Theses and Dissertations

12-15-2014

Toward a Theory of Safe Passage: Agentic Practices of Women Writers Who Teach

Lillian Gordon Reeves
University of South Carolina - Columbia

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/etd

 Part of the Education Commons

Toward a Theory of Safe Passage:
Agentic Practices of Women Writers Who Teach

by

Lillian Gordon Reeves

Bachelor of Arts
Middlebury College, 2003

Master of Arts
Middlebury College, 2007

_____

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in

Language and Literacy

College of Education

University of South Carolina

2014

Accepted by:

Diane Stephens, Major Professor

Diane DeFord, Committee Member

Tasha Laman, Committee Member

Payal Shah, Committee Member

Lacy Ford, Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies

Dedication

In honor of my parents, Richard and Candace Reeves, who gave me the world and then taught me that to live in it, you must take the bitter with the sweet.

In memory of my mom, Candace, who lost the battle before I finished the dissertation, but who read every word, listened to every thought, and loved me without end. This, and everything—is for you.

In memory of my uncle, Rocky Gooch, who lit all the fish fires at Bread Loaf and connected the schools and the teachers of BLTN with the cutting edge computer technology of First Class Client back before the days of the Internet.

Acknowledgements

"I can no other answer make but thanks, and thanks, and ever thanks"

(Shakespeare, 1623/1993, III. iii)

The most persistent feeling that came at the end of this study was gratitude. I am thankful to all the women who helped me see myself as a critical feminist. I must thank these women scholars, women who teach, and sister friends, who live as women who are always in resistance. The collaborative project resulting from this study was one of our acts of resistance. Our willingness to learn, to change, and to be changed shifted the type of study this became.

Consequently, this study changed wildly in its last two years and especially in its last six months. To see others' self-creation, transformation, and growth kaleidoscopically and alongside my own helped me understand irrefutably that I didn't know the field until I was cast into it. The field to me was for a long time a grassy knoll with flowers and greenery; it wasn't until I began writing this dissertation that I became more aware of landscapes I had not seen—that I had not been able to see. Research is difficult and even confrontational; it compels us to take risks, but it also helps us to recognize our limitations and strengths. In that regard, there is no way to know a method or to develop an epistemological view from outside the data. And it was not until I could develop those views that I was actually in my data. Dr. Stephens said I was going to have to write my way to meaning, but I didn't know what or how that was until I

eventually started writing the latest version of chapters 4, 5, and 6. And when I got into those chapters, that was when I felt like I was in the field.

Consequently, the people who made the field visible to me and who played significant, daily roles in this study must be recognized without further delay.

Dr. Diane Stephens has redefined the way I understand a mentor scholar and I hope to one day live by her example and do for my students what she has done for me. Her steadfast presence in this study, to the bitter end, will never be far from my mind; it is necessary and all together imperative to suggest this study would not have been possible without her leadership, her insistence, and her uncanny ability to strike a balance between heart, headache, and the utter resolute joy of discovery. Dr. Stephens believed in my project, my writing, and my story, when at times I did not; she pushed me to think in critical and collaborative ways I never thought I could. The debt of gratitude owed her is immeasurable.

The rest of my committee also offered me their generous support and guidance. Dr. DeFord lent me a great deal of her time and ingenuity. She read and re-read early drafts and offered powerful responses to ideas still in development. She taught me in her class and, later, during the writing of the dissertation, to cast my net wide and to relish in the haul, even if it could not all be used right away—for all histories and all findings are really stories, waiting patiently to be told. Dr. DeFord, like Dr. Stephens, offered me strong counsel and fierce friendship. Additionally, Dr. Shah, from the first time I met her, understood the intensity of my hope to participate in reclaiming teaching for women and debunking the myth that women have somehow contributed to systemic failures in public education. To be specific, the first time I met with Dr. Shah, I told her we had to

reclaim the profession or see the profession perish and, as grand an idea as it was and absolutely unlikely to be done in a single dissertation, Dr. Shah did not quiet the quickening of my voice or my belief that I needed to try. I am tremendously thankful for her profoundly theoretical insights and the interest she showed in the holistic outcome, growth, and projected futures of this study. Finally, Dr. Laman, who I took one of my early doctoral classes with in 2008, introduced me to the work of Gee and Rickford and Heath and others who looked thoughtfully and critically at the social context of speech and the functions of language. Often, in the early stages of the dissertation, I thought of that class, chock full of fellow doctoral students whose lives later became intricately entwined with my own, where we, too, were taught to look thoughtfully and critically at the social context of speech and the functions of language. I know in some ways that this early foundation helped me see the stories I eventually found in my dissertation data.

Others who were constant companions in life, online, and on the page were my participants, Debbie, Ceci, and Jineyda. It was a huge honor to work with their stories. I thought for a long time that this study would be about Bread Loaf and the thin film of life we all shared as students there. However, the study turned out to be so much more than I could have possibly imagined, not the least of which was realizing the beauty and the audacity of the participants' life's stories. The participants' friendship, support, feedback and enthusiasm fueled this endeavor from the start.

Other faculty at the University of South Carolina offered me support and friendship during my time as a doctoral student. Dr. David Virtue (with whom I had my first graduate assistantship) and his family welcomed me into their lives; it was a great privilege to work with him and to know him. Others, including Dr. Jewett, Dr. Long, Dr.

Johnson, Dr. Bryan, Dr. Brown, Dr. Boutte, Dr. Lopez-Robertson, Dr. Styslinger, Dr. Oglan, and Dr. Friend, as well as Julie Niehaus and Betsy Collins, have left indelible marks on my learning and on my life. I also want to thank my cohort, Clayton, Abbey, Kris, JR, and Tempie, who remain close colleagues and friends.

I must also acknowledge my Bread Loaf family for giving me a lifetime of love. There are so many luminaries who have touched my life, through no effort of my own, other than the sheer proximity I have kept to my grandmother, Dixie Goswami. First, Jim Maddox—for shaping Bread Loaf School of English into the type of graduate program where the stories of students like Debbie, Ceci, and Jineyda could be legitimized and elevated and brought to bear on the prestigious and ambitious work of English, language, and cultural scholars from around the world. Jim's belief in teachers' abilities to transform the educational enterprise was visible in the ambitious programming he instituted at Bread Loaf during his long and celebrated tenure as director. I was lucky enough, as a graduate student at Bread Loaf, to be beneficiary of that vision.

Current Bread Loaf director, Emily Bartels, has persisted with her own impressive mission for Bread Loaf and it has been a privilege to continue to see BLTN's role evolving and expanding as she addresses the needs of 21st century English teachers and master's candidates in English literature. Shirley Brice Heath and Andrea Lunsford extended their support and encouragement to me, especially during some very difficult times when I wasn't sure I could finish the dissertation after my mom died. They responded with excitement and joy to every measure of personal success I gained along the way and to them, again, I am indebted. My Bread Loaf faculty, who taught me while I was a student at Bread Loaf, prepared me to go with an open mind and hopeful heart

into the Language and Literacy PhD. Michael Armstrong, Valerie Babb, Sara Blair, Isobel Armstrong, Paul Muldoon, Susanne Wofford, Dixie Goswami, Shel Sax, Jim Maddox, Lucy Maddox, Beverly Moss, Jackie Royster, John Fyler, Robert Stepto, Michele Stepto, Jonathan Freedman, Alan MacVey, Carol MacVey, Lou Bernieri, Rich Gorham, Cindy Rosenthal, Betty Bailey, Sandy LeGault, Leo Hotte, Elaine Lathrop, Judy Jessup, Karen Browne, Ed and Vic Brown, Peter Newton, John Mancuso, Caroline Eisner, made my graduate experience and my life magical and magnificent.

I would like to thank my extended family and friends who supported me and encouraged me during the seven years of this doctoral program. My mom and my dad have a history of making the impossible possible, and it was only with their unwavering love and reassurance that I have arrived here. My mom, my dad, my sisters, Meredith and Sara, and their families, and my grandmother Dixie and my grandfather Bhuvenesh were tremendously interested in all that I did and all that I learned at USC. There are no amounts of thanks or words in this language to express my gratitude for all they have done for me. I want to thank my husband, Chris, too, who joined the show toward the end of this process, but who nevertheless brought me a terrific amount of joy and saw me through some pretty difficult moments of self-doubt and uncertainty.

Finally, I want to thank my students, who, at every stage of my development as a woman who teaches, have challenged, surprised, and taught me to be impassioned and—at times—enraged on their behalf. I want to especially thank (my fifth-grade student) Thomas, who once asked me: "Ms. Reeves, when you finish your degree, you'll be Dr. Reeves? That's so cool! Can we call you Nurse Reeves until then?" Time's up, Thomas!

Abstract

Past studies show that narrative is an effective tool for guiding teachers to develop teacher identity, to recognize their practical knowledge, and to engage in teacher transformation, especially during initial teacher training and the early years of their career. Consequently, other researchers have identified how narrative studies inform what we know about teachers' identities, their practical knowledge, and their transformations during initial training and early career teaching. However, we do not know how narrative functions in the experiences of teachers beyond initial teacher training and early career teaching. This study intends to fill this gap in the research.

In this study, I explored the teaching lives of three veteran women English teachers—Debbie, Ceci, and Jineyda—who all received masters' degrees in English from Middlebury College's Bread Loaf School of English, and who all participated in the Bread Loaf Teacher's Network (BLTN). Initially, I sought to understand the impact of BLTN. Using qualitative methods, including surveys, artifact analysis, and semi-structured interviews, I documented the participants' early memories of writing and reading, their growth as writers, how they made their social and intellectual connections at Bread Loaf, how these connections affected them, and how they continued to sustain them.

I composed narrative portraits of each of the women and then looked for patterns across them, using aspects of Goodson's (2013) narrative portrayal method and applying critical feminist perspectives to the data. The teachers' temporally kaleidoscopic life

stories, situated in the professional context of their experiences with Bread Loaf and BLTN, revealed the framework for a new grounded theory. The new theory—the theory of safe passage—is a triadic theory, referring to three distinct parts, which include (a) the early support from mentors or teachers, who allowed my participants to read and to write in school or in the library; (b) then later, the professional support from BLTN, Bread Loaf faculty, and Bread Loaf peers, as my participants claimed public identities as women writers who teach; and finally, (c) my participants engaged in the creation of safe passage for their own students. These findings have implications for teacher evaluation and retention. For example, teachers' narratives include first hand experiential reports of how teachers claim expertise and of how teachers articulate their needs. Combined, teachers' narratives that illustrate the above characteristics build the rich data sources needed to evaluate teacher, student, and school performance and achievement. Additionally, teachers' narratives reflect the health of the profession and, subsequently, can offer insight into whether teachers feel supported and valued enough as professionals to remain in the field long-term. Consequently, the findings of this study suggest there is much more to be understood from how narrative functions in teacher professional education programming and especially how we value and legitimize the experiences of teachers beyond early career learning environments.

This study also formalizes a call for wide-spread, ongoing mentorship in professional development programming for teachers. Ongoing mentorship, as illustrated in the narratives of my participants, significantly distinguished the type of professional associations teachers maintained with BLTN and Bread Loaf, from what I believe are traditional types of professional learning or professional development, such as one-a-day

workshops, seminars, school improvement planning, and other types of instruction, which
do not necessarily take into consideration an individual teacher's strength, abilities,
experience, and knowledge.

Second Breakfast

There we all were again

Almost all

When the lilacs

Sprawled across the stones

and

Twitched in the pale sun

As Lillie passed,

Laughing.

Fish fires

Lit up Bread Loaf

and

The trees

The Rocks

the clouds

quickened –

Awash

in the first cold pressings

of Lillie's

summer wine.

(Candace Reeves, 2003)

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter 1: The Evolution of the Theory of Safe Passage

> I've changed as a teacher, through Bread Loaf Teacher Network, firstly and most importantly, just through teacher talk. Teachers talking to each other about what they do and about their practice and about their problems and their successes and sharing models. That has been enormously supportive. It's made me understand that I'm part of something bigger. That when I go into my classroom and teach I'm not just teaching that classroom; I'm part of the public education movement around the United States and that gives me a sense of purpose I didn't have when I was an isolated teacher. (Rich Gorham, high school English teacher and Bread Loaf graduate, personal communication, 2003)

Research about children's uses of narrative firmly establishes their evolving ability to intentionally pull words from their social environment to be used as tools for making meaning (Bruner, 1983; Armstrong, 2006; Wells, 2003). Occasionally, course work for preservice and early career teachers also includes writing personal narratives about classroom experiences (Blake & Blake, 2012). Some of these assignments have been used to study how preservice and early career teachers use narratives to contextualize their learning and to make choices about how to teach what they teach (Rushton, 2004; Clandinin, 1989; Collier, 1999). Meanwhile, online, teachers have multiple opportunities to story their experiences and practices with other educators. English teachers, for example, often participate in networks such as The Guardian's Teacher Network, English Companion Ning and the Bread Loaf Teachers Network. However, very little research has explored how teachers use narrative in online venues for professional development. When I began this study, I intended to fill this gap in the literature.

1

I consequently conducted narrative research on three teachers, Debbie, Ceci, and Jineyda, who have participated in one of the oldest online networks for teachers (the Bread Loaf Teacher Network or BLTN). Every year, for the last twenty years, an estimated 500 teachers from across the U.S. and around the world come to the Bread Loaf School of English campuses to spend six weeks taking courses in creative writing, the teaching of writing, and theater arts, and in British, American, and world literature (Bread Loaf School of English, n.d.). Subsequently, across multiple academic years, Bread Loaf teachers stay in touch with each other electronically via BLTN, whose "primary goal is to encourage year-round collaboration among Bread Loaf teachers, faculty, and their students on innovative online projects, designed to promote culturally sensitive and transformative literacy" (para. 1).

My intent was to study Debbie, Ceci, and Jineyda and how narrative impacted their professional learning opportunities as they designed, implemented, reflected upon, and wrote about their classroom and online collaborative projects. I intended to answer the following questions:

1. Within the context of BLTN, how did these three women teachers draw on narrative ways of knowing to reflect upon their teaching and learning lives?

2. To what extent did these teachers use BLTN to connect their Bread Loaf coursework in literature to their classroom practice, their online collaborative projects, and their own reading, writing, and professional activity?

3. To what extent did these teachers share narratives about their personal and professional lives as they designed, implemented, reflected upon, and wrote about BLTN-related collaborative work?

However, it became apparent, during data analysis, that while BLTN was an influential and catalytic part of the participants' overall life stories, there was a larger story to be told—a story about how these women became writers who taught. As I analyzed the teachers' life stories, I began to see the highest points of narrative intensity forming patterns. The patterns were clustered around narrative episodes in the life stories that led to action or illustrated the participants engaging in agentic practices. The narrative episodes particularly involved the protagonists coming into contact with other actors (such as teachers and mentors), which resulted directly in new courses of actions. These new actions brought the participants closer to the narrative turn of the entire life story (as opposed to the micro-narrative turns throughout), which was to publically claim their identities as writers. The micro-narrative turns articulated by the participants also played a significant role and were linked and arranged in a specific way, creating an urgent sense of purpose leading up to the ultimate narrative turn of the life stories.

The linkages between the micro-narratives revealed a triadic relationship, visible in each life story, which, when combined, formed what I have called a "theory of safe passage." The triadic relationship included three "stages." The first stage focused on relationships with early teachers and mentors, who provided participants with safe passage or places and times in which the participants could engage in self-creation, as well as read and write and be acknowledged as meaning-makers and knowledge-holders. In the second stage, Bread Loaf and BLTN provided the participants with safe passage to talk, to claim expertise (Royster, 2000), and to articulate the functions of languages, cultures, and literatures contextualized in their own lives. In this stage of the theory of safe passage, the participants underwent significant self-transformation, as they made

3

public their identities as women writers. In the last stage, participants extended the rewards of safe passage for their own students. In the context of the participants' lives as teachers, safe passage was now a pedagogical choice.

By the end of the study, I had an answer to a question I had not initially asked: What theory might explain how women become writers who teach?

Contextualizing the Study in the Research Literature

To situate my study in the research on narrative, I reviewed the literature in three areas: narrative as a tool for developing teacher identity, narrative as a method for teachers to recognize their practical knowledge, and narrative as an instrument to engage in teacher transformation.

Narrative as a Tool for Developing Teacher Identity

Narrative is often used as an instructional tool for preservice and inservice teachers as they develop individual and collaborative identities within the contexts of teaching. In teacher education settings, self-narrative can be a powerful tool (Kaasila & Lauriala, 2012; Rushton, 2004) for generating dialogue about teacher practice and experience. Hayler (2011) argued that "valuable insights into the work and identity of teacher educators can be gained by examining our own memories and beliefs" (p. 1). Hayler also contended that "the narrative discourses through which we understand ourselves and our work are a source of rich description and insight" (p. 1). While this can lead to personal stories being seen just as individual celebrations, Goodson (1997) called for teacher education programs to cultivate a dual purpose for writing reflective and personal stories, suggesting that teachers must come to see their narratives as situated

4

in historical contexts and social constructs beyond just the individual moment of action (p. 115; Carter & Doyle, 1996, 2003).

Teacher education programs use identity narratives to help preservice and early career teachers project their future selves. In one study, for instance, McVee (2004) focused on culture, language, and the self-utilizing ethnic autobiographies within a master's level course she was teaching in literacy education. McVee's participants initially included six teachers and one full-time student. All the participants were American women of European descent. McVee gathered the participants' writing from the class, which included informal writing, midterms, and final exams, and also generated analytic memos of her own throughout the course of the study. Additionally, McVee used audio and video recordings for each class meeting and later transcribed those recordings and added them to her data. As she explained, "Students crafted multiple drafts of a *narrative vignette* about a cultural border-crossing experience and a *mid-term essay* exploring their views of language, culture, literacy, and teaching. *Final projects* were designed by students based on their own interests and needs" (p. 884; emphasis in original). After conducting preliminary reviews of the data, McVee began a narrative analysis, combining Labov and Waletzky's model of natural narrative (abstract, orientation, complicating action, evaluation, resolution, and coda) with a sociolinguistics examination of the participants' discourse in the specific setting of the class (Labov & Waletzky's model, as cited in McVee, 2004). After the initial analysis, McVee decided to look specifically at two of her participants' narratives for a more in-depth analysis. She discovered that the teachers were using a multitude of narrative structures and forms to tell stories and that, over time, within the context of studying ethnic autobiographies,

5

their narratives changed, even when the participant was telling the "same story" (p. 895).

Narratives, in McVee's study were not linear; rather, she believed that they were, ideally,

"teleographic" projections of her participants' future selves (p. 896). She stated that the

"the linear story with its singular self stands in opposition to the multiple selves revealed

in the increased self-reflection presented in Ellie's narratives or through Regan's multi-

voiced stories" (McVee, 2004, p. 896).

Finally, McVee argued that her findings were strong evidence that teachers need

spaces where they can be reflective and where they can re-author and/or re-imagine their

experiences.

> Narratives of personal experience need to be represented in teacher education
> courses in ways that demonstrate their dynamic, multiple viewpoints. Narrative
> provides preservice and inservice teachers with educative experiences that teacher
> educators can point to in order to encourage and then document a potential
> trajectory of growth and learning for students. (p. 897)

Identity narratives can also be used as a method to help early career teachers clarify their

professional values. Weinberger and Shefi (2012) conducted qualitative literary and

interpretive content analysis of two student teachers' narratives. The student teachers

were participating in a teacher preparation program at a well-regarded college in Israel.

Weinberger and Shefi were particularly interested in looking at how the context of

learning shaped professional identity and what was considered "professional" in the

student teachers' articulation of their life stories (p. 263). The authors selected the

student teachers from a core course, "Teachers Inquire into their Field Practices." As part

of the course, students could choose between writing a case study, doing an action

research project, or writing a life story. Afterwards, all students conducted a critical self-

analysis of their work in the field. Of the twenty-two students, nine chose life story; the

authors asked these students to explore their narratives using an interpretive analysis

6

design. Weinberger and Shefi then narrowed the selection of participants to two women student teachers, who they believed demonstrated a variety of "styles of expression and rich presentations" (p. 264). The data analysis for Weinberger and Shefi's study consisted of three components:

> We approached the narratives as *stories,* as *modes of knowing,* and as *methods of inquiry* [Barrett & Stauffer, as cited in Weinberger and Shefi]. First, the students and researchers wrote and read each narrative as *life story.* Next, the student teachers analyzed the narrative as a *mode of knowing*, thus raising their awareness of meaningful experiences in their lives. Finally, we (the researchers) approached the text as *method of inquiry,* searching for expressions of student teachers' professional identity. (Weinberger and Shefi, 2012, p. 264; emphasis in original)

During Weinberger and Shelfi's analysis, themes emerged and some became topical throughout the life stories. Ultimately, the researchers identified five significant narrative thematic categories: "the genre of the story, the main issues presented in it, the formative experiences and the meaningful figures in the story-teller's life, and the personal and educational values manifested in the narratives" (Weinberger & Shefi, 2012, p. 265). The student teachers' narratives and responses were deeply reflective as they articulated their beliefs about teaching and what galvanized their ambitions to become teachers. The student teachers drew heavily on past experiences with teachers they wished to emulate as professionals.

Weinberger and Shefi's (2012) study resulted in a number of key discoveries about student–teacher professional identity. These discoveries included a visible link between themes, figures, and experiences and the social contexts in which they were situated. The study also resulted in the formation of life story categories: genre (such as moral tale or travel journal), main issue, meaningful figures, formative experiences, and personal and educational values (p. 271). Additionally, the reflective aspect of the study allowed the student teachers to clarify and reiterate their beliefs in the context of past and

7

present learning experience. Finally, the researchers believed some of the implications of their study would be for student teachers to "understand their priorities and the ways in which they generate meaning" and to help teacher educators "become familiar with their students' world in the past and the present, in order to educate them in an appropriate context" (p. 272).

Identity narratives can also provide significant feedback about how teacher education programs influence teacher identities. Anspal, Eisenschmidt, and Lofstrom (2012) conducted a study using inductive content analysis across a number of participant samples and one in-depth case study analysis. The researchers collected 38 writing samples from students of varying levels at a five-year teacher education program in Estonia. Anspal, et al. gave participants an open-ended writing task, hoping it would encourage the student body to be reflective of their experiences and expectations in the teacher preparation program.

Anspal, et al. (2012) were particularly interested in finding out "how the students themselves narrate their teacher identity, and what functions they ascribe to the teacher education programme in those narrations" (p. 200). The researchers looked at the data from two angles. First, they analyzed the 38 writing samples to see if there were any similarities across the groups of students at different stages of program completion. They identified instances in the writing samples that articulated the students' "experiences of self as a teacher or . . . personal development during teacher education" (p. 201). The themes that emerged from this analysis were: self as teacher, motivation to become a teacher, worries and fears related to one's performance as a teacher, and changed experienced during teacher education (p. 201). Each of these themes became topical

8

across all five years of study, though some themes were emphasized more during early years and less during later years. For instance, the writing the researchers were seeing which emphasized worry or fear about one's ability to teach in the first year had mostly given way to the recognition of one's new knowledge and abilities in the fifth year.

In the second level of analysis, Anspal, et al. conducted a case study analysis of one student's narratives and used Keltcherman's themes (oneself as a teacher, performance as a teacher, motives for choosing the teaching profession, and thoughts about what it means to be a teacher; Keltcherman, as cited in Anspal, et al.) as a framework through which to analyze the data. The researchers conducted the case study in the context of the findings from the first level of analysis; it focused on the experiences and reflections of one student, Teele, who had recently completed the teacher education program to become a teacher, and who articulated the influence the teacher education program had on her teacher identity over the five years.

Anspal, et al.'s (2012) study indicated that as student teachers move through teacher preparation programs, they focus less on themselves and more on the students they will teach. The researchers discovered that a defining characteristic, especially articulated in the early years of the teacher preparation program, was the student teachers' desire to be a change agent and their belief that teaching was a profession that would allow them to achieve this. Some student teachers abandoned the program before finishing and upon realizing they were too idealistic. Others, however, maintained the belief that they could and would act as change agents in a teaching setting. Additionally, as student teachers got closer to completing their degrees, they were better able to

9

articulate their pedagogical and theoretical beliefs, and to recognize their overall

acquisition of new knowledge and professional preparation to begin careers as teachers.

Narrative as a Method for Teachers to Recognize Their Practical Knowledge

A number of studies looked at methods by which student teachers and early career

teachers come to value their practical knowledge through the use of reflection and story

reconstruction. In addition to focusing on early career teachers' practical knowledge,

these studies illustrated tremendous diversity and scope in methods and theory.

As early career teachers develop professional identities, there are ongoing

opportunities to augment professional practice with teachers' practical knowledge.

Connelly and Clandinin (1990) and Clandinin and Connelly (2000), for example, have

largely contributed to establishing narrative inquiry as a research methodology that

successfully places "the person in context" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 36). In a

three-year, longitudinal study, Connelly and Clandinin (1984) reported on teachers'

practical knowledge. The studies were guided by the actions of teachers and principals;

the teachers' and principals' roles were "'personal' meaning that the actions of the school

practitioners flow their individual personalities and personal experience" (p. 12). In one

study in this volume, Clandinin conducted a two-year intensive case study on two

experienced classroom teachers. Connelly and Clandinin (1984) emphasized that

"personal practical knowledge" was meant to express that knowledge was:

> Neither theoretical, in the sense of theories of learning, teaching, and curriculum,
> nor merely practical in the sense of knowing children. Teachers' special
> knowledge is composed of both kinds of knowledge, blended by the personal
> background and characteristics of the teacher and expressed in particular
> situations. (p. 18)

Clandinin (1989) used dialectic methodologies in her research process, which reflected

her collaborative position as a participant in the research (versus passive observer).

10

Using interviews and observations, the study was especially focused on documenting teachers' "classroom reality." Clandinin then used her "personal practical knowledge" as a frame through which to interpret what she saw. Thus, she did not interpret what she saw from a theoretical framework, but rather maintained the use of her own interpretations (p. 19).

Clandinin documented instances when personal, practical knowledge informed practice:

> I give accounts, in general, of practices, experiences, images, and relationships while acknowledging the particular practices, experiences, images, and relationships of each individual. . . . My key construct for relating the specific and the general, the practical and the theoretical, is the image. (p. 22)

In Clandinin's (1989) observations and interviews, she better understood the personal, practical knowledge the participant teachers had of emotion and morality, through the images of home and of self they created and maintained in their classrooms (Clandinin, 1989, p. 23). For example, one teacher, Stephanie, was committed to making her own classroom feel as much like home as possible and believed one way of doing that was for her and her students to grow plants. This, however, became a point of contention when Clandinin suggested that the teachers let the students take their plants home. Stephanie believed that the plants were an integral part of classroom environment and that they contributed to maintaining a home-like feel and therefore, the plants should be kept only at school. Aileen, the other classroom teacher participant, however, organized her classroom differently; she wanted her students to feel as if they were part of a "mini-society of cooperation," which was regulated by rules and expectations for which each class member was responsible for upholding (p. 34).

11

In Clandinin's (1989) study, teachers developed behaviors and interactions with their students, which resulted directly from the teachers' practical personal knowledge from when they were students, as well as from when they were in teacher preparation programs (p. 23). Clandinin's intensive research indicated a dialectic quality between "the practical understanding of the two teachers and the theoretical notions of personal practical knowledge, particularly image, as a language and perspective for inquiry" (p. 37).

Practical knowledge can also be legitimized by having preservice and early career teachers use narrative to reconstruct their experiences. Francis (1995) conducted a study, which built on Schon's assertion that reflection was needed for teachers to grow and develop their practical knowledge, skills, and abilities (Schon, as cited in Francis, 1995). Specifically, Francis' aim was to provide occasions for preservice students to collaboratively reconstruct their experiences from their personal and teaching lives (p. 231). Francis selected participants from a group of preservice teachers at James Cook University of North Queensland, Australia, who were taking a course in curriculum and teaching studies and who were in their third year of a four-year teacher education degree. Because the class was cross-content (including curriculum and teaching planning for social education, science, and physical education), Francis encouraged students to keep a binder with sections for: teaching plans; reflective writing about workshop content, strategies, and issues; a professional diary documenting events that made an impact on personal views of teaching; and a critical summary of professional reading (p. 229). Francis focused on the journal writing aspect of the students' work as a method to engage

students in reflection and as a way to make a space for "personal theory building" (p. 239).

Despite the connections that Francis (1995) drew between critical reflection and positive professional growth for preservice teachers, she deemed her findings inconclusive. When preservice students had the opportunity to look critically at their own and at the work of a peer in a collaborative relationship (which Francis called critical friends), the preservice teachers were able to be reflective and even political. They were better able to articulate their beliefs to apply new knowledge to practical and experiential knowledge, which led to action (p. 239). Francis reported, however, that there were difficulties. First, she discovered that preservice students were not often reflective in their practices and consistently wanted to know if they were doing the "right" thing or had the "right" answer (p. 239). This indicated to Francis that "personal theory building" must take institutional context into consideration when studying groups of preservice teachers. Further, she found that processes, such as establishing critical friend peer groups and trust among peers and mentors, take time. Though Francis deemed her study inconclusive, she did identify processes that successfully led to the opportunity for students to reconstruct their experiences and to work collaboratively with others to value preservice teachers' experiences and knowledge. Francis called for these practices—particularly journal writing and student collaboration in critical friends group—to be embedded early in preservice learning programs.

When practical knowledge and experiences are politicized, early career teachers must seek out support in professional communities. For example, Philpott and Dagenais (2011) conducted a study that analyzed the narratives of 27 early career teachers who

were experimenting with how to incorporate what they learned in their social justice teaching program into their individual classrooms and schools (p. 86). Building from Wenger's (1998) articulation of community of practice and by adopting a metaphoric framework reflective of Clandinin and Connelly (1994) articulation of professional knowledge landscapes, Philpott and Dagenais (2011) focused their study on teachers' social justice discourses (p. 87).

Using semi-structured interviews, Philpott asked the participants to narrate their understandings of social justice throughout their past and present experiences (p. 90). Although participants were encouraged to bring in student writing samples or curricular activities that focused on social justice, much of what ultimately became the data were oral accounts of experiences. When they were analyzing the data, the authors discovered that the early career teachers' beliefs about social justice shared characteristics with the social justice stance articulated by others researchers, such as Cochran–Smith (2004) and Ladson–Billings (1994). They also found that the early career teachers' social justice stance and discourses were sometimes at odds with their institution's "prescribed curriculum" (p. 90) and also that the early career teachers' understanding of social justice stance was different in scope and definition from the researchers'. Despite the terming differences, the researchers discovered that early career teachers were able to find ways to incorporate aspects of a social justice stance into their instruction and that they were able to offer their students opportunities to create and participate in social justice discourses (p. 91). Despite finding opportunities to engage in social justice discourse, the early career teachers had little professional support or mentoring within their schools

14

from likeminded colleagues. This caused some of them to distance themselves from political or controversial topics (p. 94).

Narrative as an Instrument for Teachers to Engage in Teacher Transformation

A number of studies have looked at the overall transformation professionals experience as they move from one stage of career preparation to the next. For teachers, narrative writing is one tool teachers can use to help them reflect upon aspects of this transition and articulate their evolving professional belief system.

Reflection can be one avenue through which teachers achieve pedagogical transformation. For instance, Lanas and Kiilakoski (2013) studied data collected from a four-year longitudinal project conducted in Northern Finland. Because the study used an ethnographic approach, the relationship between the researcher and the teacher participant was an unanticipated working relationship, which developed within the context of the larger research study. The bulk of the project included weeks of onsite visits to the village for ethnographic observation and interviews of 50 teachers and villagers. Because the data was gathered in the context of a larger study with the researchers frequently on the ground, Lanas and Kiilakoski emphasized that:

> The knowledge construction process of this study is dialogical, to the extent that it would be impossible to fully track down the researcher's influence on the situation. The authors of this paper regard knowledge not as static but as dialogic, a composition, a plurality of narratives continuously reconstructed socially and psychologically in the process of social interaction. (p. 346)

To analyze teacher transformation, the researchers further acknowledged that "transformation requires situating a teacher in personal, local, national, global, and cultural settings" (Lanas & Kiilakoski, 2013, p. 346). The setting specific to this study was a rural village in Northern Finland. Although Finnish teachers enjoy significant pedagogical freedom and are greatly admired within their communities, they are also

15

expected to maintain a certain public persona and conform to social expectations (p. 347):

> Educational policy uses therefore a 'means of inspirational material or friendly guidelines without normative power' [Simola, as cited in Lanas & Kiilakoski]. The national educational policy stresses development, not control, and a long tradition exists in Finland of aiming for the highest possible pedagogical autonomy." (p. 347)

From interviews with local teachers, the researchers learned that the village had a reputation of having little to offer young people once they finished high school; they also learned from village teachers that other communities described the people villagers as underachievers. In fact, the teaching community itself encouraged students to move away from the northern villages and toward southern urbanization. Because of this, the villagers accused the teachers of ignoring the national narrative of "local empowerment," which created tensions between the two groups:

> The broader national narratives influence the individual teacher's agency through the community of other teachers. It is not that the teachers seek to prevent educational transformation; rather, implicit broader national narratives become visible in the agency of a group of teachers." (p. 349)

During an unexpected turn of events in the broader ethnography research, there was a time when there was only one lead teacher in the village school with ten students. During that time of isolation—without the group identity that she had before—the teacher underwent personal and professional transformation. Using a journal to reflect on her experiences, she wrote her way through the transformation, focusing on major personal and professional experiences of change (p. 350). The teacher's pedagogical transformation resulted when she realized (a) she could no longer sustain the narrative of blame placed on parents and students for perceived failures, and (b) that her personal identity was quite different from the group identity she once shared with the other teachers (p. 352).

Lanas and Kiilakoski (2013) discovered these transformations by analyzing journal entries and by identifying two major turning points in the lead teacher's narrative. As the lead teacher chose to pursue the transformation, she paid explicit attention to the needs and interests of the students and their families and she responded thoughtfully and took action to meet their needs (p. 352). The lead teacher recognized the presence of conditions that made it possible for her to experience transformation: (a) space from social pressure, (b) support from the researcher, and (c) personal emotional resources for admitting the need for change and enduring the pain involved (p. 353).

Preservice and early career teachers have also indicated that positive practicum experiences can lead to professional transformation. Alves, Pereira, Graça, and Batista (2012) conducted a study on the role of the practicum experience in preservice physical education teachers' personal identity construction (p. 665). Specifically, Alves, et al. looked at the self-narratives from preservice teachers' Practicum Report and Board Diary to gain a better understanding of how the teachers were authoring their experiences. The Board Diary and the Practicum Report both provided opportunities for the chosen participant, Kate, to engage in self-narrative.

Using discourse analysis methods, Alves et al. (2012) looked for emergent and a priori themes in the data and eventually reassembled the data using axial coding (p. 669). The researchers discovered that, through self-narrative, Kate revealed fear, worry, and excitement equally. The practicum year brought Kate closer to her professional aspirations and empowered her with actual opportunities to teach; it also made her worry about whether she was fully prepared to take on her own classroom. Ultimately, she gained confidence, reporting that she benefitted from the strong support of her cohort of

17

preservice teachers, the cooperating teacher, and the supervisor (p. 670). Kate further

articulated a difference between the knowledge she used in her coursework and the

practical knowledge she used when she was teaching. Finally, the Board Diary and the

Practicum Report gave Kate the opportunity to self-narrate critical reflection and growth

as a student, as she became a teacher and developed her personal identity.

Choosing action research as a professional stance often leads to professional

transformation. Razfar (2011) studied a synthesized meta-narrative of seven urban

educators who were engaged in action research across two years (p. 25). The participants

were situated in the study as teacher researchers and the researcher was situated as the

focus group leader. The data analyzed resulted from themed discussion—on

empowerment and transformation—after conducting action research projects; other data

included action research data portfolios, final reports, and 15 formal and informal focus

group sessions (p. 28). Razfar emphasized the importance of "synthesizing the narratives

and reflections of multiple action research journeys into a single 'meta-narrative'" to gain

a broad picture of the teacher researchers' experiences conducting action research

projects (p. 29). In the focus groups concerning empowerment and transformation, the

teacher researchers (TRs):

> Raised three major themes. First, action research provided a vehicle for TRs to go
> beyond "problematizing" to pro-actively and collaboratively develop solutions. A
> *problematizing* or "problem-posing" orientation emerged as opposed to a
> "problem-solving" approach . . . TRs recognized the limitations of trying to "fix"
> and "solve" problems with myopic remedies and one size fits all solutions. (p.
> 30)

By engaging in "problematizing" and by adopting problem-posing orientations, the

teacher researchers were already accessing what Freire called "transformative

consciousness," believing by the end of their projects and in collaboration with each other

18

through meta-narratives, that they could "transform the world" (Freire, as cited in Razfar, p. 30). Additionally, Razfar indicated that after the teacher researchers conducted their action research studies, the teacher researchers were more invested in the historically marginalized communities in which they worked. Razfar also indicated there were additional levels of complexities when teachers were situated as teachers and researchers during the course of the study. Because the teacher researchers constantly had to adapt to changing circumstances, they developed a considerable tolerance for uncertainty (Razfar, p. 31).

Razfar's study indicated teachers can participate in action research that leads to change and transforms communities. The teacher researchers' narratives provided a glimpse into how teachers theorize and develop strategies for effective practice in the fast-paced and evolving contexts of urban classrooms.

Conclusion

These studies firmly establish teachers' narratives as being an essential part of professional learning. Specifically, while the studies indicated that early career teachers benefit from recognizing and reflecting on the contexts of their living and learning and what aspects of each impact their professional identities, none of the studies examined the narratives of veteran teachers in order to understand what contributed to their professional and personal identities beyond their initial early career experiences. The theory of safe passage is one way to understand the journey from early career teacher to an established identity as a writer who teaches.

19

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

Several traditions and theorists have informed my thinking and contributed to my personal and professional identity. Social constructivism, dialogic theory, and critical feminist perspectives speak across time, space, and circumstances, and helped me to elevate the individual and dynamic narratives of women teachers and to question, problematize, and confront dominant narratives that marginalize teacher knowledge and silence teacher knowing.

Social Constructivist Theory

Ultanir (2012) described constructivism as "a meaning-making theory that offers an explanation of the nature of knowledge and how human beings learn" (Ultanir, 2012, p. 195). Constructivists maintain that new knowledge is constructed based on individuals' prior encounters with events, ideas, experiences, and histories (Ultanir, 2012; Hubbard 2012; Verhoeven, L., & Graesser, A., 2008). Many studies, including mine, conducted in social science contexts build from Dewey's (1938) and Vygotsky's (1978) constructivist view that all learning is social.

John Dewey

Dewey's (1938) Theory of Experience established the fluid and persistent characteristics of experience as something shared by all humans. Dewey emphasized the permanence of "the organic connection between education and personal experience" (p. 8). Dewey further believed, "the central problem of an education based upon experience is to select the kind of present experiences that live fruitfully and creatively in subsequent

experiences" (p. 9). The task then of articulating a Theory of Experience was to identify and make use of methods and materials that would generate learning environments at school conducive to producing present experiences—for students and for teachers—"that live fruitfully and creatively in subsequent experiences" (Dewey, 1938, p. 9). Yet the problem Dewey saw—which was preventing students from engaging creatively with subsequent future experiences—resulted from widespread use of traditional education that "imposes adult standards, subject-matter, and methods upon those who are only growing slowly toward maturity. . . . [The methods] are beyond the reach of the experience young learners already possess" (p. 25). Progressive education or new education, on the other hand, was concerned with identifying and working from the knowledge young students already had.

By examining the ways knowledge is valued and shared, we create favorable conditions in which students can collaboratively generate new knowledge based on their prior actual life-experience. To Dewey, this meant that students would or could acquire an understanding of principles (those leading toward mature experience) when those principles were applied to real-life circumstances and outcomes were observed.

Principle of habit and continuum of experience. One principle Dewey (1938) emphasized was the fact of habit. Fact of habit meant interpreting habit from a biological standpoint and understanding that "the basic characteristic of habit is that every experience enacted and undergone modifies the one who acts and undergoes, while the modification affects, whether we wish it to or not, the quality of subsequent experiences" (p. 35). Further, the principle of habit: "(a) covers the formation of attitudes, attitudes

21

that are emotional and intellectual; and (b) it covers our basic sensitivities and ways of meeting and responding to all the conditions which we meet in living" (p. 35).

When the principle of habit is placed in contact with the continuum of experience, decisions must be made about whether or not experiences are miseducative or educative. If experiences are educative, there is motivation to seek out further similar experiences or to seek out new experiences. These experiences will then modify the one who acts and all future experiences. If experiences are miseducative, however, the one who acts may develop negative attitudes about that experience which may prevent further similar experiences from occurring. Some experiences have lasting impacts on the lives of the ones who act. Combined, quality, growth, and conditions shape how experiences are received and responded to; favorable experiences can, "arouse curiosity, strengthen initiative, and set desires and purposes that are sufficiently intense to carry a person over dead places in the future" (Dewey, 1938, p. 30).

Dewey (1938) further believed that each experience led to or resulted in movement (p. 38). Movement in this case would mean asking, "Does the experience move the one acting closer to a goal or expectation or push the one acting away from their goal or expectation?" Teachers, Dewey insisted, could use their "matured experience" to see if young learners were having educative experiences appropriate to the learner's level of maturity and which encouraged a seeking out of further educative experiences. Dewey asserted that teachers could use their own experiences to direct the educative experiences of young learners or else:

> There is no point in his being more mature if, instead of using his greater insight to help organize the conditions of the experience of the immature, he throws away his insight. Failure to take the moving force of an experience into account so as to judge and direct it on the ground of what it is moving into means disloyalty to

the principle of experience itself…and he is also unfaithful to the fact that all human experience is ultimately social: that it involves contact and communication. (p. 38)

Lev Vygotsky

Vygotsky (1978) also believed that all knowledge is socially constructed.

Specifically, Vygostky's research led him to consider that:

In the development of higher functions – that is, in the internalization of the processes of knowing – the particulars of human social existence are reflected in human cognition: an individual has the capacity to externalize and share with other members of her social group her understanding of their shared experience. (p. 132)

Despite Vygotsky's work taking place primarily in laboratory settings, he believed shared experiences were co-constructed in homes, communities, and under various and ongoing circumstances of change, leading to the maintenance and expansion of cultures and languages.

The maintenance and exploration of cultures and languages could further be carried out in classrooms characterized as social sites (Lee & Smagorinsky, 2000). For example, Lee and Smagorinsky (2000) contemporized Vygotsky's work by positing that the capacity to learn and acquire new skills and knowledge in the company of peers or "expert others" continued through speech (p. 2). Martin (1983) also advanced the idea that not only should speech and talk, in all their forms, be considered part of and nurtured by the school environment, but argued further that "ordinary talk has an important part to play in the assimilation of new knowledge and new experience" (p. 7).

Within a supportive lively classroom environment, González, Moll, and Amanti (2005) asserted, "the classroom can thus activate the funds of knowledge within a social network as it becomes part of that social network" (p. 26). Setting up the classroom as a social network can promote conversations about shared experiences. Moll (2000)

23

brought Vygotsky's formulation of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) to bear not

just on partnerships between novice and more experienced learners, but also to broaden

the use of ZPD:

> We have come to realize, at least within our specific sociohistorical
> circumstances, that the cultural life of children rarely replicates or reproduces that
> of their parents, for they are themselves fully creative beings…Teachers and
> researchers, as adults, are usually privy to a small slice of children's social
> worlds, but our pedagogy and our psychology must have contact with it if it is to
> acquire any lasting significance. (Moll, 2000, p. 262)

Similar to Moll's discussion, Sipe (2008) also built on Vygotsky's *expert other* to suggest

that the expert other "can be played by an adult or a more knowledgeable peer . . . [and]

evidence for the social construction of meaning is presented" (p. 225). In this way, Moll,

Sipe, and Vygotsky assigned peers and teachers specific roles to play in the individual's

acquisition and building of knowledge based on previous past experiences. Knowledge

and experiences can be presented in play, in writing, in reading, in acting, and in

conversation.

Dialogic Theory

Dialogic theory is based on Bakhtin's (1981) articulation of dialogism, which is:

> The characteristic of the epistemological mode of a world dominated by
> heteroglossia [governs the operation of meaning in any utterance and insures the
> primacy of context over text]. Everything means, is understood, as part of a
> greater whole—there is a constant interaction between meanings, all of which
> have the potential of conditioning others. (p. 426)

Dialogic theory also precludes monologues, implying that every utterance is always

awaiting an uttered response across all time and contexts. Dialogic theory demands

collaboration; utterances exist intentionally in other people's experiences until an

individual takes the utterance and adds to it their own intention, accent, appropriation and

semantic and expressive intentions (Bakhtin, as cited in Irvine, n.d.). By refuting the

24

existence of monologic speech and by advocating a position of unfinalizability, Bakhtin implicated broad society in the socio-ideological contradictions between the past and the present (Bakhtin, p. 291).

Bakhtin (1981) and Author Agency in School

Bakhtin's (1981) work detailed the author's ability, throughout history, to create dialogues between characters and between reader and author. He further articulated the power authors "spun" when they pushed their creative works to space for dialogue and discussion, and to keep the conversation going with readers beyond the novel's place and time (p. 246). By elevating the stature of dialogue, conversation, and storying that "reveal the character, 'ideas' and 'passions' of the heroes" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 246) in the novel, Bakhtin blurred the line between the significance of studying novels and the languages they used with the study of human existence and the individual's ability to write a life story.

For example, Cuenca (2011) stated, "Believing in the agency of the individual to author itself through choice in the world, Bakhtin saw human existence always in a penultimate state, capable of unforeseen possibilities because of the ability to create, innovate, and change" (Cuenca, 2011, p. 43). Cuenca continued (citing Bakhtin):

> based on his belief in the *unfinalizable* quality of humanity, Bakhtin observe[d], 'man is not a final and definite quantity upon which firm calculations can be made; man is free, and can therefore violate and regulate norms which might be thrust upon him.' (Bakhtin, as cited in Cuenca, 2011, p. 43)

Cuenca's (2011) article further argued for the place of Bakhtin's dialogic pedagogy in schools and identified three pedagogical pathways, one of which was testing authority in schools and in society:

> Bakhtin . . . observes that authority carries an aura that is monologic, absolute, and unquestionable. Like "words of the fathers," [Bakhtin, as cited in Cuenca,

25

2011, p. 46] authority is fused with demands for asking a question of the unquestionable, and challenges the infallibility of authority. Through this dialogic challenge, authority "ceases to be fully authoritative" [Bakhtin, as cited in Cuenca]. In short, once the truth of authority is dialogically tested, it becomes forever testable. (Cuenca, 2011, p. 46)

Activist-oriented pedagogies affirmed for English classes what Cuenca was arguing for in social studies programs: when teachers and students perform informed rhetoric, institutions of authority (monologic, absolute, and unquestionable) are vulnerable from the inside to the defining elastic characteristics of democracy (dialogic, evolving, and questionable). Now, more than ever, institutions of authority, like public schools, seek greater degrees of finalizability. These institutions want increased graduation and success rates, higher test scores, and measurable mechanized outcomes. Although they do not anticipate dialogic challenges from teachers, history proves that it is in the school's best interest when the schools accept the challenge and cease to exert full authority over the futures of their students and teachers.

Hymes (1972) and the Social Functions of Language

Hymes (1972) believed that, to study the functions of language in school, we must first study context. Hymes suggested that most studies had looked at "a neutral, affectless use of language for information and report" (Hymes, 1972, p. xix). He called language that referred to information and report the "referential function" of language (p. xix). Hymes, however, identified another group of characteristics, which included the contexts in which language is spoken and the "features and patterns of speech itself" as the "social functions of language" (Hymes, 1972 p. xix). Despite the differences in these functions of language, the over study of language's referential function, and the under study of language's social function, Hymes indicated that most linguists believed in "universal structures underlying all language and presumably inherent in the human

26

mind" (Hymes, 1972, p. xx). Thus, linguists believed that, if there is deterioration in the language ability of any child, it is said to be social rather than inherent. And, if it was social rather than inherent, linguists took little interest. Hymes argued that language used creatively to address scientific inquiry, to solve problems, and to make social connections is nurtured more in some environments than in others—indeed, to know that they possess linguistic acuity, students must have opportunities to display it for themselves and others. Linguists, for instance, might suggest that children who were able to use some type of grammar, while also exhibiting the "creative use of language in social life" were exhibiting communicative growth. Hymes' (1972) work, like Dewey's (1938) and Vygotsky's (1978), cautioned that, despite using language that exhibits communicative growth, if it is not the language of the school, the student is likely to experience frustration and possible failure in rigid school contexts.

Critical Feminist Perspectives

When conducting any study involving women—and especially studies involving only female participants—it is imperative to recognize how women have been situated historically in public institutions. The school as public institution has an exhausting history of marginalizing the knowledge and experiences of women teachers and of diminishing their contributions to the educational, intellectual, and cultural enterprises in the United States (hooks, 2003; Heilbrun, 1988; Grumet, 1988; Munro, 1998; Waugh, 1997). Bringing feminist perspectives to bear on this study makes possible the opportunity to document instances of resistance and agentic practices taking place within public institutions like schools and rejecting grand narratives that diminish the work, knowledge, and experiences of women teachers.

Postmodernism and Feminist Perspectives

Grumet (1988) theorized that Marx and Hegel contributed to the social maintenance of institutional power in school settings by holding views that "only men . . . can attain second nature, the rational culture of the upstanding citizen" (Marx and Hegel, as cited in Grumet, 1988, p. 62). Historically, even when institutional power has been critiqued, Grumet asserted women "do not appear in the theories constructed to deconstruct the institutions, the standards, and the state" (p. 62). A decade later, hooks (2003) affirmed the lasting effects of "institutionalized systems of domination (race, sex, nationalist imperialism)" and pointed to movements of resistance within academia:

> when contemporary progressive educators all around the nation challenged the way institutionalized systems of domination . . . have, since the origin of public education, used schooling to reinforce dominator values, a pedagogical revolution began in college classrooms. Exposing the covert conservative political underpinnings sharing the content of material in the classroom, as well as the way in which ideologies of domination informed the ways thinkers teach and act in the classroom, opened a space where educators could begin to take seriously what it would look like to teach from a standpoint aimed at liberating the minds of our students rather than indoctrinating them. (p. 1)

Others were also looking to feminist scholars to illuminate paths to liberation in school settings for teachers and students. Waugh (1997) argued that feminists had a unique opportunity to combine discourses (instead of rejecting them) from across modernist theories, to form strategies for narrative disruption in feminist research:

> Even if feminists have come to recognize in their own articulations some of the radical perspectivism and thoroughgoing epistemological doubt of the postmodern, feminism cannot sustain itself an as an emancipatory movement unless it acknowledges its foundation in the discourses of modernity. It seems to me, however, it is possible to draw on the aesthetic of Postmodernism as strategies for narrative disruption of traditional stories and construction of new identity scripts without embracing its more extreme nihilistic or pragmatist implications. (p. 207)

From a narrative postmodernist context, for example, Barker articulated a "poetics of

28

collective memory" from which narrative disruption strategies could be gained (Barker,

as cited in Waugh, 1997). Barker's poetics of collective memory included:

> (a) critique of grand narratives (one history, usually white, male, and European) in
> favor of local narratives; (b) fragmentation of self (and corporation) into
> polyvocal (means many-voiced) narration; (c) affirmative and skeptical positions;
> (d) Genealogical discourse (how stories, concepts, paradigms, history, change
> over time); (e) rejects stories of time told in linear sequence; and (f) a focus on
> how "collective memory" involves forgetting pain and suffering and recomposing
> memory to encompass new and previously excluded stories. (Barker, as cited in
> Waugh, 1997, p. 1, para. 2)

Barker (as cited in Waugh, 1997) expanded "affirmative and skeptical positions" to mean

that the poetics of collective memory were suspicious of bureaucratic narratives. Waugh

(1997) gave an example of medical and financial records as being able to lend historical

or chronological evidence to patient narratives; however, the medical record itself as a

form of public narrative was confronted, challenged, and ultimately dismantled as the

dominant narrative in the genre of critical postmodernist narratives. Similarly, in school

settings, the bureaucratic narrative was established by test scores, tracking, performance

reports, and other mechanisms of distinctions maintained through grand narratives.

Consequently, aspects of postmodernism powerfully combined with feminism both

confronted and critiqued Enlightenment epistemology "as rooted in the instrumental

domination of inert object (body, world, nature, woman), by a detached and transcendent

subject (mind, self, science, man; Waugh, p. 207).

Psychoanalysis and Feminist Perspectives

Munro (1998) effectively combined psychoanalytic research and critical

poststructuralist feminism to gain a better understanding of "literature's role in

dismantling the power and knowledge" of men (Munro, 1998, p. 29), or rather,

dismantling the dominant public narrative about women teachers. Munro, like Grumet

29

(1988), began with Marx, Nietzsche, and Foucault and worked tirelessly to loosen the researchers' masculinist hold on narratives of resistance. Combining Munro's work with Coles' (1989, 1998) I now further understand the urgency of narratives of resilience. Coles, an American psychoanalyst—who said of his own parents, that they felt "rescued by books" (Coles, 1989, p. xii)—followed a professional path that often provoked him to draw similarities between literature and medicine, between patients' stories and their diagnoses. Coles valued his patients' input; he considered their stories as a significant part of the diagnosis and healing processes. He subsequently began documenting how children living in duress articulated and ultimately lived stories of resilience within perilous circumstances (Coles, 1998, p. 95).

Renowned British psychoanalyst Winnicott's (1971, 1986) work gave me the (often ignored) "good enough" language to understand feminism beyond practical theory, and to see the birth story of feminism at a biological and psychological level, which significantly impacts theoretical and sociological feminism:

> Freud invented the concept of the phallic phase, preceding full genitality. One could call it the phase of swank and swagger. There is no doubt that girls do have a bit of bother when going through this phase, or what corresponds to it in the girl. Just for a while they feel inferior or maimed . . . but let it not be denied that in this phase, the boy has it, and the girl hasn't. Incidentally, the boy can micturate in a way that girls may envy as much as they envy the boy's erection. Penis envy is a fact. (Winnicott, 1986, p. 186)

Even third wave feminists focused a great deal of energy combating or accepting various iterations of penis envy in their theories, which seems to be the basis for Waugh's (1997) radical discourses. Waugh focused on the fragmenting of masculinist authoritative narratives, but did not take the time to get past the grand narrative of penis envy or to draw attention to the strength of gender equality, which also characterizes these phases of sexual maturation.

30

At the next phase of genitality, the girl is equalized; she becomes important and envied by the boys because she can attract her father, because she can have babies (Eventually, either herself or by proxy), and at puberty, she has breasts and periods, and all the mysteries are hers. Consequently, Winnicott (1986) thought people neglected the full story of the phallic phase and the "trauma" girls experience during this phase, which can lead to feelings of inferiority, at our own peril. Grand narratives about masculine superiority often stop before getting to the phase where the girl is equalized, important, envied, and all the mysteries become hers. Grand narratives, which suggest that boys and girls experience the phallic phase in the same way, also result in a false, shared delusion between the sexes—that girls do have a penis and that girls can/should be emasculated. Winnicott cautioned:

> Perhaps the worst part, sociologically speaking, is the side of this mass delusion, because it makes men emphasize the "castrated" aspect of the female personality, and this makes for a belief in female inferiority that infuriates females. However, do not forget . . . that male envy of women is incalculably greater, that is, men's envy of women's full capacity. (Winnicott, 1986, p. 1987)

Winnicott (1971, 1986) and Coles' (1989, 1998) psychoanalytic work about social and biological traumas drew my attention, in part, was because they used excerpts from literature for emphasis on and as evidence of narratives of resilience (Coles, 1998, p. 95) that took place amid unparalleled social struggle. From Winnicott (1986), I found the language to articulate that I was urgently aware of another mass delusion and social trauma—the publicly accepted grand narrative, which diminishes the professional and intellectual work of women teachers. Consequently, through Winnicott, I understood how that mass delusion, the mass delusion that belittles women teachers was made possible. This ongoing social trauma purposefully threatens the profession of teaching. Yet, just as clearly, I also became aware of how educational renewal springs up from

31

narratives of resistance and takes root in the public consciousness, often provoking action. I believe this because, as a profession, teachers are absolutely willing to change and to be changed; in fact, many of us depend on it. For example, in the Afterward of the book, *Students Teaching, Teachers Learning* (Branscombe, Goswami, & Swartz, 1992), Goswami reflected how the "stories and accounts collected here" affected her:

> I find myself returning often to the story of Amanda Branscombe and Charlene Thomas's ten years as co-researchers, including what the children did and how Shirley Heath and others were in it with them. They show how laboring together changed their lives. Their story changed forever my own conception of shared inquiry. (p. 324)

"Laboring together" and being "more political" to be heard is likely the truest account of what teachers actually do, and what they must do. I came to this study with a narrow understanding of what being political meant in the context of teaching. Coles (1989), whose work explored people who were enacting resistance under duress— made it clear to me that, when people choose to be political, they are choosing a dangerous path. This is especially true in school settings, even though the school itself is tasked with preparing young people for participation in our democracy (a term that is also politically contested). Winnicott (1986), Coles (1989, 1998), and Munro (1998) broadened my understanding of "being political" to include confronting deeply localized ideologies that play out in the school districts. Even amid the heightened fear many teachers experience at the mention of budget cuts and job losses, teachers continue to labor together with their students, other teachers, and on their own to engage and shape civic discourse and to demonstrate civic courage (Freire, 1970/1998).

32

Critiquing Enlightenment Epistemology with Critical Feminist Narratives: Notes From the Field

I realized irreversibly that my participants' narratives, which constituted retellings of their lives' work as women who teach, resisted essentializing discourses. Essentializing discourses would have limited the participants' narratives within the canons of stories other people have told about women teachers and stories people tell about women teachers, hoping to enable the group so labeled "women teachers" to develop new and better teaching practices. Telling stories about women teachers rather than letting women who teach speak for themselves, however, reify the dominant narrative that claims women teachers are the people who need to hear stories about stronger women teachers than themselves and deny that women teachers are knowledge holders. My participants, however, were already writing storytellers (Stepto, 2010a); they were deeply aware of their abilities to communicate truths in narrative discourse and to enact humanizing practices.

Conclusion

The frames of social constructivism, dialogic theory, and critical feminist perspectives create a relationship between narrative and experience and, as such, were the lenses though which I interpreted how teachers' particular experiences functioned in their projects of self-creation. Through these lenses, I was able to illustrate how specific, sought-after personal and professional experiences become agentic for three teachers and show how these teachers extended their experiences to their students and colleagues.

33

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

In this study, I used two variations of narrative analysis: Goodson's (2013) narrative portrayal method and Ginsburg's (1989) critical feminist articulation of plot twists within narratives. The dual analysis allowed me to better understand how three women teachers perceived their professional development experiences within the context of the blended (online and face-to-face) professional development network, Bread Loaf Teacher Network (BLTN). Goodson's narrative portrayal made visible the women's "commanding voice" of experience, even though the narrators were always "in narration" or in search of a life theme (Goodson, p. 60). Consequently, combining Goodson's continuum of narrativity with Ginsburg's plot twists amplified the overlapping storied professional and personal experiences of the participants.

The outcomes of a study, however, while emerging from analysis, are also shaped by the researcher's epistemological orientation, research design, participant selection, data collection, data collection techniques, trustworthiness, and subjectivity.

Epistemological Orientation

As what constitutes qualitative studies has expanded in recent years, many researchers have developed nuanced theories to discuss epistemologies and have applied critical perspectives to traditionally established genres of research. Marshall and Rossman (2011) described traditional qualitative research as assuming that: "(a) knowledge is not objective Truth but is produced

34

intersubjectively; (b) the researcher learns from participants to understand the meaning of their lives but should maintain a certain stance of neutrality; and (c) society is reasonably structured and orderly" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 21). Qualitative research that takes up critical perspectives from diverse scholarly traditions such as critical theory, critical race theory, feminist theories, queer theory, cultural studies, and postmodern and post-colonial traditions, challenges traditional qualitative studies and shares four underlying beliefs, as identified by Marshall and Rossman (2011):

> (a) Research fundamentally involves issues of power; (b) the research report is not transparent, but rather it is *authored* by a raced, gendered, classed, and politically oriented individual; (c) race, class, and gender [among other social identities] are crucial for understanding experiences; and (d) historically, *traditional research has silenced* members of oppressed and marginalized groups.

Consequently, Marshall and Rossman (2011) encourage researchers like us, who use these critical perspectives in our qualitative research, to look closely at the ways we represent our participants, while also examining how our own raced, gendered, classed, and politically-oriented perspectives come into contact with that of our participants'. Carter and Little (2007) implore researchers to explicitly clarify epistemological frameworks of evaluation within their own qualitative research. They argue that there is an interconnectedness of what they call "the three fundamental facets of research" (epistemology, methodology, and methods; Carter & Little, 2007, p. 1316) and the critical perspectives identified above by Marshall and Rossman (2011).

Epistemology justifies and evaluates knowledge (Carter & Little, p. 1317) or indicates "how you know what you know" (Glesne, 2006, p. 6). In the context of this study, my participants and I jointly constructed knowledge in specific times and places; we could not have constructed this knowledge under any other conditions except the ones our collaboration created. We acknowledged that we each had individual experiences,

35

perspectives, and beliefs (fleshed out in the narrative portrayals). We also had shared experiences (we were all women, we were all teachers, we all attended Bread Loaf, participated in BLTN, were members of BLTN's advisory board, and we practiced the writing for the community approach in our schools); perspectives (we articulated our political or activist orientations with individual style and, at times, of individual need); and beliefs (we believed that children should have access to an equitable education in a democratic society, that teachers and students are valuable resources to our cultural and social enterprises, and that working collaboratively is much more rewarding than working alone). Our shared experiences perspectives, and beliefs constantly shaped and interacted with the study as it was formed. Consequently, our subjectivities were purposefully and equally visible during the course of the study. By recognizing the shifting nature of our subjectivities, we also recognized that our beliefs and experiences were unfinished and could not be definitively measured in any finalized numerical way. Although I accepted and attended to the ethical considerations of my role as a researcher, I also at times used the pluralistic form "we" when I was talking about my participants and me, because, like Royster (2000 p. 13), I could not, nor did I want to, separate myself from teachers or from women who teach—especially not these particular women. I was part of the story because it was also my story. Collaboratively, we created meaning and knowledge through our interactions, relationships, and language/talk.

I used narrative analysis to capture the authentic persona of the participants. The research questions, when answered using narrative, served a dual function within the context of BLTN. First, the research questions attended to the past and current experiences we have had with BLTN as a professional development network. Second,

the research questions contributed to an evolving narrative about how BLTN serves the needs of its participants in the growing contexts of their personal and professional lives beyond Bread Loaf. My work on this dissertation was made possible through my associations with BLTN. Further, due to the collaborative nature of this study, I specifically chose to use narrative analysis and to conceptualize this study as being representative of the careful respectful analysis and interpretation of stories, which is a fundamental characteristic of BLTN teachers' pedagogies.

Research Design

The methodology of a study makes the research process theoretical and "provides the primary source of justification for the project's relationship to theory" (Carter & Little, 2007, p. 1326). Narrative portrayals (Goodson, 2013, p. 40) were the chosen methodology and method from which I built my analysis because Goodson's narrative portrayal method "assumes an epistemic position that can be linked back to formal theories," such as social constructivism (Carter & Little, 2007, p. 1321) and critical feminist perspectives (Lather, 1986). The formal theory of social constructivism maintains that new knowledge is constructed based on individuals' prior encounters with events, ideas, experiences, and histories (Ultanir, 2012; Hubbard, 2012; Verhoeven, L., & Graesser, A., 2008). Consequently, many studies, including mine, build from Dewey's (1938) and Vygotsky's (1978) constructivist view that all learning is social. Additionally, because I chose to study only women, I chose to include my beliefs about the presence of critical feminist perspectives (Lather, 1986) in this study. Lather asserted, "The overt ideological goal of feminist research is to correct both the invisibility and the distortion of female experience in ways relevant to ending women's unequal

37

social position" (Lather, 1986, p. 68). Chase further argued that feminist theory and narrative analysis combined have significant results: "When framed by feminist or critical theory, narrative analysis also can have an emancipatory purpose, as when stories are produced and politicized as counternarratives to prevailing oppressive 'grand narratives'" (Chase, as cited in Marshall and Rossman, 2011, p. 23). In the context of my study, I wanted to bring feminist perspectives to bear specifically on two particular aspects. One aspect was the act of recording stories, which brings volume to the voices of women who teach. The act of talking our narratives into being or authoring our life experiences through talk made visible counternarratives resisting dominant oppressive narratives about teacher failure. The other aspect was when participants used gendered talk to elucidate a personal experience and simultaneously disrupt micro-grand narratives playing out in their immediate experience. For instance, when Debbie described her experience teaching in Japan, she ended the narrative segment by saying:

> And I told her [a friend in Japan], I said the thing that is so important about it to me is that it's something that I dreamed of doing that I thought was impossible and could never come true [pause] and it happened. And it wasn't because some man took me on vacation and took me there to fulfill a dream, but it was because the city of Nogano wanted me because of my education and my ability to teach English.

Another example of gendered experience was in Ceci's narrative, when she discussed wanting to apply to Bread Loaf early in her teaching career:

> Then I graduated and I did my first year teaching and the English department there was really well established, three men who ran the department [pause] had been there forever, right, and um I got a flyer for the Bread Loaf Teacher, Rural Teacher Network and I was talking to them and they said, oh yes, Dixie Goswami came and Jim Maddox came and we talked to them, you know, but it's really hard to get into and you have to submit a writing analysis and Bill Sullivan, the head teacher there, said that it's really hard and I don't know if you'll ever make it, so I didn't apply. It was my first year teaching and I said, you know, well, I really can't do this anyway. . . . So then, I came to Buena and I got another one at Buena, for the second year, right, and I said oh wow! Here it is again! And I

38

noticed that Bill Kirby was, had been there that summer, right, the teacher faculty, the faculty picture from the summer before, and he was never at the U of A when I was there because he was on sabbatical. . . . So I told him I was interested in it and I said I would come up and talk to him about it and see what I might need to do and he said ok, sure!

In Jineyda's narrative, she drew on her gendered experience when referring to critical instances in her summer work as a junior in high school at an Upward Bound program:

I remember like, he turned it into a social justice class, pretty much. He's like, one day, cause I was an angry kid. One day he just kinda pulled me aside and he's like, yo, what's going on with you? And I'm like, how's that any of your damn business? [laughter] That's how I used to talk to people. And he was like, you know, you already got three strikes against you, like I don't know why you're trying to get a fourth one. And I'm like, who the fuck are you? I'm like, what kind of strikes you talking about? [laughter] And he's like, you know, you know you're Lat – you know you're woman, you know that you're Latina, and you know you're poor. So if you don't shape up, you're about to like, prove 'em right. And I'm like, what the hell are you talking about? And he's like, you know what I'm talking about. He's like if you want to be the one on welfare, you let me know. Because that's exactly where you're leading to. And he just, slapped me up pretty good? Like he got me thinking. Obviously, I wasn't going to tell him that at that point, but I remember that's one of those features that kind of reached me, you know? And then, he gave me stuff to read. You know, like real life stuff, not fictional stuff. You know what I mean?

Each of the narrative segments acknowledged, if in a tacit way, the prevailing functions of invisibility and distortion of women's experiences in grand narratives. Yet, it was how the participants articulated their responses and their actions in response to these critical encounters that contributed to a growing body of teachers' critical resistance (Freire, 1998, p. 119) that politicized and made visible the nature and the magnitude of their counternarratives.

Marshall and Rossman (2011) further maintained that feminist perspectives are expanding to include looking critically at the "multiple intersectionalities of identities" that include gender identities as well as identities associated with race, class, religion, and generation among others (p. 27). Methodological tools can be appropriated from across

disciplines to further analyze the significance of narratives when contextualized within feminist perspectives.

The initial purpose of this study was to explore how women English teachers perceived their experiences with a particular type of professional development. What I discovered by asking my participants about that professional development experience (i.e., their experience with BLTN) was that their experiences with BLTN were only a portion of a larger life history, which was articulated during interviews and in follow-up conversations. Although I was asking about more recent professional development activities, each of the participants' stories were, from the start of the interview process, temporally kaleidoscopic, with a shifting of emphasis between current time and past events that carried forward the power created from the past experience to bear on the current experiences (Webster, 2004) at the point of retelling.

The interview questions I asked were purposefully open ended, giving participants the flexibility to answer the questions using any method of discussion they thought would best convey their stories. Initially, I hoped to find out how the participants were using a certain type of blended professional development, BLTN. However, during data analysis, it became apparent that BLTN was, essentially, an influential and catalytic part of the participants' overall life stories that came out during the course of the interviews. Before setting out to gather the interview data, I had some general understanding of the type of information I hoped to see regarding BLTN. I realized later, however, that my participants had invited me to tell another story of which BLTN played a tremendous role. The larger story was one that I could not ignore.

40

Across the three data sets, all of the stories could be identified as having micro-narratives, which contributed to a macro-narrative—the life story of the participant. When I searched for analytic strategies to help me articulate what I was seeing, Goodson's (2013) discussions of life story development (p. 67) became instrumental to how I understood what the participants' narratives meant. One of Goodson's studies, "Learning lives: Identity, agency, and learning" (the Learning Lives project) recorded the incredible diversity in human life stories across England and Scotland:

> Our intention was to focus on a range of people, encompassing homeless, asylum seekers, creative artists, members of parliament, and ordinary workers and citizens – in short, a whole spectrum of people covering the multiplicity of English and Scottish society. Having assembled our sample, we then set about collecting exceptionally detailed life stories as a way of understanding people's identity projects, actions, and learning. Many of the 160 people whom we spoke to were in fact interviewed for three hours on between six and eight occasions. As a result, we were able to develop a unique archive of just how people understand and narrate their life stories. (Goodson, 2013, p. 8)

The results of Goodson's Learning Lives project and some of his other studies, such as the Diasporas project ("Cultural geographies of counter-diasporic migration: the second generation returns home") and the Professional Knowledge project ("Professional knowledge in education and health: Restructuring work and life between state and citizens in Europe") resulted in a growing archive of types of stories people tell. As the data across the studies were combined, Goodson asked the questions:

> How differentiated are people's patterns of narrativity and is there a way to conceptualize the different styles of narrativity? Further, if we can conceptualize the different kinds of narrative, how relevant are those styles to patterns of identity studies, formation, agency, and learning during the life course? (Goodson, 2013, p. 8)

To answer the questions, Goodson created a spectrum of narrativity and located some of the "exceptionally detailed life stories" along a continuum of narrativity, from descriptive storytellers using low narrative intensity on one end, to elaborative storytellers using high

41

narrative intensity on the other end and reported findings at every point on the continuum

in between.

Goodson asserted that descriptive life storytellers generally "spoke for shorter,

less intense periods and required more interviewee prompts," whereas "the more

elaborative life storytellers spoke for long periods" without interviewee prompts

(Goodson, 2013, pp. 67–68). There were exceptions:

> It turned out narrative intensity did not always equate with elaborative ways of
> storying. Moreover, elaboration itself was not a guarantee of effective
> reflectivity. The major factor in this regard proved to be not the intensity of the
> narration but the degree to which personal elaboration or description was linked to
> the development of a "course of action." (p. 68; see Table 3.1)

Table 3.1

Goodson's (2013) Spectrum of Narrativity in Life Story Development

Narrative Spectrum	Description
High narrative intensity [elaborative]	Narrative which leads to action Narrative which leads to agency Usually told utilizing long, elaborative speech events or sections of speech Narrative which does not require much or any prompting from interviewer
Low narrative intensity [descriptive]	Narrative which leads to few courses of action Narrative which is a description Narrative which is a memory Narrative which is told in short speech events Requires frequent prompting from interviewer
Exceptions	Some long speech events can be characterized by low narrative intensity and lead to descriptions. Some short speech events can be characterized by high narrative intensity and can lead to action or agency.

42

Goodson (2013) cautioned that life story narratives are not linear and, if we are to identify "complex social significance," we must also connect narrativity in life story development to identity, learning, and agency (p. 70).

Like Goodson, I was most drawn to the "exceptionally detailed" narratives, particularly narratives that led to action or to reshaping the life course. Consequently, I placed my participants' life stories within Goodson's basic framework of narrativity. When I did that, I discovered a number of patterns.

Initially, while using Goodson's (2013) framework of narrativity as a method of analysis, I looked back at my role in the actual interviews. My speech was incredibly limited across all three sets of data. My contributions, other than asking the interview questions, were mostly that of affirmation, encouragement, surprise, or interest; I did not engage in prompting the interviewees to speak further on any particular narrative episode they initiated in the context of the interview question. This indicated to me that my participants were not what Goodson called "scripted describers" (those who practiced their answers to the questions prior to the interview, despite the fact that I had previously sent the interview questions to the participants before I met with them), which resulted in narrative episodes of low narrative intensity. The fact that my participants chose to answer the questions in narrative form, with clear beginnings, middles, and ends, supported the findings that all the participants were what Goodson called "personalized elaborators," using high narrative intensity or long speech events to respond to the interview questions and interviewing process (pp. 67–69). This didn't mean, however, that Goodson's exceptions weren't also in play. For instance, Debbie's responses were the longest, meaning that she spoke for the longest period of time for each of the

43

questions. Ceci's responses were the shortest, meaning that she spoke for the shortest amount of time while constructing narrative responses to each interview question. The length of time Jineyda spoke in response to each interview question was somewhere in between Debbie and Ceci. Even though the length of talk varied considerably, each of the participants engaged in effective reflectivity and their narratives could be described as elaborative and as having high narrative intensity.

After identifying the participants as personalized elaborators who were using high narrative intensity, I focused on how their elaborations and descriptions led to courses of action or created agency. I discovered that the places where new action originated within the narratives were most intense at the narrative turns, making action possible and visible for the protagonists as well as the story listeners (Stepto, 2010a). The narrative turns, at each stage of the life story, could all be seen as linked together because they were life histories told in the context of the participants' BLTN and Bread Loaf experiences; this built catalytic momentum from one narrative turn to the next. The narrative turns each brought the participants one step or one experience closer to achieving their hearts' desires to become writers. This observation confirmed that the life storytellers were always in the process of authoring themselves as well as participating in experimentation and self-creation, leading up to and following each narrative turn (Goodson, 2013).

By magnifying the narrative turns of each life story, I discovered additional patterns, which made it possible for me to expand Goodson's (2013) framework of narrativity to include critical feminist analyses (Riessman, 1993). Because I was interested in the narrative strategies my participants used that led to action, Riessman's

44

seminal work led me to look more closely at Ginsburg's (1989) study on the life stories

of women abortion activists who were pro-choice and pro-life. Ginsburg argued:

> The point of the stories and my analysis of [the activists] is not to show that
> specific experiences *determine* whether or not an individual will become an
> activist. Rather, my interest is in the formal strategies activists use to structure
> and give meaning to the recounting of life stories that distinguish the women of
> each group." (p. 64; emphasis in original)

By documenting the formal strategies the activists used, which led to what she called

"symbolic action," Ginsburg (1989) maintained:

> In their narratives, activists use the stories of their lives to construct a plot in
> which the social consequences of different definitions of the female life course in
> contemporary America is selected, rejected, and reproduced in new form. This
> plot/story distinction is based loosely on the framework developed by the Russian
> Formalist Viktor Shklovsky for analyzing narrative. He distinguished between
> the story (*fibula),* i.e., the "raw" temporal-causal sequence of narrated events, and
> the plot (*szujet*), i.e., the way which these "raw materials" are formally
> manipulated in unconventional ways that make the audience reconsider the usual
> ordering of events. So, for example, for activists, the "story" is the expected
> arrangement of a woman's biography according to Western narrative and social
> conventions (birth, childhood, marriage, motherhood, etc.)' the plot emerges from
> the unexpected twists in the narrative that draw attention to differences from the
> conventional story, thus "defamiliarizing" the taken-for-granted assumptions, for
> example, of a "typical" biography. Activists are aware of the tension between
> their own plot and the expected story and indicate that awareness by a variety of
> devices, often as simple as a prefatory comment such as "I guess I'm different
> because" preceding an unconventional anecdote. (p. 64)

Making use of Ginsburg's (1989) nuanced definition of plot, I observed that my

participants often were aware of Ginsburgian plot—or unexpected twists— in their

narratives; in fact, my participants' stories resisted the traditional arrangement of stories

about women and about women teachers. For example, Debbie shared that she made it to

Japan (a life-long dream of hers) because of her own determination and her own abilities

as an English teacher, instead of depending on a man/provider. Similarly, Ceci stated

that, although she was originally deterred by the "good old boys" who were running the

high school English department where she first taught, she transferred schools the

45

following year, and again pursued and achieved a path to Bread Loaf. Jineyda, too, had a story. She said that she realized, while working at the halfway house, that she could no longer be part of the problem; instead, she chose to help solve the problems that teenagers were facing before they wound up in a halfway house.

These were just a few of the unconventional narrative arrangements employed by my participants that encouraged audiences or story listeners to reconsider traditional stories about women's lives. I had not anticipated the presence of Ginsburgian plots as I began to collect data; however, it became topical in my study because I was purposefully working with women who were telling stories in a specific context (Bread Loaf and BLTN), which distinguished them from other teachers. Consequently, at every step of analysis, the participants' awareness of their own Ginsburgian plots made the familiar settings of Bread Loaf and BLTN strange and the strange familiar (Geertz, 1983). By using story as a strategy, the women engaged in resisting and subverting the typical, dominant, Westernized life course of women and the traditionally reported achievements (and failures) of women teachers.

As I looked at my own role in the narrative creation of these life stories, I saw that the first Ginsburgian plot my participants experienced was not starting at the beginning but starting in the now of the interview process, which situated us within the participants' experiences with BLTN. In that way, I inserted my ideological self, as a critical feminist researcher, into the interview process. As a result of that realization, I used narrative turns and Ginsburgian plot synonymously throughout my study to refer to the word arrangements in the narratives indicating courses of action the participants devised which resisted the typical and expected life course of women and women teachers. I formalized

46

the phrase "women who teach" in the context of my study to identify my participants as women who chose the identities they adopted as opposed to women teachers who have identities imposed on them by dominant Westernized narratives; women who teach rather indicated the purposeful choices and actions my participants took to be teachers while also subversively challenging traditional narratives told about and imposed upon women teachers.

Participant Selection

Bread Loaf School of English primarily accepts master's candidates who are able to pay for their own education or who teach at schools that will pay their fees for them. It generally takes five, six-week long summer sessions to complete the Master's degree. The last twenty years saw steady enrollment of teachers from rural and urban areas, who received fellowships funded by state, local, or national foundations to attend Bread Loaf. Economic downturns then minimized funding and reduced the number of fellowships, resulting in an increasingly homogenized group of self-selected English teachers or non-teacher writers. Quite recently, funding is again becoming available for public school teachers in rural and urban areas.

Disrupting Homogenization

To avoid documenting the homogenized experiences of just any Bread Loaf teacher using BLTN, I intentionally selected to work only with Bread Loaf fellowship recipients. To make teachers aware of fellowship opportunities, BLTN directors travel to the teachers' school districts and present materials on the work of the Bread Loaf School of English and the Bread Loaf Teacher Network. Once the teachers indicate an interest in the program, the teachers undergo the same application process as all other Bread Loaf

applicants, and only once they are accepted into the program, are the teachers awarded fellowships by their states, districts, or corporate partner funders.

All fellowship recipients (during the time they receive fellowship funding) submit reports, documenting the ways they have used or plan to use BreadNet, BLTN, and Bread Loaf course content in their classrooms during the school year. Although BLTN and BreadNet are not exclusively for fellowship recipient use, fellowship recipients do generally have a fuller experience with the Network because they attend BLTN meetings during the summer session, participate in exchanges during the school year, and report how they are using BLTN and Bread Loaf course work in their teaching. Consequently, fellowship recipients create additional Bread Loaf and BLTN-related artifacts that many other Bread Loaf non-fellowship teachers do not have. These artifacts are archived by BLTN and Bread Loaf, contributing a unique historical dimension to the individual and collaborative work of BLTN teachers.

Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling is a qualitative sampling strategy that uses preselected criteria for identifying participants for a study (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005, p. 5). After conducting my pilot study, I knew I wanted to continue my work, documenting the professional lives of women BLTN teachers who were also fellowship recipients. After working with Janet during my pilot study, I knew I also wanted to continue to work with BLTN teachers who demonstrated a lasting interest in and commitment to BLTN.

48

Ethical Considerations

As Connelly and Clandinin (1990) pointed out, to begin a narrative inquiry, the researcher's point of entry into the field setting often requires prior negotiations and establishing rapport around shared principles (p. 3). The task of the participants (the researcher and the researched) leads to the "negotiation of a shared narrative unity" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 3). By setting out with these principles, participants collaboratively construct and maintain a space or community specific to the research where the individuals' narratives of experience impact, shape, transform, and generate the study as it proceeds. From this space, a collective emerges from the relationship between the researcher and the participant. The evolving research relationship aims to empower individual participants to tell their stories and assign worth to the collaborative narrative unit as it is produced.

I positioned myself as an insider in the study because, in the context of our shared educational and networked experiences at Bread Loaf, I came to know the three dissertation study participants, personally and professionally, over a number of years prior to the study. I was also drawn to working with this group of women because I valued the nuanced intellectual and professional knowledge they had contributed to BLTN. Further, I thought that the way these women acted and spoke offered a vision of hope for our profession.

By the time I invited Debbie, Ceci, and Jineyda to participate in the study, our relationships were collegial and our friendships, lasting. Assuming the identity of an insider, I felt better able to maximize my understanding of narrative inquiry, based on Glesne's (2006) assertion that, in the context of qualitative research, "friendship may

49

assist you and research participants to develop new understandings through mutual caring and dialogue" (Glesne, 2006, p. 117).

On the other hand, because I was not a Bread Loaf fellowship recipient and because I had never participated formally in an exchange through BLTN, I was also an outsider. I knew little about the significance of the work each participant generated in the context of exchanges, teacher-talk folders, conferences, and other BLTN-focused work, or in the creation of professional artifacts.

<div align="center">

Data Collection

</div>

Conducting Interviews

Early in 2011, I began speaking informally to Debbie, Ceci, and Jineyda about telling me about their perceived experiences with BLTN; they all showed interest in the project. Upon their verbal consent to participate, I sent them each formal letters of invitation and we began the study.

Travel and Timetables

As the 2011–2012 academic year began, I made arrangements to visit my participants, allowing myself enough time to understand the daily contexts of their lives. Because Bread Loaf invites national and international degree-seekers to apply and attend the summer sessions, my participants and I were geographically spread across the map—I was in Columbia, South Carolina; Debbie was in Durham, North Carolina; Ceci was in Sierra Vista, Arizona; and Jineyda was in Lawrence, Massachusetts. Based on participant availability around conferences, holidays, or other activities that would take them or me out of our usual social, professional, or academic contexts, we devised the following schedule for data collection (See Table 3.2).

Table 3.2

Participant Interview Schedule

Participant	Location	Interview Dates
Debbie	Durham, NC	November 11–14, 2012
Ceci	Sierra Vista, AZ	April 8–14, 2013
Jineyda	Lawrence, MA	June 3–9, 2013

Debbie. In November, I drove up to Durham and began the first of my researcher–participant interactions (Smagorinsky, 2011). With permission from Debbie's principal, I went with Debbie to classes, lunch duty, faculty meetings, media center writing workshops, planning periods, and to her slam poetry session after school. As a participant observer, I spoke up in class when I had something to add, and I watched eagerly when I didn't. In the writing workshop, when students had questions or needed some support or a brainstorming partner, Debbie expected that I would step in (as is customary for BLTN teachers to enact collaborative practice) and I did. Although I attended these school-oriented gatherings, I did not video or audio record on campus. I kept a journal with notes about what I was seeing and thinking, and then, in the evenings, during dinner at Debbie's house, I asked my interview questions. Although there was a pre-determined list of questions I devised and sent to each participant, they were to serve as a guideline only. Because my research was dependent on collecting storied experiences at the point of re-telling, I anticipated that our talk would, in some ways, depart from the specificity of the initial interview questions. As the semi-structured interview took place, I audio recorded and took notes. My notes mostly served as a

51

roadmap back to the parts in Debbie's talk that I wanted to ask further questions about or to ask for extension or clarification.

　　Ceci.　In April, I flew to Tucson, Arizona, from Charlotte, North Carolina, and Ceci's husband, De, picked me from the airport and gave me a guided tour back to Sierra Vista, AZ, where he and Ceci live.　De took me straight to Ceci's school, Cochise Community College, and dropped me off that first day, so I was able to immerse myself from the start.　I met up with Ceci, in fact, in her English 101 classroom.　Her students were working on second drafts of argument papers and she asked some of them (and some volunteered) to share their topics and opinions with me.　I looked at their writing for content, organization, grammar, and mechanics and I spoke to the ones I worked with, using warm and cold feedback.　For example, I started out by drawing the students' attention to their own strengths and then moving into discussion about how to strengthen other aspects of the piece of writing they were revising.　Similar to my visit with Debbie, Ceci took me to all of her classes, we had lunch together each day on campus, and we went to meetings and spent office hours together, during which Ceci graded or responded to papers and I took notes.　I stayed at Ceci's house while I was there, so in the evening, we went back to her house and saw her family (Ceci's mother lived in a granny flat at Ceci's daughter's house, just down the road); one afternoon, we went to get Ceci's allergy shots.　On Friday morning, we went to the Sierra Vista juvenile detention center for a poetry writing workshop, led by some of Ceci's students who volunteered to participate.　Although Ceci introduced all of the participants to the juvenile detainees and their teacher, the workshop was conducted collaboratively between Ceci and her students.　Each participant from the college partnered with one of the juvenile detainees for the

52

duration of the lesson. Each learner produced a poem by the end of the session, as part of a larger project to publish juvenile detainees' writing, anonymously, in the local newspaper. Later that day, Ceci, De, and I and one of Ceci's colleagues, drove to Esplendor Resort at Rio Rico, just across the border from Mexico, for a weekend planning conference hosted by Cochise Community College.

Although I did not video or audio record any of the class meetings, I did record our semi-structured interviews in Ceci's Cochise Community College office, at her home, and in the car. I took notes for clarification or extension to circle back to later.

Jineyda. Following my visit to Ceci in Arizona, difficult challenges arose and I had to cancel my trip to Massachusetts. When I talked to Jineyda about this, as a friend and participant, we started brainstorming about an alternative way for her to remain a participant in the research, despite our geographical conundrum. The answer seemed obvious enough—Skype! So, after I finished transcribing Ceci's interviews, Jineyda and I set up a Skype meeting on a Saturday morning in late May and we video-conferenced at length. I finished transcribing Jineyda's data and sent it to her in early June. I was so relieved that she had insisted on remaining in the study and had continued to participate as fully as our conditions would allow. We both felt confident that our Skype talk was as organic as it would have been, had we been sitting with each other at Senóra Tapia's home. Although the interview was absolutely fruitful, it also gave us a new set of limitations. For instance, I did not have the chance to interact informally with Jineyda at her home or school. Nor was I able to see her with her students or colleagues, or go to meetings with her. Additionally, because Jineyda is so invested in her community, I would have loved to see her in her Lawrence. Although I read about Lawrence online

and have heard about the city for years, I believe the dynamic of the personal information I received from Jineyda would have been different if I were in the location with her. Mostly, I know we would have spent time together and she would have given me a tour of her favorite places; I, of course, would have wanted to know what had changed and what had remained the same since she was a high school student.

Data-Gathering Techniques

This study employed a number of data-gathering techniques (Glesne, 2006, p. 36), specifically: (a) audio recordings of formal and informal interviews, (b) field notes and researcher's journal, (c) analytic memos, (d) participant surveys, and (e) document or artifact collection. Although I intensively immersed myself in the participants' lives for the time I spent at each site, I chose primarily not to record discussion unless it was in the context of an interview. My role was participatory and in school settings with young people; I wanted my presence to augment my participants' instruction.

Audio Recordings

Although I entered the research site with a data collection plan, it morphed into more of a guideline. For instance, at the first site, when we were in school settings, I wanted to participate in organic conversations, the evolution of which may have been impeded by the presence of a recording device. On one of the first days, however, there was an unanticipated opportunity to begin the initial interview questions. I used my cell phone to start recording the discussions; not long into the recording, a student showed up in Debbie's classroom because he had been asked to leave another class. Although the student's arrival halted the interview, I decided to continue audio recording because the event seemed significant to Debbie's teaching style. The conversations that followed

54

with the student were further evidence of Debbie's role, not only as a teacher, but also as a mentor. Despite my effort to record this informal exchange between Debbie, her student, and me, I found out later my phone was NOT recording and I did not have the chance to listen again to what transpired. Although I was able to take notes in my research journal, I was desperately disappointed that I had lost the audio component of that verbal exchange.

Needless to say, by the time I arrived at the second site, I was more cognizant of what it meant to have functional, spur-of–the-moment recordings. There were times when organic conversations arose and I reached for my cell phone to at least turn on voice memo recording so I could return to the discussions later; by that point in the research process, I was unable to separate my researcher self from my non-researcher self and, consequently, everything exchanged between me and the participant seemed significant.

Field Notes and Researcher's Journal

I took field notes as opportunities arose. There were a few times over the course of the two site visits when I had a moment to write down something I wanted to return to later but, because I was an active participant in classes or meetings or workshops, field notes were rare. More often, in the evening, I would use my researcher's journal to reflect on events, occurrences, and speech, or to write down further questions, which evolved in the context of my immersive experience. At points, the research journal looked like what Grbich (2007) described as the "block and file approach," in which initial codes were underlined or highlighted/color coded within the data and then later those pieces were taken out and put in contact with themed categories of narrative (pp.

32–33). During the interviews with the third and final participant, my notes were more nuanced and had to do with how the context itself (the Skype exchange) mediated the language we used, as well as the information I recorded in my notes.

Increasingly, my researcher's journal became more explicit. There, I was able to develop a sense of the data as it emerged and also of my researcher self as it, too, emerged; the two seemed to surface simultaneously and become interdependent. Additionally, I used my researcher's journal to connect the creation of ideas in the context of each site and each participant's story to the project of theorizing. Borrowing from Coffey and Atkinson (1996), I was using my researcher's journal to make explicit what we do daily, implicitly (p. 141). The journaling had a number of components, some of which were at first written in the margins of books by theorists who informed my thinking and later were woven into my literature review or theoretical framework. Bringing my data and my thinking into contact with the ideas of others seemed crucial to establishing reflexivity (Glesne, 2006, p. 125).

Analytic Memos

Analytic memos (Marshall & Rossman, 2011) were also a significant part of my research journey. While some of these memos seemed more like meta-talk or reflections on what I was beginning to see in the data, others were emails to and from my committee members, peers, and the other participants. For instance, at one point I wrote Ceci's narrative with an introduction, which drew heavily from Navajo Indian rhetorical practices. After I sent the introduction to Ceci, she wrote me back and said the piece of writing was beautiful, but that it made her sound as if she were Navajo. Though I knew Ceci was Mexican American, I wrote back and asked her specifically how she identified.

56

She said that, although she was a woman of Mexican descent, first and foremost, she was Ceci! Ceci reminded me in her response that she's at the beginning of a doctoral program and that she was "working through Chicana, Mexicana, feminist, etc." because they were "all new ideas and identities to me. See what this program is doing to me?!" My first thought was, "how cool!" to be working through those new identities with all the knowledge and experience Ceci already had. It was a reminder, though, that I needed to explicitly name my own identities and claim my own ideologies, which may be different from those of my participants or yet unnamed.

Participant Surveys

I emailed all three participants the same survey, which included some topics that may not have come up in the semi-structured interviews, but which might be useful when dealing with data as narrative chronologies (such as where the teachers had worked or lived and for how long).

Document or Artifact Collection

The documents or artifacts that I was most interested in were the archived copies of the participants' BLTN reports, which are stored in Bread Loaf Teacher Network's (BLTN) digital archives on BreadNet. The reports, written in the words of the participants, document the ways in which the participants planned to use their Bread Loaf coursework in their own classrooms during the academic year. The reports, which are available to any BreadNet user, lend historical significance and dimensionality to the teachers' work in the context of BLTN. Document collection also "corroborate[s] your observations and interviews and thus make[s] your findings more trustworthy" (Glesne, 2006, p. 65). For example, I used the reports as one formalized piece of documentation,

57

to show how the teachers' use of literature and writing emphasized connections to place, schools, and communities. The reports were also used as a safe space for the teachers to experiment with ideas for instruction and maintain dialogue with BLTN peers and mentors as well as a place from which their activism could be legitimized.

Organizing and Storing Data

Like all processes related to carrying out research, data organization evolved over time. As I prepared to visit my first site, I bought an Olympus VN-702PC 2GB voice recorder and microphone. I also bought an Olympus AS-2400PC transcription kit. Once I started downloading audio recordings of interviews, I made folders for each participant (Participant A, Participant B, Participant C). After I downloaded the audio recordings for each participant, I transcribed them and saved them to a Participant Transcripts folder. I added additional folders for Participant Surveys and Participant Reports to the growing number of files related to this study. Despite the public nature of this research (such as having named participants), I still kept the data on a password protected desktop in my home.

Transcribing Data

Early data analysis began with transcribing the data using the transcription package that came with the Olympus AS-2400 transcription kit. I typed out the full contents of the interviews into Word documents with numbered lines. During transcription, I devised early data analysis processes for the themes that emerged in the individual narratives and across all three. This gave me a starting point for beginning to capture what the narratives were about and what they meant.

Data Analysis

Maxwell (2005) argued that data analysis should be set up to achieve a series of purposes. My field notes served as a reserve for thoughts, ideas, and further questions that arose during interview and reflection times, from which I generated themes to code for or further questions. I coded my interview transcripts to reflect the issues that were raised in the conceptual framework, keeping in mind that deviations from the conceptual framework opened new venues for exploration and discussion. Smagorinsky's (2008) characterized coding systems as "tools that mediate thinking, the setting in which those tools have gained currency, and the goals toward which people put them to use" (p. 399). Similarly, I sought to analyze the ways participants perceived their involvement in a professional development network, how they constructed and sustained a sense of community online and in person and also how meaningful learning and professional growth take place over time.

Listening back to the interviews and typing them out with acumen and precision is, in itself, a preliminary type of data analysis (Glesne, 2006, p. 148). Reading and re-reading the transcripts and reflecting on them allowed for my initial conceptual categories or codes to emerge. As the categories emerged within the participants' stories, I also looked for shared themes. I then practiced bringing these codes into contact with my ideas or theories about what I was seeing in the data. My coding practices were in keeping with the suggestions of Coffey and Atkinson (1996), which drew from the work of Tesch (1990), Marton (1986), and Strauss (1987) to indicate that even after codes have been assigned, interpretation cannot begin: "Marton . . . argues that each quotation has two contexts—the one from which it was taken and the 'pool of meaning' to which it

belongs—[and] Tesch suggests that an organization system for data is based on developing pools of meaning" (Marton and Tesch, as cited in Coffee and Atkinson, 1996, p. 31). Strauss cautioned, however, that coding can at times seem oversimplified and that the serious work of analysis also includes: "conceptualizing the data, raising questions, providing provisional answers about the relationship among and within the data, and discovering the data" (Strauss, as cited in Coffee and Atkinson, 1996, p. 31). By first identifying start codes across my data, I was able to see representations of my initial themes, while also leaving room for further questioning and discoveries to occur. For example, because of my own gendered, raced, and politicized ideologies always being at the surface of my mind, I wanted my data to tell an openly politicized story of the professional development of women who teach. However, because I have never taught in public K–12 school settings, I was removed from the serious implications that openly politicized talk can have on teachers, especially those operating in ultra-conservative states like North and South Carolina and Arizona. So, after reducing the data from the start codes and realizing that these narratives—though open and fluid—were not openly politicized, I then created a list of interpretive inductive codes (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 220) for the individual narratives and a list of interpretive inductive codes across the three sets of data. This established theoretical sufficiency "whereby we have categories well described by and fitting with our data. This acknowledges the fact that we can never know everything and that there is never one complete Truth" (Marshall & Rossman, p. 220). At this point in my data analysis, I stopped looking for openly politicized talk and began looking for echoes of what I had found in the start code data, which was evidence that these women who teach were activists and were action-oriented,

60

starting at a young age and continuing into their current professional lives. They also seemed to develop a sense of urgency around their identities as activists, based on their own experiences.

To that end, and while I did experiment with my data in NVivo 10 and Computer Aided Textual Markup & Analysis (CATMA), I found the functions of the software too mechanized and compartmentalized for this type of narrative analysis, which resists coding and fragmentation all together (Grbich, 2007, p. 130). Consequently, I searched for manual methods of data analysis to add to my initial coding. Goodson's (2013) narrative portrayals presented a strong match for helping to identify themes, which amplified the participants' perceptions of their experiences with networked professional development without relying too heavily on fragmentation. To make use of Goodson's narrative portrayals method, a researcher begins by "bathing in the data" (not, as he says, to be confused with drowning in it!). Bathing in the data means "reading through the transcripts in a slow, incremental manner. Whilst doing this, I keep a 'thematic notebook,' marking out the main emergent themes in the notebook and on the transcript pages" (Goodson, 2013, p. 40). I, too, did this with my transcripts; I returned again and again to the same prominent or pronounced themes, but sometimes I came across stories I had not yet seen. The dialogue, then, between the transcripts and the thematic notebook were significant and, eventually, a number of the themes became theoretically sufficient or "saturated— that is, they occur commonly and are clearly salient points in many life stories" (Goodson, 2013, p. 40).

Goodson indicated that there are life storytellers who give interviews representative of some relevant themes, and others who cover many relevant themes.

61

Goodson used the term "'thematic density' to characterize those life history interviews that either cover a wide range of themes or cover particular themes in deep and profound ways" (Goodson, 2013, p. 40). Once the major themes and particular themes emerged from the narratives, another step in our collaborative work began, which ultimately resulted in ways of "theorizing and contextualizing" the data and recognizing that the participants' "knowledge [was] generated socially and collaboratively within the interview setting and the research team milieu" (Goodson, 2013, p. 41). For the purposes of this research, the research team milieu refers to the interviewer and the interviewees.

Trustworthiness

Creswell and Miller (2000) emphasized the seminal validity work articulated by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Within a qualitative study, including mine, a number of methods can ensure validity, including: triangulation or gathering and comparing of data between interviews, field notes, and documents or artifacts; engaging in reflexivity or remaining cognizant of my own views and how they affect my interpretations of the data; member checking or inviting participants to reflect on what I've written about the women participants or how I have represented them or if I've represented them; and peer debriefing or speaking with friends and colleagues about my thinking as it emerged in the contexts of the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The collaborative nature of member checking expanded the interpretations of the data, while it also legitimized my understanding of what I had seen and heard throughout the study. Similarly, peer debriefing added another opportunity to shift lenses and focus on how readers came to and left certain aspects of texts within the study. These methods can engage what Kirsch and Royster (2010) identified as "critical opportunities for inquiry":

> We go back and forth between past and present, their worlds and ours, their priorities and our own, local analyses and more global ones, doing all with the cautionary tale that a core value is an ethos of humility, respect, and care. One of the most ambitious goals in enacting this ethos of care within this context, however, is connected neither to the past nor the present. Instead, it connects both us as scholars and the women as rhetorical subjects in the future. The enterprise shifts in the sense that the ultimate goal becomes enhancing our capacity to articulate a vision for the future, a vision of hope. (p. 653)

To look at the construct of validity in feminist rhetorical research is to acknowledge the need to make public the narratives women teachers tell in private. Kirsch and Royster (2010) argued, and I affirm in this research, the crucial act of the woman researcher (me) and the women participants united in research carries with it the real possibility of making available public spaces where teachers' knowledge and experience are valued.

Subjectivity: Granddaughter as Researcher

My grandmother's life's work, in the simplest terms, has been to generate and secure learning environments where teachers and students understand the totality of writing in the community, writing to change, and consequently, their right to change. In her own words, my grandmother believes that access to spaces—digital and print— where truthful writing is performed, shared, and published—are "human rights issues." Her beliefs and her teaching have impacted my life, my interests, and my educational and professional pursuits in profound ways. Her influence has persisted in helping me adopt a belief that no cause is ever lost, no battle ever won, and that our work in classrooms and communities never really ends. The social consciousness she has invited me to, throughout my lifetime, is exemplified in and by her teaching and her living. To say that I admire her tremendously would do no justice to the esteem in which I hold her.

That same grandmother, Dixie Goswami, is the current director of Middlebury College's Bread Loaf Teacher Network (BLTN), current director of the non-profit

organization Write/Right to Change, and Emeritus English faculty of Clemson University. Although my work for this dissertation is by no means biographical as it relates to her (though maybe biological), it is historical in that it looks to the thick histories of BLTN's 20+ years of operation, which Goswami has led and has helped pioneer since its inception. Consequently, just as she has played a momentous role in the development of my teacher self—throughout my lifetime and including my time in the master's degree program at Bread Loaf—she has played similar roles in the lives of my participants. In fact, like many current and former Bread Loaf students, I have Goswami to thank for putting me in contact with BLTNers who engage, shape, and re-imagine the profession of teaching even as it transforms before us.

Despite Goswami's uncanny ability to maintain horizontal power structures in her teaching and to break down socially constructed barriers between people in positions of power (faculty, for instance) and people at the whim of those in power (students, for instance), I could not ignore the position of privilege, as Goswami's granddaughter, that I brought to this research or had over my participants in conducting it. To that end, I invited participants who were categorically removed in some ways from the immediacy of institutional power that Goswami's position as Director of BLTN holds at the Bread Loaf School of English (i.e., an issue such as whether they would or would not receive fellowships from Bread Loaf based on the positions they articulated about the school in their interviews). Consequently, my participants are at or past stages of completion for the Bread Loaf master's degree. Debbie has completed her master's degree at Bread Loaf and is currently pursuing a second degree, the M. Litt. at Bread Loaf. Ceci has also completed her master's degree at Bread Loaf. Jineyda is preparing to attend the final

64

summer of her master's degree work at Bread Loaf in 2014 (this report will not be made public until Bread Loaf's 2014 session has ended). Long before this project was even a dream, however, we cultivated shared professional and personal aspirations, as we all, at some point in our professional lives, pursued ways to equitably bring language and literacy to our students and our communities. Although the circumstances in which we met were facilitated by Bread Loaf and Goswami, ultimately, we sought each other's friendship and wise counsel because we ascribe to beliefs and passions that united us in the context of Bread Loaf and in our work with and through BLTN.

I'd also like to draw attention to the late, courageous Ken Macrorie (1996), who credits Goswami with, in the 1980s, uniting at Bread Loaf's initial Writing Program "a group of teachers and researchers from the United States and the United Kingdom who for years had been working in the same direction as I had" (Macrorie, 1996, p. xii). The group of faculty and researchers evolved over time to include Ken Macrorie, Dixie Goswami, Courtney Cazden, Shirley B. Heath, James Britton, Nancy Martin, Jacqueline Royster, Beverly Moss, Andrea Lunsford, Jim Maddox, Lucy Maddox, Michael Armstrong, Isobel Armstrong, and other luminaries comprising and shaping the field together with their master's degree students. Consequently, as I spent the summers of my childhood at Bread Loaf and in proximity to these and others who were engaged in the serious work of transforming the teaching of language, literacy, drama, and culture, it wasn't until I was a college freshman and I saw Goswami's name on the acknowledgements' page of a couple of the required texts for my classes that I understood the magnitude of influence she, her colleagues, and their collective work had on the nation and on the world. The group of faculty listed above were defining and

advancing how we study language as it emerges, how and why language is constructed and socially situated, and how language builds, breaks, and crosses the borders of emerging American and global intellects in educative and community landscapes. In a more intimate portrait, however, Macrorie (1996) believed this work was deeply rooted in the lived experiences of those who participated in it:

> We discovered that we are all equipped to express subtly and unconsciously the passion we feel about certain events in our lives. At the same time in conducive circumstances, we're able to step back and see those events more objectively than when we were part of them. But never completely objectively, because we are human beings, observers who are always part of the observed. (p. xvi)

Subsequently, this statement helps me to acknowledge my humanness and my lifelong passion for Bread Loaf and the work accomplished there by teachers. My research itself is evidence of my stepping back and seeing events more objectively than when I was a part of them, first as a child then as a teenager (1982–1998) and even later as I pursued my Master's degree (2003–2007). Surely, to study the work of the Bread Loaf Teacher Network teachers is to revisit the site where I fell in love with language and where I gained the autonomy to claim my identity as a teacher. In an era of standardization, however, the ability for others to claim identities as autonomous teachers is increasingly threatened and the professional knowledge of those who teach remains under constant scrutiny. Teachers who choose to move against the more rigid aspects of the standardization movement have the catalytic potential to create new principles of power and agency (Munro, 1998, p. 111) for all teachers. To write about and to document the conflict inherent to the processes of claiming personal teacher identities and resisting the public's dominant and often damaging story about teacher identities in school contexts, is to acknowledge the significant impact just one good teacher can have on our social project.

Chapter 4: Arriving at the Theory of Safe Passage Part I

Early Teachers/Mentors Provided Participants with Safe Passage

Within the stories that Debbie, Ceci and Jineyda told, there were multiple narrative episodes where early teachers/mentors provided participants with safe passage. For example, all three participants framed their stories from childhood, not in the context of broad childhood experiences, but specifically, in the context of school experiences with early teachers and mentors. They spoke further about their passion to read and write from an early age, and the action of their narratives intensified when they found spaces —in school, in the library, in their homes—where they could immerse themselves in stories. These actions were often made possible by the support, encouragement, or persistence of an early teacher or mentor.

Debbie

Narrative Episode 1

Debbie introduced her overall narrative and this particular narrative episode with a reflection on her early reading life. Although the librarian was lenient in some ways (she let Debbie get books from the adult section), it was the space of the library itself and the worlds that reading made available to Debbie that comprised this aspect of Debbie's safe passage. Note the introduction, conflict and narrative turn:

> **Introduction.** Well first of all, I guess I should tell you about the roll books played in my life.

Conflict. I read constantly. And uh books became my escape from the screaming and shouting and everything at home that … when my father would come home drunk and he would fight with my mother um—

Narrative turn/course of action.—to the point where … my last few years of elementary school the public library was a couple of streets away and every Friday after school I would walk to the library and I would get the maximum number of books that I was allowed, which was five. And by Sunday morning I'd be looking for something else to read. Um…I started at that school, we moved out there when I was in fourth grade, so by the time I was in sixth grade, I read everything that interested me in the children's section and I begged the librarian to let me into the adult section and she did. And I begged her to let me take more than five books. She refused.

The narrative episode also illustrated high narrative intensity, which led to courses of action as well as compromise. For instance, the narrative episode set up a clear beginning, middle, and end. Debbie situated the major conflict (her parents fighting at home) in the middle of the story, and the minor conflict (not being able to get more than five books at a time) at the end of the story, giving it less narrative significance than the major conflict. In the final stages of the narrative episode, we saw our protagonist take decisive action in a number of ways: first, as an elementary student, she took herself to the library, which indicated she was already achieving agency for herself in the project of self-creation; second, she figured out how many books she could check out at a time and always got that number of books; and third, when she finished reading all the books she was interested in in the kids' section, she petitioned the librarian to allow her access to the adult books section and she was granted access. Although the librarian would not allow her to check out more than five books at a time, Debbie compromised and was glad to have access to the adult section of the library.

Although, temporally this episode is located in childhood, its effects were temporally kaleidoscopic in that books continued, before that event and from that time on, to have an influential role in Debbie's life story. In that regard, this was a single

narrative episode with a beginning, middle, and end, as well as an introduction, a conflict, and a narrative turn/course of action, but it—reading and access to books—was also a recurring theme in Debbie's overall life story.

Narrative Episode 2

Debbie's first grade teacher, Mrs. Wexell, made safe passage possible for Debbie in a number of ways. Not only did Debbie form a bond with Mrs. Wexell, starting early in life, but Mrs. Wexell and Debbie maintained that bond until the end of Mrs. Wexell's long life. Mrs. Wexell emphasized the importance of education and also indicated to Debbie that she could succeed in her academic aspirations. Additionally, Debbie indicated to me in a different, informal discussion that her relationship with Mrs. Wexell could be credited with saving Debbie's life. Further, Mrs. Wexell's encouragement and belief that Debbie could go to the University of Cincinnati brought a new dimension to Debbie's life story. For instance, if Debbie graduated from high school, she would be the first in her family to earn a diploma, not to mention that if she graduated from college, she would be the first in her family to earn a bachelor's degree. Mrs. Wexell's steadfast belief that that was to be part of Debbie's path had tremendous positive influence on Debbie's life choices. Mrs. Wexell's early influence contributed to, solidified, and made possible a vision of hope, securing Debbie's safe passage through K–12 settings and on to college.

> **Introduction.** So I was the first one in my family, in my immediate family to graduate from high school, the first one to go to college, the first one to get a master's degree [pause] but I had Mrs. Wexell for a teacher, who told me that I was smart and that I could do anything that I wanted if I got my education. And I believed her. And she promised to help me go to the University of Cincinnati.
>
> **Conflict.** But I left, we moved to Florida when I was 14, and that never happened.

69

Narrative turn/course of action. But I did stay in contact with her her entire life. The last time I saw her was right before I went to Japan and she was in her 90s and she was in a nursing home. And I go in to see her and she looks up at me and she had, you know, those milky eyes that elderly people get, and she looks at me and she smiled and she said "I know you." Cause I had gone back to see her throughout her life. I'd been to her house. She was an incredible teacher.

The high narrative intensity of the narrative episode illustrated Debbie's experiences taking two types of action. First, she stayed in touch with Mrs. Wexell throughout Mrs. Wexell's life. Second, Debbie continued to believe what Mrs. Wexell had told her—that she was smart and that she could graduate from college. The bond Debbie and Mrs. Wexell established was sustaining; so much so, that Debbie asserted she adapted Mrs. Wexell's instructional methods in her own teaching.

This particular narrative episode also illustrated Debbie engaging in agentic practices on a number of levels. First, Debbie foreshadowed that she would disrupt her family history, which had traditionally indicated that women, in particular, did not or could not finish high school. Consequently, Debbie made a path where there was no path, ignoring or living outside of the prescribed expectations. Additionally, Debbie made use of resources, like Mrs. Wexell's instruction, which she would use to augment her own instructional style one day, as a teacher herself.

<div align="center">

Ceci

</div>

Narrative Episode 1

Safe passage in this narrative episode required a multi-layer analysis. For example, after Ceci had been a medical transcriptionist for 21 years, she came to an agentic experience in her life when she drew sharp distinctions between a "job" or her work as a transcriptionist and her desire for a "career" or to do something she was passionate about. When Ceci made that decision, however, she was not sure what the

<div align="center">

70

</div>

career would be, just that she needed to get an education if she wanted to find that career.

She set out in search of a career, despite the impressive salary and the awards she had

earned as a successful transcriptionist:

> **Introduction.** And, um, probably when I was around 31 or 32, um, and had been working in the medical field for a long time, um, I knew that what I was doing wasn't what I wanted to do, it was just what I could do. So I needed to get an education and I'd had, I had a very nice job, but that's what it was. It was a job. And not a career. And it was what I was capable of and I received awards and stuff.

> **Conflict (in conflict with self).** But it wasn't what I was passionate about. So I came to this very school, Cochise College, crying cause I didn't know what I wanted to be when I grew up.

> **Narrative turn/course of action.** Um, I just started taking basic classes. I said, as a matter of fact, I took a class that was like a re-emersion class, what how you get back into being, it's like a personality adjustment is what it was called. And when I came home, my husband said, gee, Ceci, what are you going to take? Did you talk to the counselor? And I said Yes-s-s, I'm going to take English 102 and a personality adjustment class because apparently I'm crazy [laughter] but actually it was a very helpful class about working with people and becoming a student because I hadn't been in the classroom, even when I was in high school I hadn't been in the classroom, right? So, um, I took that class and in, during the time I was taking the102 class, I had this incredible English instructor, Diannah Simms, whose office this used—this used to be her office—

> It is wonderful]. That's why it's got such good air you know? Um she was my instructor and whose kind words and encouragement carried me through some pretty dark times. And I remember a light bulb going off in my head in this 102 class thinking, I know what I can be! I can be like these two women who really helped me whether they knew it or not. Although I think the first lady came to understand that when I called her at my graduation. Um . . . Jo Smith was her name. Anyway, um, so that led me to become a teacher.

Additionally, to go back to school as an adult (age 31/32) also meant Ceci confronted her

self-identity as a non-student when she was in high school:

> I was a non-student. In high school, I was so um removed from the educational process that two weeks before, well three weeks before graduation I was suspended for two because I had missed 181 days. And I said, how could I have missed 181 days if there are only 178 in our academic calendar? [laughter] At which point the vice principal told me, well Ceci, because you've come so erratically to school we just started counting the class periods that you weren't in.

71

So. I'd have three absences on one day and four on another, which I didn't think was very fair [laughter]. A day is a day.

But that's what they did. [laughter]. I always made it to English class. But I didn't make it to many others. So I guess that's my story and I'm sticking to it.

The most elaborative high narrative intensity took place at the narrative turn in this narrative episode. The narrative turn was also temporally kaleidoscopic, though in a purposeful way because Ceci drew on her experience with Diannah Simms, her English instructor at Cochise College, as well as reaching further back to identify Ceci's high school English teacher, whom Ceci called at graduation. Ceci then made the self-discovery that as she looked at what Jo Smith had meant to her and later what Diannah Simms had meant to her, she could imagine herself as a teacher, too. The narrative excerpt about Ceci's life as "a non-student who always made it to English class" made it possible to identify Ceci's first experience with safe passage. In the initial narrative episode, it appeared that Ceci's first experience of safe passage was when she enrolled in Diannah Simms' class at college, but Ceci further remembered Jo Smith, her high school English teacher, whose presence in Ceci's life story could be identified as Ceci's actual first experience with safe passage.

Additionally, the narrative turn in the narrative episode was at the point where Ceci took deliberate action in her project of self-creation to go back to college. But there was a second narrative turn within the original narrative turn. The second narrative turn, which was characterized by low narrative intensity or a shorter segment of speech, though led to action all the same, was where Ceci decided she was going to become a teacher. Although the excerpt of talk may have illustrated low narrative intensity, the significance of the claim in the project of self-creation could not be minimized. In fact, it

72

was at this second narrative turn where Ceci's life path turned definitively toward attaining her heart's desire to become a woman writer who teaches.

<div align="center">

Jineyda

</div>

Narrative Episode 1

Jineyda's first experience with safe passage began with her grandfather, who helped Jineyda develop an enduring love for books. By the time she was in high school, and was facing difficult crossroads, Jineyda retreated into her love of reading. Safe passage was extended from those early experiences of reading with her grandfather to include the library in Jineyda's high school, where she could go to "avoid the drama" and pursue her growing interest in mythology.

> **Introduction.** [My grandfather] always emphasized education, which is interesting because only one of his daughters ended up going to college, which is my aunt Tia Sunaalh – And Tia Suna was the only one who ended up getting a college degree, so from the stories I heard, like he always regretted that his kids never followed education, so when I was younger he would always read to me. In the Dominican Republic. So, I think my love of just works came from him because he would talk about the greatness of Alexander Dumas or the greatness of Miguel Cervantes.
>
> So, that idea of like, how does somebody get to be great like that came from my grandfather. Um, I think later on it developed like in high school, you know I was at an interesting crossroads in my life, where I was involved in things that I probably shouldn't have been involved because of the friends I had around me.
>
> And you know, just growing up in the projects, things that get brought up because of those issues, you know?
>
> The other part was that I, I used to love to read. So during lunchtime, a lot of times the librarian from the high school used to let me hang out in the library.
>
> **Conflict.** And part of me hanging out there was to avoid the drama that was going on in the cafeteria.
>
> Because there was always a fight. You know what I mean?

<div align="center">

73

</div>

And if I was there, you know, when things break out you have to stand forth, you can't hide.

That would make you a punk.

Narrative turn/course of action. So for me, a lot of it also was just like, you know, just kind of avoiding the drama so I would stay in the library and I would just read, read, read, read. And um, the one that really got me interested was sophomore year, we did a mythology project –

And I fell in love with mythology and then I started reading all of these things, and later on I found out, you know, *The Iliad* [citing Homer], oh my god, it's a great work of literature. I didn't know that at the time. At the time, I just knew I wanted to read more, you know what I mean?

The introduction to the narrative episode was elaborative and illustrative of high narrative intensity. Jineyda quickly moved from one temporality to the next, connecting her past experiences through the shared theme of her love for reading. Further, the narrative turn indicated that Jineyda took an active role in the project of self-creation when she acted deliberately to avoid the social drama playing out in the cafeteria, and also acted to nourish her interest in mythology. Finally, at the beginning and end of the narrative episode, Jineyda referred to "great works" as a frame for understanding and differentiating between types of literature and as a driving force in her search for answers to the question, "how does somebody get to be great?"

Narrative Episode 2

Jineyda's access to safe passage continued to grow in a series of narrative episodes related to her experiences in high school, and each episode carried its own narrative intensity. In the first narrative episode, Jineyda very clearly chose to strengthen and attend to her affinity for and interest in books and stories, especially mythology. The library was a site that facilitated safe passage for that time in Jineyda's high school experience.

74

Introduction. Then junior year, I had Gorham.

Yeah—and later on, I actually found out that Gorham had just completed his first year at Bread Loaf. So he was trying to implement some of the things he learned at Bread Loaf in my junior American Literature class. So you know, he had us read things like Scarlet Letter and

Conflict. I was like, oh my god, this is so boring kinda thing, you know, I'm sure every high school student says that [laughter]

Narrative turn/course of action. But then I remember the writing assignments that he had, and it was one of the first times that I started writing.

Like, I never remember writing before then, I don't know if that makes sense, you know—

Um, you know he would have assignments of trying to compare Hester to Lawrence to teen pregnancy, you know?

And the idea of loyalty, like, keeping your mouth shut and putting up with all that abuse. And you know, I was kinda used to that idea because in gangs that's what you do, you know, I wasn't going to snitch on my cousins who were in gangs.

Because you just don't do that, you don't snitch, so.

Like, I understood the concepts, you know, and it was kinda funny because he was this white guy talking to me about how to live in Lawrence [laughter] kinda thing, um, so that's when I remember writing. Believe it or not. American studies was a double period class with him and Frank Dunlovey and Frank Dunlovey was this tough Irish teacher, he's from Lawrence though, you know what I mean?

So, he had us track down immigration through Lawrence and that was interesting because I had helped my mom through the immigration system. I was still kinda helping her, you know what I mean, like going to INS in Boston, the finger prints, the interviews, all that good stuff, so it was always like, it kinda fit perfectly.

The second narrative episode made visible one of Jineyda's first teacher/mentor

relationships that supported safe passage for Jineyda in an academic setting. Gorham, a

Bread Loaf student at the time, and Dunlovey prevented Jineyda from experiencing

disenchantment in English class. Rather, Gorham and Dunlovey plowed ahead,

establishing real and visible connections between the literature and their students' lives—

75

issues Jineyda herself was facing in her school and in her community. Jineyda's early narrative episodes in high school also suggested spaces of safe passage made it possible for her to develop an interest in social justice on a local level (immigration in Lawrence) and on a national level (global literatures), while she also started to claim her private identity as a writer. Additionally, Jineyda's experiences with Gorham and Dunlovey placed her finger on the pulse of the school's community, Lawrence, in which she lived and deeply cared for; throughout her responses to the interview questions, Lawrence was represented not only as a significant character in Jineyda's life story, but also as the setting in which her life story unfolded. Jineyda's narrative turn/course of action segment of the narrative episode was elaborative and illustrative of high narrative intensity. She further articulated how she was creating an understanding of the literature she was studying and relating it back to her actual life. For example, because Jineyda's mom was an immigrant, Jineyda had first-hand experience dealing with the red tape of immigration. Documenting immigration in Lawrence with first-hand accounts and interviews and using that as a tool to better access the experiences of characters in literature served the dual function of meeting the curriculum objectives while also legitimizing Jineyda's (and others') life experiences.

Narrative Episode 3

The narrative episode included direct interaction with one of Jineyda's early mentors. In the context of a social justice-oriented Upward Bound summer program, where Jineyda was developing her own social justice-oriented beliefs, Jineyda took seriously the words of a mentor who challenged the identities made available to her through her peer group. As Jineyda reached for other identities that were better aligned

76

with social justice beliefs, Preda offered her books to read that augmented her evolving

identities.

> **Introduction.** And then that summer, I did Upward Bound, in Maine, at the University of Maine in Orono, and I met Jonas Preda who was a graduate student at the time, and now I think he teaches at Tulane or Vermont, I don't know, something – he used to teach at Tulane – um, but he brought in the social justice issue stuff, you know what I mean? So he brought in, I remember Malcolm X, what is it, The Ballad or The Bullet, and he brought in Dr. King's speech, and he brought in you know, the poem, Chimney, The Chimney Sweeper by William Blake. I remember like, he turned it into a social justice class, pretty much.

> **Conflict (the good conflict).** He's like, one day, cause I was an angry kid. One day he just kinda pulled me aside and he's like, yo, what's going on with you? And I'm like, how's that any of your damn business? [laughter] That's how I used to talk to people. And he was like, you know, you already got three strikes against you, like I don't know why you're trying to get a fourth one. And I'm like, who the fuck are you? I'm like, what kind of strikes you talking about? [laughter] And he's like, you know, you know you're Lat – you know you're woman, you know that you're Latina, and you know you're poor. So if you don't shape up, you're about to prove 'em right. And I'm like, what the hell are you talking about? And he's like, you know what I'm talking about. He's like if you want to be the one on welfare, you let me know. Because that's exactly where you're leading to. And he just, slapped me up pretty good?

> **Narrative turn/course of action.** Like he got me thinking. Obviously, I wasn't going to tell him that at that point, but I remember that's one of those features that kind of reached me, you know? And then, he gave me stuff to read. You know, like real life stuff, not fictional stuff. You know what I mean?

> About struggles, about power, about you know, Gloria Anzaldua, and her "wild tongue"— like he gave me all that shit to read and I was just a junior, turning into senior year, you know what I mean?

> Um, but by then, I had kind of messed up my academics at Lawrence High School, so I had to do night school, too, to graduate [laughter]. Which I always find funny because my SAT scores rocked and I got into the colleges I had applied to –

> So I got into UMass Lowell, and that's where I went to.

The good conflict in this narrative episode illustrated high narrative intensity and was a

re-telling or performance of a past conversation. While other narrative episodes were

built around or referred to specific conversations, none had the conversation performance

as the conflict. I called this the good conflict, however, because the teacher, Preda, was represented in multiple ways and also guided the conflict in a way that could lead to resolution. For instance, not only did he cause the conflict or provoke the conflict in the form of a verbal confrontation, he also illuminated an internal conflict. Preda was not just engaging in verbal confrontation; he was also addressing a life at conflict. Jineyda described herself as an angry kid but also indicated she was determined to eliminate drama that distracted her and identified groups of people she was hanging out with at high school she probably shouldn't have hung out with. Yet we had already seen that Jineyda was also able to keep those friendships and avoid them, seeking solace in the library. Similarly, Preda inserted himself into Jineyda's story when she was on the cusp of choosing a path, and he contributed to resolving the confrontation and conflict by elevating Jineyda's growing interest in social justice, by offering her deeply personal guidance, and by recommending texts that had personal import to Jineyda. Thus, the Good Conflict was resolved by making visible a vision of hope for the future, and specifically, for Jineyda's future. The vision of hope, however, was a personal construct and one Jineyda alone could be credited with making. While Preda did not tell her what the vision of hope was, his jarring accusations reached Jineyda and made an impact that led her to take immediate direct action.

Narrative Episode 4

The narrative episode invoked the mentor/teacher Laura Bearfield and seemingly intended to describe the relationship between Dr. Bearfield and Jineyda. But to understand the full intensity of Jineyda's relationship to and connection with Dr. Bearfield, Jineyda told a micro-narrative within the narrative episode. The full narrative

78

episode was about Dr. Bearfield's role in Jineyda's choice to become a teacher. Dr.

Bearfield's role also augmented the feelings Jineyda had in response to her work as a

caseworker at a halfway house for teenagers, specifically after Jineyda realized she didn't

want to be part of the problem the kids were facing.

Introduction. So I met Laura Bearfield, who was just starting out at UMass Lowell, so you know how young professors are, like, they're full of inspiration and they always get you, you know what I mean? So she was just like, I don't know, she just attached herself to me, and she's like, we did this unit on poverty and she had some of the same articles that Jonas had had, so I kinda liked her from the get go—

And I was like, she reached out to me, and I reached out to her – and until this day, I'm still friends with that woman because she kinda guided me through college, to be honest. Like, if it wasn't for her, I don't know if I would have made it? Because it was never about smarts. I've just always had bigger issues than college, you know what I mean?

I was working 50 hours by the time I was 19. So for me, it was never like, college was kinda trying to get out of it, but "I still don't know what out of it" meant, you know? [pause] So, it wasn't until, I used, to work at residential homes. Which meant that we had to like, we had to restrain kids.

Because it's like a half-way house for kids, it's like, they're out of jail or they don't belong in jail, but then they don't belong in a foster care setting.

Because they're just at a point in their life that's just a weird crossway, so I noticed that a lot of the kids were heavily medicated. Number 1. Um, number 2, like if the kid stepped out of line too much, we had to restrain them.

And, I never ever, ever, ever initiated a restraint. Because for me, like, you know, just growing up the way I did, body and space issues mean a lot, you know what I mean?

Somebody to touch you was like, too much. I never started it, but you know, once it staff member initiates it, like you have to help.

I was a case manager at that point, like senior year. And um, you know it was a perfect job because I could go to school in the morning and then work in the afternoons cause the residential home is open 24–7 cause the kids live there.

Conflict. So, this supervisor we had, his name was David**,** he was an asshole. Like he would get the kids riled up and I would have issues with that because he would hit where it hurts, you know what I mean?

79

And then one day he started this restraint and it was the worst possible location to start a restraint. It was literally at the top of the stairs—because upstairs was like a balcony, like the crossway from one section of the house to the other, and he started it right there in that little space. And so Maritza and I, who was a colleague of mine, um, we ran upstairs, because at that point you have to step in, and the kid was just so upset and he's a huge kid, I mean the kid was like 6'3" you know what I mean? And the kid kicks out, like he had him, he was holding him behind his back, um, which you're not supposed to do, you're supposed to hold them on the ground, you're not supposed to hold them standing up, and the kid just kicks out and one, one foot caught my knee and I started rolling down the stairs, the other foot caught Maritza's face, and she starts rolling down the stairs—

So both of us got injured. I got a lower-neck sprain because of it. So, it forced me out of work for like a month.

Narrative turn/course of action. And it got me reflecting. Like, what do I want to do with my life, because I don't want to add to the problem. You know, like I knew I wanted to work with kids at that point, cause I like kids, um, but I felt like the residential home we were just like housing the kids? Like a pen? We weren't really being therapeutic. You know what I mean?

So, for me, that's where it became like, Ok, I can't do this. I can't add, I can't—I don't want a kid to remember me for taking him down, you know what I mean? So I talked to Bearfield and she goes and says, why don't you try becoming a teacher? And I literally laughed at her face. I'm not joking, Lil, like I laughed. [laughter] And I'm like you must be joking because I would kill a kid [laughter]. And she starts laughing, and she was like, no Jineyda, you know what, at that point, she was teaching her, um, Great Books of Antiquity class, where she teaches you know, *The Iliad* [Homer], *The Odyssey* [Homer], *The Aeneid* [Virgil], you know, all those books. And she's like, you know, I know you like mythology, and I know you like women's issues, and we're about to hit up Dido's Death in *The Aeneid*. Right? And she's like, how do you feel about teaching that class?

I'm like, here was a college professor, basically saying take my class and teach it.

That's crazy. Cause I looked at her like, even though we had grown close at that point, like, you know, remember where I come from, no one does that kind of shit for you. Unless they're family or something, you know what I mean?

So for me it was shocking. I was like what? And she's like, yeah, teach the class. Teach Dido's Death. Bring in the woman's perspective and I was actually doing a directed studies with her, and I did it on Penelope [referring to a character in Homer's classic work, *The Odyssey*].

80

Yeah, so I did it on like how language became the power of woman in a world where they couldn't get physical power.

So, [pause] I went in and I taught the class and I remember like the students were interacting with me, like everybody was interested in what I was saying, and you know, she never once spoke up, Lil. Like, not once. Other than introducing me to the class and saying that I was a student of hers working on a directed studies, she never like tried to help me, she just like let me go. And that was it. Like, that happened in February of 2006, so by May, 2006, I took the MTELS test which are the tests for Massachusetts, and then, um, by July I had a job. So it was really fast and it was really crazy.

So that's how I became a teacher.

The narrative episode was elaborative and indicated high narrative intensity in the introduction, in the conflict, and in the narrative turn/course of action. The narrative was reflective and indicated the protagonist was fully engaged in experimentation (going in to teach Dido's Death to college students) and self-creation (deciding she was not going to continue working in a "pen" environment that wasn't really helping the kids). An additional aspect of the narrative episode was that Jineyda really liked working with kids early on, but when Bearfield suggested teaching, Jineyda clearly knew the parameters of interaction would be different in a formalized K–12 setting than they were at the halfway house and she was uncertain how she would transition into a school setting. Again, however, Dr. Bearfield invited Jineyda to give it a trial run at UMas–-Lowell. It was during that experience in which Jineyda saw herself as a scholar and as an informed instructor who was able to claim expertise for the first time; interestingly, Jineyda emphasized the students "interacting" with her as the high point of that experience, which indicated she was already able to devise and identify horizontal power structures for sharing and creating collaborative knowledge between a teacher and her students.

Discussion: Formation of the Seeker in the Context of Safe Passage

Although each of the narrative episodes from the participants were deeply personal, there were some characteristics that the stories shared: (a) each protagonist identified at least one significant early relationship with another character (teacher or mentor); (2) the setting for the narrative episodes were schools or libraries; (3) from an early age, protagonists emphasized the importance and place of reading, books, and writing; (4) the instances of conflict in the narrative episodes were relatively short, followed by a more detailed narrative turn/course of action; and (5) the narrative episodes resulted in protagonists taking action or generating agency in the project of self-creation. Combined, these shared story characteristics engendered the protagonists' identities as seekers.

Chapter 5: Arriving at the Theory of Safe Passage Part II

Bread Loaf and BLTN provided the participants with safe passage to talk, to claim expertise (Royster, 2000), and to articulate the functions of languages, cultures, and literatures contextualized in their own real lives. In the context of BLTN, the participants were able to claim public identities as writers.

Debbie

Narrative Episode 1

The narrative episode marked Debbie's entrance in to Bread Loaf and her early experiences with Bread Loaf faculty mentors. She also situated her entrance in to Bread Loaf in the context of her life-long love of writing. The narrative episode began at a time when Debbie had essentially stopped writing in her life and it ended with her engaged in complex and legitimizing public writing practices. The narrative episode was elaborative and had high narrative intensity, particularly in the narrative turn/course of action. Despite the transformation that took place in Debbie's writing life, as it was expressed in this narrative episode, the narrative episode itself was relatively short when considered in the context of time and a life history. For instance, years passed between the time Debbie was in high school and when she began working on her AA, her double bachelor's degrees, and then her master's at Bread Loaf. Consequently, safe passage had a sustaining quality that stayed with Debbie over time, even when she was not in school and even when she was not writing. The reward of her first experiences with safe passage (starting in Ms. Wexell's first grade class and later in the Cincinnati Public

83

Library) was extended, through time and space, until the next stage of safe passage, at Bread Loaf, began. Although Debbie wrote during her undergraduate experiences, she did not refer back to any significant or meaningful relationships with mentors during those years. It was not until Jim Maddox and Dixie Goswami came to Northern High School, where Debbie was teaching, and encouraged her to apply to Bread Loaf, that we saw the next phase of safe passage activated.

Introduction. When I was in junior high school I was on the yearbook and the newspaper staff, when I was in high school I was on the literary magazine staff and creative writing. I did take one year of journalism, umm, I was always always always writing.

Conflict. And, that stopped when I was married to the monster. Because, and I think about that now, why did I stop writing? And I think it was because reality was too painful to put to words. I had to find a way to uh redirect the anger elsewhere and you know I was really angry at my mother about a lot of stuff for a long time. She had done some really hurtful things. So while I lived with him, I really didn't write much of anything. Except for school. And I did write some short stories for school. And I took creative writing classes while I was doing that, but still, I stayed away from the topic of him, pretty much. You know. And I took those creative writing classes in college, at that point, I already knew that the marriage was over there was just no way for me to get away from him. And so I was trying to start the writing up again, but other than school assignments I didn't write much of anything. I did write a short story that later became the basis for the book that I've written. [pause] Um. And I put it aside, I was working, I had kids, I didn't have a lot of time to write, a single parent, working two jobs, uh [sigh]

Narrative turn/course of action. When I got into Bread Loaf my first summer I took two writing classes, which I know you're not allowed to do, but it was late registration and I didn't know you weren't allowed to do it and I signed up for 'em and they let me in 'em.

So I had Tilly Warnock's Writing about Place class and I had Richard Chess' poetry class. And [cough] I have to tell you, Tilly was really wonderful to me.

She let me tell her about the misery I was feeling over this mistaken marriage coming up here and everything, although if I hadn't married him I doubt I'd be at Bread Loaf. Um, she let me talk to her about it. And there weren't really many people around here for me to talk to. But when I was in Tilly's class, I wrote about [pause] some of the abuse and also some of it in the poetry class,

84

although he wasn't really very comfortable with it. And even told me I should investigate some other woman who wrote about abuse and stuff, you know. Um.

But I did write poetry. I made a B in the class. Ah . . . which was a little frustrating. And I had I guess an A– in Tilly's class, but I wrote a one-act play about my father's abuse of my mother and how it caused their daughter, she couldn't cope with it growing up, and how she committed suicide**.** But that was not something I ever would have done, but that was what I had happen in the story. You know.

And then I wrote poetry for Tilly's class and stuff for creative non-fiction and I wrote about the abuse there. And later, Tilly thanked me for being brave enough to read something about um a real issue, about the abuse and everything. And she said she thought that the class felt comfortable opening up and sharing their real feelings after I had broken the ice. Which was a great thing for her to tell me.

Debbie's narrative turns/courses of action in the narrative episode indicated a number of things. First, Debbie pursued two writing courses during her first Bread Loaf summer at the Asheville campus. In the poetry class, she discovered early on that the faculty member was not comfortable with the rawness of Debbie's experiences as poetry topics. The discomfort Debbie observed in the faculty member, however, led Debbie to write about other topics in the poetry class, which were also fulfilling topics about which to write. Tilly's class, Writing About Place, however, was the beginning of Debbie's experiences with Bread Loaf faculty who legitimized and welcomed her stories. Writing about her real experiences and having the courage to share them publically created the intrinsic reward of having others in the writing class experience a level of comfort they may otherwise not have had. In addition, Tilly offered Debbie affirmation that her stories played a significant role in shaping the class environment. Tilly's affirmation set the groundwork for Bread Loaf becoming a site for safe passage.

Narrative Episode 2 (Claiming Expertise and Articulating the Functions of Culture and Literature Contextualized in Real Life)

The narrative episode was the first evidence of Debbie claiming expertise (her ability to write and the significance of her grandmother's, mother's, and her own reading lives) in public.

> **Introduction.** So um, the other thing was while I was at Florida State taking creative writing classes, that story that I had, about my grandmother, I worked on, I continued to work on it and I started turning it into a book as an undergrad. And I had maybe 40 pages of it or so, maybe even 60, already written, [pause] but then getting to Bread Loaf and having people being encouraging about my writing and creative writing and stuff and encourage me to keep working on it and so I worked on it more for Tilly's class, I worked on an excerpt of it for her class, as well. Revising. She knew that I had already been writing it, she said as long as you're doing a major revision that's fine so I did get work on it for her class as well, um, I worked on it for Dixie's class. I did a sort of a non-fiction reflection on my grandmother and my mother and me and the part that books played in all of our lives.

> **Conflict.** And now my grandmother only had a third-grade education and because her father pulled her out of school because she knew how to read and cipher so it was time for her to learn how to be a good wife. Third grade. Yeah. She was born in 1904. And my mother quit school when she was 15 because she was pregnant and got married. That baby died but still. She read. She read constantly. She read magazines, she read books. [pause] But still, with a sixth grade education. She worked as a waitress most of her life, and she worked at the hospital, um, making appointments for doctors and then later in housekeeping. So, the women in my family did not have positions that were considered professional. You know, uneducated, labor jobs for the most part. [pause]

> **Narrative turn/course of action.** So I was the first one in my family, in my immediate family to graduate from high school, the first one to go to college, the first one to get a master's degree.

The narrative episode was elaborative and had high narrative intensity, particularly in the introduction and in the conflict. In the introduction, Debbie indicated she clearly felt compelled to begin writing about aspects of her life during her undergraduate experience. There was a sharp distinction, however, between writing on her own as an undergrad and then returning to the same piece as a graduate student with the encouragement and

86

support of Tilly and Dixie and other faculty and peers at Bread Loaf.

The narrative episode also indicated that Debbie's cultural background, as understood through her grandmother's and mother's experiences, had significant bearing on Debbie's self-creation and experimentation in the project of claiming identities. Debbie's inclusion of her grandmother's and mother's stories as those of women who worked "uneducated, labor jobs" and who also loved reading, became topical for Debbie, as a way of accomplishing assigned work as an undergraduate and, later, became part of her resistance. For instance, while Debbie shared with her grandmother and mother an incredible reverie for reading, she did not experience the same societal or personal constraints the other women did. To build on the experiences of her matriarchy—grandmother, mother, daughter —in the context of reading and then later in writing, Debbie identified women who were constrained from achieving professional independence, yet—despite those constraints—achieved and pursued literacy and resisted aspects of the traditional stories about women.

Narrative Episode 3 (friendships at Bread Loaf)

Debbie's friendships she established at Bread Loaf had a significant impact beyond her time on campus. Not only were Debbie's Bread Loaf friendships intense and place-specific because of the commonalities she shared with her roommates (pursuing a graduate degree and teaching English), they were personally intense, as well, when she was away from Bread Loaf.

> **Introduction.** I met Barb in Asheville. And we were actually in the same dorm section. We had private rooms, but she was in the room next to me. And we became fast friends—

> **Conflict.** And when I found out that my ex-husband had cheated on me, when I came home, I really didn't have anywhere to go to try to figure out what I was going to do.

87

Narrative turn/course of action. And I got in my car and I drove down to her house. I called her up and I said, can I come down there, and she says yeah and gave me directions and it didn't seem like it took me that long but I guess I was crying the whole way and didn't figure out it was a four hour trip until the next time I went.

But we had continued to talk on the phone, and email back and forth and stuff and she's another one of these people who's not real technologically literate and I help her with her technology and stuff, too. She has a couple of us that help her out.

Um so I went down there and I stayed with her several days and cried and cried and cried. She was the closest friend that I had that I could turn to. My Bread Loaf friend. And I've come to categorize people as my Bread Loaf friends. You know. And my other friends.

But yeah, Barb has been, she's been amazing. Very supportive, very helpful, READ my papers. Her and my other roommate. And they were both, um, were they both seniors? No, the other one, the woman from Alaska, was a senior and Barb had, was going to Oxford and she graduated at Oxford. They both read my papers for me, I read for them, and Barb was very supportive about the book I was writing, too. Thought it was good. Um, so they were helpful. Mentored me in that respect. And then, um, I guess they thought I was ok because they let me read for them, too. Um, my family has become very supportive of my going to Bread Loaf because they know that it is what I love to do. Um, my co-workers at school, I don't have a clue about how they feel about it [their experience at Bread Loaf]…I don't think it was a life-changing experience. You know what I'm saying?

Logan who quit teaching at Northern and she got a job with a publishing company in New York City. And she's actually the one who rejected my book. But it, it, Hey, she read it, she let me cut through the lines, explained to me about query letters, and um, how to get an agent to read my stuff. And she was phenomenally helpful. Wrote me pages and pages of emails.

Yes, so it was probably the kindest rejection letter you could ever ask for, she targeted specific things, and told me things that she loved and what she thought needed to be done to it, and then she said, you get it rewritten, feel free to send it back to us and anything else you write.

So, yeah, how much better of a rejection letter can you ask for?

Yeah. And, uh, so I'm very grateful for that. And very encouraged, I just haven't had time to write it yet.

Barb and I were in contact first on BreadNet and you know, we took it off of BreadNet. Um, most of the people that I did email with and stay in touch with are now on the Advisory Board (BLTN advisory board).

Yeah, um, a lot of emails with Dixie. An incredible amount. I mean, I get all of these emails from her and the kinds of things she's posts to the advisory board she was sending to us when it wasn't the advisory board anyway. You know, so that kind of stuff. Plus personal email, as well. Um, so Dixie has been my number one contact. James and I, we are in contact on Facebook, Susanna, Jineyda, Lorena we're on Facebook and we comment to each other and stuff like that. Holly Spinelli. That's all – I saw Holly again this summer, I realized, I thought I hadn't met her, but I had. You know, Tara we're on Facebook and make comments every once in a while, um, she's graduated now, too. Um, who else, a little bit with David emails here and there, some emails with Lou um, about writing and writing workshops and stuff like that.

And you know, Jim Maddox. He does still email me some. You know. I haven't emailed him back in a while, and I'm friends with Lucy on Facebook, as well. Um. I really got close to Jim and Dixie. Both of them. When they gave me that Betty Bailey Award they gave me a group hug. [laughter]. Jim on one side and Dixie on the other.

This narrative episode was elaborative and had high narrative intensity, especially in the Narrative turn/course of action segments. Friendships also extend the reward of safe passage beyond Bread Loaf and BLTN and through Bread Loaf and BLTN. Debbie's friendship with Barb, for instance, was the one Debbie turned to when she struggled with coming home from Bread Loaf to an unfaithful partner. Barb, a number of hours away, welcomed Debbie to her home and comforted her through a very difficult personal experience. The relationship had grown from a shared professional endeavor—that of attending Bread Loaf—to becoming fast friends in the early weeks of the session. The intensity of the program, the hope for sharing writing and ideas with peers, and the tight-knit community aspects of learning at Bread Loaf campuses provided Debbie and Barb a chance to develop a very close friendship over a short amount of time. While writing, teaching, and reading were at the center of their friendship, personal matters were relevant and acknowledged, too, and contributed to the overall project of legitimizing experiences in the context of professional advancement.

Narrative Episode 4 (Claiming Expertise)

Debbie's positive experiences at Bread Loaf emboldened her. When budget cuts

threatened her opportunities for attending Bread Loaf, Debbie devised other strategies.

Introduction. As part of the fellowship, we had to do the two exchanges. Um, a year, and post to BreadNet. Basically like the other fellowships. Um so I made sure, you know I did all my exchanges. I have never once gone a year without having two exchanges and sometimes I've had three or four. So I'll go in on somebody else's.

Conflict. Um I had, there was fellowship money until the economy got bad and there was some left over and they gave that to us the last year and then there wasn't any money for my last year. Um, and so Judy said apply for Middlebury financial aid and we'll see what happens. If there's any other money, you know, whatever. So there wasn't going to be any more money and they approached Fidelity for more money and the person, I actually did meet her last year, she came to Vermont. Uh she was the person responsible for that, went on to the medical program, that foundation, Partners in Freedom, yeah, well they're on my Facebook page, but she went to work for them and so she left Fidelity and that money dried up. So I was in a panic, not sure how I was going to pay for everything,

Narrative turn/course of action. And I wrote two NEA grants. And one of them was actually my coursework for Dixie's class. And it was about getting an iPod cart and using iPod's in the classroom and this stuff and I submitted it to NEA and I did not get it. [pause] So then, it was right around Thanksgiving, and I'm looking online at NEA finding out I didn't get it and I saw the Foundation Grants. And I started reading through it and the deadline was that night at midnight.

So, I decided, because I wanted to take Django's class, the hip hop class, I decided to take bits and pieces out of the one they rejected and plugged it in, you know what, stupid me, I didn't even print a copy of it, I plugged it into all the fill-in-the-blank parts on the NEA site and then I called it "Hip hop to close the gap" ---

And, I wrote about how I wanted to take this hip-hop class so that I could---

I got it and everything. And it's on the NEA website and that's the name of it. So, um, and I wrote it so that I could try to have a better understanding of my African American students, in particular, the African American males, and that I wanted to use hip-hop in the classroom along with poetry and to try to help motivate them to stay in school.

90

And I filled it, and by the time I get it done, I get down to the last page, and it says "principal's signature" and it's about 8 PM or 8:30 and I went, Oh my god, what am going to do? I had the assistant principal's, at that time, cell phone number, and here it is right around Thanksgiving, and I call her, left her a message, Kathy, she's now my principal, Kathy I'm sorry to bother you, but I'm trying to do this NEA foundations grant, it says I have to have a principal's signature, will you give me permission? She called me back in 15 minutes. Absolutely. Do it! So I was able to check that I had her permission. Sent it off, didn't print a copy, didn't think anything more about it, next thing you know, I'm getting a phone call from NEA and getting this big thick envelope in the mail and I got it!

And then Django gets promoted because Jim retires, and he's no longer teaching it. So here I am in a panic because Django gets promoted and quits teaching. And the class doesn't exist. So I call them and told them and I emailed them about it and I sent them the link from Middlebury where Django was promoted, you know how they put that thing on,

And I said, the teacher's not there anymore, they're not offering the class, they have these other two classes that Miesha was teaching, and I said, do I send, do I refuse the money or what do I do? And they said pick one of those other two classes. So, I picked Miesha's Literacy and the Black Arts Movement class. And I still, I bought all the books for Django's class before he left and, that's why I had two copies of that book. Cause then I bought it again for David's [Kirkland] class, I forgot I bought it for Django's class. Um, and the other thing was, NEA foundations grants cannot go for a degree program. So the way I worded it was that, yes, while I am enrolled in a degree program, and this is of course offered at this program, because I am a senior, it does not fulfill the courses that I need for graduation. And so I would still have to have two classes besides this to graduate. And they still gave it to me. [laughter] I don't know. I wish I had the paper that I had written, you know, but stupid me I didn't print it. I went back looking for it and it was never anywhere in my documents to be found, after I got it. But you can look me up on their website. I'm on there. [laughter]

The one I spent all summer slaving over. I don't get. And then the one I cobble together with bits and pieces from that one and information from the school website and throw together, I get.

The narrative episode was elaborative and had high narrative intensity, particularly at the Narrative turn/course of action. Debbie needed to claim expertise under pressure when it became apparent that the previous funding she had been awarded for attending Bread Loaf was no longer available. The conflict was catalytic because it provoked Debbie to publically claim expertise. Simultaneously, Debbie Bread Loaf had become a site of safe

91

passage, which further amplified Debbie's ability to publically claim expertise beyond Bread Loaf. The rejection of funding for the first grant was hardly a deterrent when Debbie began writing the second one.

The Narrative turn/course of action was elaborative and relied on experimentation. For instance, Debbie was in a deep panic, thinking she would not be able to return to Bread Loaf. She devised a plan, however, to write two grants to see if the funding could be made available by an alternative method. Further, within the Narrative turn/course of action, there were additional micro-conflicts (like securing her principal's signature over the Thanksgiving holidays and later realizing that Django's class had been canceled) that had to be resolved. Debbie also continued the project of self-creation by taking on a new type of writing (grant writing) and continuing to expand her knowledge and abilities by purchasing and reading the books regardless of the class being canceled.

Narrative Episode 5 (Professional Connections)

The relationships that developed around Debbie's writing—such as the ones with Harriet, Dixie, Jeanie, Dolan, and Logan—gave Debbie confidence to stay in contact with these mentors and peers as well as to continue writing her book. Relationships that clustered around writing and writing experiences at Bread Loaf were particularly important to constructing the sites of safe passage as well as maintaining the structures of safe passage once the physical site was no longer available (for instance, Bread Loaf campus operated for six weeks a summer and then Debbie returned to Durham, NC, and to her life as a teacher).

> **Introduction.** Not last year, two years ago, I come home from Bread Loaf and I get this random email from Dixie including me in a reading group online with

92

Harriet Chessman. And this lady that Harriet was mentoring, who was not in Bread Loaf, she was doing her creative writing with her and helping her with some workshops she was doing out in California. And I didn't know who Harriet was and Jeanie's story was about growing up in Appalachia and comparable to mine. And she's telling the story of her birth, and so I send Jeanie this excerpt from my book about my grandmother's birth and my grandmother's mother died giving birth to her. And so I pulled that out of my book and I sent it to Jeanie. And the next thing I know, Harriet is all over it and making comments and reading it and telling me all this stuff and asking me to send her more bits and pieces and is really being very encouraging. [sigh] And then we sorta quit writing to Jeanie. And finally Dixie tells me, do you know who Harriet is? No. She's a friend. She told me to write to her, I did. You know. Just following instructions as always. She says you better Google her. [laughter] And so I go and Google her and I find out she's teaching creative writing at Stanford and she used to be at Harvard or Yale or something. And she continues to read my stuff for the rest of the year and then finally, when our exchange type thing was over, I said Harriet, you've been phenomenally helpful, you're the first person who's ever given me any inkling that my writing was worth being published and this is terrific.

Conflict. But what do we do now? I know you're busy, I know you're getting ready to start a new semester, and, I said, do you want me to keep sending you bits and pieces or should I go away and be grateful for what I have? And she says, finish the book and send it to me. And I said ok. And so I did – I finished it. And I sent it to her. And I didn't hear anything. And I didn't hear anything. And I didn't hear anything. And Dixie keeps saying, I've heard not a word. And Dixie emailed her and not a word. Well, it turns out that Harriet's father had died and her computer had died and she lost an amazing amount of stuff, and—

Narrative turn/course of action. —She said send it to me again. And I did. And she still didn't read it. And I didn't hear from her and finally Dixie said, send it to me. I said, you want me to send it to you electronically or do you want a hard copy? And she says can you do the hardcopy? And so I printed the dern thing out, about 36000 words by this time, and I mailed it to Dixie. Priority mail. And she said she read it, told me parts of it that she loved, and said that she thought it needs, not only deserves to be published but needs to be published.

And so her comments gave me the courage to contact Logan. And, actually, Logan had already contacted me, the library the year before had brought Dolan Perkins Valdez in who had a New York Times Bestseller book called "Wench" and she was in town. And they had emailed, do you want her for your creative writing class? Oh sure. She came over, did a great workshop, real nice lady and everything, and so I posted it on Facebook about how much the kids loved her and how great it was meeting her and posted about her book and everything. So Logan emails me and asks me, you know privately, asked me about it. She says, she's one of our writers. I work for the company that published her book.

93

So we started talking and I told her about how nice she was about my own writing and everything and Logan says well when you get a chance, send it to me. So after Dixie read it and said she thought it should be published, then I had the guts to email Logan and say, were you serious about reading it. And she says yes. So I sent it to her.

The narrative episode was elaborative and had high narrative intensity. The overall narrative episode gave voice to Debbie turning her personal writing into a public artifact. She shared the piece of writing with a number of faculty members and peers at Bread Loaf and started making initial plans to turn it into her memoirs. The narrative episode also identified a number of key characters that made it possible for Debbie to see this part of her heart's desire—to be a published writer—actualized.

Narrative Episode 6 (Claim Expertise)

This was the narrative episode in which the narrative turn of the overall life story took place. Debbie shifted her talk from stories of events directly related to claiming expertise (applying and attending Bread Loaf, becoming the North Carolina coordinator for the BLTN, writing two grants, facilitating professional development in her home district, engaging in exchanges online with fellow BLTN members, assuming a position on the Bread Loaf Teacher Network Advisory Board) to the story in which she publically claimed expertise. The narrative episode was a departure from other episodes because in it, Debbie discussed a number of ways in which she engaged scholars and challenged their positions on texts using her own ideas, research, and understandings of literatures situated in specific, educative contexts.

> **Introduction.** I would say the things that I have produced which I would NOT have produced without Bread Loaf would be that words have power. I don't think I would have had the guts to write an NEA grant before that. So even though I can't put my hands on it, there's part of it out there online. And I do have the piece that I wrote for Dixie. Was geared toward closing the achievement gap for African American males, as well. And I mean, it's long. Thirty pages or

94

something like that. Um, another piece, I mean I have some poems that I wrote that I really like, but I still consider them works in progress.

Conflict. Um, I wrote a paper for my professor at Oxford and I ended up with a B+ in her class but she doesn't believe in giving As. She very rarely ever gives them. She thinks American professors give them out too freely.

Narrative turn/course of action. And she said that a discovery I made about *Beloved* [Morrison, 1987] was kind of like shining a light in a rabbit hole and then chasing after what you see and finding it. I mean, she said that I …

I said something about *Beloved* that had not been published before. So basically, she let me know that, I mean I wrote it was a 13 page paper and the majority of it was about the six words in the epigram to Beloved. And she said not only did you focus on the epigram but you went out and found empirical evidence to support what you were saying.

She made me believe that I had something that could be a doctoral thesis. To look at Toni Morrison's work and her allusions to other genocides in her book to give her writing more power. So, that paper was very important to me, about *Beloved*, and then the other paper that I wrote for her about *Wuthering Heights* [Bronte, 1847/1996] I did a psychological analysis of Heathcliff [a character in Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*] and I said that there wasn't a ghost that Heathcliff became the monster that he was because he was abused and neglected and I used Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs* and you know the basic needs of shelter and safety not being met, um, arresting your development and stuff like that. And then I wrote, you know, the thing that makes him truly a monster is the fact that we have so many children out there who are going through exactly the same thing. How many more Heathcliffs are being made every day? And she told me that I effectively debarred her from teaching *Wuthering Heights* as a ghost story anymore.

When she said that it basically put me on fire, for one thing. Gave me the idea that I could actually apply for a PhD program and maybe somebody would want me, even if at my old age of 58, at that time 57 when I first started considering it, um, validation to the amount of time I've spent with books and writing in my entire life. Made me think that I had something to say that people would actually want to read. Made my life worthwhile. And it sure beat back a lot of that negative crap that I was fed when I was married to my abusive ex-husband.

To have someone tell you something like that, to actually go to a place like Oxford University and be able to say, yeah, I spent my summer at Oxford University this year you know?! [pause]. Having a grandmother with a third grade education who apologized in every letter she wrote for her poor spelling and poor grammar. And a mother who dropped out of high school and only had a 6th grade education, to be able to go to Oxford?! [pause] I couldn't believe I had

95

> that opportunity. And I had that because of Bread Loaf. And sure, you want me
> to do something, Dixie, you tell me. What do you want me to do? Jim, what do
> you want me to do? Sure I'll do it.

The narrative episode was elaborative and had high narrative intensity. Additionally,

Debbie identified her contributions to the field in her brief though impactful discussion of

how she recognized the few words in *Beloved* (Morrison, 1987) as a literary device used

by Morrison to call up all the power of histories and genocides long past. In the narrative

turn, I realized Debbie used repetition throughout the telling of her life story as a literary

device, too, referring back to her mother and grandmother's histories as fierce "readers"

throughout their lives. In the overall narrative turn of Debbie's life story, when she

mentioned her mother and her grandmother, just by name, Debbie was locating their

experiences within her life story in a way that made it possible to allude to their histories

of being forced out of school and into work or into accepting a "woman's place." At this

point in the life story, I became aware that using words, just a few words, to call forth the

power of histories and stories was a theme deeply rooted throughout Debbie's life story.

She fought to resist one aspect of those histories (the aspect in which neither her mother

or her grandmother finished school; the aspect in which her mother long endured

domestic abuse) while she relentlessly pursued the other (a life-long love of reading).

When she applied her analytical strategy—that of using a few words to allude to or call

upon the power of histories—to *Beloved,* it legitimized Debbie's own life story as well as

her deeply analytic response to the piece of literature. Consequently, the protagonist's

(Debbie's) life story entered into a dialogic relationship with *Beloved*. Not one in which

our protagonist (Debbie) claimed a shared experience with the protagonist of *Beloved*,

but one in which our protagonist developed an analytic tool over the course of her own

life stream and applied it to canonized literature in a way that broke down the last barrier

between herself and her ability to publically claim her identity as a woman writer who teaches. To have achieved this at a site of safe passage, in the company of Emma Smith, who publically acknowledged Debbie's unique analysis, affirmed the significance of Debbie's life's pursuit of reading and writing: "it made my life worthwhile."

<div align="center">**Ceci**</div>

Narrative Episode 1

Ceci first encountered Bread Loaf and the work of Bread Loaf graduates during her practicum work. It was through the words and works of Nancy Atwell that Ceci became familiarized with the Bread Loaf School of English and started to identify with the types of teaching to which she wanted to ascribe.

> **Introduction.** So when I was doing my education courses at the University of Arizona, right, we had, a, a semester called practicum. And in my practicum course I went to work with Middle School Students at Naylor (sp) Middle School in Tucson, and the teacher there was a strong advocate of Nancy Atwell's reading and writing workshops, right? So that's where I was introduced to Nancy Atwell. And of course I read *In the Middle* (Atwell, 1987) from front to back and I learned about Bread Loaf School of English. That's the only place I'd never heard of. Because we're way out here. Then I graduated and I did my first year teaching in Bisbee and—
>
> **Conflict.** —The English department there was really well established, three men who ran the department – had been there forever, right, and um I got a flyer for the Bread Loaf Teacher, Rural Teacher Network and I was talking to them and they said, oh yes, Dixie Goswami came and Jim Maddox came and we talked to them, you know, but it's really hard to get into and you have to submit a writing analysis and Bill Kirby, the head teacher there, said that it's really hard and I don't know if you'll ever make it, so I didn't apply. It was my first year teaching and I said, you know, well, I really can't do this anyway.
>
> **Narrative turn/course of action.** So then, I came to Buena and I got another one at Buena, for the second year, right, and I said oh wow! Here it is again! And I noticed that Bill Kirby was, had been there that summer, right, the teacher faculty, the faculty picture from the summer before, and he was never at the U of A when I was there because he was on sabbatical. Cause I did all my courses hours in 15 months—64 credit hours in 15 months—

Cause I was driving, so I said I was going to call him up and see what this was all about. So I called him and I said I'm Ceci Lewis, I'm here at Buena High School and I'm interested in the Bread Loaf Teacher Network. And . . .

So I told him I was interested in it and I said I would come up and talk to him about it and see what I might need to do and he said ok, sure! When do you want to come? So I made an appointment to go see him and I told him how I wanted to go to Bread Loaf and how I loved Nancy Atwell and reading and writing and to be part of the Bread Loaf Teacher Network and I don't think I was in his office 5 minutes and he said, you need to meet Tilly Wornack.

And I said who is she? And he said she's the head of our composition board but she also is the director of Bread Loaf's New Mexico campus. So he whizzed me out of his office straight to Tilly's. And the minute I walked into Tilly's office, it was like I had known her all my life.

I mean she, I was like, I know her? You know? So Tilly and I sat down and we talked and she was like, Oh, she was so excited, so then she said, Ceci, you need to come back tomorrow. And I said, come back here. Yes. Jackie Royster is going to be here and you need to meet Jackie.

I said, ok, so I came home, and De said, how did it go? And I said I have to go back tomorrow because I have to meet a woman by the name of Jackie Royster. And he says ok. We gotta get you some more clothes! This looks significantly Southwest and let's get this top and this. [laughter] You know?

So I went back and listened to a lecture by Jackie and Tilly introduced me to Jackie and we sat and had coffee and Jackie said, Dixie is going to love you, and that is how I was introduced to Dixie Goswami. And that was like…

It was like a whirlwind. And my life's been a whirlwind ever since. [laughter].

The narrative episode was elaborative and had high narrative intensity. In the introduction, Ceci indicated that her first contact with Bread Loaf was during her teacher preparation work when she came across Atwell's book, *In the Middle* (1987. As Ceci's interest in Bread Loaf grew, she ran into an unexpected roadblock. In the conflict of the narrative episode, Ceci discovered her English department colleagues were not supportive and went so far as to outright discourage her from attending Bread Loaf by suggesting she likely would not make the cut for the competitive Bread Loaf program.

98

At that particular point in the life story, Ceci was navigating her work as a new teacher, and therefore did not pursue applying for the program.

The conflict in the narrative episode not only made visible the glaring presence of gendered institutional and systemic hierarchies, but on a localized level, the conflict illustrated Ceci resisting victimization. From the point of Ceci's narrative, she recognized she was being discriminated against because she was a woman of Mexican descent who was teaching in an English Department run by older white men. Yet her reaction was agentic. She was not run off from teaching and she was not deterred from her interests in Bread Loaf. Instead, she finished the school year and then moved to a different high school to pursue her second year of teaching.

The next year, when Ceci was teaching at a different high school, she again came across the material about Bread Loaf. That second time, Ceci pursued experimentation and plotted an alternative route to gain access to more information about the program; she engaged in agentic practices by reaching out to the faculty member, Bill Kirby, at the University of Arizona who was also on the Bread Loaf–Santa Fe faculty. Ceci scheduled and attended a meeting with Kirby, where she expressed her ambitions for attending Bread Loaf and inquired further about the details of the program. Additionally, as Ceci engaged in the agentic practice of meeting with Bill Kirby and discussing her with him, she publically claimed knowledge as a teacher and as a learner. Kirby, who was connected with other Bread Loaf faculty, responded to Ceci's agentic practices by inviting her to meet Tilly Wornack, another Bread Loaf faculty member. Ceci immediately developed a bond with Wornack, which marked the next step of Ceci's experiences with Bread Loaf. In the company of Wornack, and later Jackie Royster and,

99

eventually, Dixie Goswami, Bread Loaf became a site of safe passage, from which Ceci publically claimed expertise and knowledge.

Narrative Episode 2

Ceci was immediately drawn to finding and creating communities that were geared toward generating place-based and other writing theories, like those Atwell made use of in her book, *In the Middle* (1987). Additionally, with two years of teaching completed, Ceci still felt the need to pursue her heart's desire, which was to become a writer. She had hoped that teaching English would give her the time and the environment she needed to write; however, she found that she rarely had enough of either. Bread Loaf, as a site of safe passage, gave Ceci the environment and the support she needed to move forward in the project of self-creation and to claim her identity as a woman writer who teaches.

> **Introduction.** And um so now, fast forward, I'm 38 years old and I've got a lot of life experience behind me and I wasn't really too frustrated with children or students or behavior because that just wasn't ever an issue for me.

> **Conflict.** But I knew that there had to be something more because after two years I was not writing and um I wasn't really moving and—

> **Narrative turn/course of action.** —I got the flyer for the Bread Loaf School of English, of which I was really excited about. The Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network at that time, that was funded by DeWitt Wallace and Reader's Digest. So I applied for that and came in 1996, I started with the Bread Loaf Teacher Network and *that* shook me upside down, spun me on my head, and I'm still spinning. [laughter]

> And it's *only* and I can say this definitively, it is only because of my association with the Bread Loaf Teacher Network, with Dixie Goswami, with the Bread Loaf School of English but even more importantly with Dixie and the Bread Loaf Teacher Network that I have grown as a writer, as a scholar, I mean I have *become* a writer because of them. Right? I wrote, but nobody ever read it, um, I always dreamed of being a writer but was never out there and through the Bread Loaf Teacher Network and the Bread Loaf Teacher Magazine I was published (elated).

100

It's only been through my involvement that I would even have the academic ability, the courage because I am a part of a network, right, with people, especially Dixie, who have encouraged me, who have um said you need to do this, and have believed in me I think most importantly. It has been the most incredible experience. So while, since I have been in the Bread Loaf Teacher Network I have published articles in the Network magazine, I have published, co-authored a book that was published by Teacher's College Press, and I have been encouraged to continue my education which is why, at the ripe age of 58, I am going to be embarking on a PhD! And you know that's kinda crazy but um [pause] what I think Bread Loaf, the Bread Loaf Teacher Network has provided me is an opportunity to continue trying to quench that thirst of knowledge, that, stretch myself more than I have ever been stretched.

This second narrative episode was elaborative and had high narrative intensity. The narrative turn/course of action in the narrative episode indicated Ceci was committed to involving herself in the work of Bread Loaf, during the summers and during the school year. Through her involvement, she formed lasting relationships with faculty and peers, who legitimized Ceci's writing and expertise, and who invited Ceci to continue conversations online and in person that were started at Bread Loaf in the summer.

The second narrative episode also illustrated Ceci's self-creation and transformation. In the first narrative episode, we saw Ceci reach for and obtain professional and personal relationships that helped her navigate safe passage to Bread Loaf. In the second narrative episode, we saw Ceci's self-creation as a writer actualized and we saw Bread Loaf become a site of safe passage. At Bread Loaf and through her associations with BLTN, the barriers fell away that had prevented Ceci from having the time to write, the place to write, and from making connections with peers and colleagues who encouraged her writing. The second narrative episode, which constituted the narrative turn of the life story, was where Ceci claimed her public identity as a writer. In the narrative episode, we see the protagonist (Ceci) go from having no chance or opportunity to write as an isolated teacher, to identifying and pursuing a writing

101

community, as well as becoming a published writer and publically claiming expertise. The narrative episode illustrated self-creation and transformation, as the protagonist reached for and obtained her heart's desire.

Jineyda

Narrative Episode 1

Jineyda was in a particularly interesting environment during this period of her professional life because she returned to her own school, Lawrence High School, to teach; when she returned, her former English teacher and then Bread Loaf grad, Rich Gorham, was still teaching English. Jineyda reconnected with Rich, who encouraged her to think about applying to Bread Loaf and also to consider attending the Andover Bread Loaf writing workshops that he co-directed with Lou Bernieri, another Bread Loaf graduate.

> **Introduction.** Well, to be honest again, I didn't become a writer until, again, I should say, I didn't start re-writing until I did Bread Loaf, in 2009. I um, so Rich Gorham, he sees me, he remembers me, he's like Oh my god, I miss you, bla bla bla. You have to do Bread Loaf. And then I'm like, you're joking, right. I'm not going to do Bread Loaf, I'm too busy, bla bla bla. Like, being a first year teacher at Lawrence High School, like, somebody needs to write a book on that because it really is taxing. And I'm saying that in the nicest way possible, you know?
>
> So, I was like, you know you're crazy, da da da, and he was like, no, you have to do it, da da da, so finally I was working in Upward Bound cause I wanted to give back, and I'm like, you know what, let me just take a summer off, it won't hurt me, let me do the two weeks at Andover Bread Loaf. And I did it, and I started writing again, Lil. And it was like an explosion because I hadn't really written like that since high school. Because in college, you know, you write your papers, you move on.
>
> **Conflict.** And then, um, you know, I was working 50 hours, so like what kind of writing was I going to do? I was too busy.
>
> So, and then when I started teaching in '06, I was too busy my first three years of teaching, you know?

102

Narrative turn/course of action. So what ended up happening was we um, we went to Bread Loaf and it was the first time I started creatively writing again. And it just exploded from there. I just kept writing and, like, people were like oh my god, this is so in depth, da da da. And the whole time I'm like, I don't know, like I've never, I've never had confidence with myself as a writer, not because it's low confidence, but because I see it and I don't see what's so special about it, it's just words, you know what I mean? Like I'm just speaking the truth, type of thing. So, you know I got a lot of positive feedback so on and so forth, and they're like you need to go to Bread Loaf up in the mountain. And I'm like, oh my god, you want be to go to a camp for six weeks [laughter] – like, what the hell? Bla bla blah, but those two weeks was when I met Dixie. And I knew that that was a class I could take because I sat in on her class and I also was invited to speak in Andrea Lunsford's class, cause Andrea Lunsford was teaching this class on like power and language and she wanted to know about translating –

You know, and I, just the feedback I got those two weeks, I was like, you know what, let me just try it. Because I never saw myself with a master's, you know what I mean? Like, college was the bar, and I barely made it through that because of just work and everything, you know what I mean?

So, my first summer on the mountain was really interesting cause socially, I just hated it. There were certain things I was just not ok with. But then I had Dixie's class and it was the first time ever that a professor allowed me to write academically and write in my own voice. I don't know if that makes sense, because the way I say it, it's like every time I wrote an academic paper, I knew how to sound white. So I would write white. Does that make sense?

Because that's what academic language is. So I imitated it. You know, just to kind of get through it. And she was the first one to kind of like say, you could write it however you want to write it. And I'm like, oh really? And she's like, yeah, you know, write it however you want to write it. And I wrote it to her, and it was like in Spanglish and it was also quote ghetto English, which is street English for us, you know what I mean?

And it was like a combination of all, it was a hybrid of all these like combinations of languages that I had inside of me and you know, at times, like I would bring in my mother's voice, too, you know, and quote her? And I would bring in my grandmother's voice, and Dixie just said, you know, I got to talk to you about this paper. I'm thinking this woman is going to give me an F, right? [laughter] She's like, I'm like I finally have crossed the barrier, the academic barrier that I shouldn't have crossed with Dixie Goswami. [laughter]

So, we go to her office and we had a three-hour conversation and since then, like, every academic paper I've written has to have my voice. You know, like I, even like last summer I took Mexican American Lit and Professor Bacca was so very like, encouraging with using your own voice, your own narrative, I even pushed the limits onto his paper. Like, it's very interesting, like, to be

discovering your voice in 2009. [laughter] You know, cause at that point, you know I had a college degree and everything, so that, that's when I became a writer, and you know, every time you see my interviews or anything, where I'm talking about either Bread Loaf or the work I do with What's Good in the Hood and their newsletter and you know the work I do at the here, just with the writing workshops, I refuse not to speak in my own voice anymore.

The narrative episode was elaborative and had high narrative intensity. The conflict in the narrative episode drew attention to the unfulfilling writing that was essentially non-writing Jineyda performed to get through college. The conflict also drew attention to the reality that Jineyda literally did not have the time to write creatively in the first three years of teaching. Not having the opportunity to write motivated Jineyda to carefully consider Rich's invitation to the Andover Bread Loaf Writing Workshop, which Jineyda eventually accepted.

During the two-week workshop, Jineyda began writing again. During the two weeks, the Andover Bread Loaf teachers also spend a few days at Bread Loaf School of English in Vermont, connecting with Goswami and other writing and language focused scholars, with the hope that a number of the Andover Bread Loaf writing workshop participants will apply to Bread Loaf School of English the following summer. As Jineyda found scholars who legitimized her thinking, her knowledge, and her uses of translation in the production of writing, Andover Bread Loaf and Bread Loaf School of English became sites of safe passage where Jineyda claimed and shared expertise.

The narrative turn/course of action was temporally kaleidoscopic, comparing the type of writing Jineyda was performing in college ("writing white") to the type of writing she was able to and encouraged to perform at Bread Loaf ("It was the first time ever that a professor allowed me to write academically and write in my own voice").

Narrative Episode 2

Jineyda found herself at another crossroads in her early years of teaching, one in which she would decide whether to teach to the test or to teach to the needs and interests of her students. Whereas her early experiences, like those of many teachers, included doing whatever she could to keep her head afloat, she also began to resist types of teaching which excluded or denied the experiences of her students.

Introduction. Scholarly wise, that's also where I developed because

Conflict. I was so stuck with like teaching toward the MCASS TEST because you get bombarded with that, of course, three years of your teaching, that you know, I didn't like myself as a teacher, to be really honest with you. Like, I was pushing it in some areas, but I wasn't pushing it enough, um, and

Narrative turn/course of action. It wasn't until Bread Loaf that I was like, you know, some of the stuff I did last summer at Bread Loaf got into the class, and then, forget it. After my first summer in Vermont, there was, I became a different teacher. Like, I was not the same teacher I was in 2007-2008, you know. I um I incorporated more writing, more personal writing, but also writing in reflection to the literature in your own personal voice. [pause] For example, like, we did Oedipus [Beowulf] once, the class of 2011, and this kid, Prince, he always would draw, like he is one of the most amazing artists you could ever see, right? And he's a drawer so, you know, we're talking about Grendel and the descriptions that made him evil and how those archetypes are also based on biases and you know what I mean, so on and so forth, and I see him and he's sketching, Lil, and he's sketching, sketching, sketching. So I go over and guess what? He's drawing Grendel. Like, he's drawing him. And I look at it was one of the most amazing drawings, not because he was good, but because he took the details that we had been discussing and he amplified it. In his drawing. And I'm like, that is more analytical than any BS topic that I could come up with. And have the kids write. You know what I'm saying?

Like his abilities to see those details of what made him evil and incorporating that into his drawing and amplifying it was so analytical. And then when I asked him, like, yo, Prince, why do, why do you, um, draw it that way? He just starts explaining it to me. And it was like an essay. You know? And that's how I push my students. Like, ok, I have to teach Beowulf, I'll teach it, but I'll teach it in a way where the literature relates to them not that they have to relate to the literature. Does that make sense?

105

Cause it's always like, oh we gotta bring the kids up to this level, it's like, no, the kids are at the level they're at, you need to bring whatever you're bringing into their level. Because it's their world. You know what I mean?

And I hate that because it's almost like they either dumb down the kids or they dumb down the literature.

That's what I've learned anyway since – a lot of it had to do with Dixie. A lot of it had to do with Lou um with the Bread Loaf Network**,** just having Rich around. Just being able to conversate with Kirkland or you know what I mean, like, being able to talk to Lorena, and just James Knight and just really push our ideas so – what are we doing in the classroom? You know, like, ok, yes, I don't control if I have to teach Beowulf but guess what? I can teach it in such a way where it becomes relevant to my student. You know what issues are my kids going to be interested in in Beowulf? Well, when we talked about Grendel it was the stereotype of evil, you know what I mean? And we talked about our own personal stereotypes and then the literature becomes personal. [pause] I mean, that's what I'm hoping I'm doing. A lot of times you gotta pray cause there's so many things going on in education right now. But – the kids always step it up, you know? The kids always remember it, you know?

So, I've noticed that mentorship has been really important to me through all my career and my life. Um, you know, the mentorship I receive now from Dixie and Lou and from Rich and Laura Bearfield informs me, informs my work, you know what I mean? And I think that's one of the reasons I fell in love with the BLTN network because I need that space where I can talk to other professionals about my work. Does that make sense?

You know, the school tries to give you that space, but it's always their agenda.

So it's not like it's a real space. So for me, like when I'm trying to find a new assignment, or something, you know, at the beginning of the year, I remember calling Dixie and being like you know Dixie, like, they don't have a fucking curriculum. [laughter] Like, what do I do? I've never taught 7th and 8th graders. Like, what the heck? And you know, she just, she talked to me on a professional level and you know, do this, do that, try this, try that. And I feel like that network piece is missing, in a lot of things, you know. And they don't, and people don't realize how important it is because it has been vital to my own growth as a scholar and you know, meeting Django and Kirkland the last couple summers and meeting Baca too, like, meeting other professionals who do what I do legitimizes it to a certain point, to a certain point, and also pushes it because I can now reach out to them and ask whatever I need to ask, you know. So, I think that's been huge.

This second narrative episode was elaborative and had high narrative intensity. In the process of self-creation and publically claiming her identity as a writer, Jineyda also transformed her teaching. She resisted the "teach to the test or perish" mantra which impedes the success and individual creativity of many teachers. Instead, Jineyda had her students engage in types of writing and artistic expression that were empowering. The success Jineyda experienced at Bread Loaf when she was finding her voice in 2009 and writing in that voice for public audiences also empowered her to create assignments where her students could write in their voices, too. She backed away from some of the more rigid aspects of the profession and relied more heavily on her own experience and expertise to guide her work in the classroom.

Jineyda also looked to her community of scholars, faculty, and peers for support and to share stories and methods, which resulted in positive outcomes. In her own words, Jineyda said these relationships and connections with other professionals who "do what I do legitimizes it to a certain point, and also pushes it because I can now reach out to them and ask whatever I need to ask, you know. So I think that's been huge." While Jineyda indicated that schools were trying to make professional development opportunities available to teachers, the experience was always geared towards the school or district needs, rather than the teachers and students' needs.

One final point about the narrative episode was that it was temporally kaleidoscopic in that it reached back to Jineyda's experiences with safe passage and the relationships that made safe passage possible in high school (Rich), college (Bearfield), Andover Bread Loaf (Lou), and Bread Loaf (Dixie, Baca, Paris, Kirkland). The narrative episode also illustrated Jineyda's willingness, even after claiming expertise as a teacher

107

and as a woman writer, to participate in experimentation and self-creation in the classroom. For instance, she recently started teaching middle school for the first time and discovered there was no curriculum. She reached out to her community, got in touch with Dixie, and spoke about curriculum development and resources she could use to design and implement her own curriculum. While the project of self-creation certainly is not over, it can be engaged in with more certainly, knowing that likeminded peers are accessible and willing to support Jineyda's endeavors and that she is there to support their endeavors, as well.

Conclusion

In this part of safe passage, the participants arrived at Bread Loaf School of English and became members of the Bread Loaf Teacher Network. At the same time, the participants underwent significant self-transformation, making public and claiming their identities as women writers. Each participant had expressed their love for writing and reading from an early age, but often kept their writing and their identities as women writers private or secret. In the company of likeminded peers and encouraging, supportive faculty, Bread Loaf and BLTN became catalytic sites from which identities could be claimed and identities could evolve. Additionally, the participants' ongoing involvement in Bread Loaf and BLTN made evident the intrinsic reward of a professional community like that at Bread Loaf, which supports the professional and personal ambitions of English teachers.

Chapter 6: Arriving at the Theory of Safe Passage Part III

Participants Extend the Rewards of Safe Passage to Their Students

At this stage of the theory of safe passage, the participants took further organized action in their professional communities. Their actions meant that they made their own classrooms sites of safe passage and their mentorship offered spaces and time for a sense of safe passage to develop in their students, as well. These experiences were kaleidoscopic, as the participants continuously drew on their own past experiences to help shape the types of experiences they would provide for their students. The participants also looked ahead to the future, securing grants, devising exchange projects, developing curricula, and community organizing inside and outside of school, making opportunities for their students and their colleagues more visible. Although the individual connections these teachers made with their students were not the focus of the study, the larger implications of the teachers' emphasis on the importance of face-to-face relationships with their students resulted in teacher activism. Consequently, these narrative episodes were specifically focused on magnifying the courses of action the participants took to achieve agency for themselves and to create opportunities in which their students could also take agentic actions. Additionally the participants' narrative episodes (combined) generated subversion narratives and did not necessarily feature the classical aspects of narrative arrangement (introduction, conflict, course of action) seen in the first two stages of safe passage.

Debbie

To extend safe passage to her students, Debbie continuously participated in experimentation and self-creation. For instance, through Bread Loaf, Debbie found the language to talk about her evolving pedagogical approach. In David Kirkland's class, Debbie wrote a paper called "The Word's Half Hour," which emphasized the importance of words in her life and in her teaching. In that same class, Debbie participated in a discussion where the characteristics of the wounded healer approach became topical. Though historically used in psych/medical settings, the wounded healer pedagogical approach could also refer to the motivation behind teachers like Debbie, who returned to the classroom to help kids like the kid she used to be.

Additionally, in an effort to extend the reward of sage passage to her students and to magnify the importance of the types of thinking and meaning making her students did, Debbie developed an exchange, which included inviting current Bread Loaf director Emily Bartels to participate in discussions around *Othello* (Shakespeare, 1603/1993), as contextualized in Bartels' (2008) book, *Speaking of the Moor: From "Alcazar" to "Othello."* Consequently, Debbie did not gloss over topics historically avoided or silenced in K–12 settings. In fact, by using Bartels' (2008) book, Debbie indicated that she took race (imposed, assigned, or chosen racial identities) as a central and salient theme and point of discussion with her high school English students. Bartelsherself contributed to these discussions and wrote back and forth with Debbie's students as they explicated and shared knowledge about the play and about what they were seeing in it, as they placed it in local and contemporaneous contexts.

> [The wiki is] called "Prejudice in Othello" and I used some of the same
> documents that I've already given you about prejudice and racism in Elizabethan

110

and Jakobean England... I took Emily's book into the classroom and I said, we're [in North Carolina] going to be doing this exchange with students, seniors in South Carolina and we posted essential questions and they had to respond to those. They had some wonderful discussions about the essential questions. By the way, you see this book here? The lady who wrote it is going to be in our exchange. [laughter] And one of the kids goes, "Not too much pressure, huh?" [laughter] And Emily ended up making a connection with one of the kids in the group. A girl who was graduating as soon as this class was over. Graduating a semester early who had twin sons who were a year old. And Emily is talking about Venice and how cool Shakespeare is and everything like that, and she got the student interested in traveling. And encouraged her to try to follow her dreams. Now I don't know if she has, but I know that she was a positive and motivated person for the rest of the semester. I did not have the first problem out of her. And she said she was going to try to make her dreams happen. And I put Emily's picture up and introduced her to the kids, and she's a professor at Rutgers, she's the director of my grad school, and all this stuff and they were majorly impressed with having her participate in the exchange.

I think they [the South Carolina students and the North Carolina students who participated in the exchange] had a better understanding and appreciation of Shakespeare because of the exchange. And I think the documents that I gave them about prejudice, and knowing that Othello is an African and a genuine hero, and that Shakespeare was wrestling with the idea of prejudice before it was even something to be concerned about, when it was acceptable to treat people differently 400 years ago. I mean, and I think it blows the kids' minds away. I know it blows mine away.

Extending the Reward of Safe Passage Using Evolving Digital Literacies

Debbie became interested in digital technologies while she was in the process of

obtaining her associates of art degree, which made participating in BLTN's blended

professional development distinctively appealing and made it easier for Debbie to engage

her students and legitimize their experiences and knowledge in digital spaces:

Well, [pause] when I was working on my AA, I didn't know anything about computers. And I was taking a science class that had a lab. And the final exam was on the computer. And I had difficulty even finding the buttons to turn the thing on. And I was the *last* person to finish the exam. And I made a C on the exam because and I know it was because I had difficulty with the computer. And I promised myself after that that I was not going to let that happen to me again. So I took two computer classes um as part of my AA [Associate's of Art], and learned how to use computers, and I fell in love with using computers, and you know how everybody talks about the kids being technology natives and we're immigrants, I feel more like a naturalized citizen than an immigrant. Yeah. I sort

111

of jumped all over it. Um [pause], you know, chatting online, using the internet for resources, and finding teaching materials and things like that. So when I saw that there was a class offered about using technology in the classroom I was all over it. So that was why I signed up to go to Vermont. To be in Dixie's class and learn how to use computers better in my classroom. So, um, my first year exchanges we used BreadNet and emails and um I would have the kids type things up and email em to me and then I'd copy and paste them into a First Class email and everything like that. And that was rather tedious. Well then, James and I wanted to do an exchange when he was here in town, he was at a different high school, and we wanted to try to do something digital after being challenged to that, or I'd been challenged to that by Dixie's class. So one of the other teachers at my school suggested a wiki and I didn't even know what a wiki was. And asked, alright Matthew, what is a wiki. He sat down with me, he spent about 15 or 20 minutes showing me how to navigate PB WORKS and that was it. Took it and ran. Self-explanatory. Um oh and James had also heard about a wiki and he said, somebody showed me but I couldn't figure it out. You know. So, with Matthew's teaching, James came over to my school, I set the wiki up, showed him how to do it, showed him how to add students, how to make pages and all that stuff, and so he did his end of it, and he set up his students pages for, we were doing, he had a Mass Com [mass communication] class and I had creative writing so we gave them a wide range of things they could write about and post them on the wiki. I went over the Riverside, he came over to Northern, we helped each other out in person and we also did use BreadNet, but we found ourselves using the wiki more and more and using the wiki was really eye-opening for me. Because I had never seen students so willing to work on their class work. I mean, these were kids who were already writing. They were on the wiki constantly. Before I could even tell them about making comments, they were commenting on each other's work. Immediate feedback. And with PB WORKS, you can get a notification any time someone makes a change to the page that you administer, and also it would give the time and what kind of changes were made. And that way you can track if the kids are doing anything inappropriate and you can delete it and stuff like that. You have a complete record of when everyone is logged on. They were logging on at all times of the day and night. One o'clock in the morning, two o'clock in the morning, on the weekend, over spring break, they were working on their pages. And I thought, "what is this?" I've never seen kids so eager to, to learn, to complete an assignment. And I honestly had to tell kids I'm really happy you're working on your page, but please, at one o'clock in the morning, you need to be sleeping so you can come to school!

Extending the Reward of Safe Passage to Student Engagement

Debbie's first exchange with James, between the two North Carolina high

schools, was a big success. Students authoring original work and sending feedback to

112

each other immediately, via SNS (Social Networking Sites) had desirable outcomes for student participation and enthusiasm:

> So for the culmination of that project, James and I decided we would do an Academy Awards night. Yes. And we agreed that we were going to meet, I don't know where we got the idea, I read about it somewhere online, no, I do too know where I got the idea. It was from my mass com teacher in high school. He gave Jerry, his first name was Jerry, so he gave Jerries instead of Oscars. And we went out to dinner and we had a viewing of our movies and stuff. So I took that idea and I found these little porcelain bowls that were like banks but there were about this big (shows with hands) really cute and so we painted, I got paint, and we painted on the side what the award was for. And we went to Texas Roadhouse and we met and the kids had dinner together and we gave out the awards and all this stuff so we did what my mass com teacher did when I was in high school. And the kids, they enjoyed meeting each other, they already, they felt like they knew each other because they had been commenting on pages and stuff and all of the kids posted their video of themselves reading their writing and I still have the wiki page and if you want you can access it. But they said that was so much fun and I think the fact that they had immediate response from their peers, because it provided immediate publication, I think that was very powerful for the students.

Students teaching students. Debbie's uses of SNS did not end after that first successful exchange. She went on to use wikis to host her students' work, making it possible for students across vast distances to reach each other and respond almost instantaneously:

> After I did wikis with creative writing class next fall, I did them with my other classes. And I, uh, I gave them options, at that time the wikis changed some since then, but you could post powerpoints, you could post videos, you could do, you could load all kinds of things from external sites, you know photo-stories and things like that so, and so I had my kids, take 'em to the library, introduce them to PB WORKS, give them a page, and they would post their projects there. And I now have about 48 different wikis that I either administer or I have editing privileges on that my kids have set up. And Bryan Alexander, I told him one time how many wikis I had, and he said "you're a wiki hearder." [laughter]

Students teaching teachers. Debbie's interest in and assumed leadership role in BLTN's professional development led her to host a two-day workshop for North Carolina teachers, which focused on highlighting the types of student work made possible through using wikis and other significant educational technologies, as tools to aid in student

engagement. Debbie extended the reward of safe passage to her students in this narrative

episode by generating a platform (the professional development workshop) from which

they could publically claim knowledge and expertise:

> And I had my students help teach and Write to Change [Dixie Goswami's nonprofit organization] provided food, refreshments. Two-day workshop. It took me almost 6 months to get the attention of the then English Curriculum Specialist. I emailed her, I called her, I did not hear back from her. I finally went to a workshop that I was told that she would be at, sat down with her, and showed her a Bread Loaf catalogue and said this is what we want to do, Bread Loaf is behind it, you're getting free professional development for the county, how can we get people active? And soon as I got her attention, she was all over it. Got us on the professional development calendar so that people could sign up and come to the workshop. And it was a two-day, she said the only way you can do it is if they would get enough hours so they'd get the CEUs [professional development credit for teachers]. I said, well let's do two days…and the second day they'll just come back and be with me, I'll give them homework the first day, and they'll come back and be with me and then we will, they will bring stuff and they will do their own wiki page. And the first day will just be about 'this is how you do it'. And we did help them with the basics and then, most of them did come back the second day and we, the kids helped me the second day. There weren't any other teachers there. Just me and the kids. Working with these teachers and helping them load documents, paste things on there, and one of these, this little lady from one of the schools looked at me and she said, "they need more teachers doing professional development."

> But Jim came for that, and I set up similarly to what we do at our school. At the beginning of the year, we have kind of round robins where you go from classroom to classroom, split up into small groups, and then – so I did the presentation three times. You know. And James came and he did part of the presentation. My students made their own wiki page and they gave a presentation, too. So we had about three minutes apiece where we got up and we talked and did our wiki presentation. Here she is, up there talking to teachers about this is what you can do with the wiki and this is why we love it. And then [here were these students] helping teach these teachers how to do it.

Extending the Reward of Safe Passage by Securing Outside Funding

Debbie's interest in taking what she learned at Bread Loaf during the summers

back to her own students during the school year continued to grow. In an effort to be

awarded funds to return to her studies at Bread Loaf, Debbie wrote two NEA (National

Endowment for the Arts) grants, one of which was based on Debbie's coursework in

114

Goswami's class, "Evolving Forms of Literacy." In addition to providing funds to help Debbie return to Bread Loaf for another summer of studies, Debbie's grant money would also pay for the purchase and use of iPods and an iPod cart for her students. But the NEA did not award her the grant. Determined, she kept looking at possible grant options through the NEA. Debbie then wrote a second grant called "Hip Hop to Close the Gap," in which she discussed the proposed work she would do with Django Paris in his class at Bread Loaf the following summer, and how hip hop and poetry can help motivate African American students, especially African American males, to stay in school. With the overwhelming support of Debbie's principal, she received the grant from NEA. By writing the grant, Debbie had a chance to return for another summer semester at Bread Loaf, and she proposed to study the impact language and literacy learning had on youth culture and to develop learning engagements that would positively affect the oral and written communications of youth. Consequently, the grant made possible one more opportunity for Debbie to extend the rewards of safe passage to her students because she was publically—on a local and a national level—legitimizing the oral and written communications of her students.

Additionally, Debbie helped her school receive other funding that would extend the reward of safe passage to her students. For instance, in the summer of 2009, when former Bread Loaf faculty member Ken Macrorie died, a tremendous amount of deliberation went into establishing a Ken Macrorie Writing Center at Bread Loaf. In the summers that followed, faculty members such as Dixie Goswami, Beverly Moss, Andrea Lunsford, and John Elder, among others, encouraged Bread Loaf students to set up writing centers in their schools. When the Writing Center at Bread Loaf Vermont

115

opened, Debbie considered participating as an editor/reader, but thought better of it, as

she already had a job in the Bread Loaf Computer Lab, the Apple Cellar. Later, however,

a folder opened on BreadNet about establishing Writing Centers and Dixie Goswami's

nonprofit organization, Write to Change, was providing some initial funding. Debbie

received the initial funding from Write to Change, but the money sat in a Writing Center

account for a whole year due to no space to open a Writing Center at the school. The

next year, however, Debbie teamed up with two of the assistant principals, and the dream

for the Writing Center became a reality. Though Debbie eventually took a back row seat,

her persistence in wanting to establish the Writing Center had implications for

acknowledging the written communications of students and their families:

> So they [the two assistant principals] came down to my room and they told me,
> we know this is your idea and your baby and everything like that, but we have
> some ideas too and we wanted to know what you thought about it. And they
> started telling me how they want to have it open in the evenings, uh, that's part of
> their plan, so, you know, the kids could use it then. Maybe some of the people in
> the community could use it and they want to have supplies for kids, like she did in
> her classroom for their projects and things like that. And they wanted to try to
> gather some computers and stuff. Well, then you know, this other grant comes
> up, and apparently, -- oh, and they asked me, we don't want to step on your toes,
> you mind if we take this over? Really? No. You go right ahead. Please, don't
> worry about me. When it comes to the kids I don't have an ego. What's good for
> them, it'll carry more weight if you guys, if the administration is behind it
> anyway. Have at it. And they said ok. Next thing I know, they write this grant,
> and they get for the writing center 54,000 dollars. To buy computers, to create a
> professional library, to train people in there, and I think even some stipends and
> stuff for teachers who work in there are included. And also to send three teachers
> to that conference in Chicago that was in Durham last year. And I, I could pull
> the name of it up, but it has to do with closing the achievement gap for African
> American students. Ok. Particularly boys. And they're on fire over that. And
> that's what's got them on fire about this because our school population now is
> more than 50% minority. So we're trying really hard to turn things around. And I
> wrote parts [of the grant] for Poetic Justice. So all together we got about 59,000
> dollars. And they're getting 15 new computers, and they're, and everything we
> need to staff it and supplies and everything. Now I haven't been sticking my nose
> in because um, I don't want to get tons of responsibility dumped back on me,
> since they've made it their own child. I said I'll be happy to come and work my

116

shift. You know. I think this is wonderful. Have at it. You know. So, I mean, I'm thrilled because they're going to do way more than I ever could have accomplished with $250-500 dollars. You know. I was going to be begging for left over computers and things like that and borrowing old desks and things, and they're going to have decent supplies.

Extending the Reward of Safe Passage Through BLTN Reports

We learned earlier that Debbie's experience with Professor Emma Smith at Oxford was life-altering. In that class, Debbie introduced considerable topical research on two of the novels for the class. In Debbie's 2009–2010 BLTN report, she reflected critically on her work at Oxford and wrote a report that would link that work to her teaching during the academic year. She developed a direct linkage between her intellectual experiences with safe passage at Bread Loaf-Oxford and the safe-passage she made available for students by aligning the work she studied with Emma Smith to correspond directly to the North Carolina state standards. Consequently, below is an expression of how Debbie's Bread Loaf course work defined and framed portions of her teaching during the academic year back in North Carolina. The report dealt specifically with aligning proposed student work with North Carolina state standards (see Appendix A for complete table).

Debbie took considerable time and effort to follow and acknowledge the impact that standardization had on her teaching, instruction, and curriculum development. She further decided to familiarize herself with the growing conversations about the Common Core Standards and how those standards would impact her instruction and her students. In this narrative episode, Debbie's initiative was agentic for her and for her colleagues and had later, positive implications for her students because the teachers did not have to completely rewrite the state standards. Additionally, Debbie stepped into a role where

117

she officially authored units for her school and her district, directing the course of

instruction and the methods of instruction in favor of her students:

> Any professional development that we have here it's a pain to go to, a lot of times it's stuff that we've already covered, or busy work. Um, after Dixie's class, well as part of her class, I was trying to find the standards for North Carolina to incorporate them into that, the grant document that I wrote, and I stumbled onto all this information about the Common Core. And it was before anybody was talking about the common core. I came back to school and I asked my department head about the common core and she had not ever heard of it. I asked the other teachers and none of them had heard about the common core. Nope, didn't have a clue. That year, they made us take the North Carolina standards and unpack them. Several standards a month. The whole time we're doing this, I'm fussing, we already adopted the common core standards, why are we unpacking standards that we're going, this is going to be the last time we use them? 2013 school year, we have to use the Common Core. Why, this is a waste of time? We still had to do them. But we found a way around it. One of the other teachers, um, found online an article that did a line-by-line comparison of our standards and the common core and so we sort of did a scaffolding type thing, you know, this is our standard, this is the common core that goes with it. And I fussed and I fussed and I fussed about it. Each meeting was an absolute waste of time.
>
> So we go to this meeting and I am pissed beyond belief because North Carolina adopted the common core standards as part of the Race to the Top. It's one of the mandates. If you want Race to the Top, you have to adopt the common core. So what does North Carolina decide to do? Give all the Race to the Top money to kindergarten and first grade. So we have to do all this extra work, and I will never see a minute's profit of it. And I go to this first meeting and I gave her an earful.
>
> And I said, you know, I said, I will be retired before these kids ever show up in my classroom. And we have to do all this extra stuff, work harder, adopt more standards, write new curriculum, and everything like that, and I started talking about Bread Loaf. And she says, I was actually telling her that when we were at Bread Loaf how everybody was worried we weren't going to be able to use full novels with too much focus on informational texts, and all this stuff, and she says, well I know all about Bread Loaf. I'm from New York. And I said, well, I have my master's from Bread Loaf. So she was nice. She said she understood. Let me vent.
>
> Then she starts advertising online that, through our school system, that they needed teachers to write curriculum to align with the common core standards. And here again, if it wasn't Bread Loaf, I wouldn't have had the guts to do this, although I had written curriculum before, but I'd written, I wrote it with another teacher. And we were already working on there, and we re-wrote it for the, it ended up being the curriculum for the night school for the whole county

118

[pauses] but we took what was there and we revised it. So I was teaching seniors, I had just started teaching seniors, um, last year, and so I emailed her and said I wouldn't mind writing curriculum for English IV. [pauses] And out of the entire county, they picked four teachers, and she picked me. So I got paid extra money last year to write these units and …

On *Othello* (Shakespeare. 1603/1993), *A Modest Proposal* (Swift, 1728/2010), and *Brave New World* (Huxley, 2006). And they all have technology embedded in them, things that I learned I Bread Loaf, um, I learned about accessing documents at Bread Loaf, that I never would have thought to access before. And I, I mean I have primary source documents with *A Modest Proposal*, I had the penal code from 16- something in Ireland and everything, and how, I used that with my kids, because basically we treated the Irish like they were slaves. You know. So we used that to make a comparison to slavery here in the United States to try to make it relevant. But for the *Modest Proposal* unit, and the *Brave New World*, there's a week of technology orientation and being safe on the internet in both of those. And that comes from our conversations at Bread Loaf. *Othello* had to have the research paper so I have technology embedded in it but not the, you know, the unit at the beginning. Because I didn't feel like it should go in there. If they're doing a research paper. And with both of them I put a note if you've already covered technology in the beginning of the year, you can skip this step. [pause] So I wrote three units and they're on the Bread Loaf bibliography, too. So if you wanted to see them they're there.

In this excerpt, Debbie acknowledged that local professional development was often unfulfilling and without purpose, despite some administrators' efforts to make it engaging. Debbie, however, plowed her own way, using agentic practices. She recognized that her school and her students had needs and she used her Bread Loaf course work and her pedagogy to meet those needs. Even while exhibiting skepticism about the Common Core Standards, Debbie embedded the use of primary sources and the use of instructional technology in the curriculum; she rose to meet the growing demands to use information texts, while resisting some of the more rigid applications of the standards. She participated in subversion techniques by putting herself forward and claiming expertise to write the new units for her district, elevating her dynamic pedagogies and embedding technology instruction, while making the work relevant and interesting for high school students.

119

Extending the Reward of Safe Passage Through Activism ("But I Do It Anyway. I've Always Done That.")

As Debbie and I spoke further about race in *Othello* (1603/1993), she brought up some of the articles she used from the Folger Shakespeare Set Free (Folger Shakespeare Library, 2009) course kit with her students. Some of the resources questioned the existence of races, while others focused on sexual jealousy that can lead to tragic outcomes. This led Debbie's students to talk about domestic abuse and if it was ever acceptable to abuse another human being. Compelled to ask, I wanted to know if Debbie had always been so bold in confronting and engaging difficult topics from which some schools and parents shy away. Debbie, it turned out, had a history of raising eyebrows with her frank methods. Starting in Florida, during her first teaching job, she "terrified the librarian" with her topical approaches to literature, and later, when a fellow teacher observed Debbie's class in Durham, the visiting teacher was taken aback by the Freedom Writers' resources Debbie used and later mentioned to other teachers that Debbie shouldn't be using such material in her instruction. When I asked Debbie if what she was doing was putting her job in jeopardy, she said, despite the complaints:

> I do it anyway. I've always done it. I've never compromised on that. You know, school was my safe place. Later, my job became my safe place. Because it was the place where I could be in control and know what was going on. And I've never had anyone question my ability to teach. Or question my ability when I was in the bakery. I've always had very good reviews, uh, evaluations.

Additionally, Debbie received continued support from her principal and from other teachers. She had never had a parent complain about the materials she used and she believed vehemently that you have to "talk to the kids, about what's important to them and give them a chance to tell you what they think, then they will respect you. And if you don't make it accessible to them, they're not going to buy in. And you're still going

120

to have kids who aren't going to buy in no matter what you do." Debbie practiced what

Bread Loaf faculty member David Kirkland called a Pedagogy of Love:

> You're honest with them, if you put yourself out there, for them, most of them will respond in kind. [pause] I also do with them that stereotyping thing that I told you about where I ask them to evaluate me.
>
> How much education do you think my parents had? How much money did they make? Are they still married? Are they divorced? Where do we live – in the city, out in the suburbs, in the country, where do you think? And I always get this upper middle class college educated still married, living out in the suburbs routine. And I go – wrong! My mother quit school in 6th grade, my father quit school in 7th grade, and we lived in the ghetto that was way worse than where you live right now. And I give them that story and they kinda sit there and they're like, oh. No. And if you tell 'em I'm not anybody special, I'm one person. If I can get to where I am now and overcome those things, you can do what you want to if you really work at it. There is hope. [pause]. You can't reach everybody. But you can try.

Extending the Rewards of Safe Passage Through Community Organizing (How we

Fought the Budget Cuts and Won)

North Carolina, like South Carolina, has no teachers' unions. During the budget

cut crises that have plagued the country and which have had devastating effects on the

teaching community, Debbie found her school among those targeted for budget cuts. The

first evidence arrived as assistant principal pay cuts.

> We marched from the school board over to the county commissioner's office. We stood outside with our signs and they came out and they said they heard us and they were going to do something to make it happen. The, um, manager for the county was not listening, they did not want to put another tax, the one penny tax, because they didn't want to raise taxes a penny. And kept talking against it, I took kids to the school board meetings, the county commissioner's meeting. They spoke at both events and the, at the school board meeting, the atmosphere was really really tense. And the school board seemed very defensive. But when [two of Debbie' students] got up there and spoke about how they needed their teachers in the classroom, they paid more attention to them than they did to anyone else. And it kind of defused some of the tension in the room. And other kids got up from other schools, as well. Mine weren't the only ones. [pause] And they ended up reallocating some of the capitol funds and kept almost all, I think it was 216 teachers, in the classroom. Yes. And they cut out some positions downtown and consolidated like that. Because of what we did. Um, Lou [another BLTN

121

member] actually emailed me and asked me for details for what we did because he wanted to put some of that stuff in play up in Massachusetts as well. But not only did they do that, the kids wrote letters. I had them, I had said instead of a warm-up, write a letter and ask to keep your teachers in the classroom. And they did. [One of Debbie's students], she emailed every county commissioner, every school board member, and she emailed the governor and she heard back from the governor.

Eighteen years old. This kid who is at Columbia University now. Um, we both, I was emailing them. I did not hear back from the governor other than a form letter. But some of the local commissioners called me back, left messages and stuff, and said they were listening, you know, and they would look at the budget very carefully. They wanted to keep teachers in the classroom, as well.

When the kids found out they may not have their arts and band program and everything like that they were hot. They wanted to do something about it. And if went and talked to some of the seniors that are still there, they were involved in it, and they'll talk about, yeah, how we fought the budget cuts and we won. So, what kind of lesson does that give the kids? Their opinion matters. They can be heard by their government.

In another budget attack, the district planned to cut the funding for student literary work

and publications at Debbie's school.

I'm the only one in the entire county that goes down there to complain about the fact that they were going to reinstate everybody else's stipends but not ours. I'm giving them yearbooks and lit mags and they're up there looking through them, and you've seen our lit mags, --

And I said, this was produced as an after school activity. The literary magazine. I said, yearbook and newspaper are a class. I said, but I don't know if you're aware of this or not, but you will not get, schools will not get their – and I found this out because we went through accreditation in Florida and I advised the newspaper down there, and one of the criteria for having your accreditation through the college board is that you have student-produced publications. I said are you aware that for a school to be certified –

—to get their accreditation you must have student-produced publications? And I said um, I cannot in good conscience understand how you would give a coach a stipend and refuse to give a stipend to publications advisors. I said I cannot believe you want to send the message to the kids that their words are not worth being seen in print.

They reinstated publications stipends THAT night. [laughter] And they kept mentioning, when they came out and made their decision, they mentioned my name and mentioned me bringing all this stuff and they said, point blank, I cannot go forward with this unless they reinstate the stipends for advisors.

So, that's how I'm politically active.

In these instances of activism, the state of North Carolina and the school district heard Debbie and her actions led directly to change with immediate results for her students and for her colleagues. Additionally, and perhaps more significantly, Debbie modeled for her students what activism looked like in action. Not only did she involve her students in the democratic process, she again extended the reward of safe passage to her students by taking action to protect the teachers against budget cuts and by establishing a movement that brought about real change, grounded in protecting student-produced publications. The voices of the students, who spoke up on behalf of the assistant principals, were heard (see Table 6.1). Also, in a public forum, Debbie displayed the work of student writers, authors, and other artists involved in the student-produced publications and used empirical evidence to defend the importance of student-created work (see Table 6.2). By persuading the district to keep the student-produced publications, Debbie legitimized the students' experiences and language, and extended that opportunity to future high school students in Debbie's district.

Table 6.1

Responses to Budget Cuts in School and Community Settings

Assistant principals to receive 11 months' pay instead of 12 months. One month of pay cut.	Debbie spoke to her students and described how these changes would affect them. If teachers were losing their jobs, the class sizes would grow.	1) Let's start a petition. 2) Students took the petitions home. 3) People signed them at school. 4) Other schools started petitions, too.	Meetings with commissioners and teachers ensued. One woman talked about how she made such a small salary as a teacher that she qualified for food stamps and at one point was living in her car with three small children.	The local NEA got involved and collaboratively organized a march with the school board.

Table 6.2

Single Response From One Teacher to Budget Cuts

Problem	Initial Action	Narrative Turn	Further Action
Cut out stipends for extra-curriculars, including the year book, the newspaper, and the literary magazine.	1) One teacher went to the budget vote. 2) Teachers signed the petitions but did not go down the budget vote to "fight" for the extra-curricular funding.	Before the vote, news gets out that the commission is going to reinstate the athletic stipends but not the stipends for the student produced literary work.	Debbie, alone, drives down to the meeting with stacks of yearbooks, newspapers, and literary magazines to confront the commission planning to reinstate the athletic funds and not the literary funds.

124

Ceci

Extending the Reward of Safe Passage by Establishing International Student Collaboration

Ceci extended the reward of safe passage to her students by giving them the chance to share their knowledge about Arizona and to acquire knowledge about South Africa. The groups of students and teachers worked collaboratively to create and legitimize the experiences of the students in disparate geographies. In the process of sustaining the connection with the Imagine Scholars program, Ceci's students learned about video documentation and then made a video about Cochise College to share with the Imagine Scholars in South Africa:

> I've been working with students from the Incomasi Imagine Scholars and my students have been communicating with them, a little erratically, but we have been on a Facebook page, and there, the students in the Incomasi are 10th–12th graders and it's a program where they have to come in, it's an NGO, and they come in, they have to apply to be accepted, and then they come in and work on improving their reading, writing, and English skills. So my students um participate by having discussions with them online about what they're doing. Like recently they've just finished studying *Of Mice and Men* (Steinbeck, 1993).
>
> They read that so they were talking about law and justice system and what it means to provide justice for some and not for others, and trials, right, and we had a really lengthy talk in my class, in my 101B class, with, about what that means and so we have a student from Mexico whose idea of justice differs quite a bit from ours because of his system, anyway, we've been exchanging back and forth.

When I asked Ceci how she had established such an interesting connection with the Incomasi, she explained:

> We started working with the Incomasi because when I went to [Andover Bread Loaf for] the first year, as a student, I met, in my cohort, Jack Judson who was also a student and then Jack Judson came back and we did a program together um and he had been working with the Incomasi and he was just back in the United States and he's also a film guy so he came and filmed my students and we did a page for Facebook, a Facebook page for the hundredth year anniversary of Arizona as a state. And he still had friends working at Imagine Scholar in the

125

Incomasi so he hooked me up with Cory Johnson who is still there and then Cory came the following year when I was co-director at ABL and, um, so Cory and I have been working together. So it's a network, right?

The video was later viewed by the Cochise College administration and posted online and made available to all Internet users. In the narrative, Ceci made a total of three contexts available in which her students could claim expertise. First, she established the connections the Imagine Scholars where the students in each group wrote back and forth about their understandings of the novel *Of Mice and Men* (Steinbeck, 1993). Second, Ceci's students made a video, which was viewed by the college administration, legitimizing the perspectives and insights of college kids. And third, when the students posted the video to the Internet, they were able to see responses, comments, likes, and more in online spaces. Seeing their work viewed and discussed in multiple contexts was an empowering experience for Ceci's students.

Extending the Reward of Safe Passage by Promoting Technology Literacies

Ceci extended the rewards of safe passage to her students by developing assignments that had multiple future purposes. She understood early in her career as a transcriptionist and later as a teacher that technology literacy is beneficial to just about every field of work in the twenty-first century. For instance, not only were the videos shown locally and promoted online, but they also contributed to building the students' digital portfolios. Students were able to share the videos with their families and to maintain access to the videos in the archives to show future employees or as further evidence of their technological abilities:

> Um, for my students, we have been utilizing Facebook because it is more accessible for those who aren't in the BreadNet network, right? Um, and I don't have to download that on every computer, however, I still have students who don't have Facebook. Um, [pause]. What's the word I'm looking for? They're not on Facebook? So they don't have Facebook accounts. Um, so that's kind of

126

different. I thought everybody did. That I was one of the last! But I do have students who aren't on Facebook. So, when that person has to respond they usually do it through somebody else's account in the classroom. Um, and we don't really do a lot of responding. What we do do is posting and let others write to us. Um, one of the other things that um BreadNet or Bread Loaf, the Bread Loaf Teacher Network has done, and here again, Dixie has been an incredible, an incredible mentor, is that I don't have to know everything. That has been such a freeing experience for me. While there are many Bread Loaf Teacher Network members who are really proficient like Janet Atkins and Tom McKenna and um, and I could just go on, that have their own incredible webpages and things like that. I'm not there. But my students can do it. And, for instance, this past year, when we were doing that Facebook page for City to School, one of the requirements was that they had to, in whatever area that they were going to be um researching about Cochise College, I had the larger umbrella topic which was Cochise College, but they had to decide what part of Cochise College they wanted to research. They were researching that and then they had to interview someone in that field, right? Well, one of the biggest things was interviewing the individual, and THEN pairing down the interview to 3-5 minutes. And nobody had editing skills on how to pare down a video-taped interview. I showed them about the interview process, you know we talked about interview questions, we discussed what would be important, and why on their subjects, where their subjects should be sitting, how they should be looking, how they should be looking at the camera, what angle the camera should be, um, we discussed all that. But I don't know anything about editing. And this one student, oh my gosh, she was like – I can't do this! I've never done this before! And I said, we'll learn this together and we did! And we got help from the librarian, but um, when she was done, she said, oh and she you know, interviewed Tanya.

So she had like 26 minutes [laughter] and she didn't know how to get it down to 3-5 minutes. And the 3-5 that they had, the finished product must be approved, one of the requirements was that it must be approved by the interviewee prior to posting it and of course they had to learn about signing off, and getting permission, and doing all of that stuff and so it was really fascinating to see that. But just because I have an idea doesn't mean I have to do all of that. And I learned that from ole Miss Goswami because –

So, in order to help them become more competitive and more proficient in this electronic age, sometimes I have to pull them kicking and screaming, but when they have done it, that gal walked out of there so proud. And then when we presented them and everybody got to see their own videos, she was like Oh! My gosh! That was so nice! Thank you very much! To know who her interviewee was and the student knew that this is a form of communication, it is, maybe not the written essay, but she wrote the questions, she had to analyze the responses, she had to make choices on what to keep and what to let go. And that is the writing process, right?

That's interesting because one of the, mmm one of the things, once the president and vice president and all the deans viewed the presentation, um, it was highly recommended that we put a disclaimer on it. They were saying that this was a project and not necessarily the views of the administration. However, that's the best bang for buck they got for advertising because it's free. And we get so many hits because people just Google Cochise College and there it is!

And the students love that. Oh did you see how many people liked it, how many likes we got this week, and –

It's also easier for them because it's archived. It's archived, so they can go back and show their family members – well look what I've done, look what I've done. And they can show future employers, look, this is mine. Here's my essay, here's my um video. I have this. So in terms of moving them forward, they have, as long as that stays up on Facebook they have that information.

In the narrative episode, Ceci referred to her mentor's instructional methods, which helped Ceci with her work at Bread Loaf. She then applied those methods to her own twenty-first century instructional setting. In the particular instance, Ceci extended the rewards of safe passage to her students by inviting them to claim expertise, widely through posting their work on the Internet, as well as more locally, by having the students present their work to the president, vice president, and the deans of Cochise College.

The video-making process, however, was deeply rooted in the writing process, and required the students to apply analytic and revision strategies to their interviews. There was a tremendous amount of editing, as well, which required the students, in some cases, to edit 25–30 minute long videos down to 3–5 minute clips. Ceci also required that the students remain in contact with their interviewees and that they receive final approval of the shortened video before it was made public, as a type of member checking. Ceci's students were viewing and creating ethical responses to representation from a personal— and also legal—standpoint, as the college had to approve the video and apply a disclaimer.

Extending the Reward of Safe Passage Through Activism

Ceci was modest about her activism and, like Debbie, chose her wording carefully. More significantly, she chose her actions wisely. While my mindset was to call what Ceci did political, she did not see it that way. Rather, Ceci dug into the community and rooted out needs that were much more systemically motivated and much less visible than the everyday political spats in the news. Ceci was distinctly aware of the contested politics of her home state, Arizona, and folded into her style of instruction, opportunities for her students to trace their interests back to the root cause, the beginning, and the truth—or as close to the truth as any of us can find. Her beliefs about her instructional style were not motivated by politics, but by a strong sense of practicality and logic. Ceci developed instructional styles and pedagogical choices—like looking for needs in the school community and asking her students to use primary resources, such as interview data they gathered from their own encounters and other meaning-makers—that made choices and opportunities visible to her students as a result of their own willingness to track down truths. As a result, Ceci's activism broke down barriers (political barriers in Arizona and geographical barriers between exchange groups such as her students' work with the Incomasi in Africa) and had personal and general implications for her students, their schools, and their communities:

> When I was growing up my mother always said that I was a rebel with any cause
> [laughter]. However, um, I suspect it, I – I would love to say that I'm a powerful
> activist, but um, a mover and shaker, but I think I shake. I'm not, I'm not sure
> how to phrase this. My activism is done in helping individuals think**.** Not WHAT
> to think, but HOW to think. And so that, um, has been, especially in the public
> school system in Arizona, a radical kind of activism. And so I always encourage
> my students when I was teaching at the high school to do projects that they cared
> about, that would have some type of, um, effect or movement beyond themselves.
> And to think about why that was important. So, in that regard, it was not about
> my activism, my project, my – and I'm very careful about that because, as the role

129

of instructor, I want my students to think but I want them to think for themselves and to look at the logic and I have too often seen, um, instructors who have their own agenda that they try to push onto their students because they are passionate that, but I don't think that's fair. Because I now believe that there are many more sides, particularly living here in the Southwest. So, when we open up a topic, like immigration, um it's important that we have a place where everyone's voice can be heard and that the logic is followed through. Right? And so probably my activism is in, um, providing a safe space for critical thought and uh, in an area where people's ideas can be challenged but not the people. Right? And that's really important for me. So at the college level, I teach the persuasive argument and the persuasive argument um, is that's – that's the capstone for 101 and that capstone requires a place where people can take a topic that they are passionate about, look at it, and then, and also look at the opposing viewpoints and why that's important. How they can, um, refute that opposition. It has to be about the principles, it can't be about the principles, it's about the people.

So what often happens, uh, is that people who begin researching something that they have felt passionately about and then have to change their opinion about why they felt passionately about it because there was no substantive support for their emotions, have had their eyes opened and then, I think I feel like I've really done something in the world. One person can look logically and find the, and change an opinion they never understood. And that happens. [laughter] Maybe not too often, but one is better than none. [laughter] And I usually get at least one a semester that says, oh my gosh, I never knew why I felt this way. I never understood why I felt this way and this way that I feel is not logical and I need to be more aware. When we look at issues of immigration, we look at issues, at that time, gays in the military, issues, all those types of things. Well, in that classroom, that's a safe place for that to be. And then other people's eyes are opened because they see the logic of the argument. [pause]

So if that would be radical I guess maybe, or if that would be, um, any kind of activism that would be what I would call, that would be how I call myself an activist.

On the more personal, on a more professional basis, in the Bread Loaf Teacher Network I'm active in issues of social justice in helping other teachers see how they can promote equality of learning and understanding and logic in their own classrooms. How, um, and I try to do that in my department here. [laughter] Often times, not very successfully, but, um, so that's what I really feel, you know, that if I can help, it's like, you know, how when you throw a rock in a pond and the circles go out and go out and go out, well, Dixie's that rock. Right? She is the center of the circle and then we are the concentric circles that move out away from that and I want to be there, right? I want to be a circle, I want to be one of the waves that causes another wave. I want to be one of the waves that causes a wave that causes another wave that causes another wave. And that's how I view my activism with the Bread Loaf Teacher Network.

130

In the narrative episode, Ceci explained how she developed a pedagogical style, in her work with her students and with other teachers, that focused on teaching young people "how to think, not what to think" and by guiding other teachers to use instructional methods that "promote equality of learning and understanding and logic." By implementing her pedagogical style, Ceci extended safe passage to her students by dialoguing with them around issues that were most important to the students and the students' identities (even if the student was initially misinformed). For example, the open exchange of ideas that Ceci promoted created conditions in which opinions, meaning making, and discovery (intellectual and self-discovery) could take place and be validated. Further, Ceci shaped the site of safe passage for her students to respond directly to the environments in which she met them. For example, Ceci was teaching English 101 or early English early courses to students entering Cochise College. The objectives of the courses required that students be able to write a research paper, using research and persuasive argument techniques. Ceci emphasized logic over emotion; however, she also acknowledged the validity of her students' opinions before they researched a topic and then legitimized the magnitude of social and intellectual growth necessary to accept the end results, had a change of opinion occurred in the process (e.g., the student who is fiercely opposed to gay marriage, then has a change of opinion after researching the issue).

Ceci's pedagogical choices in the context of providing safe passage for her students were considered "radical" in an ultra-conservative state like Arizona. She invited conversation between students and their topics, via research presentations, while also meeting her course objectives. Ceci's experimentation in the classroom came from

131

her fierce commitment to being part of concentric circles of actions, from her desire to move away from her mentor, Dixie Goswami, and her eagerness to build on the momentum of her colleagues at Bread Loaf and BLTN.

Extending the Reward of Safe Passage Through BLTN Report

Ceci's document artifacts were from the 2001–2002 academic year, during the aftermath of Arizona's adoption of Proposition 203 (Arizona Secretary of State, 2000), which proposed to severely limit bilingual instruction for English language learners. However, as I observed her as she moved from student to student, offering greetings and later responding to research paper-related questions, Ceci spoke in English and in Spanish. In Arizona, a state that has spearheaded the English only movement in the U.S., it absolutely required a radical courageous teacher to extend safe passage to students so they could resist language persecution in academic settings and so they could see a mentor/teacher resisting language persecution, as well. At the time of the 2001–2002 report, in addition to seeing the community suffer under extreme language instruction restrictions, Ceci was also seeing schools struggling under the heightened demands of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2001) and the accountability movement. Further, teachers were experiencing significant financial strains and the educative landscapes in Arizona were tense and unpredictable. Even though Ceci was seeing first-hand how students, teachers, and communities, especially Cochise County, were suffering under new legislation, she was also responding to the needs of her students, colleagues, and communities, as they arose. For instance, Ceci hosted exchanges on relevant texts, pursued and received outside funding to bring other BLTN teachers and faculty to Arizona to work with her students, and she and her BLTN partners in Arizona worked

132

tirelessly to engage the school board and the Arizona Department of Education to recognize the work of BLTN teachers and to, as Ceci wrote, see BLTN teachers as "innovators and leaders" in the state (see Appendix B for complete table).

Ceci's report pulled from the work she was doing in her individual classes, exchange groups, and in her work with the Arizona Department of Education. The work with the Arizona Department of Education was subversive because it elevated from within the politicized institution types of instruction and types of learning that resisted Proposition 203 (Arizona Secretary of State, 2000) and other rigid mandates on ELA faculty across the state.

<div align="center">

Jineyda

</div>

Extending the Rewards of Safe Passage Through Activism and Community Organizing

Jineyda's activism and community organizing took place in and out of school. Because she had developed such a strong affinity for the Latino population living in her beloved home city of Lawrence, much of her activism took her beyond the school and into the community. Often, she involved herself in small-scale networks that addressed a need in the community (such as the Greater Lawrence Young Professional Network) by being the resource or by making the resources available to others coming up through the community as students or as workers and professionals. The work she was doing was largely motivated by her commitment to give back to the community that raised her. That meant not only involving herself in efforts to revitalize, restore, and clean up Lawrence; she saw that she could also help through her work as a teacher in the

<div align="center">

133

</div>

Lawrence schools. Her experiences, her willingness to go back to her own school, and to

make Lawrence her professional home, also legitimized the experiences of her students:

> I'm involved with the Greater Lawrence Young Professional Network, which is only about three years old. Um, a bunch of us kids came back to the city and we all found each other and we're like, hello, why this professional networks – we never had the ability to network where we went because we were always the only Latinos and the only Lawrence kid, you know what I mean? So we started the Greater Lawrence Young Professional Network, so a lot of the things we do is community service. Ah, there's a business aspect to it and there's also the educational aspects to it. Um, with the community service, um, like I've been mentor, we've done mentoring programs, um, we just did the Earth Day Clean Up and you know, the act of giving back just by me visually being there and telling my kids that I'll be there gets them involved. And through that, you know, I try to tell them, like**,** yo, you gotta love your community. You know what I mean? Like, you can't just, a lot of them divorce themselves from the city because it has such a reputation. So the, the very act in itself that I'm there is a, I don't know, it's a social justice act, you know what I mean? Like, this is my city, I'm gonna clean it up type of thing. So for the kids, like, when they see me, they're like, Yo, Miss, da da da and then they see me, the social issues that I'm talking about in class, like if we just talked about King [MLK, Jr.], and if we just talked about education, and just talked about whatever, they're like, *they see that I'm trying to live that way.* You know what I mean?

> And it gets them thinking, like, oh, I can do that too. I can live that way, too. And that to me is exciting because at the end of the day, like**,** they don't really have someone that looks like them that's quote professional, you know what I mean? So that's part of it. I do a lot of the writing workshops with Bread Loaf. Like we have our conference coming up in May, uh, so that's huge work that we do around the city. We had, we had a big one the other month at the Boys and Girls Club, there's some others. Two of my former students also have their own writing workshops going –

> Dariana Gurerez is huge right now. She was, ironically, I never really had her in class, she was one of my students because I had her in student council. So she heard that I did this stuff, and she's like, Tapia, how can I get involved? And all I did was just get her in Bread Loaf, one of the summer sessions, Lil – the girl has her own 50-kids writing workshop at the Beacon Projects.

> You know what I'm saying? And – Lawrence just had their first slam poetry contest, I guess Loran Barricka at the El Taller coffee shop that Mary Guerrero (Bread Loaf grad) owns, and it was all because Diariana did it, you know what I mean?

> It's amazing. And then you have, you just have all these kids like my students Ray she's um, she's from Movement City because I do work with them,

134

too, and she's amazing. She's such a go-getter, I have, you know, it's the kids who do it. Like, I pray that I'm the one like guiding them or stuff, but a lot of times it's their ideas that are moving things forward, you know?

Movement City is one of the programs we have in the city. And they asked me for ideas about how to revamp it and a lot of my ideas were informed by my work through Bread Loaf. You know what I mean? Like, for example, I told them, have you actually talked to the kids? And they're like, well, yeah, you know they say they're unhappy with the program and I'm like, no no no. I mean, have you actually interviewed them with what kind of programs they want to see. With what kind of programming, what workshops they'd be interested in doing. And they looked at me like it was the greatest idea I ever came up with. And I'm like, that's just, that's my work informed through Bread Loaf. You know what I mean? So for me it's kinda like, I don't know how to say, Lil, like, I might not be interacting with other Bread Loaf teachers but my work Bread Loaf work is interacting with other professionals. You know what I mean?

We have um, I'm also involved with What's Good in the Hood, which is a newsletter started by students, written by students. And the only reason I'm involved is because they need an adult around. You know what I mean?

They ask me for my feedback and everything, but I'm always careful about that because it's their newsletter, so what they'll ask me is about like, Miss, how do we get more income, more revenue for advertisement and things like that. So I'm involved in that and um, Gladys Gitall was one of the students who got it started. She's also an undocumented immigrant. So, through her own struggles with just, cause I always come through immigration, but through the undocumented side, cause my mom was a resident, she became part of the student immigration movement in Boston and she got me involved. So, through her own work, I was inspired to be involved with SIM (student immigration movement) and like, for example, they do clinics every month. And at those clinics we help undocumented immigrants with immigration issues. And also with the DACCA because now students can apply to be U.S. Citizens.

We help with those kind of applications. Um, you know, it's interesting. It's literacy. You know? How do you read this form? How do you fill it out in a way where it's not going to give you issues with immigration because God knows immigration likes to knit-pick at everything. You know. So, I do that work with them, um, I mean that's four things, and then, I mean, I teach. That's the most important work I do, I guess? I bring it to my classroom. I, if I have to teach *The Tell Tale Heart* (Poe, 2013)*,* well, ok, that's fine, I can make it fun, but I could also make a writing assignment where it becomes personal. You know, I could have them use one of their senses and bring that to the forefront. You know, how does, it connects them better to the literature cause then it's like, Ok, then well, if the heart was pounding during the literature, and that's the sound he keeps hearing, you have to now write something where your senses overcome your logic, you know what I mean? And sometimes the kids will be like, Ma, my

mom's music is so loud in the kitchen I can't study. She's overcoming my senses [laughter]. That's hilarious, you know? That's pretty much it.

I'm teaching English to adult learners, right now, too. At the Adult Learning Center. So that's exciting work. I go there on Tuesday, Wednesdays, Thursdays, from 4:45-8:45 –

And the cool thing is that they're learning English, but some of the writing assignments I have them do are Bread Loaf writing assignments.

And Um, a lot of them are like, they're hard workers, they just come from a long day of work, and they, you know, the first writing assignment I have them do was about home. You know – and they could write it in Spanish and then they have to translate it into English. Just so they can get their language skills there? But you should see some of the work that they come up, you know, it always, I always uncover this – people, especially hard workers, people in Lawrence, you know people in these kinds of communities, they have so much to say and it's bottled up inside of them? And I always forget that, and then I do a quote silly writing assignment, you know what I mean, or it might seem silly to people on the outside, about writing about home, and everything just spills forward. And it becomes one of the most linguistically beautiful but also socially critical pieces that I could see. So I do Bread Loaf writing with them, I can only do it one night though because it takes a lot of work between the writing and the translating. And you know, they're there to learn the language, so – but it's interesting. It's interesting how, you know, it informs my work all the time.

Jineyda's community involvement was rooted firmly in her own experiences in and love for Lawrence. For instance, looking back at the intensity of her high school experiences in English class with her teacher Rich Gorham (a Bread Loaf graduate) and then later hearing her talk about implementing similar methods of instruction in her own classes facilitated a continuation of the type and style of instruction that brought Jineyda closer to her writing self and continued to fuel her life-long love and appreciation for literature. Additionally, the historical component of her learning and teaching experiences at Lawrence High School were recursive, coming back to tracking down immigration in Lawrence, making processes of documentation visible and available to immigrants and immigrant families navigating life in a new city, and participating in supporting immigrants and immigrant families as they reached for citizenship and English language

136

acquisition.

Not only was Jineyda's activism rooted in her own experiences, it was also linked by larger themes of equality, social justice, and access. For instance, because Jineyda had helped her mother through the process of becoming a U.S. citizen, she held insider knowledge about the system. Jineyda then became involved in SIM (Student Immigration Movement) and used her personal knowledge of the processes for achieving citizenship to help undocumented immigrants navigate the application processes to become residents. Jineyda said, however, that it wasn't just filling out the application; it was also an opportunity to interact with and obtain experience-specific literacy skills.

Extending the Reward of Safe Passage Through Pedagogical Activism

Jineyda's combined reports from 2010 and 2013 (see Appendix C for complete table) again were recursive in that she sought new ways, just like Rich had, to make relevant and to bring classical literatures to life in the spaces and times where her students lived. The flexibility and creativity the *Oedipus* (Sophocles, 2010) exchange called for aimed to localize global themes, including fate and free will, wisdom and knowledge, determination, memory, and power. Students were invited to see and identify topics and themes in the literature and then to seek modern representations of those themes in their own environments. By engaging in the process of making classical literature relevant, the students were given the opportunity to identify power centers and struggles in their school, community, and in broader geographical settings across or between the locations of the exchange (Northeast and Southeast U.S.). There were other aspects of Jineyda's reports that called the students into the community. For instance, the "Things, Objects, and Artifacts" writing workshop at El Taller in Lawrence drew on the
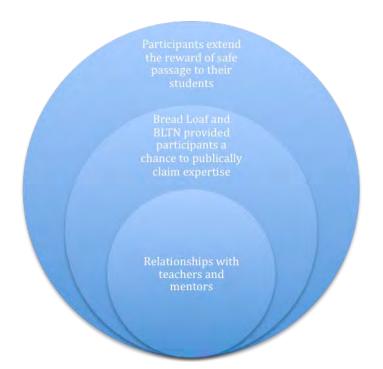
137

model of training students to lead workshops and training younger students to become leaders. It provided a chance for young people to publish or display their work publically and an opportunity to talk about personal interests.

Conclusion

The evidence of the triadic relationships of safe passage, as illustrated in the analysis above, grew in momentum from one part of safe passage to the next. For that purpose, safe passage resisted traditional arrangements of theoretical progression and, rather, was more effectively understood in a concentric arrangement (a–c): (a) relationships with early teachers and mentors who provided participants with safe passage or places and times in which they could engage in self-creation, read and write, and be acknowledged as meaning-makers and knowledge-holders; (b) Bread Loaf and BLTN provided the participants with safe passage to talk, claim expertise (Royster, 2000), and to articulate the functions of languages, cultures, and literatures contextualized in their own lives. At that stage of the theory of safe passage, the participants underwent significant self-transformation, making public their identities as women writers; and (c) participants extended the rewards of safe passage for their own students. In the context of the participants' lives as teachers, safe passage became a critical pedagogical choice (see Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1. Concentric Arrangement of Triadic Features of Safe Passage.

Additionally, the micro-narratives told by each participant led to immediate actions

within the project of safe passage. The act of arriving at Bread Loaf and becoming

members of BLTN catalyzed and legitimized the participants' determination to pursue

larger actions, with far-reaching impact on the participants' students, schools, and

communities.

Chapter 7: "I Open at the Close"—The Path of the Seeker

> The Snitch. His nerveless fingers fumbled for a moment with the pouch at his neck and he pulled it out.
>
> I open at the close.
>
> Breathing fast and hard, he stared down at it. Now that he wanted time to move as slowly as possible, it seemed to have sped up, and understanding was coming so fast it seemed to have bypassed thought. This was the close. This was the moment. (Rowling, 2007, p. 698)

The golden snitch had a prominent place in fictitious Harry Potter's (Rowling, 2006) project of self-creation. Early in his experiences at Hogwarts School for Witchcraft and Wizardry, Harry developed an affinity for the sport Quidditch, specifically for the position of the Seeker. Harry was particularly drawn to this position because he immediately excelled in it and Professor McGonagall said he was "naturally talented." He later learned that his father was once a Seeker. The unimposing, yet all together lasting presence of the snitch throughout the Harry Potter series could never have prepared me or Harry for one of Rowling's greatest bits of witchcraft, which was accomplished by having the unsuspecting golden snitch among the final significant pieces needed for solving the hallows and horcruxes mysteries. For the snitch to open at the close and let Harry Potter win the day, save the world, and choose love, catapulted the role of "the Seeker" into a multiplicity of meanings, some of which can serve as metaphors for aspects of my dissertation that I discovered in the final stages of writing.

140

Making the Familiar Strange

I'll use the snitch and seeker metaphor to describe a few occurrences I documented about the work and lives of my participants during this research. To do this, I'll return briefly to Geertz (1983), who argued that we have to make the familiar strange and the strange familiar if we are to study phenomena we already know exist or know intimately. Harry, for example, had become so closely familiar with the snitch as it was used in the game of Quidditch that the meaning of the snitch in a new context (the context of the search for the horcruxes or hallows) was unknown to Harry for most of the seventh and final book in the series. Even though Harry had the snitch in his possession, he searched and searched, yet could not solve the mystery of the snitch. Not until he solved the mystery of his self, was Harry able to solve the mystery of the snitch.

Consequently, the first snitch and seeker metaphor I'd like to use looks at how teachers and the general population, similarly, become intimately familiar with teaching in the context of school. Rarely, however, do we see the teacher in the process of self-creation outside of teaching or alongside teaching. The motivation, the determination, the "natural talent" of young people who eventually choose the path of teaching often go unseen and unacknowledged; the history of self-creation as it is facilitated through the existence of safe passage is not featured in teachers' professional portfolios, despite the fact that how we come into our abilities as teachers and what our mentors have done for us throughout our lives impacts every aspect of our professional beliefs and identities.

Although I was able to develop patterns of analysis and to see how certain events clustered around the narrative turns and plots of my participants' narratives, I saw just as clearly that my participants were seekers from an early age and, like Harry, they were

141

looking for something particular to excel at—something that offered their emerging selves a path forward, especially a path that led them to achieve their hearts' desires. For my participants, the thing they sought, they found in books and stories and writing, as well as in mentorship from adults, including parents and family, teachers and librarians, and many others. My participants returned to reading and writing in every setting of their life course, just as surely as Harry returned to the Quidditch field, again and again as they continued their projects of self-creation. For Harry and for my participants, being Seekers brought them into ways of being and ways of knowing that helped them to understand and endure their projects of self-creation beyond the immediacy of the field.

Story Writers and Writing Storytellers' (Stepto, 2010a) Collaborative Research

Another snitch and seeker metaphor resulting from this study concerned my own role in the research. I especially use the line "I open at the close" because I didn't know what story my research would tell until I came to the close of my journey, which I think of now as an opening. I think there is some hope or desire to have an idea of what you might expect to see when you set out on an epic endeavor such as this. You develop an expectation, and then you work backwards to design a study that can lead you to a new awareness. For example, initially, I hoped to find out how my participants were using a certain type of professional development, BLTN; however, it became apparent, during data analysis, that BLTN was just one influential and catalytic part of the participants' overall life stories as women writers who teach. And their life stories came out during the course of the interviews. Because I went into the research believing that I was working primarily with teacher identities in the context of a specific type of professional development and not necessarily working with such strong writing storyteller identities, I

142

needed to look further than what research had documented as effective ways for using

narrative in teacher education programming. Stepto (2010a) emphasized the idea that

writing storytellers often write and organize with a readership or storylisteners in mind;

they speak and they write with the intention of affecting their audiences and possibly

even changing the way the listener acts, responds, or participates in the story being

listened to. Consequently, I'd like to reference what Stepto (2010a) identified as

distinctions between "story writers" and "writing storytellers:"

> The distinction I make between "story writer" and "writing storyteller" partly has
> to do with the persona or voice the writer creates. A "story writer" may well
> create an eccentric, idiosyncratic voice (a high modernist voice, perhaps),
> possibly with its own distinct singular syntax and grammar, and consider that
> creation to be in itself an act of art. A "writing storyteller" can hardly surmount
> the fact that he or she is writing, but seeks [emphasis added] nonetheless a voice
> that is at once singular and shared in much the way a storyteller's voice (and
> story) may be singular and yet shared with storylisteners. To hope that readers
> will become, to a degree, storylisteners, is to seek the kind of communal
> relationship found, for example, between preachers and congregations, musicians
> and audiences in certain performance venues, and between storytellers and
> storylisteners. The writing story storyteller approximates the performative
> aesthetic of the "folk" event, I believe, in an effort not to be removed or alienated
> from certain readerships by the *act of writing*. (Stepto, 2010b, para. 12; emphasis
> in original)

Although I had some general understanding of the type of information I hoped to see

regarding BLTN, I realized later that my participants had invited me to tell another story

in which BLTN played a tremendous part but was not the leading role. I acknowledged

that invitation, which led me to see the participants most clearly in their identities as

writing storytellers. Their persona as writing storytellers, in turn, allowed me to assume

the identity as a writing storylistener. The story writer, as Stepto (2010b) suggested, may

be quite content to end a creative project on the page and leave it there as art in its own

right. I could have done that, too, and focused entirely on the functions of networked

professional development in the lives of teachers. But my participants conducted

143

themselves as writing storytellers, as people willing to reach out into the full and chaotic lives of others and offer their stories as testimony, even shared testimony, to storylisteners, expecting or hoping for a response that would lead to further shared action and real change.

Once I saw my participants as writing storytellers, rather than listening for how my participants functioned in the Bread Loaf Teacher Network, I started listening for the chosen arrangements of narrative segments and where Bread Loaf and BLTN fell into those arrangements. Consequently, I started seeing how my participants had developed ways of seeking, even as young children, which allowed them to create sustaining intrinsic value from their associations with BLTN and Bread Loaf. I began to understand how that distinguished them and their professional learning from what I believe are traditional types of professional learning or professional development, e.g., one-a-day workshops, seminars, school improvement planning, PLCs (Professional Learning Communities), and other types of instruction that do not necessarily take into consideration a teacher's individual strengths, abilities, experiences, and knowledge of teachers. What I found, at the close, was Bread Loaf and BLTN contextualized in the life stories of my participants. Arriving at Bread Loaf and the associations each participant formed around BLTN became the narrative turns of the life stories, of the self-creation stories, and of the women writers who teach stories.

The Seeker in Safe Passage

Once I realized that the narrative turn for the participants' life stories was arriving at Bread Loaf and once the theory of safe passage began to form in my mind, I started to think about how I had gotten to Bread Loaf and if my story was similar to theirs. I didn't

144

remember seeking safe passage as adamantly or as determinedly as my participants did; now did I did not seek safe passage as a young child in school contexts, or later as an English major in college, an English grad student, or a PhD student. Interestingly, however, I did remember that when I first started teaching, I wanted to and worked toward providing something akin to safe passage to my students, even though I was not a student who necessarily needed it or sought it for myself.

After forming the theory of safe passage, however, I looked back over my researcher's journal very closely and discovered, at the close again, that two instances of safe passage had been offered to me during the course of the research.

The Researcher Receives Safe Passage in the Detention Center

The first safe passage occurred when I was in Arizona, documenting what became Ceci's life story. I had the opportunity to go with her and a number of her students to participate in a poetry-writing workshop at the local juvenile detention center. Ceci was engaged in a partnership between Cochise College students and the detention center school. Ceci led the workshop, which was democratically shared with the college student participants from Cochise, who worked one-on-one with the detention center students. The assignment for the day was to write a letter poem.

Ceci kicked off the session with an informal brainstorming about the types of topics one might choose for a letter poem. This helped the students get some ideas about where to start and also established an environment of sharing and safety. Some of the letters were to parents, teachers, friends, judges, and partners. I worked with one young man who was not enthusiastic about the writing and spoke little as the session got underway. Having experienced my own hesitancy to launch into a personal account of a

145

relationship or friendship, I sympathized with him. On the other hand, he was
encouraged and drawn to the idea of publishing his work, even anonymously, in the local
newspaper, and if he completed the workshop, the result would be a publication in the
newspaper.

We both stared blankly at our pages for a while; we listened to the other
conversations and eventually watched the others start writing. Then I started writing and
shortly after, he started too; we wrote until the time was called. I remember that I was
enveloped in what I am now calling safe passage because, for the first time since my
mother had been diagnosed with stage four cancer (18 months before), I had not been
able to write about her, though I longed to do so. On that day with Ceci, however, I
wrote a letter poem to my mother's former students, raging at them in one line, and
pleading with them in the next. I fumed with envy because my mom had made it to so
many of her students' weddings and the births of their children, their graduations and life
events—and she was going to miss mine. I pleaded with them, in all the days ahead in
our lives, to never let mom's prolific life light go out. *Dear students.*

At the end of the session, I stood with the rest of the writing pairs and pods, and I
read my poem. One little quiver in my voice at the end, but I did it. And the space—all
the while—was not contested; it was safe for sharing and for affirming the difficult stuff
we know about but don't often feel we can say out loud.

The writing and learning experience were personally and professionally
significant. A school in a detention center hardly seemed like an environment where safe
passage could be found or offered. Yet, in the company of Ceci's Cochise students and
the detention center students, I experienced safe passage as a learner and I observed the

146

others in the class taking seriously the task we all faced; I hoped the conditions, which made it possible for me to accept safe passage, were also visible to the students. As I was learning from my participants, even one short experience with safe passage as a young learner can hold you over until you get to the next, even if they are years apart. I hoped this and I was assured in my hoping, as I observed that the detention center students' monochromatic clothes and shoes proved to have no bearing on the breadth of topics and experiences they drew on in their letter poems. It was a powerful experience.

The Researcher Receives Safe Passage While Writing the Dissertation

Another snitch and seeker metaphor occurred at the very end of this study. In reading back through the early drafts of chapters, and looking at the vast distance I traveled intellectually, emotionally, geographically, and academically during the dissertation journey, I realized that—by providing me with professional safe passage in the context of this study—my participants made this final part of my PhD possible and, consequently, all of my future academic and professional endeavors.

The snitch metaphor in this example was of me engaging in the familiarity of course work and paper writing, final grades and discussion, and of me, thinking the dissertation would be one final exercise in completion. The dissertation study, however, turned out to be something entirely different. I was blind-sided by the stories; I was drawn back, impassioned, to the profession of my choosing—and unexpectedly and graciously, I experienced safe passage as an authoritative and dynamic alternative to the isolation that I've heard doctoral students speak of so often.

The professional safe passage offered to me in the context of this study also shared characteristics with the safe passage I discovered in the life stories of my

147

participants. For example, I was in the process of seeking and self-creation because I was writing the dissertation and, in many ways, I was pulled into this project as a fourth participant. And though I originally sought a different story, once the other stories became visible to me, I pursued them adamantly. Further, I was able to speak with my participants at every step of developing the theory of safe passage; they affirmed the ideas and the collaborative experiences I documented from our informal conversations and interviews. Because they extended safe passage to me, I could step back from my political and ideological self; I was then able to see the importance of those other identities in their projects of self-creation and experimentation and realize how they functioned in the representation I created about their projects of self-creation. I admired tremendously, for instance, that Ceci wrote a number of responses to me about how she identified herself (American of Mexican descent) differently than how I identified her (Latina) in my writing. Those conversations also led me to use the word "activism" rather than "political" when exploring the additional community-based and democratic nature of my participants' pedagogical styles. In the context of schooling, teachers' "politics" have a long history of being silenced. Yet, we can see clear examples of change (what I believe to be the end result of effective politicking) that are directly related to community organizing and activism, in each of the settings through which my participants took us.

Ponderings and Recommendations

At the close of this dissertation, I emphatically believe that we need to establish programming that elevates and motivates teachers to understand how to provide safe passage to young learners. We also need to seek out those in the field who are already

148

providing safe passage and bring volume to their stories and experiences and then start developing models of teacher training that are reflective of successful safe passage strategies. Further, districts and superintendents need to be aware of the significant and lasting impact that safe passage can have on young people and teachers; they must provide teachers with the time and space to articulate need-driven professional opportunities that are embedded with safe passage building, as an alternative to school failure, high student dropout rates, low student graduation rates, and climbing teacher attrition.

As evidenced in their life stories, these women writers who teach have demonstrated that safe passage for young writers and young readers can lead to positive professional and personal outcomes, which ultimately shape, change, and direct their life course.

Safe passage also has implications for the general teaching community. Decades ago, Goswami (1996) argued, "From the perspective of BLRTN [now BLTN], it appears that centralized, standardized models and traditional forms of professional development aren't appropriate for the collaborative, dynamic inquiries and practices that must be at the heart of meaningful change" (p. 3). Borrowing from economist Robert Putnam's (1993) concepts of "civic virtue," Goswami (1996) further theorized that teachers ardently exhibit:

> The human tendency to form small-scale associations that are catalysts for political and economic development even if the associations themselves are not political or economic…Let us speculate that BLRTN is one of many small educational associations having qualities that allow members to build "social capital" that will influence everything else that is happening in schools and communities. (p. 3)

149

Safe passage that is made available among teaching collogues, especially those who primarily work with ELA content, seems like convincing evidence that these small-scale associations are forming as a result of need-driven community organizing, for teachers, by teachers. Although Debbie, Ceci, and Jineyda all spoke about Bread Loaf and BLTN as having catalytic impacts on their lives, they also spoke about returning to their schools and other professional organizations and trying to establish similar informal networks with their colleagues. Their extensive involvement in afterschool and community programming also indicated that teachers, at every level of the educational enterprise, are taking their practice into their communities and applying it to broader programming to meet the needs of those outside school settings. They are generating safe passage and agentic community organizations. Even the most informal of these associations is still fulfilling and meeting the needs of teachers who seek challenging intellectual work, while continuing to stay in and build the profession.

Although BLTN did not take the main stage of this study, one of BLTN's most enduring qualities was engendered in my participants' stories. The dual components of BLTN, which are the online community hosted by BreadNet, and the face-to-face meetings made available during Bread Loaf summer sessions, annual conferences, and personal travel, augment each other equally. Whereas the network component of BLTN made it possible for the participants to stay in touch with fellow BLTNers and faculty, the human component seemed to be what drew them back to BLTN over and over, even once their degrees were completed. The relationships, friendships, and mentorships mentioned throughout the life stories were, in many ways, the defining characteristics of each part of safe passage.

150

References

Alves, M., Pereira, A., Graça, A., & Batista, P. (2012). Practicum as a Space and Time of Transformation: Self-Narrative of a Physical Education Pre-Service Teacher. *US-China Education Review 7,* 665–674.

Anspal, T., Eisenschmidt, E., & Lofstrom, E. (2012). Finding myself as a teacher: Exploring the shaping of teacher identities through student teachers' narratives. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice, 18*(2), 197–216.

Arizona Secretary of State. (2000). *Proposition 203*. Phoenix, AZ: Author.

Armstrong, M. (2006). *Children writing stories*. New York, NY: Open University Press.

Atwell, N. (1998). *In the middle.* Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.

Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination: Four essays*. (Trans. C. Emerson & M. Holquist). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Bartels, E. (2008). *Speaking of the Moor: From "Alcazar" to "Othello."* Philadelphia, PA: Penn Press.

Blake, R. W. Jr., & Blake, B. E. (Eds.). (2012). *Becoming a Teacher: Using teacher narrative as reflective practice.* New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Branscombe, N. A., Goswami, D., & Swartz, J. (Eds.). (1992). *Students teaching, teachers learning.* Portsmouth: Boynton/Cook.

Bread Loaf School of English (n.d.). Bread Loaf School of English Website: "About Us." Retrieved January 8, 2014 from http://www.middlebury.edu/blse/about

Bronte, E. *Wuthering Heights.* (Ed.). Dover. (1996). Mineola, NY: Dover. (Original work published 1847).

Bruner, J. (1983). *Child talk: Learning to use language*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton.

Carter, K. (1993). Teachers' knowledge and learning to teach. In W. R. Houston (Ed.), *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education* (pp. 291–310). New York, NY: Macmillan.

Carter, K., & Doyle, W. (1996). Personal narrative and life history in learning to teach. In J. Sikula, T. J. Buttery, & E. Guyton (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education* (2nd ed., pp. 120–142). New York, NY: Macmillan.

Carter, K., & Doyle, W. (2003). Narrative and learning to teach: Implications for teacher education curriculum. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*. *35*, 1–13. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.

Carter, S. M., & Little, M. (2007). Justifying knowledge, justifying method, taking action: Epistemologies, methodologies, and methods in qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research, 17*(10), 1316–1328.

Cazden, C. B., John, V. P., & Hymes, D. (1972). *Functions of language in the classroom.* Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

Clandinin, D. J. (1989). *Personal and practical knowledge: A study of teacher's classroom images*. Toronto, Canada: Wiley.

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (1994). Personal experience methods. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 413–427). London, England: Sage.

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey–Bass.

Cochran–Smith, M. (2004). Stayers, leavers, lovers, and dreamers: Insights about teacher retention. *Journal of Teacher Education,* (55)5, 387–392.

Coffey, A. J., & Atkinson, P. A. (1996). *Making sense of qualitative data: Complementary research strategies.* London, United Kingdom: Sage.

Coles, R. (1989). *The call of stories: Teaching and the moral imagination.* Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Coles, R. (1998). *On doing documentary work.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Collier, M. F. (1999). Characteristics of reflective thought during the student teaching experience. *Journal of Teacher Education, 50*(3), 173–81.

Connelly, M. F., & Clandinin, J. D. (1984). *The role of teachers' personal practical knowledge in effecting board policy*. Toronto, Canada: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Connelly, M. F., & Clandinin, J. D. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Research, 19*(5), 2–14.

Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into Practice, 39*(3), 124–130.

Cuenca, A. (2011). Democratic means for democratic ends: The possibilities of Bakhtin's dialogic pedagogy for social studies. *The Social Studies, 102,* 42–48. doi: 10.1080/00377996.2010.484442

Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education.* New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

Folger Shakespeare Library. (2009). *Folger Shakespeare Set Free*. Course Kit. Washington, D.C.: Author.

Francis, D. (1995). The reflective journal: A window to preservice teachers' practical knowledge. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 11*(3), 229–241.

Freire, P. (1998). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Continuum International. (Original work published 1970)

García Márquez, G. (2006). *One hundred years of solitude*. (G. Rabassa, Trans.). New York, NY: HaperCollins. (Original work published 1967)

Geertz, C. (1983). *Local knowledge.* New York, NY: Basic Books.

Glesne, C. (2006). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Ginsburg, F. (1989). *Contested lives: The abortion debate in an American community.* Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

González, N., Moll, L., & Amanti, C. (Eds.). (2005). *Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities, and classrooms*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Goodson, I. (2013). *Developing narrative theory: Life histories and personal representation.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Goodson, I. F. (1997). Representing teachers. *Teacher and Teacher Education, 13*(1), 111–17.

Goswami, D. (1996). Rural Schools, Small Networks, and Large-Scale Contributions. *Bread Loaf Rural Teacher Network Magazine*, Spring/Summer 1996, 2–3.

Grbich, C. (2007). *Qualitative data analysis: An introduction.* London, England: Sage.

Grumet, M. (1988). *Bitter milk: Women and teaching*. Amherst, MA: The University of Massachusetts Press.

Hayler, M. (2011). *Authoethnography, self-narrative, and teacher education.* Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense Publishing.

Heilbrun, C. G. (1988). *Writing a woman's life.* New York, NY: W. W. Norton.

hooks, b. (2003). *Teaching community: pedagogy of hope.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Hubbard, G. T. (2012). Discovering constructivism: How a project-oriented activity-based media production course effectively employed constructivist teaching principals. *Journal of Media Literacy Education*, *4*(2), 159–166.

Huxley, A. (2006). *Brave new world.* New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Irvine, M. (n.d.). *Mikhail Bakhtin: Main theories.* Retrieved from: http://faculty.georgetown.edu/irvinem/theory/Bakhtin-MainTheory.html

Kaasila, R., & Lauriala, A. (2012). How do pre-service teachers' reflective processes differ in relation to different contexts? *European Journal of Teacher Education*, *35*(1), 77–89. doi:10.1080/02619768.2011.633992

Kirsch, G. E., & Royster, J. J. (2010). Rhetorical practices: In search of excellence. *College Composition & Communication, 61*(4), 640–672.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Lee, C. D., & Smagorinsky, P. (2000). *Vygotskian perspectives on literacy research.* New York, NY: Cambrdige University Press.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Mack, N., Woodsong, C., MacQueen, K. M., Guest, G., & Namey, E. (2005). *Qualitative research methods: A data collector's field guide*. Triangle Park, NC: Family Health International.

Macrorie, K. (1988). *The I-search paper*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.

Macrorie, K. (1996). *Uptaught.* Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.

Martin, N. (1983). *Mostly about writing*. New York, NY: Boynton/Cook.

Maxwell, J. (2005). *Qualitative research design.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

McVee, M. B. (2004). Narrative and the exploration of culture in teachers' discussions of literacy, identity, self, and other. *Teacher and Teacher Education, 20,* 881–899.

Moll, L. (2000). Inspired by Vygotsky: Ethnographic experiments in education. In C. D. Lee & P. Smagorinsky (Eds.), *Vygotskian Perspectives on Literacy Research* (pp. 256–68). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Munro, P. (1998). *Subject to fiction*. Buckingham, United Kingdom: Open University Press.

Morrison, T. (1987). *Beloved*. New York, NY: Random House.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, Pub. L. No. 107–110, § 115, Stat. 1425 (2002).

Philpott, R. & Dagenais, D. (2011). Grappling with social justice: Exploring new teachers' practice and experiences. *Education, Citizenship, and Justice, 7*(1), 85-99.

Poe, E. A. (2013). *The tell-tale heart.* Shelton, CT: Ninety–Nine Cent Publishing. (Original work published 1843)

Razfar, A. (2011). Action research in urban schools: Empowerment, transformation, and challenges. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 38*(4), 25-44.

Resnais, A., & Argos Films. (2003) *Night and fog.* [DVD]. United States: Criterion Collection. (Original release 1955)

Riessman. C. K. (1993). *Narrative analysis.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Rowling, J. K. (2007). *Harry Potter and the deathly hallows.* New York, NY: Arthur A. Levine Books.

Royster, J. (2000). *Traces of a stream: Literacy and social change among African American women*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Rushton, S. P. (2004). Using narrative inquiry to understand a student-teacher's practical knowledge while teaching in an inner-city school. *The Urban Review, 36*(1), 61–79.

Shakespeare, W., Mowat, B. A., & Werstine, P. (1993). *Twelfth night, or, What you will.* (New Folger's ed.). New York, NY: Pocket Books. (Original work published 1623)

Shakespeare, W., Mowat, B. A., & Werstine, P. (1993). *The tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice.* (New Folger's ed.). New York, NY: Washington Square Press. (Original work published 1603)

Sipe, L. (2008). *Storytime: Young children's literary understanding in the classroom.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Smagorinsky, P. (2008). The methods sections as conceptual epicenter in construction social science research reports. *Written Communication (25)*3, 389–411.

Smagorinsky, 2011. *Vygotsky and research: A methodological framework.* Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.

Sophocles, Grene, D., & Sophocles. (2010). *Oedipus the King*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

155

Steinbeck, J. (1993). *Of mice and men.* New York, NY: Penguin.

Stepto, R. (2010a). *A home elsewhere: Reading African American classics in the age of Obama*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Stepto, R. (2010b, March 26). *A home elsewhere/Interviewer: Serena Golden* [via email]. *Inside Higher Ed.* Washington, D.C.: Kathlene Collins. Retrieved from https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2010/03/26/stepto

Strauss, A. L. (1987). *Qualitative analysis for social scientists.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Swift, J. (2010). *A modest proposal.* Seaside, OR: Watchmaker. (Original work published 1728).

Tesch, R. (1990). *Qualitative research: Analysis types and software tools.* London, England: Falmer.

Ultanir, E. (2012). An epistemological glance at the constructivist approach: Constructivist learning in Dewey, Piaget, and Montessori. *International Journal of Instruction, 5*(2), 195–212.

Verhoeven, L., & Graesser, A. (2008). Cognitive and linguistic factors in interactive knowledge construction. *Discourse Processes: A Multidisciplinary Journal, 45*(4–5), 289–97.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Waugh, P. (1997). Modernism, postmodernism, gender: The view from feminism. In S. Kemp and J. Squires (Eds.), *Feminisms* (pp. 206–212). Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity.* Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Weinberger, Y., &Shefi, P. (2012). Professional identity formation through narrative research: How much the personal and professional are intertwined? *International Journal of Learning*, *18*(11), 261–275.

Wells, G. (2003). Children talk their way into literacy/Los ninos se alfabetizan hablando. In J. R. Gracia, (Ed.). *Ensenar a escriber sin prisas…pero con sentido*. Seville, Spain: Publicaciones M.C.E.P. doi: 10.1159/000106415

Winnicott, D. (1971). *Playing and reality.* London, England: Tavistock.

Winnicott, D. (1986). *Home is where we start from*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton.

Appendix A

ELA Standards Oriented Reports, North Carolina (Debbie)

Contents of Debbie's BLTN Reports (2009–2010) During Enrollment in Master's Degree

Bread Loaf Class	Literature	Assignment	Exchange Work	North Carolina Standards Met During Exchange Work
Ghost Stories with Professor Emma Smith at Bread Loaf, Oxford University	**Literature from Bread Loaf Course:** *Hamlet, Wuthering Heights, Beloved, Casting the Runes, The Oxford Book of English Ghost Stories, Hotel World, The Woman in Black*, and *The Turn of the Screw*. Additionally, we watched the movie, *The Sixth Sense*. Emma provided us with a piece called "Uncanny" by Sigmund Freud, which was very helpful in understanding why one feels fear and thrills at ghost stories. I wanted to take this course because I teach a unit on Edgar Allen Poe and felt it would help me have a better understanding of Poe.	The exchange includes three sections of freshman English at 3 different high schools. Students will: (1) Have and build individual pbworks wikis, where they will post their introductions and literary letters. (2) Students will choose one story or poem about which to write the literary letter. Students must identity the elements of the ghost story present, identity literary devices used, and tell why they liked that particular story or poem. Students will have some creative leeway with their wiki pages and may post artwork and photos, as well.	I especially felt this class would be helpful because I will be doing my fall exchange about Poe again. This time, we will do a technology based exchange, where I want to focus on the elements of ghost stories with the students. Additionally, the students will write introductory letters, literary letters, and a ghost story of their own. All of this will be posted to the wiki and shared openly for conversation between the three participating classes and three participating teachers.	**1.01** Narrate personal experiences that offer an audience scenes and incidents located effectively in time and space; vivid impressions of being in a setting and a sense of engagement; appreciation for significance of event; a sense of narrator's personal voice; **1.02** Respond reflectively (individually and in groups) to a variety of expressive texts (e. g., memoirs, vignettes, narratives, diaries, monologues, personal responses) in a way that offers an audience: an understanding of the student's personal reaction to the text, a sense of how the reaction results from a careful consideration of the text, an awareness of how personal and cultural influences affect the response;

157

| | Literature for High School exchange work: "The Raven," "The Telltale Heart," "The Cask of Amontillado", I will have them read "The Red Room" by H.G. Wells and "Smee" by A.M. Burrage from The Oxford Book of English Ghost Stories. "The Fall of the House of Usher" by Poe. | (3) Students will write a ghost story and generate video podcasts of them reading their ghost stories. | | **4.01** Evaluate the effectiveness of communication by: examining the use of strategies in a presentation/product, applying a set of predetermined standards, creating an additional set of standards and applying them to the presentation/product, comparing effect strategies used in different presentations/products; **4.02** Read and critique various genres by: using preparation, engagement, and reflection strategies appropriate for the text; identifying and using standards to evaluate aspects of the work or the work as a whole; judging the impact of different stylistic and literary devices on the work. **4.03** Demonstrate the ability to read, listen to, and view a variety of increasingly complex print and non-print critical texts appropriate for grade level and course literary focus. |

158

Appendix B

Education Reform/Policy Oriented Reports, Arizona (Ceci)

Senior English: Beowulf and Grendel exchange with two BLTN teacher/classrooms. House on Mango Street exchange with one BLTN teacher. **Journalism:** One aspect of the class involved writing a reflection about conducting online exchanges with other BLTN teachers/classrooms. **College Prep English:** Accepted at the University of Pennsylvania to present research project conducted over two academic years. Idea was developed in conversation with Bread Loaf faculty member, Andrea Lunsford, and concerns writing research papers which include exploring what it means to be "American"; what changes our world has undergone in the past; where we might be headed.	**The Spencer Foundation** helped fund the research, which brought Bread Loafers Michael Armstrong, Lusanda Mayikana, and Mary Guerrero to Tombstone High School to work with the classes.	The Arizona State Department of Education and the AZ Legislature have been struggling with public education in our state and the results have been grim, to say the least. As the state moderator for the BLTN, I feel we have made some significant, if small steps in the right direction this past semester. Due to the outstanding efforts of Evelyn Begody and Jill Loveless, AZ BLTN is now recognized by both the AZ State Department of Education and the state legislature. Representative Tom from Northern Arizona attended our spring meeting in Globe and brought with him excellent suggestions and contacts for us to pursue at the capitol. Armida Bittner, a member of the board of county superintendents,	Funding, accountability, and charter schools continue to plague Arizona classrooms and education. In Cochise County alone, salaries have been frozen in most districts and insurance rates have increased anywhere from 35% to 50%. This adjustment for many with family coverage actually results in as much as a 7% decrease in pay. Morale is definitely low as the pocket-book shrinks and public demands increase.	(1) In these unfortunate times of increased stress and doubt, BLTN has really stepped in to help place everything in proper perspective for me. The BLTN conference has been a major source of comforting dialogue as I have read entries centering on everything from attendance policies to writing instruction. Our school is currently grappling with a school improvement plan. It has been a great help to see how others are handling similar experiences. (2) Most importantly, BLTN has helped me to recognize and remember why I became a teacher for the opportunity to work with students! Between fiscal difficulties, pie-in-sky mandates, and extreme apathy, it is easy to overlook

The project combined junior Honors English, College Prep English and US Constitution, and Economics courses. University of Arizona professor, Dr. Joni Adamson, was a project collaborator and respondent, as well as a visiting lecturer giving a talk on *The Great Gatsby.* Dr. Adamson, "in true Bread Loaf fashion" received the students' papers electronically and responded to the papers and then sent them back to students electronically. The project was undertaken in an effort to introduce high schools students to the rigors of college writing and research.		also attended and has recognized BLTN teachers as leaders and innovators in public education in our state. She has already contacted our group for assistance in a workshop that her association is planning on hosting. So although these are just small steps, they are certainly steps in the right direction. Thanks to Jill and Evelyn for their perseverance and efforts in getting AZ BLTN recognized in our own home state.		the fact that there are students who want to learn and who come to school prepared and ready. An online conference my students and I engaged in this semester brought this fact home to me. This conference, which centered on Sandra Cisneros' *House on Mango Street* paired Susan Miera's students in Pojoaque High School and my students in Tombstone, allowed me the opportunity to write vignettes about two issues which are near and dear to me, my students and my friends.

160

Appendix C

Extending the Rewards of Safe Passage Through Social Justice: Pedagogies and

Teacher Research Oriented Reports, Massachusetts (Jineyda)

Contents of Jineyda's BLTN Reports (2010, 2013) During Enrollment in Master's Degree

Bread Loaf Course	Writing	Social Justice Teacher Research
Evolving Forms of Literacy with Professor Dixie Goswami at Bread Loaf, Middlebury College (2010) and Modernism and Latin American Narrative with Professor Jacques Lezra at Bread Loaf, Middlebury College (2010)	Through Dixie's Evolving Forms of Literacy class, I have been inspired to explore the unspoken and unresearched literacy that my students employ every day; translation. My students are active linguists that have a major role in their families; they "scribe" the world for their parents.	(1) Lawrence, Massachusetts' population is about 85% Latino and through my own personal experience I know that many of us go with our parents to medical, immigration, and school appointments and act as translators for them. This unique experience has various consequences, such as the power dynamics in the family being shifted because the children hold some power over parents, the child's sense of responsibility to their family and conflicts (such as school absences), and the need to balance familial responsibilities with everyday life. My goal is to demonstrate how apt these students are with language; more than their environment indicates. Through case studies I wish to demonstrate the active literacy and fluidity of language that these students hold. I hope it will also give a public voice to these students, when many times they're silently using their voices to help their families. (2) I work in a community that is primarily Latino and it's very hard to introduce Latin American literature because the curriculum is heavily based on European and American writers. This class has taught me how all three literary cultures interact and how I can introduce it in my classroom. I [also] want to expand what my students know as "literature" and this class [Modernism and Latin American Narrative] was a wonderful opportunity to learn how I don't have to create a new curriculum, but how these Latin American writers are part of it already. I plan to recreate how in the class we tied the many African lives lost during slavery (Morrison, 1987), to the banana massacre scene in Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *A Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967/2006), to the Holocaust by watching the documentary *Night and Fog* (Resnais, 1955/2003).

161

		I want my students to see that literature and cultures are not divorced from each other, but instead enhance each other's meanings and react to one another. Hopefully, through that, I can facilitate them becoming more aware and active global citizens.
The Fantastical Works of Italo Calvino with Professor Michael Armstrong at Bread Loaf, Middlebury College (2013)	My final project, collecting folktales from the Dominican Republic and translating them, then writing an essay about literature being the lived human experience, have led me to create an opportunity for middle school students to research and retell some of the folktales from their countries	(3) Michael Armstrong opened up the lens that we see literature through and challenged us to critique it, expand on it, and recreate it. His assignments allowed for individual voices to have a conversation with Calvino's works. The way he organized the class, the democratic discourse, the fact that everyone in the class had a voice in it: I always walked out of there thinking that I "knew" the works and realizing how much I didn't know, based on everyone's else's contributions. He had a way of concluding the class that gave us a way forward; his journals helped us keep the conversation going outside of the class.
Oedipus (2010)	James will create a wiki page in order for our students to do a digital exchange. We give our students pages to post their opinions and to comment on each other's work. The goal will be for our students to eventually reproduce Oedipus to a modern drama. How do they see the play in the year 2010? The exchange should take about four weeks and will most likely take place during the first semester. By the time students begin working with each other, we hope to build a unity between both groups of students. Through the *wikispace* we hope that our students will become active learners, exchangers of ideas, writers, and teachers that can educate one another as to how they *see* the world.	We are excited to have both our classes interact. They are in diverse geographic and economic areas, but we hope they realize that they have more in common than they might realize. Patti teaches in Lawrence, the poorest school district in Massachusetts, with a high Dominican Republic population. Many of James' students are from the projects, primarily African American and Southern. This exchange will give James' students the opportunity to learn about the North and the Dominican Republic, while my students will learn about the South and the African American culture.

162

Things, Objects, and Artifacts in 19th Century Literature with Professor Isobel Armstrong at Bread Loaf, Middlebury College: Derivative Work –"Things, Objects, and Artifacts Exchange" (2013)	Lorena German and I are planning a permanent writing workshop at El Taller (coffee shop in Lawrence, MA, owned by former BL student, Mary Guerrero), centered around "Things, Objects, and Artifacts." We'll create a blog and work with Dixie on students reflecting and writing about the experience. We'll have a special workshop at the end of the year, where these students are workshop leaders.	

163