on the classroom before the students leave.

Group Tactics (Grade Two)

Group tactics (or what I like to think of as “the chain game”) only occurred in second grade. They can be cognized as a form of mimesis, involving repeated imitation on the part of several students as a form of resistance. I recorded dozens of such instances in my fieldnotes, but a few examples should suffice here. In the first, Ms. Tueksberry is leading Ms. Maldonado’s class one day in late August, near the beginning of my research:

Ms. Tueksberry is a large Irish woman with red hair and a brusque demeanor. She wears a denim skirt that reaches down to the tops of her tennis shoes. She begins to model how to write a personal narrative, using the overhead projector. As she does this, I notice Ms. Maldonado’s students doing several things. De’Andre is “petting” a book in front of him with his finger and his shoe. When Ms. Tueksberry asks him to repeat what another student has just said, he is unable to do so. Tionne, who is sitting next to me, has removed the metal ring from her word list and begun to play with it. A moment later and she has pinched her finger in the joint where the ring fastens together. Then, I notice something rather interesting. First, Claudia asks to use the restroom and is allowed to. When she returns, De’Andre asks to go, and when De’Andre returns Geraldo asks to go. At that point, Ms. Tueksberry tells them all they will owe part of their recess.

In a second excerpt, the children are attempting to line up for a restroom break:

Lining up the children are so noisy that they have to sit back down and try again. Ms. Maldonado tells them they obviously aren’t ready for the hall. The second time they try to line up, Sophia notices she has an untied shoe and she sits down to tie it. She is followed in quick succession by Tionne, Geraldo, Tamara, and Amanda, all of whom go to the floor to tie their shoes (only some of which are actually untied). This takes close to a minute.

In a third example, Ms. Maldonado's students participate in a mock coughing fit:

The line begins to snake its way through the school. A couple of the children have been fighting colds, and they are coughing loudly. Several other students then feign coughing, becoming so loud that the fifth grade teacher comes out of her room to see what is the matter. In addition, the custodian, who is having lunch in the teachers' lounge, asks the class if they are allergic to the teacher.

Finally, Ms. Maldonado addresses the issue. Interestingly, she focuses only on Tionne, who in fairness has been making a spectacle of her coughing. "You need to stop that fake coughing right now," she says. "You have not been doing that all day!"

When we return to the room, Ms. Maldonado has all the children come sit on the floor for a story. The coughing begins again. This time, Ms. Maldonado addresses Zora: "Stop that right now, Zora. That is fake!"

These three excerpts demonstrates the mimetic quality of group tactics. I would argue that these are moments of resistance insofar as they interrupt the flow of officially sanctioned practices. They are, in addition, ways of demonstrating solidarity, as those who engage in group tactics tend to be friends with one another. I would argue, finally, that group tactics are critical and parodic. Schooling is a mimetic process, with much of a school day focused on repetition and imitation. Group tactics assume this morphology but do so in an inverted way, as the impetus for imitation is a student rather than a teacher. We might say, in sum, that the mimetic quality of group tactics hold up official school practices to inspection and, perhaps, parody.

Technologies of the Self (Grade Two)

It will be remembered that technologies of the self are self-directed operations that one effects by her own means that have some kind of transformative effect on her being. In the context of my study, technologies of the self were evident both in second and sixth grade, albeit to a much greater extent in the latter. In second grade, responses of power did not tend to accrete into technologies of the self. That is, resistance in second grade tended to stay at the level of tactics, and often lacked the seriousness of intent of technologies of the self. However, there was some evidence of technologies of the self in Ms. Maldonado's room—at least technologies of

self in an inchoate form. In interviews, for example, several second graders discussed personal interests that, when acted upon, could get you into trouble. Zora spoke of her love of music:

Zora: Well, she [Ms. Maldonado] just tells me what to do. I listen to her.

Lewis: What kind of things does she tell you what to do?

Zora: To be quiet, ahh, and stop singing, and... But I love singing, though.

Lewis: You like to sing.

Zora: Mhmm (positive)

Lewis: You like to hum. I've noticed that about you.

Zora: I like to hum, rap, make beats, and sing.

Lewis: Really? So sometimes do you do that in class and Ms. Maldonado has to say to stop.

Zora: Mhmm.

Likewise, Amanda spoke of a passion for drawing:

Lewis: That's your favorite thing to do? Are there other things that you like to do? Tell me all about what you like to do at school.

Amanda: I like to read, and I like to, and I like writing and making stuff in our class, and making music at music time, which we have today. And I like drawing pictures a lot more than anything I like to do.

Lewis: Is that your very most favorite?

Amanda: [laughs loudly] I like drawing pictures!

Lewis: Really? Is that something you do at home a lot?

Amanda: It's like, I will connect... I will make a triangle, then I make something down here. Then I can just connect them. That's, that's what I do on drawing. Most of the time, I'll do that.

Lewis: Okay, do you have very much time to draw at school?

Amanda: Hmmm, no. Because we have to learn.

Lewis: Okay, so you, do you sometimes draw anyway, though?

Amanda: Yes.

Lewis: Yes, okay. What happens if you, what happens if you're drawing?

Amanda: Checkmark!

On other occasions, students would make things (either at home or at school) as examples of self-directed operations with transformative potential. One day, for instance, Lily fashioned a laptop out of cardboard and I took the following note:

I spent the morning through lunch with the second graders. While they were taking out their things for the day and putting away papers to go home that evening, Lily showed me a laptop that she had made out of cardboard, paper, and markers. She worked on gluing the lid back on while the other students put away their things. Later, when the other

children were working on computers, she would pretend to work on it. It was quite something—really impressive work. She had labelled all the individual keys.

These three excerpts demonstrate three different forms of technologies—singing, drawing, and creating. They are moments in which students work on the self—playing with its contours, trying out different forms. It is noteworthy that technologies of the self in second grade didn't tend to involve others, whereas, as we shall now see, technologies of the self in sixth grade were most often group endeavors.

Technologies of the Self (Grade Six)

Technologies of the self is a much more germane concept for explaining the resistance experiences of the sixth graders in my study. The self-operations in sixth grade were more common and more lasting than those in second grade. Moreover, they tended to involve multiple individuals engaged in a common pursuit with a transformative end result. For example, Warren created a series of clubs that were quite popular with his classmates. In the beginning of the year, he led a clay school that met at recess:

At 2:00 I have recess with the sixth grade. I'm standing, perhaps a bit awkwardly, for a time near Warren's table before I ask what they're up to. They tell me they have a clay school and I blurt out, "I want to join" to a few laughs. But they let me in and I learn we're making food. Everyone is to list on a sheet of paper the three foods they'll be making. I choose hamburger, hotdog, and peas (because I think they'll be easy to make). We begin the process, and Warren shines. He directs all of his students, guiding their actions as they mold sundry sorts of food. He delights in this control, you can tell. Warren is something of a marginal child, perhaps with little control in most areas of his life. In schoolwork, he lags behind the others, but here he seizes an opportunity to lead. I'm really pleased that they allow me to join the school, and for the remainder of recess I work on making my foods. Warren helps me a lot; he is incredibly talented.

After clay club, Warren started a book club:

I saw Warren before school today, over in the hallway near Ms. Maldonado's room. He told me that the clay club was ending, and, when I asked why, he said that he was starting a book club instead. Later in class he showed me a book he had written and illustrated called *Lola Grows*. It was a beautiful little story: sparse prose and detailed drawings, telling the story of a girl who is born sickly, realizes she is different from all the other

kids at school, and has a baby at sixteen. After having a baby, she meets a friend who is bad for her and who cuts her son's finger off. Such an evocative (and tragic) story. Warren had adorned the back of the book with the phrase "crack head studios," which he told me made stories, pictures, films, and music. He is such an enterprising young kid. I find this incredibly hard to reconcile with the "official" view of Warren as low achieving.

For Warren, clubs were an opportunity to effectuate subjective alterations—to erase and redraw the lines of selfhood again and again. They provided him opportunities to experience success, to become a leader, to transcend the limits of official school practices. They afforded him opportunities for growth in many directions, and indeed opened up spaces of freedom through which he could articulate sundry kinds of remonstrations against dominant school forms. That is, in articulating an alternative version of self—and in doing so vis-à-vis a marginal, ascribed version of self—Warren offered a critique of the dominant order and its conceptualization of him. He questioned a rigid, fixed version of self, and he articulated a much more dynamic, fluid version for himself. Thus is the power of technologies of the self: they allow for transformations and reconfigurations in selfhood.

Maya, who like Warren occupied a marginal position in the classroom, also engaged in technologies of self. In particular, she created a student organization called the Branch of Education, which I described in the following note:

Once we were back in the room, Maya outlined her new group, the Branch of Education, for me. I also sat in on a meeting with the Branch officers and Dr. Smith a little later in the day, and I have combined data gleaned in that meeting with what Maya told me here. Anyway, the Branch of Education is the brainchild of Maya, who wanted to improve the school, make homework bearable, and include kids in the creation of school rules. The group has three goals: bring up students' grades, improve test scores, and ameliorate social problems. The roles are as follows: Maya, president; Sofia, vice president; Isabella, secretary; Montrell, sports editor; Tabitha, posters; Sally, slogans; and Sara, big brothers big sisters. The group also has a lot of ideas for activities and projects, including a monthly newsletter, food drives, anti-bullying efforts, and a blanket drive for a local hospital. My favorite idea is something called the respectful raffle, in which students get tickets for kind behavior, which they may then either spend at a school store or enter into a raffle for a larger prize. They have planned monthly posters with jokes, birthdays, riddles, and so forth, as well as a mentoring program for younger children in the school.

This is a group with multiple purposes, defined roles, and a complex structure. And it functions in a similar way to Warren's clubs. That is, it affords Maya (and the other members) opportunities for subjective reevaluation—for articulating a version of self that stands in opposition to and supplants the one she had been ascribed. The Branch of Education, in short, provided Maya with an outlet for trying on new selves. Moreover, as we see in the stated purposes, this is clearly a group with a transformative message and objectives. It also functioned to question the sharp divide between school work and personal work, as we will see in the following examples.

The status of these technologies—their strategic relationship with the teacher, their linkages with power, their transformative potential—was suggested by the line Ms. Barber drew between them and official work, and by the zeal with which she protected it. For example, one day Warren was working on a book for book club, which led his teacher to chastise him:

Warren begins to work on one of his personal books, and Ms. Barber notices. She says, “What are you doing? No, my work is first. You need to go back and do the questions. My work is first.”

Or when Maya was working with her peers in the hallway on Branch of Education business, which led her teacher to express similar sentiments.

In just a moment, we all heard Ms. Barber telling everyone that the break was over. She called out to the hallway, telling the girls that they could work on Branch of Education projects during the next break. Once we were back in the classroom, Sofia showed me a draft of the newspaper that they were working on. The Branch of Education is up and running. It has an organization and clear structure, and many different projects that the children plan to work on. Ms. Barber announced to the children that the remainder of the day (approximately two hours) would be passed with seatwork. Some students would be taking tests on the computers, whereas those who had already finished would be reading and answering questions from their social studies text. It wasn't long before Sofia and Maya began whispering about Branch of Education matters. Ms. Barber caught them, saying, “Not now, ladies. My work comes first. I will give you some time later.”

At this, Maya jumped from her seat. “When?”

“Well, you have recess. But schoolwork comes first because that’s what you get graded on. Schoolwork comes first.”

In these examples there is a pedagogical gap—a space where interest flags and resistance is hatched. These instances further demonstrate the sharp divide Ms. Barber drew between school work and personal work indicative of technologies of the self. Their radical, transformative power is suggested by Ms. Barber’s efforts to keep them containerized within particular moments of the school day and, thus, within her control.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, we examined the experiences of two classrooms of students in a disciplinary environment. In particular, we examined the idea of resistance, drawing upon the work of Michel de Certeau and Michel Foucault. Five categories of resistance were explored: 1) tactics using the body, 2) tactics using objects, 3) spatial practices, 4) group tactics, and 5) technologies of the self.

Tactics using the body were found to be quick, ephemeral moments in which the body was used in a tactical way. They occurred, like all the tactics explored in this chapter, in the context of the disciplinary apparatus, specifically through lacunae in the grid of discipline in the classroom. Tactics using sound and ironical tactics in the context of pedagogy were explored as two examples of tactics using the body.

Tactics using objects refer to tactical interventions in disciplinary contexts that, in the course of their expression, alter the original use of the object in question. In second grade, we found that such tactics tended to be less serious and more playful in nature, whereas in sixth grade they tended to be more agonistic. Such was the case with tactics in general.

In spatial practices, the body applies itself to space or to objects in space. Like other forms of tactics, spatial practices rely on disciplinary gaps that serve as the foundation for their

articulation. As with tactics using objects, spatial practices tended to be less serious in second grade, more agonistic in sixth grade.

Group tactics were found only in second grade, and I have argued here that they are a form of mimesis. Insofar as much of the school day involves repetition and imitation, group tactics were ways of holding up these practices to inspection and critique. Group tactics imitate and parody the naturalized rhythms of the school.

Finally, I argued for using technologies of the self as a construct for understanding the self-directed, transformative operations of the children in my study. More common in sixth grade, these practices were noteworthy for their transformative potential—for affording opportunities for reconceptualizing and re-forming the self. In second grade they tended to be individual affairs; in sixth grade, they often involved groups.

Chapter Nine: Conclusion

As a way of concluding this dissertation, I would like to pursue three interrelated objectives. First, I would like to offer a brief summary of the four results chapters. Second, I would like to discuss the implications of this study. Third, I would like to discuss some of the study's limitations.

Summary

In chapter five I examined teacher-initiated instances of power that focused on students' bodies and, in the process, delimited the contours of student subjectivity. First, I argued that both teachers drew upon strategies to effectuate still, silent student bodies. Through repeated injunctions for silence, teachers constituted a discourse of silence that positioned themselves as users of language and students as passive recipients. Moreover, I argued that students experienced an ethos of silence—a generalized environment of silence—that shaped their experiences of school. In addition, I suggested that students engaged in extended periods of sitting—that is, stationary activity that regulated movement, disciplined bodies, and coded bodies as still, quiet, and productive.

I also found that teachers disciplined student bodies through a managing of detail. I demonstrated how teachers divided classroom tasks, linked bodily articulations with constitutive parts, and thereby established a bodily ideal to which student conduct had to conform. I argued that repeated training of the body resulted in a school habitus that became part of how students came to know themselves as students.

In chapter six, I discussed four categories of power related to pedagogy and pedagogical contexts. To begin with, I examined instructional practices, arguing that both teachers segmented

and rationalized their lessons, with a concomitant transmogrification of work into the following of a series of steps.

I also discussed how the teachers in my study formed student language. Here, I argued that the teachers incited their students to speak in prescribed ways and to thereby come to know themselves as certain sorts of subjects—namely, as passive recipients, rather than expressive users, of language. The mechanisms by which the teachers did so varied, as Ms. Maldonado used sentence frames, recitation of important information, and correction of solecisms, whereas Ms. Barber used only sentence frames.

Both teachers in my study manipulated time as a technique of power. Ms. Barber demarcated and monitored an official rendering of time, in which students with their own agendas were defined as behavioral problems and students who conformed to classroom time were called “scholars.” Ms. Barber also set time limits in order to increase individual productivity, and she suspended activities to regain control of time. While Ms. Maldonado also set time limits and declared moratoriums, she did not establish official time in the same way Ms. Barber did.

Finally, both teachers in my study utilized surveillance, call and response, and inscription—techniques of power that share the quality of monitoring the pedagogical moment. Each strategy was found to normalize certain forms of behavior, identify others as improper, and reposition the student so that teaching could continue.

In chapter seven, I examined the relationship between space and power. I looked specifically at how each teacher conceptualized and arranged space, and I analyzed two specific spatial technologies, *isolation* and *movement*, with several permutations. I concluded chapter seven by examining the confluence of gender, space, and power at Washington. I documented

several teacher-imposed examples of sex segregation in second grade, as well as several instances of student-imposed segregation in sixth grade. I argued that it is important to think about the ways in which places are gendered in school settings, and I presented several examples of this at my research site.

In chapter eight, I examined the idea of resistance, drawing upon the work of Michel de Certeau and Michel Foucault. I articulated and explored five categories of resistance: 1) tactics using the body, 2) tactics using objects, 3) spatial practices, 4) group tactics, and 5) technologies of the self.

Expressed in the context of the disciplinary apparatus—specifically through lacunae in the grid of discipline—tactics using the body were found to be quick, evanescent moments in which the body was used in a tactical way. Tactics using sound and ironical tactics in the context of pedagogy were two examples of this form of tactic that were explored in some detail. Similarly, tactics using objects appeared in the gaps of discipline, but they involved external objects, which were transformed through their use in games of resistance. In second grade, such tactics tended to be playful, whereas in sixth grade they were more agonistic. This was true for spatial practices as well, in which the body applied itself to space or to objects in space as a form of resistance. Like other forms of tactics, spatial practices relied on disciplinary gaps that served as the foundation for their articulation. Group tactics, which were found only in second grade, were a form of mimesis, holding up the common practices of imitation and repetition to inspection and critique. Finally, I argued for using *technologies of the self* as a construct for understanding the self-directed, transformative operations of the children in my study. More common in sixth grade, these practices were noteworthy for their transformative potential—affording children opportunities for self-work in disciplinary contexts.

Implications

In my estimation, this study makes three contributions to the scholarly literature on school sociality and contributions to educational practice as well. To begin with, the study makes a theoretical contribution to writings on power relations, specifically power relations between teachers and students. As an empirical study of power relations, it lends credence to many theoretical writings on power (primarily in the Foucauldian tradition), while at the same time interrogating others. At the risk of overgeneralizing, this study finds power relations to be infinitesimal articulations of force that target the body in uninterrupted coercions in many distinct domains (such as, for instance, pedagogy, spatial manipulations, etc.). That is, the picture of power that is revealed here is something akin to “micro-managing” the body, and this was explored through several concrete examples and analytical commentary. At the same time, this study challenges certain aspects of writings on power, such as, for example, the tendency for the empirical literature to overemphasize surveillance, to undertheorize resistance, and to give short shrift to one actor in exchanges of power. This is a significant contribution because power relations are ubiquitous features of schools and one of the reasons that many schools have a similar, unchanging ethos. Despite this, power has not generated a lot of scholarly attention (Gore, 1998). As such, this study is offered as a close examination of power in one context. It is through such studies that we can hope to learn more about how power operates in our schools, which can further help us to understand necessary and unnecessary applications of force.

This study also makes an argument for the importance of studying micro-sociality—evanescent glances, fleeting remarks, microscopic technologies of force—and its place, in particular, within educational research. These aspects of sociality are typically treated as little more than a backdrop for “real” social intercourse (de Certeau, 1984), yet, as this study

demonstrates, they are significant parts of our lived experience that deserve to be taken seriously. They are, moreover, deserving of additional scholarly attention. Many of the students and teachers in this study were affected in a real way by these micro, inter-subjective social exchanges. We saw, for example, many instances of how minute attempts to regulate the body impacted the children in this study. As such, micro-sociality seems, at the very least, to be an impactful phenomenon that is relevant to the lived experiences of students and teachers. To my way of thinking, that speaks to its significance.

As a third contribution, this study centralizes the body as a legitimate site of social analysis. While some sociological thinkers have made the body a focus of study, others have eschewed the body as a central topic of examination (Henry, 2013, p. 3). What's more, although we rarely think about it, bodies are incredibly significant in the context of our schools. For instance, schools contain a whole litany of what Henry (2013) calls "latent corporeal rules": keep your hands and feet to yourself; make certain you walk straight in line; raise your hand before speaking; and so forth. In a similar way, this study has demonstrated the pervasiveness of micro-articulations of power that target the body, training it to move in particular ways. In short, then, the body is a significant but understudied site of social analysis. This study is offered as something of an ameliorant for this situation.

At the same time, I believe this work contains empirical data that can, if utilized, perhaps help effectuate concrete changes in educational practice. When asked about the methods he employed in his analyses, Foucault (2000b) answered that they might be conceptualized as "eventualizations," which he defined as

making visible a *singularity* at places where there is a temptation to invoke a historical constant, an immediate anthropological trait, or an obviousness that imposes itself

uniformly on all. To show that things “weren’t as necessary as all that”; it wasn’t a matter of course that mad people came to be regarded as mentally ill; it wasn’t self-evident that the only thing to be done with a criminal was to lock him up; it wasn’t self-evident that the causes of illness were to be sought through the individual examination of bodies; and so on. A breach of the self-evident, of those self-evidences on which our knowledges, acquiescences, and practices rest: this is the first theoretico-political function of “eventalization.” (p. 226)

My study, of course, is not a historical excavation of the phenomenon of power. At the same time, in exploring power relationships—their forms, the conditions for their existence, their intersectionalities and effects—this study can be conceptualized as something of an eventalization. With hope, it helps expose the specificity and taken-for-grantedness of school power relationships and opens up spaces for the exploration of new arrangements. Empirical studies of power can help us to tease out techniques of power that are necessary for the daily functioning of the school from those that are peripheral (Gore, 1998). As such, this study might ultimately compel us to reconsider the social relationships we have instituted and, subsequently, reified in our public schools. In other words, this study hopefully helps the reader *see* power, asking her to consider how power works and to reflect upon those locations where we would like it to play and those where it is an unnecessary imposition of force.

In a very particular way, I would hope this study aids practitioners in realizing that while power and discipline will remain mainstays in our classrooms, there are certain times when it is warranted and others when it is not. For instance, there are numerous instances in this study when instructional time is lost because of a technology of power (e.g., a lecture). Most would agree that this is an unwarranted use of power that should be reconceptualized. As such, I would

think the results of this study would be useful to practitioners interested in creating more democratic classrooms, wherein discipline is consciously deliberated upon and carefully dispensed. As such, following Deborah Dillon (1989), I hope that this study will galvanize teachers to examine their teaching behaviors and students' responses to them in order to improve professional practice. At the same time, there are warranted relations of power that I see as integral to the schooling process. For instance, for teachers to go about the business of teaching their students, there must first be requisite conditions of power in place. In the case of pedagogy, for example, which we explored in some depth, teachers have a duty to *teach* students, and I see no reason for teachers to abdicate this duty simply because it will involve messy relations of power. In fact, for a teacher to do so would be a disservice to her students. This pedagogical duty necessitates that students will be involved in relations of power with their teachers. However, in this case—where the teacher is responsible for the academic growth and prosperity of the student—certain articulations of power are warranted, provided of course that they do not become so limiting that learning is stultified. But I find this example to be a necessary application of power because of the express purpose of schooling—that is, for students to learn from a teacher with a greater range of experience and knowledge. Again, I would ask that this dissertation becomes something of a springboard for practice—that teachers consider places where limitation is egregious and other places where it is absolutely necessary.

Limitations

This is, of course, far from a perfect study, and the reader has likely identified several limitations of her own. Nevertheless, it seems warranted to conclude this dissertation with a discussion of a few of this study's limitations. In particular, I'd like to spend a moment to discuss

six limitations to the present study—limitations that I believe the reader should keep in mind when interpreting my results.

To begin with, I spent almost six months in the field. This study, then, did not involve fieldwork in the traditional ethnographic sense. A longer engagement at my field site would have doubtless produced richer data and, perhaps, more nuanced explanations of the interactions that I observed. Moreover, an engagement with more individuals at my site—non-instructional staff, additional teachers, and so forth—would have added breadth to this study. This breadth could have added additional informing voices to this research. It could have, moreover, helped the researcher see how the classrooms he chose to study aligned (or failed to align) with others in the building. Second, I think this study would have been strengthened by more interviews with students insofar as this would have added both more breadth and depth of understanding to the study. In both of the aforementioned cases, the limitations were unfortunately beyond my control. The school district where I conducted my research stipulated the amount of time that I could spend at the school, as well as the number of students I could interview. I had originally asked for more on both counts. Despite these factors being somewhat beyond my control, they are nevertheless limitations that should be kept in mind when evaluating the results of this study.

Third, this study failed to examine how power is replicated farther down the school hierarchy—namely, in relations between students. This focus was something that I was initially interested in, but because of time constraints and my inability to explore all compelling subjects, I was unable to investigate this aspect of power relations. To be sure, it is something that is deserving of future scholarly attention, and an aspect of power that many studies fail to address (Gallagher, 2004).

In addition, this study's focus on micro-sociality involved a difficult tradeoff. In particular, it meant that while my view of the minute was sharpened, my view of the broader context in which teachers work was perhaps occluded. That is, broader, institutional, normative structures do not emerge as an emphasis in this dissertation, albeit this broader context doubtless affected the micro-practices that I studied. The teachers in the study, for instance, often remarked to me how many aspects of their professional practice were mandated from above. This should not be forgotten when considering their actions. To be sure, a study focusing on this broader context would enrich and nuance the present effort.

As a qualitative study of a particular context, there are of course limitations to the extent to which it can be generalized to other settings and populations (Merriam, 2009). While I do not wish to get mired in the philosophical debate of whether qualitative results can be generalized to new and distinct contexts, I will note that instead of idea of generalizability, I prefer Lincoln and Guba's (1985) notion of transferability, in which potential applications of research are made by the consumer rather than the producer. It is with the consumer, after all, that knowledge of new situations and potential sites of application reside. In the case of this study, then, it is with teachers and school children in different contexts that we may find the knowledge for inferring ultimately the most useful applications of this study.

Finally, this study would have doubtless been improved by increased input from the teachers in my study. While I attempted to involve the teachers as much as possible, I was not for the sake of time able to allow the teachers to read this document in its entirety prior to my finishing it. Teachers were, however, afforded the opportunity to respond to incipient findings, which they did in positive²³ ways, and this dissertation is replete with their voices. Having

²³ By "positive" I intend to connote that both teachers suggested there was a strong correspondence between what I was seeing—the data I was producing—and what they were doing in their classrooms. Ms. Barber even

teachers respond to the completed document would have, of course, been optimal, as it would have allowed me to integrate teachers' ideas and voices on how they are represented in this text. This is not something that I take lightly, especially given that this dissertation is critical of practice at certain junctures. It is my hope that the teachers in this study do not read this dissertation as a screed targeting them as individuals—for that was certainly not the intended purpose—but rather as a sometimes critical account that can be used to improve professional practice. I would note, in closing, that both teachers will be given a copy of this dissertation following its ultimate approval.

exclaimed, as she read over a data summary, "You got me!" I think this is important to note because it speaks to the quality of the data collected, as well as the opportunity given to teachers to provide input into the study. Admittedly, providing teachers the opportunity to provide input during data collection is significantly different from providing them the opportunity to respond to the ways in which they have been delineated in the final text, which I was unfortunately unable to do. This is a limitation to the text that will be discussed presently.

Appendix 1 – PS Permission to Conduct Research Form

Document Provided to Intended Researcher by:

Signature _____

Date: _____

(Building Principal for District Employee
or Central Office Staff for Out-of-district Researchers)

DISTRICT ASSESSMENT TEAM

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH/GATHER DATA IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DIRECTIONS: The applicant should complete this form, obtain the necessary approval and signatures, and return to:

It may take up to three weeks for requests to be processed; please plan accordingly in order to meet course deadlines.

1. Please describe concisely the basic concepts and goals of your proposed project, and how it is relevant to the field of education.

This study will examine teacher-student social dynamics at the elementary level. In particular, it will examine teachers' behavior management strategies and students' responses to such strategies. The study will focus on interactions that occur both in classrooms and in non-instructional spaces such as lunchrooms, hallways, and playgrounds.

Behavior management is an integral part of schooling, preparing students for citizenship¹, and ensuring that learning objectives are met². At the same time, it is an understudied area of educational research, and researchers have little empirical data on teachers' management practices³. As such, this project is relevant to the field as a whole, and the results could be utilized to improve management strategies, as well as teaching and learning in general.

2. List the names of all data collection instruments you intend to use and enclose a copy of each with this application. Also, enclose a copy of each parent/student consent form, if needed. Please describe in detail the distribution, implementation, and collection methods you intend to use in your data collection.

I would like to conduct this research in two classrooms—one at the kindergarten level and a second at the sixth-grade level. Examining two classrooms will afford a depth of understanding and a comparative look at how behavior management changes throughout the course of elementary school. The proposed project is a qualitative study. As such, the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis.¹ In the course of my research, I will utilize three data-collection strategies. My primary strategy will be observations of student-teacher interactions. These observations will focus on eliciting data regarding the specific mechanisms through which teachers shape student behavior and the ways in which students respond to behavioral interventions. I will keep fieldnotes of my observations, which will serve as the raw data for this study, and which will later be subjected to systematic analysis. Prior to engaging in these observations, I will obtain written consent from both the kindergarten and sixth-grade teachers, as well as all parents/guardians of the students in the two classrooms. In addition, I will obtain oral assent from all students in both classrooms. Copies of observational consent forms are attached, designated as follows: teacher consent (Appendix A), parent/guardian consent (Appendix B), and student assent (Appendix C).

To supplement my observations of these rooms, I would like to interview the two classroom teachers and four students from each classroom. Given the extent of their interactions with students, the two teachers are natural choices for interviews. The eight student interviewees will be chosen to represent a range of possible conduct. From each classroom, I will choose two students whom receive moderate to high amounts of behavior-focused attention and two whom receive little or no attention. Written consent will be sought from the parents of students asked to participate in interviews (Appendix D), and oral assent will be sought from the students themselves (Appendix E).

Interviews with teachers will focus on eliciting their views or philosophies of classroom discipline, their self-concepts as managers of behavior, and the strategies they have found to be effective in the classroom and in non-instructional spaces. Interviews with students will focus on eliciting data concerning their understanding of classroom rules and their perception of classroom social climate. Interview guides for faculty (Appendix F) and students (Appendix G) are attached to this request.

Finally, I intend to utilize a visual method termed *photo elicitation*,² wherein the researcher introduces visual imagery into the interview context in order to facilitate communication, especially with young children who may be unaccustomed to an interview context. In my study, I anticipate using pictures of various settings within the school in order to elicit my participants' affective associations with particular areas under study—e.g., the playground, the lunchroom, the library, etc. This could entail a couple of strategies. First, I might take photographs of various school spaces and ask students to comment upon them. Alternatively, I might ask students to take photographs of important places in their school, generating visual landscapes of how children see their school and which places are especially significant to them. No children will be photographed for this study.

3. Give the names of the Public School(s) you intend to involve to meet the project requirements. Are there certain demographics required for the project (i.e., grade level, gender, etc.)?

This study will attempt to understand behavior management (a general phenomenon) in an urban school setting. Thus, my decision to conduct this research at PS involves purposeful sampling⁶, or non-random sampling in which the researcher chooses sites and populations where his/her research questions can best be addressed. In particular, I would like to conduct this research at Washington Elementary. My choice of Washington involves typical case sampling⁷, or a desire to examine an average, non-extreme example of

the phenomenon in question. Its diverse population and high rate of students who qualify for free-and-reduced lunch make Washington a fairly typical urban elementary school. In addition, I should note that I previously taught at Washington and know the school principal, Dr. Mark Smith.

Pending teacher approval, my plan is to study two classrooms—a kindergarten room and a sixth grade room. These grade levels have been selected in order to afford a comparative vantage of behavior management at the beginning and end of elementary school. However, grade levels may be changed if individual teachers do not express a desire to participate in this study. In other words, teacher participation is entirely voluntary. My plan is to reach out to all kindergarten and sixth-grade teachers at Washington, clearly delineate my research project, describe what participation would entail, and ask if they would be interested in participating. In the event that more than two teachers express interest in the study, brief observational periods will be conducted during the first two weeks of school. These observations will focus solely on teachers and their strategies for managing classroom conduct. Following these observations, I will pare down my sample to two classrooms. In particular, I will choose teachers who demonstrate effective behavioral management strategies in their classrooms. Conversely, should no kindergarten or sixth-grade teacher express interest in this study, I will shift my attention to first- and fifth-grade teachers, following the same procedure outlined above. Beyond grade level, there are no demographic requirements for this project.

4. What amount of time would be required of staff or students in the schools in order to meet project requirements?

I would like to visit each classroom one time per week over the course of the fall semester. This would entail approximately fifteen total visits to each room. Each visit will be scheduled with the classroom teacher; that is, I will not show up unannounced. My optimal scenario would entail half-day visits. However, this time commitment can be adjusted to accommodate the needs and preferences of students, classroom teachers, building administration, and district personnel. At a minimum, I would like to conduct two-hour observations once a week. This portion of the research will not require participants to do anything outside normal routines. That is, I will be engaging in naturalistic observation and will not disrupt classroom instruction.

Interviews with teachers and staff will be approximately 45 minutes in duration, whereas interviews with students will be approximately 30 minutes. I will interview each classroom teacher twice over the course of a semester, totaling 90 minutes of interview time. Interviews with teachers will occur either before or after school, depending on individual preferences. I will not conduct interviews with teachers during the instructional day, including planning time. Students will only be interviewed once. If students attend Washington's extended day program, I will conduct these interviews before or after school. If not, I will conduct these interviews during lunch or, as a last resort, over recess. As a given student would only be interviewed once over the course of the semester, this would entail one missed recess. I will not conduct interviews during instructional time.

Based on Mark Smith's suggestion, teachers will be recruited following professional development sessions on August 4th. Teachers who participate in the study will be offered two incentives. First, I will volunteer to tutor or help in another capacity in the classroom. I am happy to undergo a background check so that this obligation can be met. Second, they will receive the results of my study in written form, which they may use to improve their professional practice.

5. Are there any other school records you would require (for example, achievement test scores or attendance)? No student identifiers will be made available including student names or ID numbers. However a method to distinguish students is available.

No.

6. Give the name of each person who will enter the schools. For non-district employees, please provide existing background checks for individuals or a plan to ensure background checks are in place prior to entry in schools.

I will be the only individual entering the building. As a former teacher in the district, I have completed a background check. However, I am happy to complete an additional background check if that is required.

7. What is the date you wish to begin? August, 2014 (dependent upon the beginning of school)
8. By what date do you anticipate being finished? January, 2015 (dependent upon the winter break schedule)
9. If this is a course requirement, please obtain the signature of your instructor responsible for this assignment and attach a copy of the assignment guidelines. N/A

Signature:

Position:

University/College/School/Department/Division:

10. Name of applicant (please print) _____

Signature

Address

_____	_____
Position/Status	Email address
_____	_____
Date	Phone Number

CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL

The approval or disapproval of requests will be made within the following general guidelines.

1. The only projects which will generally be approved are those which:
 - a) contribute to the improvement of education in the Public Schools;
 - b) contribute to the improvement of education in general.

2. Even within the above categories, studies will generally be disapproved if they:
 - a) appear to infringe on the privacy of pupils, parents, or staff members;
 - b) present a burden to pupils or staff members;
 - c) threaten school-community relations in any way.

3. Research solely for a course requirement will be considered only for the Public School District staff.

4. At any point in the research process, Public Schools staff can terminate the study if determined necessary for any reason.

5. Any results or product created as a result of this project which uses data from the district's students, staff, or facilities must be made available to the Public Schools.

PARTICIPATION OF THE SCHOOLS

Generally, participation in any research study conducted by an outside agency or individual will be completely voluntary on the part of the principals, teachers, pupils and any other personnel involved.

Project Approval Signature _____ Date _____

Director of Assessment and Research, 816-418-7428

Works Cited

1. Richard Rothstein, "Towards a Composite Index of School Performance," *The Elementary School Teacher* 100, no. 5 (2000): 409-441.

2. Ramon Lewis, Shlomo Romi, Xing Qui, and Yaacov Katz, "Teachers' Classroom Discipline and Student Misbehavior in Australia, China, and Israel," *Teaching and Teacher Education* 21, no. 6 (2005): 729-741.

3. Steven Little and Angeleque Akin-Little, "Psychology's Contributions to Classroom Management," *Psychology in the Schools* 45, no. 3 (2008): 227-234.

4. Sharan Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* (San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, 2009), 15.

5. Iris Epstein, Bonnie Stevens, Patricia McKeever, and Sylvain Baruchel, "Photo Elicitation Interview (PEI): Using Photos to Elicit Children's Perspectives," *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 5, no. 3 (2008): 1-11.

6. Sharan Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* (San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, 2009), 77.

7. Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2011), 111.

Appendix 2 – Recruitment Flier

August 4, 2014

For my dissertation project at the University of Kansas, I will be conducting observational and interview research at Washington Elementary during the fall semester, 2014. My study will focus on classroom management strategies and student responses to them. I would like to conduct this research in two classrooms—one at the primary level and a second at the upper-elementary level. Please keep the following in mind as you decide whether you'd like to participate in my study.

- I am not here to evaluate you. I am here to gather data—to learn from you.
- You, and your students, will remain anonymous in all writings that result from this study.
- You will receive two incentives for your participation. First, I will volunteer time each week to help you in your classroom. Second, I will provide you with the results of my study.
- This research project has been approved by KU and PS.

Thank you for considering participating in my study. Please indicate your current level of interest by initialing one of the spaces below:

_____ I would like to participate in this study.

_____ I am not sure about participating, but you can contact me to discuss it further.

_____ I do not wish to participate.

Teacher name (print) / Grade level

E-mail

Phone

Please contact me if you have any questions or would like to discuss the project in more depth.

Matthew Lewis
matthewlewis@ku.edu
816.289.2370

Appendix 3 – Teacher Consent Form

Project Title: Behavior Management as Social Exchange: Teacher-Student Dynamics at an Urban Elementary School

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Kansas supports the practice of protection for human subjects participating in research. The following information is provided for you to decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You may refuse to sign this form and not participate in this study. You should be aware that even if you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time. If you do withdraw from this study, it will not affect your relationship with this unit, the services it may provide to you, or the University of Kansas.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study will examine how teachers regulate and modify student conduct and behavior, and how students, in turn, respond to such strategies. The study will focus on teacher-student interactions that occur both in classrooms and in non-instructional spaces such as lunchrooms, hallways, and playgrounds.

PROCEDURES

I would like to visit your classroom once each week. These visits will be scheduled, so that you will always know when to expect me. I would like to stay with your class for half-days, albeit this can be modified according to your preferences. During my observations, I may ask a few questions regarding classroom procedures or something that has happened on a given day. This will be informal conversations that will not take up much of your time, and they will never interrupt your teaching. As an example, I might ask you about something as we walk back to the classroom after dropping your students off at art. I will not interrupt your planning time.

I would also like to interview you twice during the course of the semester. The first interview will focus on your beliefs about classroom management, your perceptions of yourself as a classroom manager, and how classroom management affects you and your job. A second interview will focus on your responses to particular events that have happened in the course of my research. Each interview will last approximately 45 minutes.

I would like to audio record these interviews, but recording is optional. There is a space for you to initial at the bottom of this page if you consent to being recorded. If you allow me to record the interview, I will transcribe it in full for data analysis, and I will store the audio file of the recording on my personal laptop, which is protected with a password that is known only to me. I am the only person who will have access to this audio file. The file will be kept indefinitely for the purposes of future interpretation.

RISKS

I do not anticipate any risks for involvement in this study.

BENEFITS

There will be no direct benefits to research participants. However, the study will help the research community understand, and hopefully improve, significant school social relationships and interactions.

PAYMENT TO PARTICIPANTS

Participants in this study will not be paid.

PARTICIPANT CONFIDENTIALITY

You will be assigned a pseudonym for this study. Any publications or presentations resulting from this study will utilize this pseudonym. That is, your actual name will never appear in print or be used in a presentation, nor will it be used in the interview recording. Your identifiable information will not be shared unless (a) it is required by law or university policy, or (b) you give written permission.

By signing this form you give permission for the use and disclosure of your information, excluding your child's name, for purposes of this study at any time in the future.

REFUSAL TO SIGN CONSENT AND AUTHORIZATION

You are not required to sign this Consent and Authorization form and you may refuse to do so without affecting your right to any services you are receiving or may receive from the University of Kansas or to participate in any programs or events of the University of Kansas. However, if you refuse to sign, you cannot participate in this study.

CANCELLING THIS CONSENT AND AUTHORIZATION

You may withdraw your consent to participate in this study at any time. Any data collected prior to your withdrawal will, at the time of withdrawal, be destroyed. If you cancel permission to use your information, the researcher will stop collecting additional information about you. You also have the right to cancel your permission to use and disclose further information collected about you, in writing, at any time, by sending your written request to:

Matthew Lewis
313 Joseph R. Pearson Hall
1122 West Campus Road
Lawrence, KS 66045-3101

QUESTIONS ABOUT PARTICIPATION

Questions about procedures should be directed to the researcher(s) listed at the end of this consent form.

PARTICIPANT CERTIFICATION:

Appendix 4 – Parental Consent for Observation

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Kansas supports the practice of protection for human subjects participating in research. The following information is provided for you to decide whether you wish your child to participate in the present study. You may refuse to sign this form and not allow your child to participate in this study. You should be aware that even if you agree to allow your child to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time. If you do withdraw your child from this study, it will not affect your relationship with this unit, the services it may provide to you, or the University of Kansas.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study will examine how teachers regulate and modify student conduct and behavior, and how students, in turn, respond to such strategies. The study will focus on teacher-student interactions that occur both in classrooms and in non-instructional spaces such as lunchrooms, hallways, and playgrounds.

PROCEDURES

I will be observing your child's class (in the classroom and in common areas such as hallways, playgrounds, and lunchrooms) one time each week. During these visits, I will take notes focusing on behavioral interactions between the students and the teacher. I will not interrupt any instructional routines, although I may ask your child questions during periods of time when no instruction or related class work is occurring.

Depending upon the results of observational periods, I may ask your child to participate in either a short interview or a research task such as drawing, painting, map-making, or taking pictures of the school. If your child is chosen for an interview, a separate consent form will be sent home for you to sign. The consent you are providing on this form is for your child to be observed in her normal, daily routines.

RISKS

I do not anticipate any risks for involvement in this study.

BENEFITS

There will be no direct benefits to research participants. However, the study will help the research community understand, and hopefully improve, significant school social relationships and interactions.

PAYMENT TO PARTICIPANTS

Participants in this study will not be paid.

PARTICIPANT CONFIDENTIALITY

Your child will be assigned a pseudonym for this study. Any publications or presentations resulting from this study will utilize this pseudonym. That is, your child's actual name will never appear in print or be used in a presentation. Your child's identifiable information will not be shared unless (a) it is required by law or university policy, or (b) you give written permission.

By signing this form you give permission for the use and disclosure of your child's information, excluding your child's name, for purposes of this study at any time in the future.

REFUSAL TO SIGN CONSENT AND AUTHORIZATION

You are not required to sign this Consent and Authorization form and you may refuse to do so without affecting your right to any services you are receiving or may receive from the University of Kansas or to participate in any programs or events of the University of Kansas. However, if you refuse to sign, your child cannot participate in this study.

CANCELLING THIS CONSENT AND AUTHORIZATION

You may withdraw your consent to allow participation of your child in this study at any time. Any data collected prior to your withdrawal will, at the time of withdrawal, be destroyed. If you cancel permission to use your child's information, the researcher will stop collecting additional information about your child. You also have the right to cancel your permission to use and disclose further information collected about your child, in writing, at any time, by sending your written request to:

Matthew Lewis
313 Joseph R. Pearson Hall
1122 West Campus Road
Lawrence, KS 66045-3101

QUESTIONS ABOUT PARTICIPATION

Questions about procedures should be directed to the researcher(s) listed at the end of this consent form.

PARTICIPANT CERTIFICATION:

I have read this Consent and Authorization form. I have had the opportunity to ask, and I have received answers to, any questions I had regarding the study. I understand that if I have any additional questions about my child's rights as a research participant, I may call (785) 864-7429, write to the Human Subjects Committee Lawrence Campus (HSCL), University of Kansas, 2385 Irving Hill Road, Lawrence, Kansas 66045-7568, or email irb@ku.edu.

I agree to allow my child to take part in this study as a research participant. By my signature I affirm that I am at least 18 years old and that I have received a copy of this Consent and Authorization form.

Type/Print Participant's Name

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Researcher Contact Information

Matthew Lewis
Principal Investigator
Educational Leadership & Policy Studies
313 Joseph R. Pearson Hall
University of Kansas
816.289.2370

Jennifer C. Ng
Faculty Supervisor
Educational Leadership & Policy Studies
424 Joseph R. Pearson Hall
University of Kansas
785.864.9660

Appendix 5 – Parental Consent for Interviews

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Kansas supports the practice of protection for human subjects participating in research. The following information is provided for you to decide whether you wish your child to participate in the present study. You may refuse to sign this form and not allow your child to participate in this study. You should be aware that even if you agree to allow your child to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time. If you do withdraw your child from this study, it will not affect your relationship with this unit, the services it may provide to you, or the University of Kansas.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study will examine how teachers regulate and modify student conduct and behavior, and how students, in turn, respond to such strategies. The study will focus on teacher-student interactions that occur both in classrooms and in non-instructional spaces such as lunchrooms, hallways, and playgrounds.

PROCEDURES

I have identified your child as someone I would like to interview. If your child is a sixth-grader, this interview will be a conventional, verbal interview. That is, I will ask questions and your child will provide responses. If your child is a second grader, a conventional, verbal interview may not be age appropriate, so I may conduct a visual interview by asking your child to respond to photographs of different locations in the school. Interviews and related research tasks will be approximately 30 minutes in length. If your child attends the before or after school program, I would like to conduct interviews at that time, so as to minimize disruptions to his or her school day. If not, with your permission, I would like to conduct the interview during lunch or recess.

I would like to audio record the interview. However, you may consent to your child's interview but prefer not to have the interview recorded. There is a space to initial at the bottom of this form if you give consent for me to record the interview. Please note, too, that if you give permission for your child to be recorded, I will also ask your child whether she/he would prefer not to be. If your child does not assent to recording, I will not record the interview. Your child will also be instructed that she/he has the right to stop the recording at any time, for any reason whatsoever.

All recordings will be transcribed in full by the researcher for data analysis. The recordings will be stored indefinitely on the researcher's password-protected laptop, where only he will have access to them.

RISKS

I do not anticipate any risks for involvement in this portion of the study.

BENEFITS

There will be no direct benefits to research participants. However, the study will help the research community understand, and hopefully improve, significant school social relationships and interactions.

PAYMENT TO PARTICIPANTS

Participants in this study will not be paid.

PARTICIPANT CONFIDENTIALITY

Your child will be assigned a pseudonym for this study. Any publications or presentations resulting from this study will utilize this pseudonym. That is, your child's actual name will never appear in print or be used in a presentation, nor will it be used in the interview recording. Your child's identifiable information will not be shared unless (a) it is required by law or university policy, or (b) you give written permission.

By signing this form you give permission for the use and disclosure of your child's information, excluding your child's name, for purposes of this study at any time in the future.

REFUSAL TO SIGN CONSENT AND AUTHORIZATION

You are not required to sign this Consent and Authorization form and you may refuse to do so without affecting your right to any services you are receiving or may receive from the University of Kansas or to participate in any programs or events of the University of Kansas. However, if you refuse to sign, your child cannot participate in this study.

CANCELLING THIS CONSENT AND AUTHORIZATION

You may withdraw your consent to allow participation of your child in this study at any time. Any data collected prior to your withdrawal will, at the time of withdrawal, be destroyed. If you cancel permission to use your child's information, the researcher will stop collecting additional information about your child. You also have the right to cancel your permission to use and disclose further information collected about your child, in writing, at any time, by sending your written request to:

Matthew Lewis
313 Joseph R. Pearson Hall
1122 West Campus Road
Lawrence, KS 66045-3101

QUESTIONS ABOUT PARTICIPATION

Questions about procedures should be directed to the researcher(s) listed at the end of this consent form.

PARTICIPANT CERTIFICATION:

I have read this Consent and Authorization form. I have had the opportunity to ask, and I have received answers to, any questions I had regarding the study. I understand that if I have any additional questions about my child's rights as a research participant, I may call (785) 864-7429, write to the Human Subjects Committee Lawrence Campus (HSCL), University of Kansas, 2385 Irving Hill Road, Lawrence, Kansas 66045-7568, or email irb@ku.edu.

Appendix 6 – Sample Scripts for Observational Assent

Assent Form for Observations (second grade)

My name is Matthew, and I am learning about your school and how kids learn to follow the rules in classrooms, hallways, lunchrooms, and playgrounds. During the next few months, I will be visiting your classroom twice a week. I will be watching what you and your teacher do each day. I will also eat lunch with you sometimes, walk with the class to other parts of the school, and even go to recess!

While I'm here I may ask you some questions. You can answer the questions if you want to, but you don't have to. If you choose not to answer, no one will be mad at you. Also, if you don't want me to watch something you are doing or working on, just tell me. Again, I won't be mad at you.

I am happy to be in your class. Do you have any questions for me?

Assent Form for Observations (sixth grade)

My name is Matthew Lewis. I am interested learning about how teachers and students interact at school. In particular, I am interested in what strategies teachers use to encourage certain behaviors and discourage others, and in how students respond to these strategies. I will be visiting your classroom two times each week for the next few months. During this time, I will be observing how you and your teacher interact in the classroom. I will also be following your class to support classes, eating lunch with you, and going to the playground with you. I may also ask you some questions, but I will never interrupt when your teacher is teaching or when you are working on a classroom task.

There are no risks or direct benefits for your time.

Other people will not know if you are in my study. I will put things I learn about you together with things I learn about other students, so no one will be able to tell what things came from you. When I tell other people about my research, I will not use your name, so no one will be able to tell whom I am talking about.

Your parent/guardian has said it is okay for me to be here and to gather information about you, but you have the right to decline to participate. If you do not want to participate, I will not collect any information on you, and I will not ask you any questions. This choice is perfectly acceptable, and no one will be mad at you if you do not want to participate. You can also change your mind at any time.

I will be happy to answer any questions you may have now or at any time in the future.

Would you like to be involved in this study?

Appendix 7 – Sample Script for Interview Assent

Assent Form for Interviews (second grade)

My name is Matthew, and I am learning about your school and how kids learn to follow the rules. I would like you to... (Script will vary with research task. The finishing predicate will include one of the following: “answer some questions,” “draw/paint a picture for me,” “create a map of X,” “take a picture of X.”)

This will take about thirty minutes. If you don't feel like playing, you don't have to. You can stop at any time and that will be all right. Do you want to take part in this game?

Assent Form for Interviews (sixth grade)

My name is Matthew Lewis. I am interested learning about how teachers and students interact at school. In particular, I am interested in what strategies teachers use to encourage certain behaviors and discourage others, and in how students respond to these strategies. I would like to interview you and ask about how your teacher manages your classroom, how you feel about this, and how it affects you at school. The interview will last about thirty minutes.

If you decide you want to be in my study, you will answer my questions as best you can. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers here. I want to know what you think and feel.

There are no risks or direct benefits for your time.

Other people will not know if you are in my study. I will put things I learn about you together with things I learn about other students, so no one will be able to tell what things came from you. When I tell other people about my research, I will not use your name, so no one will be able to tell whom I am talking about.

Your parent/guardian has said it is okay for me to interview, but you get to choose for yourself. If you don't want to be in the study, no one will be mad at you. If you want to be in the study now and change your mind later, that's okay, too. You can stop at any time during the interview.

If you agree to the interview, I would like to record it. But that is your choice, too. You may agree to the interview but choose not to be recorded. You may also choose to be recorded but decide to stop the recording after it has begun.

If you don't feel like answering any questions, you don't have to, and you can stop speaking with me anytime and that will be all right. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have now or at any time in the future.

Would you like to take part in the interview?

May I record the interview, or would you prefer not to be recorded?

Appendix 8 – Interview Guide (Second Grade)*

What does your teacher do for you?

Prompt: What do you like about her?

Prompt: Anything you don't like about her?

I don't know how to be a good second grader, so I'd like for you to teach me. What does a good second grader do in the classroom?

Probe: In the lunchroom? Hallway? Playground?

Do you have to follow rules in your classroom?

Probe: What are the rules?

Probe: Who makes them?

Probe: What happens if you don't follow them? What does the teacher do?

Is it important to follow rules? Why or why not?

Have you ever been in trouble at school? Tell me about what happened.

Probe: How did you feel?

I want to show you some pictures I took of your school. When I show you a picture, I want you to tell me all about the place it shows.

*I used several readability indices to determine if my interview guides were age appropriate. This guide had the following scores:

Flesch-Kincaid grade level: 1.2

SMOG Index: 2.5

Gunning-Fog: 3.3

Appendix 9 – Interview Guide (Sixth Grade)*

Can you describe your teacher and your class for me?

Prompt: In your estimation, what does your teacher do well? What are areas where she could improve?

Prompt: Do classmates in general get along with each other? With the teacher?

Prompt (if negative response to prior prompt): Why do you think that is? What might be changed to improve classroom relationships?

Do you have specific classroom rules to follow?

Prompt: What are the rules?

Prompt: Who makes them?

Prompt: What happens if you don't follow them? What does the teacher do?

Is it important to have classroom rules? Why or why not?

Prompt: Do you agree with all the rules in your classroom?

Have you ever been in trouble at school? Tell me about what happened.

Prompt: How did you feel?

Have you ever felt you were treated unfairly at school (doesn't have to be this school)? Without identifying particular people, can you tell me about what happened?

Prompt: How did this situation make you feel about yourself and about the adult in question?

What does a sixth-grader have to do to be successful in this school?

I would like to show you some pictures I took of your school. For each picture, I'd like you to tell me about the place it shows—what it's called, what you do there, how you typically feel when you're there. Would that be okay?

*I used several readability indices to determine if my interview guides were age appropriate. This guide had the following scores:

Flesch-Kincaid grade level: 2.9

SMOG Index: 4.1

Gunning-Fog: 5.1

Appendix 10 – Teacher Interview Guide (First Interview)

How would you describe your approach to or philosophy of classroom management?

Probe: What strategies have you found effective?

Probe: What have you found ineffective?

Probe: What is the goal of classroom management?

Tell me about a student in your class who has had a lot of behavioral problems.

Probe: What specific behaviors does she show? Why are these behaviors problematic?

Probe: What strategies are you using with this student?

Describe your relationship with (student in question #3).

Why do you think this student misbehaves? In general, why do you think children misbehave?

I want you to think about your room arrangement. When you set up your room, or when you change its layout, do you think about issues of behavior management?

Is classroom management an important part of your job?

Probe: How much thought do you put into it?

Probe: How would you assess yourself at it?

Probe: Do you take pride in your ability to manage a class of students?

Do you find that children's behavior is different outside the classroom—e.g., at lunch, recess, hallways, library, etc.—than it is inside the classroom?

Probe: What do you expect to see from children in these areas?

Probe: Do you change the way you manage behavior outside the classroom?

Appendix 11 – Interview Guide, Ms. Maldonado (Interview Two)

I have been struck by the degree to which students operate independently of instruction. For example, walking in hallway, using the bathroom, preparing to work—the children do many of these things without explicit directions. How is it that you get the students to do this?

It seems to me that you gave fewer directions, say for walking in line, as the semester wore on. Is this accurate? If so, why?

I have heard you talk about time in your classroom several times. I have seen you tell the children you're waiting on them—which seems to carry the implicit assumption that they are wasting classroom time—and I have seen you set time limits on their work. Tell me about how you think about classroom time.

Prompt: Why do you tell the children you're waiting on them?

Prompt: Who does time belong to in your classroom?

Prompt: Why do you employ time limits for activities?

What places in the room are off-limits for the students? Why?

I have noticed that a few students always sit by themselves, but also that they move around a lot. Explain to me your thinking behind this.

Your room underwent several reorganizations. Why?

Prompt: What was your goal(s) in rearranging the room?

Prompt: Was it effective?

At times you have put tape on the floor next to students' desks. Tell me about this.

Why do you have a line order?

What is the goal of discipline in your classroom?

Prompt: What do you want to see from students?

Prompt: Is discipline important for children? Why or why not?

In your opinion, why do children sometimes misbehave at school?

Appendix 12 – Interview Guide, Ms. Barber (Interview Two)

I have been struck by the degree to which students operate independently of instruction. For example, walking in hallway, using the bathroom, preparing to work—the children do many of these things without explicit directions. How is it that you get the students to do this?

It seems to me that you gave fewer directions, say for walking in line, as the semester wore on. Is this accurate? If so, why?

At the beginning of the year you didn't send kids out of the room, but maybe two months in you began to. Why the change?

Toward the end of my time here, you began giving students short breaks every so often throughout the day. Explain to me why you started doing this.

What places in the room are off-limits for the students? Why those places?

I have heard you talk about time in your classroom several times. I have seen you tell the children you're waiting on them, and I have heard you tell them "it's the wrong time for that." Tell me how you think about classroom time.

Prompt: Why do you tell the children you're waiting on them?

Prompt: Who does time belong to in the classroom?

I have noticed that when you make corrections you often tell students you need them to look like scholars. What does this mean and why is it important?

I have seen you tell students that a quiet, still body is important for thinking. Tell me why this is important to you.

I have noticed occasionally that you will write a kid's name down. Can you tell me about the process of writing down a name?

Prompt: Why do you do it?

Prompt: What happens to a kid whose name gets written down?

What is the goal of discipline in your classroom?

Prompt: What do you want to see from students?

Prompt: Is discipline important for children? Why or why not?

In your opinion, why do children sometimes misbehave at school?

Appendix 13 – Principal Interview Guide

Tell me about your professional background.

Prompt: What made you want to become a principal?

Prompt: What has it been like to be the principal at Garcia?

Prompt: What is your biggest professional challenge?

Describe your school for me.

Prompt: What is the current percentage of free and reduced lunch?

Prompt: What are the demographics of the school?

Prompt: Have these changed in your time here.

Describe your personal approach to or philosophy of discipline.

Prompt: What sorts of management techniques do you expect to see from teachers?

Prompt: Do you ever have staff development aimed at discipline / classroom management?

I'm studying behavior in two classrooms. Is there a school wide approach to discipline?

Prompt: If so, describe the approach.

Prompt: If not, why.

Are there “problem areas” in the school—that is, places where you see more misbehavior?

Prompt: What are these areas?

Prompt: What kinds of behaviors do you see in them?

Prompt: What makes management in these areas difficult?

What kinds of behaviors do you most often see students for?

In your opinion, what are the main causes of teacher-student conflict and student misconduct at your school?

Appendix 14 – Sample of Second Grade Interview Summary

Interview Participant: Amanda

Interviewer: Matthew Lewis

Date of Interview: 11.5.2014

Summary:

In our interview I learned that you like to write, read, and make stuff at school, but your favorite thing to do is draw pictures. You also taught me about your teacher's method of using checkmarks and numbers to keep track of student behavior. You told me that you like your teacher, but that you feel sad when she doesn't let you play at recess. You told me that Ms. Maldonado sometimes sends kids to different classrooms when they misbehave. Finally, you taught me about how second graders are supposed to act in different areas of the school—the classroom, the hallway, the lunchroom, and the playground—and about the importance of listening.

Appendix 15 – Data Summaries for Teachers

Data Summary for Teachers, 10/9/2014

Teacher strategies I have observed/gleaned from interviews:

- Emphasizing listening/remaining quiet and having a relaxed/still body
- Having children use gestures or signs instead of talking
- Moving children to new places in the room
- Having roles in the classroom
- Spot checking or watching students
- Call and response (e.g., clapping and repeating patterns, Whoop-whoop)
- Writing down behavior infractions (using checkmarks, tally marks, etc.)
- Writing down positive behavior (e.g., giving points for appropriate behavior)
- Rules

Student responses I have observed/gleaned from interviews:

- Using their bodies (falling out of chairs, singing, making sounds, slumping, etc.)
- Using other objects (playing with pencils, phones, etc.)
- “Creative” resistance (making things during instructional times, playing games, etc.)

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