Fostering and Foreclosing Student Learning Potential: Portraits of Performativity, Emotion, and Relationality in the Classroom

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FOSTERING AND FORECLOSING STUDENT LEARNING POTENTIAL:  
PORTRAITS OF PERFORMATIVITY, EMOTION, AND RELATIONALITY IN THE 
CLASSROOM

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A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of Social Sciences

University of Denver

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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by

Jeanne Marie Jacobs

June 2012

Advisor: Dr. Kate G. Willink
Abstract

This dissertation endeavors to build a much-needed bridge between the fields of communication and education. Using critical pedagogy and critical communication pedagogy as theoretical frameworks, this project advances an understanding of classroom communication as constitutive of power relations, and teachers and students as agents who can work together to foster learning potential and social justice. I look to interdisciplinary scholarship on affect to craft a nuanced conceptual framework of the connection between communication and emotion, and how they create learning opportunities for some students and construct barriers to learning for others. Through ethnographic fieldwork at an urban magnet school, I explore the interactions between and among three teachers and their students over an entire academic year. I present compelling portraits of each classroom that illuminate the impact of performativity, emotion, and relationality on students' potential to learn. I conclude by assessing how the circulation of teacher and student desires can lead to mutually empowering pedagogies.
Acknowledgements

In many ways, the journey toward completing this dissertation started the day I stepped across the threshold of my very first classroom. My experiences as a student—those I vividly remember as well as those long forgotten—have significantly shaped my interests and commitments as a researcher and a teacher. I am indebted to all my former teachers and peers, and the teachers and students in Denver who generously opened their classrooms and allowed me to observe their daily interactions with one another.

I am deeply grateful to my dissertation director, Kate Willink, who mentored me from the very first days of my doctoral program. Kate's faith in me and my scholarship have been unfailing—she knew what to say when I needed to hear it; provided resources with ease and generosity; and offered feedback on my work that was always laser sharp and illuminating. I could not have asked for a better advisor, teacher, mentor, or friend to accompany me on this journey. The other three members of my dissertation committee also influenced me in significant and memorable ways. Roy Wood reignited my passion for field research and helped me better understand the ethical dilemmas that make this work challenging yet ultimately rewarding. Richie Hao reminded me that being reflexive about my positionality as a researcher is imperative; that I must be aware and accountable for my subjective observations and interpretations. Bruce Uhrmacher introduced me to Educational Criticism and Portraiture and encouraged me to experiment with merging methods.

Two other members of my University of Denver community were a blessing to me on this long and challenging journey. Tiffani Baldwin, my dissertation buddy, was a
loyal and supportive friend and colleague from day one. She spent hours with me brainstorming ideas, commiserating when times were tough, and celebrating each and every milestone along the way. Her encouraging telephone calls and texts were a source of comfort for which I am eternally grateful. TaraShea Nesbit, my eleventh-hour angel, read my entire manuscript from beginning to end and provided me with thoughtful feedback. She not only helped me improve the overall quality and readability of my dissertation, she regaled me with some much-needed levity during the final stages of the writing process. These two remarkable women made my journey more enjoyable and made me feel less alone during the many days and weeks of solitary work.

This work would not have been possible without the professors who believed in me and encouraged me to pursue a doctorate, including Rudolph Busby, Mark Jones, and Ann Hallum from San Francisco State University, and John Krumboltz from Stanford University.

As always, my family and friends embraced my dream and did everything within their power to ensure I achieved it. I am forever grateful to Andrew Jacobs for his support and encouragement, without which I would not have had the courage to leave home and embark upon this quest. My parents, Dawyn Russell and Al Russell, spent hours on the telephone with me discussing intricate details of this project and reassuring me that I was capable of accomplishing significant things. My siblings, most especially my sister, Jerri Villalovos, provided unwavering love and support. I deeply appreciate my friends both near and far, including Melissa Rosenbaum and Marlene Bunch who were always available for a quick meal, a conversation, and a word of encouragement,
and Karen Pogosian who always believed in me and cheered me on from a distance. I am also thankful for the caring people I met along the way who supported my body and my spirit, including Dr. Craig Stimson, Janet Hume, Diane Duschatko, and Luke Seven.
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Chapter One

"Welcome Back to School": An Ethnographic Field Study of Three Classrooms

In the spring of 1967, I was a pint-sized seven-year-old girl in second grade attending a parochial school run by an order of Catholic nuns from Spain. At that delicate age, the Carmelite Sisters of Charity who ran the school seemed foreign and frightening to me: they wore long black robes that shrouded all but their hands and their faces, they rarely smiled, and they spoke with unfamiliar accents. As a young girl I did not like going to school and although I lacked the vocabulary to clearly articulate my unhappiness, I knew the nuns played a large part in the joylessness I associated with learning.

Unlike other parochial schools, at Our Lady of Mercy¹ students did not wear uniforms. Boys were required to wear dark slacks and button down shirts and girls were expected to wear skirts or dresses that covered our knees. On one particular spring day, I was wearing my favorite frock—a short sleeve dress made of a lightweight cotton plaid fabric, accented with a bright white peter pan collar.

We were in the middle of our math lesson when I raised my hand and asked my teacher, Sister Mary Agnes, if I could use the restroom. She promptly denied my request.
She made the assumption I had not gone during the lunch break and publicly castigated me for my perceived misstep. I put my hand down and tried to focus on my workbook, but I could not concentrate. After a few minutes passed, I reluctantly raised my hand again. Sister Mary Agnes did not wait to hear my plea; she simply instructed me to put my hand down and get back to work. By now, I was in full panic mode and did not know what to do. I rocked back and forth in my little wooden chair praying for a miracle. When I felt I could wait no longer, I frantically waved my hand in the air while simultaneously calling out, "Sister, I really have to go!" This time, the uncharitable lady in black blatantly ignored me.

I was overcome by fear and in a state of physical distress when the unthinkable happened—I wet myself. And once the river of relief started flowing, there was no stopping it. A classmate seated near me saw what was happening and called out in horror: "Sister, Sister, Jeanne is peeing all over her chair." In a few swift strides, the nun was at my side. She tugged at my arm, flung my body from the chair, and dragged me out the door and down the hallway to the main office.

Once inside the office, Sister Mary Agnes released her grip from my slender arm and discharged a look of disgust that brought tears to my blue eyes. The nun told the office secretary to call my mother and then, without another word, she left. Standing there in my favorite dress—shivering, soiled, and smelling of urine—I was consumed with shame. I stood in that office for ten minutes or more, quietly crying and growing colder as each moment passed, waiting for my mother to rescue me from that terrible place called school.
At home, my mother bathed me, changed my clothes, and agreed to let me stay with her for the rest of the afternoon. I begged her to enroll me in the public school down the street from our house, but I could not persuade her. My mother assured me that my classmates would forget and that everything would be fine. But it wasn't. I continued on at that school through eighth grade with the same kids and none of us forgot. Although the teasing tapered off in later years, occasional jokes were made at my expense until I entered high school.

I have carried the shame of that moment with me for most of my life—my only form of redress was refusing to wear that scotch plaid frock ever again. From the distance of many decades, I have come to understand the significant role that particular classroom moment played in shaping my identities, commitments, and philosophies as a student and a teacher. As Sedgwick (2003) asserts, shame is never fully purged or forgotten; it is "integral to and residual in the processes by which identity itself is formed" (p. 63). Shame may be reframed, refigured, transfigured, and even metamorphosed, but it cannot be expunged (Sedgwick, 2003). Sedgwick suggests that the social constructions of race, gender, class, and sexuality develop together with the "shame-delineated place of identity" (p. 63) to become a performative; that there are infinite ways in which shame can influence these identity constructions and their "particular structures of expression, creativity, pleasure, and struggle" (p. 63).

In educational contexts, shame ignores, manages, and privatizes bodies and at the same time it exposes the intersubjective nature of affect (Werry & O'Gorman, 2007). Probyn (2004) asserts that shame is both individual and social—that it "is perhaps the
most intimate of feelings but seemingly must be brought into being by an intimate proximity to others" (p. 331). Ahmed (2004) contends that shame is a "feeling of badness" (p. 104) about the self directed toward the self that always requires a real or imagined witness, and shameful experiences are often felt by both the shamed individual and others who witness it (Ahmed, 2004).

There is no question that my classmates were affected by my shameful event. The fact that none of us forgot and that my peers continued to mention it up to six years later demonstrates shame's insidious affect on everyone present. Ahmed (2004) makes it clear that the "difficulty of moving beyond shame is a sign of the power of the normative" (p. 107). She contends that shame is "both a domesticating feeling and a feeling of domestication" (p. 107) and that shame occurs when an individual fails to meet a "social ideal" (p. 106). When my body failed to comply with the norms of classroom behavior, it unleashed a recursive interpersonal process wherein "there [was] no natural limit to the intensity and duration of arousal" (Scheff, 1990, p. 77).

In classrooms where Cartesianism reigns, the body is subjugated to the mind (Warren, 2005; Werry & O'Gorman, 2007; Bowers & Flinders, 1990), therefore, the body and its functions can be a source of shame if not properly comported and constrained (Werry & O'Gorman, 2007). Warren (2005) reminds us that in Western schools the fleshy presence of student bodies is often viewed as an infringement upon the development of mental capacities:

That schools seek to regulate biological functions like eating, drinking, and restroom use, suggests that bodies are not welcome in the confines of school . . . the body, which is always already understood as matter out of place in schools, disrupts the practice and functioning of schools. The smooth functioning of
schooling depends on the absent body, for if the body finds itself present, the system is contaminated. (p. 91)

From my second grade perspective, my body let me down: it shamed me and as a result I felt ashamed. As Ahmed (2004) reminds us, shame is often "experienced as the affective cost of not following the scripts of normative existence" (p. 107). This unfortunate experience haunted me for several decades; the shame was as real at age thirty-seven as it was at age seven. The passage of time, however, has brought new light to bear on my understanding of emotion in educational contexts and the double-edged sword of the Cartesian dualism that continues to dominate in most Western schools today. As a child, I was expected to do the impossible: to separate my body from my mind; to think about math while simultaneously fighting a bodily function. When my body failed to conform to school rules surrounding proper timing for restroom visits, I was caught in a deluge of negative self-evaluations for not measuring up to expectations (Scheff, 1990) or ideals (Ahmed, 2004). These negative evaluations about my inability to control my body became conflated with my evaluations about my capabilities as a learner—judgments that followed me through high school and college.

Students pay a high price—emotionally, intellectually, physically—when they are expected to leave their bodies and emotions at the doors to their classrooms. And although it has been liberating for me to examine how this particular shaming moment changed my perception of myself as a student and a learner, my interest in telling my story is to spotlight my teacher, Sister Mary Agnes, and the role she played in orchestrating, or managing, this shame-making event.
Sadly, this event was not confined to the classroom moment in which it occurred. As Olson (2009) asserts, "school wounds" (p. 6) can remain unhealed for an entire lifetime, or they can be "grieved" (p. 8), "explored and contextualized" (p. 27), and then used to "make educational environments more humane and less shaming" (p. 27) for others. Although shame can never be eradicated, it contains "powerfully productive and powerfully social metamorphic possibilities (Sedgwick, 2003, p. 65). This dissertation—the eight-month ethnographic field study I conducted, my motivations for undertaking it, and my interpretations and evaluations of what I witnessed—has helped me heal my own educational wounds by illuminating the metamorphic possibilities present in the seemingly mundane moments of classroom life.

This dissertation endeavors to build a much-needed bridge between the fields of education and communication. While education scholars have long recognized the significance of communication in education (Barnes, 1992; Dewey, 1916, Eisner, 2002; Freire, 1970/2007; Giroux, 1988; Kincheloe, 2008), none have examined communication from a constitutive perspective. By using critical pedagogy and critical communication pedagogy as theoretical frameworks, this project advances an understanding of classroom communication as constitutive of power relations, and teachers and students as agents who can work together to foster learning and social justice. I look to interdisciplinary scholarship on affect to craft a nuanced conceptual framework of the connection between communication and emotion and how they create learning opportunities for some students and construct barriers to learning for others. Through ethnographic fieldwork at an urban magnet school serving students in grades six through twelve, I explore the
interactions between and among three teachers and their students over an entire academic year and create compelling portraits that illuminate the impact of performativity, emotions, and relationality on student learning. I conclude this dissertation by assessing how the expression and circulation of teacher and student desires can lead to mutually empowering pedagogies.

**Learning: The Purpose of School**

Schools are institutions dedicated to student learning. While there is significant disagreement whether students should learn a canon of existing knowledge (Hirsch, 1987), how to think critically and solve problems (Giroux, 1988, 2006b; Kincheloe, 2008; Shaker & Heilman, 2008), how to become civically responsible and democratic citizens (Alexander, 2005; Ayers, 2001; Dewey, 1916; Freire, 1985; Giroux & McLaren, 1986; hooks, 1994; Kincheloe, 2008; Shaker & Heilman, 2008; Sprague, 1992; Warren & Hytten, 2004), or how to care for self and others (Noddings, 2005), many educators contend that students often learn lessons that are significantly different from, and interfere with, the official curriculum (Barnes, 1992; Eisner, 2002; Giroux, 1988; Giroux & Pena, 1988).

Vital to understanding theories of teaching and learning is the hidden curriculum—those attitudes, beliefs, and values that are not explicitly taught, but are nonetheless learned by students (Barnes, 1992; Eisner, 2002; Giroux, 1983, 1988; Giroux & Pena, 1988). Philip Jackson (1968/1990) first coined the term "hidden curriculum" over four decades ago when he suggested that despite its implicit or invisible nature, students and teachers are nevertheless expected to master and conform to the hidden
curriculum. Since Jackson first articulated the obscure nature of the hidden curriculum in classrooms, scholars have identified its invisible but undeniable presence in many aspects of school life, including: the official curriculum (i.e., what counts as knowledge and what is important for students to know); pedagogy (i.e., methods and philosophies about how to effectively teach students and how they learn); evaluation (i.e., performance standards and measurements, and associated rewards and penalties); institutional hierarchies (i.e., who has power and why, and who is subordinate to whom); and norms of behavior (i.e., routines and rules regarding use of space, allocation of time, proper comportment of the body, and expectations and limitations of human interaction) (Giroux, 1983, 1988; Jackson, 1968/1990; Jay, 2003; Eisner, 1985; Wren, 1999).

The hidden curriculum is often disguised in educational discourses, policies, and practices that promote some students' potential to learn while hindering other students' potential. For example, "color blindness" and "ability tracking" promote the belief that race, class, and gender are not factors in academic achievement while ignoring the historical, social, and systemic factors that contribute to academic success or failure. Undergirding these discourses, policies, and practices is the hegemonic belief that academic achievement is a matter of innate intelligence, determination, or effort. These hidden curricula implicitly teach that traditionally successful students are competent and capable individuals deserving of every available academic resource, while struggling students are inadequate or incapable of significant learning.

The hidden curriculum has a significant impact on student learning. For example, tracking and labeling a student as "gifted" can be empowering for the student, creating
feelings of confidence and providing enhanced opportunities for learning through mentorship, enrichment, and extracurricular programs. In contrast, labeling a student "average" or "at-risk" can be disempowering for the student, creating feelings of frustration and constructing obstacles to learning through lower expectations and self-fulfilling prophesies fostered by the student's belief that she or he is incapable of learning.

While many students can articulate the hidden curriculum embedded within the labels "gifted" or "average" (e.g., "I am capable," or "I am incapable"), they often are unaware of the ideologies undergirding them, the power relations they create and reinforce, the emotions they evoke, and the ways in which learning potential is fostered and foreclosed through their repetition.

Jay (2003) contends that the hidden curriculum is "a hegemonic device for the purposes of securing, for the ruling class (and other dominant groups in society), a continued position of power and leadership" (p. 6). The hidden curriculum is a particularly insidious manifestation of hegemony, maintaining itself through student conformity to covert norms rather than through overt domination.

In this dissertation, I extend the current purview of the hidden curriculum by including communication between teachers and students. While it can be argued that communication is merely one of the norms of behavior enacted in schools, I adopt a nuanced understanding of communication that includes an affective dimension that is often overlooked in scholarship on teaching and learning in general, and hidden curriculum in particular. I argue that communication between teachers and students operates as a form of hidden curriculum that can intentionally or unintentionally foster or
foreclose a student's potential to learn. My understanding of communication is circumspect, incorporating word choice, tone of voice, facial expressions, and body language, as well as the emotional and relational valence created between teachers and students.

A central idea guiding this study is the understanding that learning is an affective and cognitive process. Many educators and communication scholars committed to the scholarship of teaching and learning view the affective and cognitive dimensions of learning as discrete (Frisby & Martin, 2010; Nabi, 2010), however, recent advances in the field of neuroscience offer compelling evidence that emotion and cognition are linked (Damasio, 1994, 2000). Whereas common understandings of affective learning are limited to positive regard for teachers and course content (Frisby & Martin, 2010), I advance a more complex understanding that recognizes a full range of emotions as integral and inseparable aspects of cognition and, by extension, learning. I maintain that understanding how emotion and cognition are linked is vital to any study concerned with student learning.

**Classroom Communication and Emotion: Creating, Recreating, and Changing Reality for Students**

This ethnographic study is grounded in the understanding that communication constitutes reality and that emotion is a powerful form of communication. I turn first to current scholarship in critical communication pedagogy to explicate the constitutive nature of communication. I then examine interdisciplinary scholarship on affect in education, neuroscience, communication studies, and critical/cultural studies to advance
the proposition that emotion is a powerful form of communication that fosters and forecloses students' learning potential.

**Critical communication pedagogy.** Most communication and education scholars agree that communication is a significant aspect of education (Barnes, 1992; Dewey, 1916; Eisner, 2002; Fassett & Warren, 2004, 2005, 2007; Freire, 1970/2007; Giroux, 1988; Kincheloe, 2008; Sprague, 1992), however, they disagree on the role communication plays in learning. Many view language as a symbolic system of representational meanings and communication as a medium used to convey such meanings (Nainby, Warren, & Bollinger, 2003). For example, course content and the form of instruction are frequently viewed as separate. Others recognize that content and form cannot be separated and that together they have a significant influence on what is taught and what is learned (Barnes, 1992; Eisner, 2002). Barnes (1992) insists: "As the form of communication changes, so will the form of what is learnt" (p. 15). Eisner (2002) puts it another way when he writes: "How one teaches something is constituent of what is taught" (p. 150). If these education scholars are correct, and I believe they are, then communication constitutes teaching and learning.

Critical communication pedagogy views language and communication as synonymous and constitutive—a mechanism of production wherein meaning and reality are created, recreated, and changed (Stewart, 1995; Nainby et al., 2003). This is quite different from the traditional view of communication as a medium for conveying meaning. From a constitutive perspective, a teacher's statement that a student is
intelligent does more than express an idea or opinion; it has the power to construct reality for both teacher and student.

I contend that communication in educational environments is an immediate and iterative force on the realities of educational subjects. This view of communication is significant because it advances an understanding of the potential teachers and students have to create (un)supportive learning environments and educational (in)equity through everyday classroom interaction. A constitutive understanding of communication acknowledges that education is not limited to the purpose of preparing students for the future; it is a shared living, breathing, feeling, thinking (embodied) experience with immediate consequences for everyone present. When communication is understood as constitutive, every moment of classroom communication, which is to say, every moment in the classroom, has the power to create learning opportunities or obstacles, impacting the present and future lives of students.

**Interdisciplinary scholarship on affect.** Over the past two decades there has been an increase in scholarship recognizing that teaching and learning are both emotional processes (e.g., Berlak, 2004; Bibby, 2009; Boler, 1997, 1999; Chubbuck & Zembylas, 2008; Glass, 2004; Hargreaves, 1998, 2000; Knight-Diop & Oesterreich, 2009; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003; Tatum, 1992; Werry & O'Gorman, 2007; Zembylas 2003, 2005, 2007b; Zembylas & Boler, 2002). Students and teachers both experience a wide range of emotions in school (Chubbuck & Zembylas, 2008; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003; Werry & O'Gorman, 2007), including but not limited to: anger, fear, frustration, sadness, joy, hope, and pride (Garner, 2010; Horan, Chory, & Goodboy, 2010; Meyer & Turner; 2006;
Pekrun, 2006; Schutz, Hong, Cross, & Osbon, 2006). And although scholarship on the role of shame and other emotions in the processes of teaching and learning has increased in the past two decades, how emotions impact learning has been largely unaddressed in educational literature.

Recent advances in neuroscience offer evidence that emotions are physiological changes attached to thoughts (Damasio, 1994, 2000). As these physiological changes occur, they send signals to the brain through the nervous system, creating a circuit in which the brain and other parts of the body engage in a constantly changing process of neural and physiological activity. Emotions release chemicals (such as hormones) into the bloodstream, which travel to the brain further modifying the processing of neural signals. The understanding that cognition and emotions are interdependent processes not only highlights "Descartes' error" (Damasio, 1994), it has significant implications in educational contexts since any changes in a student's emotions have the potential to change the student's cognitive processes, thereby impacting learning.

In this study, I move beyond the construct of emotional intelligence (e.g., Goleman, 1995; Salovey & Mayer, 1990) that has dominated much educational literature to date and has been criticized for viewing emotion and cognition as separate processes (Waterhouse, 2006; Zembylas, 2007a, 2007b). Education scholar Michalinos Zembylas (e.g., 2007a, 2007b) recognizes that emotions are communicated between people; however, he does not articulate how this occurs. For an explanation, I look again to neuroscience and the phenomenon of entrainment—"the form of transmission whereby people become alike" (Brennan, 2004, p. 9). Evidence from neuroscience that suggests
one person's emotions can be entrained by another’s is a compelling argument for recognizing emotion as a form of communication. When combined with the recognition that communication constitutes reality and that emotion and cognition are interdependent processes, an imperative is created for investigating how emotions foster and foreclose students' potential to learn.

I look to political philosopher and social theorist Brian Massumi's (2002) theory of affect to explicate potential and how it is facilitated or forestalled. For Massumi, emotions are significant because they alert the body to affect's presence and the foreclosure of potential. Feminist philosopher and social theorist Teresa Brennan's (2004) theory on the transmission of affect illuminates the individual and social nature of emotion. When taken together and applied to educational environments, Massumi's and Brennan's theories of affect suggest that emotion is both individual and social—an individual neural and physiological process (Damasio, 1994) that is transmitted between and among people (Brennan, 2004). For example, a student's anger may originate from within (e.g., directed toward a teacher who repeatedly ignores the student's questions) or be transmitted from another person present in the classroom (e.g., projected from a peer who was reprimanded by the teacher). Regardless of the origin of the emotion, it has the power to either induce or constrain the student's potential to learn. When acknowledged, emotions can alert individuals to their potential; when ignored, emotions can stifle potential (Massumi, 2002).

It is widely accepted among interpersonal communication scholars that emotions serve a communicative function and that communication is instrumental (Planalp, 1998,
This instrumental view recognizes communication as a medium for conveying meaning or achieving a purpose (Planalp, 1999). According to Planalp (1999), people communicate emotion to influence another's behavior, to seek help or support, to negotiate relationship roles, or to build rapport (Planalp, 1999). While the communication of emotion may take various forms such as facial expressions, tones of voice, gestures, or verbal messages such as "I am infuriated," the instrumental view recognizes emotional communication as intentional—the "sender" is sharing her emotions with the "receiver" as a means to an end. The constitutive view, on the other hand, recognizes communication as a mechanism for producing meaning and reality. Emotions, when understood as a form of communication, constitute the affective realities of both the sender and the receiver.

Although communication scholars have found that teachers can positively affect student learning through communicative actions such as confirmation (Ellis, 2004; Goodboy & Myers, 2008), humor (Wanzer, Frymier, & Irwin, 2010), immediacy (Allen, Witt, & Wheeless, 2006; Burroughs, 2007; King & Witt, 2009; McCrosky, Richmond, & McCrosky, 2002; Pogue & AhYun, 2006), and rapport (Frisby & Martin, 2010; Frisby & Myers, 2008), none of this scholarship investigates the ways in which emotions are entrained between and among teachers and students, or the way emotion and cognition are linked.

Recognizing emotion as a form of communication entrained between and among individuals breaks new ground in both the education field and the communication discipline. The most significant contribution this study makes to the fields of education
and communication is the understanding that emotions are constitutive, and like all forms of communication, they have the power to create, recreate, and change reality for educational subjects.

**Critical Pedagogy: A Lens for Understanding the Connection among Communication, Emotion, and Learning**

Literature on critical pedagogy covers a broad range of purposes and commitments. In this study, I highlight three aspects that align with my goals as a critical intercultural communication (ICC) scholar and guide my examination of communication between and among teachers and students: power, agency, and social justice.

**Power.** As a critical ICC scholar concerned about educational (in)equity, I seek to understand both oppressive and productive aspects of power as it "circulates" (Foucault, 1980) between and among teachers and students, opening up and closing down opportunities to learn. Critical pedagogy makes a contribution to my study by recognizing that interactions between diverse individuals are neither neutral nor equal; that they represent historical and structural power relations (Halualani, Mendoza, & Drzewiecka, 2009). Critical pedagogy recognizes that even in the most progressive or democratically structured classrooms, everyday interactions between and among teachers and students are imbued with power (Brookfield, 2005; Fassett & Warren, 2007). Critical pedagogy is committed to identifying and critiquing the ways in which power permeates educational spaces and bodies (Kincheloe, 2008; Fassett & Warren, 2007). Likewise, critical ICC scholars seek to interrogate and challenge the role power plays in constructing relations between and among groups (Halualani et al., 2009). While much
critical ICC scholarship interrogates problematic discourses, most often they are interrogated from a macro rather than a micro perspective (Warren, 2008). Rather than focusing on the ways in which mundane communication re-inscribes power structures, I respond to Warren's request for critical ICC scholars to interrogate what discourse is doing in the present—the here and now—from an ontological as well as an epistemological perspective.

Agency. In this study, I argue for a performative agency—an "agency-in-the-moment" wherein teachers' and students' communication has the power to open up or shut down students' potential to learn. Critical pedagogy is committed to the process of exposing the structures that shape teachers and students and impede them from shaping the choices that affect their lives, thereby opening up spaces where they are able to recognize and employ their power as critical agents (Carr, 2008; Fassett & Warren, 2007; Giroux, 2006a; Kincheloe, 2008). Many educational discourses, policies, and practices (such as color blindness, individualism, and meritocracy) promote the belief that students have agentic power over their educational lives while ignoring the historical, social, and institutional factors that work to constrain student agency. Whereas agency in educational scholarship is often understood as a subversive alternative to domination (De Lissovoy, 2010; Kincheloe, 2008), in this study, I understand agency as an intrinsic aspect of every human being, and every moment as imbued with the potential for individuals to exercise agency (De Lissovoy, 2010). Although I recognize that teachers and students are always subjects of power by virtue of their institutional relationships, I view agency as a moment-by-moment decision to act in ways that are personally
empowering, not solely in response to domination, but in response to the human drive to realize one's potential.

**Social justice.** By understanding social justice as relational, I advance the proposition that educational (in)equity is created through interaction between and among teachers and students. To achieve social justice, members of a society (and classroom community) must be accountable for one another, seeking equitable distribution of power and resources for every member regardless of factors such as class, gender, race, or sexual orientation (Choules, 2007; Hytten, 2006; Simpson, 2006). Key to critical pedagogy is the belief that "issues of education and social justice are fundamentally related" (Hytten, 2006, p. 223). Education is about changing the world as much as it is about developing the intellect (Freire, 1970/2007). Schools can help students imagine a different kind of world and provide them with opportunities to bring their visions to life (Hytten, 2006; Simpson, 2006). Through this study I expose classroom communication as a powerful force in constituting social (in)justice.

**Critical Methodological Bricolage: Merging Critical Ethnography, Educational Criticism, and Portraiture**

As a critical ICC scholar interested in classroom communication and the ways it creates and reinforces educational (in)equity, I was compelled to use a method that brought me into personal contact with teachers and students actively engaged in everyday communication practices. For the purposes of this research project, I created a bricolage—a form of inquiry that merges "diverse theoretical and philosophical notions of the various elements encountered in the research act" (Kincheloe, 2001, p. 682). I
refer to my method as a critical methodological bricolage (CMB). This CMB brings together methodologies from the arts, education, humanities, and social sciences in an effort to produce a finely nuanced, aesthetically detailed, and rigorous understanding of the connection among communication, emotion, and student learning. By merging critical ethnography, educational criticism, and portraiture into a CMB, I synthesize: 1) the critique of power and the social justice goals of critical ethnography, 2) the four dimensions of educational criticism—description, interpretation, evaluation, and thematics—as guidelines for analyzing data, and 3) the concept of portraiture for representing my classroom observations. The anticipated value of uniting key aspects from each of these methods into a bricolage is its generative combination of purpose, analytical approach, and form of representation.

Critical ethnography, educational criticism, and portraiture all recognize the significance of subjectivity, context, and change in the research process. These concepts represent key commitments of both bricoleurs and critical ICC scholars and were a driving force in the creation and application of my critical methodological bricolage.

**Subjectivity.** Each of the three methods used to create this CMB recognize and embrace subjectivity. Critical ethnographers labor not only to reveal taken-for-granted assumptions about power and control, we are reflexive about our own positionalities and subjectivities, our own biographies and biases, and our moral and ethical responsibilities in representing our study participants' experiences and meanings (Madison, 2005; Noblit, 2004). Educational criticism is concerned with the veracity of subjectivity. Eisner (1998) reminds us that there is no objective truth and that subjectivity enables people
with different perspectives to create new forms of knowledge. He recommends that qualitative researchers construct credible cases for our knowledge claims through structural corroboration and consensual validation. An important aspect of structural corroboration is the use of multiple sources of data to provide evidence in support of the researcher's conclusions. Consensual validation refers to agreement—as long as most people would agree that the researcher's conclusions make sense then it has been achieved. In portraiture the perspective of the artist/researcher is highly visible but not central to the final representation (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). Since the researcher is part of the setting, she must make her presence explicit in her final representation—her personal experiences, presuppositions, biases and the ways in which her presence may have influenced her participants and the interactions she observed are all factored into the final representation. The researcher is responsible for selecting which stories to tell, therefore, by including her impressions, inner dialogue, and emotional responses to what she sees and hears, her unique perspective on the participants, their situations, and the research setting are contextualized, enabling readers to create their own interpretation.

Subjectivity is a vital aspect of research for both bricoleurs and critical ICC scholars—both view subjectivity as a social construction and as such, seek to interrogate the ways in which power operates to shape it (Kincheloe, 2005; Madison, 2005; Mendoza, Halualani, & Drzewiecka, 2002). In this study, I seek to understand the "historical, social, cultural, ideological, and discursive construction" of my own subjectivity and the subjectivities of my research participants (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 337).
**Context.** All three methods highlight the significance of context and the importance of studying people in natural settings. Critical ethnography, following the path of its traditional ethnographic roots, seeks to understand a phenomenon by observing and engaging in the daily life of a culture (Thomas, 1993). Unlike traditional ethnography, a critical approach seeks to take everyday situations in the field and expose the historical and political context—the "broader social processes of control, taming, power imbalance, and the symbolic mechanisms that impose one set of preferred meanings or behaviors over others" (Thomas, 1993, p. 9). Educational criticism was originally created to understand and improve educational practice (Eisner, 1998). Though educational criticism is not critical in the same sense as critical ethnography, Eisner (1998) suggests that situating a classroom or school within historical context "is likely to enhance our ability to interpret what we see" (p. 82). Portraitists also view experience as "embedded in context" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) state that

> human experience has meaning in a particular social, cultural, and historical context—a context where relationships are real, where the actors are familiar with the setting, where activity has purpose, where nothing is contrived. (p. 43)

Therefore, portraiture views context as a vital source of understanding as contrasted to the positivist paradigm that views context as "potentially distorting" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 11).

Bricoleurs examine "intersecting contextual fields" (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 328) not only to better understand the complexity of diverse meanings, but to highlight the ways in which phenomena can be understood from multiple contextual perspectives. Critical ICC
scholarship is similarly concerned with the historical and political contexts that constitute and shape culture, as well as individual identities, social institutions, and communication (Halualani et al., 2009). Martin and Nakayama (2007) remind us that "context is neither static nor objective" and that it includes everything from the physical setting to the "social, political, and historical structures in which the communication occurs" (p. 107). In my study, I make explicit and interrogate multiple contexts that shape teachers, students, their classrooms, their curricula, and their communication.

**Change.** While each of the three methods contributing to this CMB vary in their research goals, all of them advocate for some type of change. At the heart of critical ethnography is the goal of social justice (Madison, 2005). As Thomas (1993) asserts: "Critical ethnography is ethnography with a political purpose" (p. 4). Critical ethnographers are "opposed to inequality, which they conceptualize as a structural feature of society, and they wish to conduct research that will support efforts to reduce it" (Carspecken, 2001, p. 4). Educational criticism, on the other hand, does not have an explicit goal of social justice; however, it does aim to enhance educational processes and "further the public good" (Eisner, 1998, p. 214). Eisner identifies educational improvement as the primary goal of educational criticism when he writes: “the ultimate test of a set of educational ideas is the degree to which it illuminates and positively influences the educational experience of those who live and work in our schools" (p. 2). Like educational criticism, portraiture does not have an explicit goal of social justice. It does, however, recognize its ability to "engage in acts (implicit and explicit) of social transformation" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 11). Not only do portraitists
engage in dialogue with participants and potentially "make an imprint" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 11) while in the field, through its uniquely accessible form of representation, participants' views of themselves can be transformed as their everyday struggles are presented in a context that may not be typically visible to them (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). Portraiture also invites readers who may be unfamiliar with the particular research site to think about and contextualize educational experiences in new and generative, potentially transformative, ways.

Both bricoleurs and critical ICC scholars are committed to social change (Kincheloe, 2005, 2008; Halualani, et al., 2009; Howard, 2004; Johnson, Rich, & Cargile, 2008; Simpson, 2006). By rejecting the reductionism and objective distance of positivist research methods, bricoleurs and critical ICC scholars seek to reshape dominant knowledge and the social structures built upon such knowledge. By pursuing "subjugated insight" (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 345), both bricoleurs and critical ICC scholars seek to remove meaning making and knowledge production from the exclusive terrain of dominant elites (Kincheloe, 2005; Lee, Chung, Wang, & Hertel, 1995). Critical ICC scholarship seeks to reveal the disjunctions between dominant and subjugated knowledge through the interrogation of historical, social, economic, and political forces shaping them (Lee et al., 1995; Starosta & Chen, 2005). Halualani et al. (2009) assert that this "clashing of perspectives" (p. 32) is necessary for social change to occur.

Through my ethnographic field study and this critical methodological bricolage, I seek to reveal aspects of the hidden curriculum embedded in everyday classroom communication. I am committed to excavating existing structures of (in)justice that
impact student learning but are buried beneath words, tones of voice, facial expressions, gestures, emotions, and interactions. It is my deepest desire that this study will not only provide readers with new ways of understanding the teaching and learning process as constitutive, but also provide teachers with new reasons to be reflexive about their practice.

My Ethnographic Field Study

This dissertation represents the culmination of an eight-month ethnographic field study I undertook at an urban magnet school in Denver that serves students from grades six through twelve. Beginning in September 2009 and concluding in May 2010, I observed one middle school and two high school social studies teachers and their students. During my observations, I witnessed moments of anger, defiance, and frustration, as well as excitement, joy, and pride. Although I originally set out to understand how the communication between and among teachers and students fosters or forecloses learning, it soon became apparent that emotional encounters were pervasive and had a major impact on the teaching and learning process in each classroom.

I chose to conduct my field study at the International Magnet School of Denver (IMSD) because of its mission to prepare students for college and to develop their competencies as intercultural communicators (International Magnet School of Denver, 2009). Also, the school’s commitment to voluntary integration, academic rigor, and the pursuit of physical, mental, and emotional health also appealed to me (International Magnet School of Denver, 2007).
Because of the well-documented connection between educational inequity and student race and class (Kozol, 1991), selecting a school that demographically represented the diversity of the local and national community was another important consideration for me. During the 2009-2010 academic year, IMSD serviced a student body of 600 students of which 1% were American Indian, 9% Asian, 7% Black, 46% Latina/o, and 37% White. Thirty-five percent of students qualified for free lunches and 10% qualified for reduced lunches (Denver Public Schools, 2009). In addition, 64% of students at IMSD were female and 36% were male (Denver Public Schools, 2010). Although demographic information was not available for the administration and faculty, I conducted an informal review of the school's website which revealed that 9% of teachers are Asian, 18% are Latina/o, and 73% are White. In addition, 72% of teachers at IMSD hold graduate degrees, and many were born in other countries or served in the Peace Corps prior to joining IMSD.

I believed that IMSD would be an exceptional research site as it would allow me to observe both traditional and non-traditional classrooms. I imagined that a magnet school, with its mix of required and specialized courses, would provide a rich environment for observing different forms of communication and approaches to teaching and learning.²

**Gaining access.** Fortunately for me, at the time I embarked upon this study, my dissertation advisor's two teenage sons attended IMSD. My advisor introduced me to one of the social studies teachers at IMSD via e-mail, which proved invaluable. That teacher put me in contact with both the principal and assistant principal who gave me the
approval I needed to receive consent from University of Denver's institutional review board to observe a number of social studies classrooms during the 2009-2010 academic year. My social studies contact sent out an e-mail to all of the teachers in her department asking for volunteers who were willing to allow me to observe them and their students. Three teachers responded and invited me to observe the following classes: a sixth grade Cultural Studies class, a tenth grade Cross-Cultural Communication class, and an eleventh grade Advanced Placement World History class.

**Data sources.** There are three main sources of data for my study: observational field notes, interview transcripts, and focus group field notes. In addition, I collected copies of handouts the three teachers distributed to students during classroom sessions. I also had access to various school and district web sites that articulate the mission statement and expected learning outcomes, as well as student demographic, enrollment, and performance information.

Many scholars suggest that triangulation of methods is an important alternative to validity in qualitative inquiry (Denzin, 1978; Flick, 1998). And while I agree that multiple data sources add rigor and depth to a study by combining and contrasting different perspectives, I embrace Richardson's (2000) concept of crystallization, which rejects the fixed image of a triangle in favor of the multidimensional aspects of a crystal. As Richardson asserts, there are more than three sides to any story:

> Crystals grow, change, alter, but are not amorphous. Crystals are prisms that reflect externalities and refract within themselves, creating different colors, patterns, and arrays, casting off in different directions. (p. 934)
This subtle shift in metaphors aligns with the CMB I used as it allowed me to tell "the same tale from different points of view" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 5).

Eisner (1998) notes, "the richest vein of information is struck through direct observation of school and classroom life" (p. 182). Observations provide important insight into communicative action, whereas interviews and focus groups "put behavior in context and provide access to understanding [teachers' and students'] action" (Seidman, 2006, p. 10). Lofland and Lofland (1995) contend that focus groups are an effective form of interviewing that not only takes less time than one-to-one interviews, but allow participants to listen to one another and interact in ways that inspire ideas and differences of opinion and perspectives. While Eisner advocates using interviews and focus groups to learn what people think and feel about their experiences, he views these as secondary to observation and as a means of deepening understanding about what is transpiring. For this reason, I structured my study into three distinct phases: 1) classroom observations of teachers and students, 2) informal one-on-one interviews with teachers, and 3) focus groups with students.

Observations. The first phase of my field study consisted of classroom observations and casual conversations with teachers and students. Prior to my first day of observation, each teacher signed an informed consent form indicating that my study would span the entire academic year and that pseudonyms would be used to identify them and their students in any research reports emerging from my observations. I also prepared and provided each teacher with notification forms to distribute to students advising their parents or guardians of my presence in the classroom.
I observed all three classes most Fridays beginning in September 2009 and continuing through May 2010. All of my field notes were recorded by hand in 8 ½ x 11 inch notebooks. I kept separate chronological records for each of the three classes, reserving space at the end of each notebook for special notes or observations of all-school meetings or student presentations I was invited to attend.

In my notes, I recorded demographic information for the students present in each classroom on every day of observation. Although I will discuss the ethical and practical challenges this responsibility created for me in more detail in the upcoming section entitled "Important Considerations and Difficult Decisions," it is important to mention here that most of the racial and gender signifiers I assigned to teachers and students were based on visual markers. Some teachers and students revealed their racial and/or cultural identities during classroom discussions, however, for the most part, I assigned identity markers to teachers and students based upon their physical appearances and surnames, fully recognizing that this practice was reliant on racial and gender stereotypes that are often dehumanizing and radically inaccurate. As I will discuss in greater detail in the upcoming section, due to the educational injustices enacted daily against certain students based on race and gender, I believed it was important for me to at least try to represent the diversity of students present in each classroom despite the possibility that in so doing, I may be guilty of perpetuating an injustice I am deeply committed to transforming.

In addition to recording student demographic information each day, I also drew rough sketches to illustrate the configuration of classroom furnishings and the seating location of each student. I primarily focused on recording communication between and
among teachers and students including who spoke and what was said, as well as body movements, gestures, tones of voice, and changes in the classroom climate. In my field notes, I tried to capture verbatim dialogue whenever possible, using quotation marks. I also recorded my own inferences and questions, as well as my emotional and intellectual responses to what I was seeing, hearing, feeling, and smelling, using parentheses to distinguish my internal processes from my observations. Often I would make notes in the margins about possible connections to theories or information I wanted to clarify later.

There were breaks between each of the three classes, which allowed me time to add notes regarding brief conversations I had with students and teachers before, during, or after class. At the close of each day, I often spent time journaling about particularly meaningful or disturbing events that occurred that day, reflecting on and interrogating my own impressions and emotional responses to the day's happenings.

*Interviews.* After observing all three classrooms for seven months, I had developed a friendly, respectful, and trusting relationship with each of the three teachers and their students. At that time, I asked the three teachers and one student teacher I observed to participate in informal one-on-one interviews. I submitted my interview protocol (refer to Appendix A) and informed consent forms to the University of Denver's institutional review board and once I received approval, I scheduled the interviews. All four interviews were held at IMSD in a private location selected by each teacher (e.g., vacant classroom, teacher's lounge, etc.). I digitally recorded the audio of each interview while also taking brief handwritten notes. All of the interviews could be described as "guided conversations" (Lofland & Lofland, 1995, p. 85). Rather than adhering to a
structured format, I asked the first question and allowed the conversation to flow freely, asking my next question when it seemed natural to do so. My interviews were designed to discover each teacher's beliefs about the role of communication and emotion in learning, and to understand how each teacher perceived different aspects of classroom life. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. Due to a scheduling conflict, it was necessary for me to divide my interview with one teacher, Dolores Varela, into two separate days.

**Focus groups.** After completing the teacher interviews, I submitted my focus group protocol (refer to Appendix B) to the University of Denver's institutional review board. Once approved, I arranged with the three teachers to hold focus groups with their students during their regularly scheduled classes. Teachers Julie Rios and Joaquin Reyes facilitated the focus groups with their students while I took notes. The teachers asked their students each of the questions on the approved protocol during an informal class discussion the last week of school. The third teacher, Dolores Varela, and I agreed that it would be more effective if an outside party led the focus group while she and I observed. I arranged for Tiffani Baldwin, a doctoral colleague of mine from the University of Denver, to lead the focus group with Dolores' students. During the focus group, Tiffani distributed blank pieces of paper to each of Dolores' students and invited them to write anonymous responses to any questions they did not feel comfortable answering out loud, and she assured them that I would be the only person to review their written responses. My goal for each focus group was to understand what students thought and felt about their learning experiences over the course of the academic year.
Data analysis. At the completion of the field study, I used Eisner’s four dimensions of educational criticism as guidelines for analyzing my data: description, interpretation, evaluation, and thematics (1998). Although these dimensions appear to provide a structured and sequential approach to data analysis, Eisner's intention is to offer these as analytical tools rather than prescriptions to follow. Eisner's conceptualization of research as an artistic process is found in his lack of direction with regard to coding data. Lawrence-Lightfoot's and Davis' (1997) suggestions to read and reread data for examples of repetitive refrains (things that were heard or observed again and again), resonant metaphors (words and phrases that illuminated ways in which participants made sense of their experiences), and rituals (activities, events, and traditions that offered insight into the culture of the site) provided useful guidance for identifying and coding initial themes for each classroom. Eisner's dimensions were then used to make sense of those themes.

Central to Eisner's analytic method is an understanding that writing is a method of inquiry. Richardson (2000) asserts that writing as a method of inquiry views the analysis of data and the writing of the results as intertwined—an emergent process that includes some stories and excludes others. As Eisner (1998) reminds us: "One does not—nor can one—tell it all . . . the writer must be selective in both perception and disclosure" (p. 90).

As I read through my field notes and interview transcripts and listened to the digital recordings of the interviews numerous times, I began to identify the repetitive refrains, resonant metaphors, and rituals apparent in the classrooms. Once I gained a sense of the significance of specific moments I observed and the ways the teachers and students made sense of them, I then engaged in the first dimension of educational
criticism. I began by writing detailed descriptions—portraits—of individual teachers and their students, describing the physical details of each classroom and meaningful communicative actions and events I observed. For each classroom, I accumulated over 300 pages of handwritten field notes representing over 30 hours of observations; therefore, the task of selecting key moments from each class was both intellectually and emotionally challenging. As I read through my field notes multiple times, I relived classroom moments that warmed my heart and others that broke it, again and again. Through the process of reliving those moments, I had to make difficult decisions about which moments to highlight and which to ignore. As I discuss later under "Important Considerations and Difficult Decisions," none of these decisions were easy and I approached the decision-making process with a deep sense of responsibility and respect for the individuals who welcomed me into their classrooms. I endeavored to portray specific moments that exemplified the day-to-day goings on of each class.

The second and third dimensions of educational criticism were, in practice, an iterative process. I first interpreted the meaning of events I had witnessed using my commitment to critical pedagogy as a theoretical framework to guide my interpretations. Then, I evaluated, or appraised, the events in light of my understanding—I made value judgments about what I had heard, observed, and experienced during the field study. During the process of appraisal, I frequently reexamined my interpretations and investigated other possible explanations, which often led to new or additional evaluations. Although I was mindful to take ownership for my interpretations and
evaluations, whenever possible, I tried to offer different perspectives on the events I had observed.

Eisner (1998) makes it clear that researchers must have some standard or criterion from which to make our value judgments. While educational criticism resists prescribing values associated with educational experiences, Eisner suggests critics must evaluate whether the conditions they observe "contribute to a state of educational health or illness" (p. 100). He acknowledges that the act of making value judgments is a highly contentious and subjective act; however, there is no way to improve educational experiences if one is incapable of making judgments about what is working well and what is not (Eisner, 1998). My evaluations therefore involve more than an assessment of what was—they involve an assessment of what could have been and what ought to be (Eisner, 1998).

The fourth and final dimension of educational criticism, thematics, refers to the "distillation of major ideas or themes from the material described, interpreted, and evaluated" (Eisner, 2002, p. 190). Thematics in the context of educational criticism is different from themes emerging from data during the coding process, although they are related. Whereas the themes emerging from my data alerted me to significant aspects unique to each classroom, thematics refers to "naturalistic generalizations" (Eisner, 1998, p. 203) that are intended to capture the essence of my overall experience at IMSD. Thematics are meant to bring to light "pervasive qualities" (Eisner, 1998, p. 104) from a particular research setting that can be applied to other settings. It is in this final dimension of educational criticism that I, as the researcher, performed the role of the
critic by making explicit the implicit learning that took place during my field study at IMSD.

Although the four dimensions of educational criticism appear discrete, in practice they work heuristically (Eisner, 1998). Throughout the analysis process, I engaged in a recursive process of describing, interpreting, and evaluating that led back to describing, interpreting, and evaluating which continued to deepen my understanding of the teachers, students, and classrooms I observed while facilitating the elucidation of an overarching thematic.

Since the analytic process advocated by Eisner's (1998) educational criticism necessarily embraces writing as a method of inquiry, it seems appropriate to briefly address portraiture—a significant aspect of this dissertation. As a method of qualitative inquiry, portraiture refers to a painting with words: a work of art that captures the essence of the research site and phenomenon. Through the use of narrative, portraiture seeks to "seduce readers into thinking more deeply about issues that concern them" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 10).

Portraiture resists the tendency of scientific research to search for and document failures and instead focuses on a search for goodness (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) state:

The researcher who asks first 'what is good here?' is likely to absorb a very different reality than the one who is on a mission to discover the sources of failure. But it is also important to say that portraits are not designed to be documents of idealization or celebration. In examining the dimensionality and complexity of goodness there will, of course, be ample evidence of vulnerability and weakness. In fact, the counterpoint and contradictions of strength and vulnerability, virtue and evil (and how people, cultures, and organizations
negotiate those extremes in an effort to establish the precarious balance between them) are central to the expression of goodness. (p. 9)

Portraiture seeks to resonate with the reader "beyond the particular that has so preoccupied science to the universal that echoes throughout art" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 37). This resonance depends heavily upon the form and quality of the narrative. In portraiture, the portraitist strives to "create a picture into which the reader will feel drawn" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 59)—a picture that conveys a sensory experience of the "subjects," their situation, and the setting. The portrait seeks to vividly express the sights, sounds, smells, and emotions experienced by the researcher and the participants. Using the metaphor of a painting as a guiding principle for composing the narrative, portraitists are encouraged to "include the use of keen descriptors that delineate, like line; dissonant refrains that provide nuance, like shadow; and complex details that evoke the impact of color and the intricacy of texture" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 29).

**Important Considerations and Difficult Decisions**

Reflexivity—"to turn back on our self the lens through which we are interpreting the world" (Goodall, 2000, p. 137)—is a vital aspect of any critical ethnographic study (Madison, 2005; Thomas, 1993). Critical researchers create representations of others that are necessarily and unapologetically influenced by the researcher's positionalities, as well as their epistemological, methodological, and, in my case, pedagogical commitments. Although positivists would argue that valid research must be objective, I know from first-hand experience that all research is a subjective process beginning with the questions asked, the methods used, the tools employed to analyze data, and the content and style of
the final representation (not to mention the questions, methods, tools, and content omitted). Research is a political process with the potential to change lives, for better or for worse; therefore, researcher reflexivity is an ethical obligation (Davies, 1999; Berry, 2011; Fine, Weis, Weseen, & Wong, 2000; Goodall, 2000; Madison, 2005; Nespor & Barber, 1991; Thomas, 1993).

Ethnographic fieldwork presents researchers with an additional set of moral obligations because we get to know our research participants personally. Although in the field, I tried not to interfere with the goings-on of classroom life, I am an embodied being who was both out of place and took up space in the three classrooms I observed. Each of the teachers informed their students that I was a teacher and a researcher, however, the students were likely unclear about my reasons for being in their particular classrooms. Despite my efforts to keep quiet and blend in, this was an impossibility—teachers would share with me their goals for the day or their feelings about a specific classroom interaction, and students would smile and wave at me and sometimes offer me candy or gum, and I would respond. I am a middle-aged, middle-class, White woman who, despite my best efforts to fit in, stood out.

As my introductory story and my upcoming narratives reveal, my educational history was peppered with challenges that, although unique in their particular details, are not all that uncommon. All six of my siblings attended the same parochial school as I and although they are each bright and inquisitive individuals, none pursued a higher education. The oppressive environment of our early education was enough to turn
anyone off from learning and although I still have wounds from those early days, my desire to learn and grow kept me going and still motivates me today.

This dissertation represents only a snapshot of what I witnessed and learned while sitting in three classrooms most Fridays for an entire academic year. Some readers may question the moments I chose to highlight, the style I use to present my findings, and my interpretations and evaluations. Some may question my bias and I encourage readers to do that. This dissertation would not be worth the time I spent or the tears I shed writing it if readers do not question the ideas I put forward. I had a clear research agenda when I set out on this journey and although I have made many adjustments along the way, I have a clear agenda for this written representation. I started with a simple curiosity about how teachers and students foster and foreclose potential through communication and nobody was more surprised than I with what I found in these three classrooms.

While in the field, I tried to keep my eyes, my ears, and my heart open, and everyday I tried to put myself in the proverbial shoes of these three teachers and their students. The research process, however, was not perfect and neither am I. I am simply a student, a teacher, and a researcher who cares deeply about the quality of teaching and learning. I recognize that in my drive to bring to light educational injustices, I may create new forms of injustice. I take Madison's (2005) words very seriously:

Positionality is vital because it forces us to acknowledge our own power, privilege, and biases just as we are denouncing the power structures that surround our subjects. (p. 7)

Although my positionality as a White educated adult has significantly influenced what I saw, heard, and felt at IMSD, I contend that it matters little whether I chose the
moments you would have selected had you been in those classrooms with me. Had you been there with me you likely would have noticed things I did not or overlooked things I saw. What matters is whether the moments I describe make sense and ring true to you. It is my hope that the portraits I present provide enough detail of the classrooms I observed to evoke curiosity and consideration of the interpretation and analyses that follow them. If so, then that is a wonderful basis from which to begin.

There are ethical issues that have haunted each stage of my research and each page of this dissertation that until now I have resisted putting into words. Although I use pseudonyms throughout this work, every teacher and student in this study is a living, thinking, feeling human being who will likely recognize themselves on these pages. There is no way to escape the ethical consequences of ethnographic scholarship. As Conquergood (1985) asserts. "Opening and interpreting lives is very different from opening and closing books" (p. 2). Just as each teacher and student who participated in this study has changed my life, this scholarship has the potential to change their lives. And although this work has been challenging—physically demanding, emotionally draining, and intellectually taxing—it has been rewarding beyond my wildest imagination.

During the course of this study I met three teachers, each of whom I have grown to care for and respect. They have taught me that the lives of middle and high school teachers are not easy; the teaching profession is not for the faint of heart. Although each had different histories, personalities, positionalities, and philosophies, each of them taught me how to be a better teacher. They reminded me that becoming a better teacher
is a process that never ends; that there is always room, always potential, for improvement.

And then there were the students—those beautiful young people whose lives are overflowing with potential. Talking with and observing them was an unexpected delight, despite the uncomfortable chairs and long school days. The students represented on these pages are real kids and although their names have been changed, I have tried to retain a sense of their uniqueness and diversity by reporting their actions in the classroom, as well as what they had to say about their experiences and feelings. The markers I use to identify their gender and racial identities are based on phenotypic characteristics that are more often than not misleading and always oversimplify the complexity of what it means to be a human being in a race-centric world: Racism and discrimination occur in classrooms every day based on these types of visual assessments (Fergus, 2009). It is important to point out that I am not drawing conclusions about gender and race in this study; I am simply trying to bring the diversity of the students at IMSD to life for the reader. I recognize that race is both "a floating unstable fiction and a fundamental, unerasable aspect of biography and social experience" (Fine et al., 2000, p. 111), and although I believe it is important for readers to get a sense of a student's racial identity, I find all racial signifiers problematic. For example, to visually identify a student as Black does not account for the fact that he may have a parent who is Latina/o or White (Mertens, 2005). Likewise, the categories "Asian" and "Latina/o" fail to account for the many different countries of origin, ancestry, or immigration histories that make up the complexity of student identities found in classrooms around the world today. With all
these problematic aspects laid out before you, I ask that you approach these markers skeptically knowing that much about each individual student remains unknown.

I admit to looking at these three teachers and their students through the lens of a wounded student, an impassioned teacher, and a dedicated researcher who is committed to understanding how to make classroom life more affectively vibrant and intellectually empowering for teachers and students.

Overview of the Dissertation

Chapters two, three, and four each examine a different classroom I observed at IMSD. Although the teachers, students, and courses are different, I have organized each chapter using the same format. At the opening of each chapter, I share one of my own classroom experiences not only as a means of situating myself in that particular research setting, but to provide readers with a glimpse into the experiences and attitudes that have shaped my research agenda and my sensibilities as a student, teacher, and researcher. In this first section of each chapter, I introduce the reader to the featured teacher and the class I observed, and provide a brief overview of the chapter. In section two, I present a portrait of each classroom. In each portrait, I illustrate a few significant events as I experienced them. In section three of each chapter, I present my interpretation and evaluation of the classroom and, wherever possible, I provide alternative and often opposing perspectives on the events under discussion. I have tried to mitigate my biases where they are unwanted and unnecessary; however, in the tradition of critical ethnography, I allow my voice to penetrate the interpretation and evaluation. In the fourth and final section of each chapter, I address issues of power, agency, and social
justice that were brought to light through my examination of that particular classroom. In this last section, I strive to show not only what is going on in each classroom, but the potential that exists in each classroom to empower students and teachers, enhance their agency, and work toward social justice.

In chapter two, I take you into Julie Rios' eleventh grade Advanced Placement World History class. In Julie's classroom, you get a glimpse of performativity: its focus on measurable outcomes and the ways a teacher and her students navigate the conflicting desires to fulfill performance expectations and experience growth as human beings. In chapter three, you meet Dolores Varela and the tenth grade students in her Cross-Cultural Communication class. In Dolores' classroom, you get a close up on emotion: the way it is transmitted between and among a teacher and her students, and the impact it has on student learning. In chapter four, I introduce you to Joaquin Reyes and his sixth grade Cultural Studies students. In Joaquin's classroom, you get to see relationality in action: how its commitment to mutual empowerment fosters student engagement and learning.

In the fifth and final chapter, I present an overarching thematic that attempts to make sense of what I witnessed during my year at IMSD and to offer teachers and researchers like myself new ways of thinking about the invisible forces circulating in our classrooms and how they can be mobilized to foster student learning. This thematic does not make an explicit appearance in the preceding three chapters but if you look carefully you will see it. In this final chapter, I discuss desire—I do my best to point out the places it frequently hides, the reasons it is so often ignored, and suggest how teachers can invite it in their own classrooms.
It is 10:45 A.M. on Friday, September 11, 2009 when I pull my car into the crowded parking lot at the International Magnet School of Denver (IMSD). I turn off my engine and take a deep breath before I get out of my car and begin my walk to the main entrance of the school. IMSD is housed in a two-story building that takes up an entire city block. The main entrance faces a busy one-way street with four lanes heading east. I walk west against the traffic; the clamor of automobiles and their noxious exhaust stand in stark contrast against the verdant manicured lawn and towering pine trees adorning the school facade. I notice the Rocky Mountains in the distance beyond the school. Although summer is just now coming to an end and the air is hot and dry, I am surprised to see that the mountains behind the Front Range are already sprinkled with snow.

At the entry of the school three steps await me, which lead to a landing and a row of four powder-blue steel doors with security glass windows. I climb the steps and notice an intercom on the wall with a sign above it that reads:

Welcome
Please ring bell once
When directed, please talk directly into the speaker

I ring the bell and when the office assistant answers, I tell her I am here to see Dolores Varela. I hear a loud buzzing sound and the door unlocks. I step through the threshold of the school and find myself in a foyer that leads to another set of steel doors that are all propped open. Above the doors is a large navy-blue banner that reads:

Welcome Back to School
International Magnet School of Denver  
Developing Tomorrow's Global Leaders

On the left side of the banner is a map of North and South America and on the right side is a map of the world. Around the perimeter are the words for "Welcome" in five different languages, including "Bienvenue," "Benvenuto," "Bienvenidos," as well as Chinese and Japanese characters.

I pass through the open doors and walk past the school auditorium, dark and empty at this time of day. When I reach the end of the main hallway, I turn left toward the office. A friendly middle-aged woman greets me when I enter and I tell her I am here to see Dolores Varela. As I sign the visitor's log, she tells me I can find Dolores upstairs in Room 209. I thank her and tell her I have been here once last year and that I know the way.

When I exit the main office, I turn right and head west, noticing the beige subway tiles and royal blue lockers that line the hallway walls. Disturbing pictures of piglets with photo-shopped smiles are taped to many of the locker doors; a reminder that we are in the midst of a swine flu pandemic and that extra precautions should be taken to minimize the spread of germs. Classes are currently in session, so the hallway is mostly quiet. I pass three Latina students clustered around their lockers—one is putting away books, another is brushing her hair, and a third is eating a cup of soup. The pungent scent of pepper sauce wafts my way as I stroll past the girls. I turn the corner and as I prepare to enter the stairwell, I notice colorful banners hanging from the ceiling along
the length of the hallway. Each banner indicates one of the five core values of the school: Diversity, Integrity, Collaboration, Reflection, and High Expectations.

When I reach Dolores' classroom, she is seated at her desk working on her computer. She greets me and invites me to take a seat at a desk near a wall of windows. She sits down next to me and we begin talking easily. Dolores tells me that this is her fourth year teaching at IMSD and that last year she taught the same students I will be observing. She says that the class meets at the end of the day and that the students are often restless during her class. I ask Dolores about the Cross-Cultural Communication course I will be observing and she explains that the course is part of IMSD's specialized foundations curriculum, therefore, she has a great deal of flexibility because the course is not subject to district requirements. After a brief conversation, Dolores shakes my hand and smiles genuinely, indicating that she is looking forward to having me in her class and receiving some constructive feedback on her teaching.

I leave Dolores' classroom and make my way back down the stairs to Julie's classroom. I arrive promptly at 11:30 A.M. and Julie is ready to head over to the cafeteria for lunch duty. She welcomes me with a warm smile, locks her classroom door, and points the way to the cafeteria. The hallways are now abuzz with activity. Middle-schoolers emit giggles as they rush along the perimeter of the hallway; they circumvent the crush of older student bodies who saunter slowly while engaged in conversation. The diversity of hair colors, skin tones, languages, and apparel catch my attention. In this hallway, black hair and brown skin dominates. I feel conspicuous among this multitude of youthful souls—my tall, middle-aged body and blonde hair set me apart—yet I am
strangely at ease. Julie and I are swept up in the pulsing beat of bodies all moving in the same direction; some students are headed toward the cafeteria and others to the parking lot that lies just beyond a set of four steel doors at the end of the hall. Julie talks casually to students as we pass them; she is friendly without being effusive.

Once inside the cafeteria, Julie invites me to take a seat at a large round table. While keeping both eyes on the students, she happily answers my questions about the Advanced Placement World History class I will be observing this year. Julie tells me that she prefers a discussion format in her classes, however, the Advanced Placement class is "an anomaly" that requires more lectures. We talk a bit about her experience teaching at IMSD—she tells me that although she has been teaching here since before it became a stand-alone magnet school in 2005, this is only her third year teaching Advanced Placement World History. She states that there are twenty-four students in the class and that they are all "highly motivated."

During our brief conversation, Julie scans the cafeteria and keeps a watch over the students. When it becomes clear to me that she has given me all the time she can, I thank her for her time, and tell her I am looking forward to visiting her class next week. Before I leave, I ask if she can direct me to Joaquin Reyes' classroom. Joaquin is the third teacher I will be observing and although we have exchanged several emails over the summer, we were unable to schedule a meeting prior to my first day of observation. Julie informs me that Joaquin is having lunch off-campus with some of the other male teachers. As I say goodbye to Julie, I survey the cafeteria one last time and I smile
broadly. I am excited to get started with my field study next week, confident that I will learn a great deal from Julie, Dolores, Joaquin, and their students.
Chapter Two

"I Can Teach Them How to Take this Test": Performativity and Student Learning

When I was in high school, I never heard of Advanced Placement (AP). Although AP courses have been around since 1956, they were not as prevalent in the seventies as they are today. The closest equivalent in my high school was a unique class I took in my junior year—College Composition and Speech—designed to prepare college-bound students for the rigors of higher education. My teacher, Mr. Frederick, a former college professor, was an elegant man in both dress and elocution. He regularly wore colorful slacks and button-down shirts with ascots peeking out of the collar, and he spoke with perfect diction.

Mr. Frederick's course transformed me in many ways. I still recall the informative essay I wrote explicating the negative effects of cigarette smoking on unborn babies. Most memorable, however, was the persuasive essay I wrote arguing against heroin use and the subsequent speech I delivered, during which I displayed for my classmates the makeshift paraphernalia of a heroin addict. I cannot recollect why I chose those topics, but I do recall my weekly trips to the local library and the excitement I felt returning home with stacks of books in tow. I remember sitting at the kitchen table while
my mother prepared dinner and poring over the many hardcover books in search of information and statistics to support my argument.

All these years later, I hark back to the look on Mr. Frederick's face when I expertly delivered my speech; every fact organized for optimum persuasive impact. My teacher had taught me well and the joy was visible on his expressive face. Although we exchanged few personal words that entire year, Mr. Frederick's comments on my papers and the feedback he provided conveyed to me that he was pleased with my progress.

Although I had many teachers during high school, Mr. Frederick was by far the most professional. He had an exaggerated elegance and wit that my other teachers lacked. Though many of his colleagues were smart and friendly and, by yesterday's standards, would be considered good teachers, Mr. Frederick did something none of my other teachers did—he helped me prepare for and envision my future.

Now that I have been teaching college communication courses for over eight years, I have often fantasized about returning to high school to teach students how to write a thesis statement and organize an essay—skills too many of my college students lack. I often wonder what inspired Mr. Frederick to leave his post as a professor to teach at a large suburban high school. Perhaps he was frustrated by his college students' inability to construct a cogent paragraph or disgusted by their atrocious spelling (something he cared deeply about in an age before personal computers and spell-check). Regardless of Mr. Frederick's reasons for becoming a high school teacher, his objectives were clear: to teach his students to think deeply, write clearly, and express ourselves verbally.
As I reflect back on my experiences in Mr. Frederick's classroom, I realize that he, more than any other teacher, shaped the student and teacher I have become. He pushed his students outside our comfort zones and encouraged independent work, but always within a supportive environment. He set high standards and clear expectations for each assignment; however, he never told us how to accomplish a task. It was up to us to choose topics of interest, figure out how to locate credible sources, and develop logical arguments. I am saddened to think that if I were to teach high school today—in this age of high-stakes testing and standardized curriculum—I might feel pressured to "teach to the test" as so many teachers do. Instead of giving my college-bound students opportunities to explore their own thinking and learning processes, I might be tempted to follow a rigorous, fast-paced curriculum that leaves little time for nurturing the habits of thought and expression Mr. Frederick held dear.

I was excited when Julie Rios responded to my request to observe her eleventh grade Advanced Placement World History class. And although I was thrilled by the prospect of going back to high school, I had limited knowledge about the Advanced Placement Program and was unsure what to expect. Julie graciously agreed to meet me prior to my first day of observation, inviting me to tag along with her during lunch duty. This gave me the opportunity to meet her and get a glimpse of the students at the International Magnet School of Denver (IMSD). During our lunchtime visit, Julie told me that, unlike other IMSD courses that highlight the school's special emphasis on international studies, her AP World History course was administered by the College Board, the same organization that administers the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT).
She explained that at IMSD, unlike many other schools, AP courses were "open access," which meant that any student who wanted to enroll was encouraged to do so.3

I met Julie's students for the first time the following week and I was immediately captivated by their energy. One student entered the classroom skipping and singing, while others hugged one another or engaged in lively conversations. I was pleased to see that the 24 teenagers in Julie's AP World History class mirrored the diverse population of the school. When the class commenced, the previously exuberant group of young adults metamorphosed into students right before my eyes. The high energy shifted to subdued silence as students took their assigned seats and quietly turned their attention to their teacher and the task of learning.

On my very first day of observation, I noticed that Julie and her students approached the teaching and learning process in a mature and professional manner. I initially associated this task-oriented approach with the students' desire to succeed in the class and on the end-of-year exam. However, as the year unfolded I began to focus on the connection between Julie's structured curriculum and pedagogy, and her interactions with her students. I often reflected back on my experiences in Mr. Frederick's classroom and remembered the freedom he gave his students to work through problems in our own way and to embrace our individual learning processes. Although my initial purpose for observing Julie's class was to understand how communication between and among teachers and students fosters or forecloses students' potential to learn, I quickly began to wonder how much flexibility Julie had within the AP curriculum, and the impact her pedagogical choices were having on her students and their shared learning environment.
The following portrait presents an unembellished account of a teacher professional and her students. This portrayal provides a glimpse into Julie's classroom and endeavors to bring to life the mundane and taken-for-granted aspects of a high school Advanced Placement classroom. In this chapter, I examine performativity—a "mode of regulation" (Ball, 2003, p. 216) that constrains and obscures teacher and student agency in the classroom. My interpretation and evaluation of Julie's classroom explore the ways in which AP curriculum and exams limit, but do not determine, a teacher's pedagogical choices. I argue that performativity promotes a future orientation and a new form of teacher professionalism that minimizes the relational aspects of teaching and learning by prioritizing the uncritical accumulation of historical facts. I conclude with an evaluation of teacher and student performativity and its impact on issues of power, agency, and social justice.

A Portrait of an Eleventh Grade Advanced Placement World History Class

It is week six of the academic year when I cross the threshold to Julie's classroom for the first time. I arrive during the advisement period—a half-hour sandwiched between the first and second sessions of the day that is designated for students to meet with their teachers, if needed. Julie is seated at her desk, which is positioned directly across the room from the door. As I enter, she greets me with a relaxed smile. Her cheerful eyes are framed by tortoise shell glasses that subtly accentuate the golden highlights in her short brown hair. Julie—a middle-aged woman of Armenian descent—is dressed casually in a navy short-sleeved t-shirt, tan thin-wale corduroy pants, and gray
Croc sandals. I take note of the no-nonsense quality to Julie's dress and demeanor as she directs me to a desk in the southwest corner of the room.

After settling into my seat, I survey the classroom. Across from my desk is a row of windows that offer a clear view of the school's soccer field and a winding path that leads to the parking lot, tennis courts, and a cluster of bright purple picnic tables. Above the windows hang an array of colorful college pennants: the blue and white of Barnard, Columbia, and Duke are offset by the crimson of Harvard, orange and black of Princeton, and the green and gold of Colorado State University. Above these pennants is a handwritten sign indicating "East." I look around the room and notice that the other three cardinal directions also are displayed on handwritten signs. On the north wall, the wall closest to the door and Julie's desk, there is a white screen with a projector mounted to the ceiling above it, and next to it a chalkboard displaying the school schedule for each day of the week. At the center of the south end of the room there is a large map of the world on rollers that includes dozens of charts and illustrations, and next to it is a clean white board. Behind my desk, running the entire length of the west side of the room, are oak bookcases overflowing with a random assortment of papers and books. Student desks are positioned on the east and west sides of the room—six rows wide and three desks deep on either side, facing each other and creating a wide walkway down the center of the room. I take note of the many Asian artifacts adorning the walls—a picture of two Chinese men in colorful robes, an Asian-themed calendar, and a tapestry of an elephant with ornate decorations of green, red, and yellow.
Julie is seated at her desk, talking to a White female student who is wearing a brightly-colored tie-dye t-shirt. Julie asks the student to collate several pages stacked on two desks not far from where I am seated. The student asks Julie to explain what "collate" means. Julie stands up, shows the student what to do, and heads back to her desk. As the student gets to work stapling packets of paper together, another White female enters the room and asks her what she is doing. The girl in the tie-dye says matter-of-factly, "I'm collating," to which the other girl responds, "What's collating?"

Ten minutes pass and several students enter the room. A tall female with pale white skin, dark hair, and a mouthful of braces breezes into the room and announces dramatically, "Okay everyone. You can relax. I'm here!" I smile at her and she smiles back. The room begins to fill up and the sound of light-hearted chatter envelopes the space. I observe a tall slender male with pitch-black hair and glasses skip into the room, drop his backpack on a chair, and hug a male with shaggy brown hair as well as a short female with gentle facial features. The diversity of hair colors and clothing catches my attention as I scan the room and notice two girls wearing colorful hijab. These two young women covered from head to toe in fabric, appear both at home and out of place in this multicultural classroom where their female peers—Asian, Black, Latina, White—bare their sun-kissed skin in tank tops and tight-fitting jeans.

The students seem unaware of the hour and eager to visit with one another for as long as they can. The energy in the room shifts instantly from jocular to serious when Julie asks: "Guys, can you sit down please? I need to take attendance and you'll be marked absent." Julie takes a seat on a tall oak stool beneath the projector and asks
everyone to get out their rubrics and worksheets. She then says she is going to give each student a packet of documents, instructing them not to write on the pages because she will be collecting them later. "Anything with a hole punch is not to be taken out of this class," she asserts.

"Let's review," Julie continues. "There's a formula you can use if you want when you're writing," Julie says, and stands up and makes her way to the white board near my desk. She writes "DBQ" on the board and says, "Look at the documents. What are you looking for in each document?"

A Latina female responds, "The thesis."

Julie asks her, "What do you mean by thesis?"

The student adds, "The question you're supposed to answer."

"What else are you asking from the documents?" Julie asks the entire class.

Another Latina female states, "Reporting evidence."

"Of?" Julie inquires.

The student responds again, "Evidence."

Julie smiles and says, "I call it POV, but it used to be called bias. Bias has a negative connotation. What is POV?"

A White male calls out, "The writer?"

Julie pushes him, "What about it?"

He responds, "Who is it?"

Julie turns and writes S. O. A. P. S. vertically on the white board while stating, "We have an acronym you can use. Who can tell me about soaps?"
Several students respond in unison: "Subject."

Julie writes the word "subject" next to the "S" and asks, "What is the O?"

A student calls out "occasion" and Julie writes it on the board, adding "when & where."

Several students ask "Why?"

Julie responds: "Historians ask a lot of questions. 'Why would they sit down and write this?' What is one of the purposes or reasons we talked about in the documents?"

A White male responds, "To show Christian and Muslim attitudes toward merchants?"

Julie inquires, "Do you think that was the purpose? Would they have written differently if they knew we were looking for these attitudes? What were they doing?"

The same White male continues to speak, "The morals."

"Yes!" Julie responds. "Writing moral studies. Where were they put?"

A student calls out, "In the Bible and Koran."

Julie points to the board. "What's A?" Before anyone can respond she provides the answer: "Audience." She tells her students: "Have a little dialogue with the documents. 'Who are you writing to, dude?" Without pausing, she asks, "What about P?"

Several students respond enthusiastically, "Purpose!"

Julie writes it on the board as she asks, "What's the S?"

In unison, students respond, "Speaker!"
Julie then directs students to the documents she distributed earlier. "We went through this on each of the documents. Do you want to review them to remember what they say?" When students remain silent, Julie points to the white board and asks, "How many wrote this down?" Only 6 of the 24 students raise their hands and Julie reminds them that it is a good idea to write things down so they can refer back to it. She erases the board and writes, "Christian views changed."

"Help me out," Julie tells her students. The White male with shaggy brown hair says, "Christian views changed over time. In the beginning Christians disliked merchants and later they liked them." Julie writes exactly what he says.

"How can we make this historical?" Julie asks.

A White female responds, "Up until the time 1500 C. E."

Julie pushes gently, "Can we make it better?"

When nobody responds, Julie writes on the board: “From 70 C. E., up until 1500 C. E., Christian views changed.”

Julie asks, "Did we answer the question? What is the question?"

The White female student with braces answers: "No, we didn't because we still need to talk about Muslims."

After finishing the sentence to Julie’s satisfaction, she erases it and writes ATPT vertically on the board.

She asks, "What do historians care about?" and fills in details next to each letter. A= answer question, T=thesis statement, P=place, and T=time. "So, in the first
paragraph of your essay you will always address ATPT, and then when you get to the documents, you look at SOAPS. Now, let's get to the rubrics."

Julie leads students through a rubric, discussing how on the AP exam they must group the provided documents, as well as create a list of hypothetical documents for their essays. Julie tells her students, "They don't have to be real, but they need to be possible. Not 'I want a Martian to come down and take a picture.'" Nobody laughs.

The room is quiet. Julie walks over and opens a window. The tall male student with dark hair and glasses follows, opening several windows and inviting a cool breeze of fresh air into the room. Julie passes out packets of sample essays and tells everyone to go through and read the first one. A student sneezes and several others respond in unison, "Bless you!"

After five minutes, Julie instructs students to get into groups of two or three and come up with a grade for the first essay using the rubric. When students don't immediately jump into action, Julie claps her hands and says in a kind, but assertive tone: "Come on! Move!"

Students form groups with others seated near them. Some groups are comprised of four or five students. There is a lot of talking going on. Julie calls out that she will collect what they have written down and that they need to provide evidence. "If there is a thesis, what is it?"

Julie writes the names of group members on the board. She asks if everyone is finished and when a group of five indicates that they need more time, she says matter-of-factly, "That's why I wanted you to form smaller groups. See?"
Julie gives her students two minutes to finish up before calling on a group to tell her the grade they came up with for the essay. When they tell her they gave the essay an "eight" several other students call out in disbelief, "Eight!?!!" Julie says reassuringly, "Hold on. This is how it starts. This is a conversation." She then asks the group for their rationale. An Asian female member of the group goes through each of the rubric items, starting with one point for thesis and one point for understanding documents. As she explains her group's grading system, there are quiet conversations going on between members of other groups. Julie interrupts the student and says, "These side conversations may benefit you, but they don't benefit the class. So please raise your hands otherwise it sounds like mish-mash." Julie asks the student to finish with her rationale, writing the points for each grading criteria on the board.

With only five minutes remaining, Julie asks students to read the last document. At 11:30, Julie tells everyone that they will finish it on Tuesday and to leave the documents in class. Several students immediately stand up and begin talking to others near them, while some remain seated. The energy in the room instantly returns to its pre-class intensity, with students making plans for lunch and the upcoming weekend. Nobody appears to be in a hurry to leave, although there is a frenzy of activity as students return their documents to Julie before stuffing books and pens into their backpacks. The tall male with dark hair and glasses slides his backpack over one shoulder and on his way out the door, he turns to Julie and says, "Good class!" to which Julie replies tepidly, "Thanks for your approval, Dylan."
In week seven of the academic year students engage in a group activity examining the differences between Confusianism, Daoism, Legalism, and Mohism in ancient China. During week eight, students watch a film about Alexander the Great. By week nine, my third week of observation, I know most students by name. It is an early release day so I arrive at 8:45 A.M. and the class is already abuzz with activity. Most of the students are already present and visiting with their peers. Julie is seated at her desk talking with a man who is there to retrieve a cart filled with laptop computers. At 8:47, Julie stands up and addresses her students. "Today's test will be a timed test. You have 50 minutes to complete 70 multiple choice questions."

A student calls out, "How much is this worth?"

Julie responds, "Usually on the first test I curve it. You're aiming for 50 correct. I don't count negatives." She pauses for a moment, clasping a stack of papers close to her chest. "I need everyone to take everything off your desk except a pencil. There is no reason in the world to cheat. I will catch you and you will get a zero. That's what happens during the test. If a proctor catches you, it's over."

Julie starts passing out the tests, placing them print-side down on each student's desk. When everyone has one, she looks at the clock on the wall above me and says, "You may begin. No talking." Julie walks over to the white board and writes:

Start: 8:51

End: 9:41

I look around the room. The students are busy working. It is quiet except for the sound of bodies shifting in seats and papers rustling. Most of the students appear to be
deep in thought; many lean over their papers. For a moment, complete silence blanketing the room and its inhabitants. I hear a door slam in the hallway, then several pages turning in unison. It appears that some of the students are working at the same pace. I am struck by the dramatic contrast in energy now and just moments ago. Julie strolls slowly down the center aisle of the room and then takes her place at her desk, standing so she can see all of her students. I watch Antonio, a Latino student, pulling on his eyebrows as he works his way through the test. A student sneezes and several others respond, "Bless you!"

Piper, a female student with pale white skin and bright red hair, stretches her arms, strokes her forehead and her hair, and then returns her attention to the test. Dylan studies the exam intently. Julie walks to the center of the room and scans her students. She glances at the clock, turns around and faces me. She draws her hand to her mouth and looks like she is deep in thought. Piper calls out "Mrs. Rios?" and Julie walks over to her. I cannot hear what the student says, but Julie smiles broadly as she walks away.

The room is absolutely still; the only sound is an occasional squeak from a chair sliding across the linoleum floor. Laura, the dark-haired girl with braces, cracks her neck; first to the right and then to the left. I can hear it from across the silent room. Dylan leans back and stretches, kicking his long legs out in front of him. As Julie paces the open space between the desks, Dylan and Piper hold up their papers, signaling to Julie that they are done. Julie collects their exams and motions them toward the door. They exit and Julie resumes her surveillance. It is only 9:15. They have finished in less than 25 minutes!
I notice that Antonio is only on number 39. An Asian female, Chantou, holds her paper up and Julie comes over and collects it. Another Asian female follows suit. Ryan, the White boy with the shaggy brown hair, holds out his paper for Julie, then takes a big gulp from his shiny black water bottle. He gets up, takes a tissue from Julie's desk, blows his nose, and returns to his desk. He and Laura smile at one another; she reveals her full mouth of braces. Piper returns to the classroom, opens a book, and begins to read.

At 9:25, all but five students have finished their exams. Antonio is now on number 59. Julies slowly paces the center of the room, clutching the completed exams to her chest. She purses her lower lip and looks at the clock. She runs her fingers through her thick brown hair and smiles. Julie collects two more tests and takes a seat at her stool. She begins to grade the exams, looking up occasionally. At 9:34, two more students signal to Julie that they are done. She gets up, collects their papers, and stares at Oleg, the last hold-out. He is tapping a clean white sneaker on the floor and running the palm of his left hand along the front ridge of his desk. It is 9:37. Time is running out but he seems oblivious. At 9:38, Oleg stands up and gives his test to Julie.

Julie breaks the silence. "Okay, I think that's it. How did it go?"

Several students respond with grunts and groans. One student offers: "Some were easy."

"I graded everybody's first page and it's about what I expected," Julie states dispassionately. "Some got all correct but others are not reading carefully. We'll go over this next week. Many of you indicated that hunting and gathering was the first agricultural technique. Agriculture was the transition."
There is a lot of chatter amongst students. Julie says, "Shhh. I need to go over this. Why did the Roman Empire fall?"

The students are silent. Julie doesn’t wait long before answering her own question. "Three reasons. The biggest is Nomadic invasion."

Dylan interjects, "Epidemics."

"Yes!" Julie responds. "That’s number 2. Third part is internal collapse. What is one of the biggest issues?" When nobody offers a response, Julie pushes: "Are there more wealthy or poor?"

Several students respond, "Poor."

"Who owned land?" Julie continues to inquire.

"Wealthy" students reply.

"What I need you to pay attention to in the chapters are the theme overviews. What stays the same and what changes? You need to watch out for these things. Keep notes." Julie then asks students to turn in their chapter notes so she can check them, adding, "If you don’t have them today you can turn them in next week. I just want to make sure I see them."

Students get busy going through their binders and talking with one another about their notes. Julie tells them to have a good weekend and to read chapter 13. The students appear to float on a current of contentment and relief as they prepare to leave. Dylan breaks into song, emboldening two Latinas to joyfully join the chorus.

The next couple of weeks are spent reviewing the DBQ rubric, which Julie tells me refers to Document Based Questions. Students alternate between collectively
evaluating sample essays, and individually grading essays their peers have written. Julie reviews SOAPS again, offers students tips on how to group documents, and provides insights into the AP readers—a mix of high school teachers and college professors who, Julie says, are looking less for good writing than for a well-reasoned response to the question. Julie is consistently upbeat and encouraging in her comments, telling students "This is a hard one," and "The DBQs are looking really good."

It is now mid-February. I arrive at 9:40 A. M. and Julie is at her desk talking to a student I don't recognize. I notice that the desks are arranged in two concentric circles. As the student turns to leave, Julie looks my direction, says hello, and tells me that they are going to engage in a "Socratic Seminar" today. The school principal enters the room and approaches Julie's desk, where they proceed to discuss an upcoming meeting. Julie tells him, "By the way, you have a real bright aura these past two weeks. I don't know what you're doing, but you seem like you're lighter." They talk about "the project" for a few minutes and at 10:00 he leaves. There are only a few students present, and when they begin to rearrange the desks Julie tells them to keep them where they are. "I will explain the seating arrangement in a minute," she says to them.

Over the next two minutes, most of the students arrive and take seats in the outside circle. Julie tells a few students to put away their food, reminding them that lunch is in an hour and a half and then she says, "So, the seating is arranged differently because we're going to try a different type of discussion called Socratic Seminar." A few students bark out questions and Julie responds, "I'm going to teach you and hopefully in
a few weeks you can lead it without me. You can use it for notes, to study, to go over
Document Based Questions."

Julie asks half the students to take a seat in the inner circle. She says, "People
sitting in the outside circle need to pick one partner to make eye contact with in the inner
circle. Each of you needs a different person and then you need to move to a seat where
you can maintain eye contact with your partner." Several students in the outside circle
get up and move to another seat. Ryan smiles broadly and comments enthusiastically,
"This is so exciting."

Julie smiles at him and says: "I know. I think so."

Returning her attention to the class, Julie continues: "Okay. This is called a
Socratic Seminar and everyone will take part. Typically it is 12 people and a closed
circle, but I like to keep 2 empty desks so anyone on the outside can join the inner circle
to contribute, and when you're done, you can return to your desk." Julie then calls on a
student in the outside circle, asking her to declare her partner. Julie continues like this
until every student has been partnered up, then she tells her students that the article she
had them read is college-level and because it is the first time they're doing this, her
expectations are not high.

"I'm going to go around the inner circle and ask each person to either make a
statement or ask a question about the article. If you ask a question, I'd like it to be
specific rather than 'I don't understand the whole article.' Asking 'What is Western and
Eastern nationalism?' would be good." She pauses briefly and surveys the students
seated in the center. "I gave you a graduate-level reading so I don't expect really specific questions. The author teaches at Cornell and is a foremost scholar on nationalism."

Julie gives her students a few minutes to prepare a question or statement. The room is silent; I can hear an airplane flying overhead. "Okay, Zaara. Are you ready?"

Zaara, a composed female student wearing a white hijab with black trim, asks: "Why are they trying to expand nationalism?"

Julie looks at a Latina with long black hair, her thick bangs almost covering her eyes. "Louisa?"

Louisa looks at Julie and says, "I'm not ready."

Julie tries to help her out. "What's one thing you've highlighted?"

Silence. Julie continues to look at Louisa, whose eyes are glued to the article. "Just read the sentence you have," Julie coaxes.

As soon as Louisa begins to quietly read her statement, Oleg enters the room and causes a distraction as he locates a seat in the outside circle. The students begin taking turns contributing, no longer waiting for Julie to call on them.

Gabriella, a Latina with wavy shoulder-length hair, says, "It seems like he based his research on the Chinese because older is better."

Flora, a Latina female with deep dimples, offers, "On page two, third paragraph, he talks about his experience in the classroom when only one student identified as Chinese."

Miguel, a soft-spoken Latino with dark eyes and a calm countenance, says: "I want to know the meaning of nepotism and euphemism."
Antonio, a Latino with a kind but serious face, contributes: "I thought the experiment with the three Chinese students was interesting."

Ryan, the White student with shaggy brown hair, adds, "I like when he talks about the difference between imperialism and nationalism."

Kaitlin, a White female with dark hair and a broad smile, says: "I thought the part about the battle of the tongues and linguistic nationalism was interesting. Languages are very different in the way they express things."

Piper, the White girl with ivory skin and red hair, states, "He talks about the Japanese dressing exotically."

Emma, a White girl with golden hair and glasses, leaves her seat in the outside circle and takes a place at one of the vacant desks inside. "Many of you know I did linguistic nationalism for Passages. When a particular culture tries to conquer another, they try to force their language as a means of submission."

Julie smiles broadly. "I forgot you did that. I had really wanted to come to your presentation. What is your definition of linguistic nationalism?"

Emma sits up a little straighter in her chair and responds confidently: "First and foremost, it is a way you identify yourself. You can't have a culture without language. It is the first thing the next generation learns. Linguistic identity is a source of power; not just how you identify yourself, but how you'd like to be seen by others."

Laura picks up the conversation. "It mentions that immigrants want their children to speak English—to be American."
Julie interjects: "What is the difference between colonialism, imperialism, and nationalism?"

Ryan answers: "Colonialism and imperialism are forceful—do or die."

Julie prods: "How do we define 'nation'?"

Ryan says, "A nation is a country with geographic borders."

Laura interjects, "There are exceptions. Indians see themselves as members of a sovereign nation."

Julie says, "We have geography, language ..."

Maya, a Latina with a bright smile, calls out, "Ethnicity."

Shareen, a cheerful female wearing a hijab in multiple shades of brown, says, "Religion."

Julie affirms, "Yes, religion would be part of it."

Maya adds, "Skin color could put you in one group, but Catholic could put you in another group."

There is a momentum building in the inner circle, an energy that propels the students into the conversation. Piper says, "Kosovo wanted to separate from Serbia, nationalism within nationalism. I'm picturing concentric circles."

"Why did he title his book 'Imagined Nationalism'?" Julie inquires.

Kaitlin responds, "Because nations don't have to be defined by geographical borders."

Emma, who hasn't spoken for awhile, vacates the desk in the inner circle and returns to her desk outside. As if on cue, Dylan gets up and takes Emma's place.
Mustafa, a male exchange student from Iraq, says, "It's not the place you live in. It is your culture. Kurdish are different from Iraqis. Same dance and alphabet, but different clothes. Kurds are in Turkey and Iran and there are problems. Nobody wants to give them part of their land. Nationalism depends on your culture, not where you live."

Chantou adds: "In Cambodia, there are three different places—upper, middle, and lower. Some people who live in hills are from the old culture. They have different tones in voice and culture."

Dylan says, "He cites on page three that the Ainu and Ryukyu became Meiji. In more modern times it was like how Ireland and England used to be ambiguous."

Julie asks Dylan, "Why did they change?"

Dylan is relaxed in his chair, his long legs spread out in front of him. "Meiji arose as popular form of nationalism."

Julie continues, "So you guys talked about different forms of nationalism. Some are self-defined and some are imposed from above."

Trissa, a serious student with big, bright eyes and the only Black female in the class, says: "People want to be different from others."

Emma joins the inner circle again while Laura speaks: "The Chinese dispute the argument that all people came from Africa. They want to be distinct."

Emma jumps in: "It is hard to achieve distinction. Going back to linguistics, and sorry for those of you who are bored out of your mind, even though languages change, they almost always mix with native tongue. Even though we've established distinctions,
most of our language roots go back to Latin. Every language has incorporated words from other cultures."

Zaara joins the discussion, "There are so many religions in the world, but they have a lot in common. Jews and Muslims seem different, but they have a lot in common."

Piper adds, "The blending of cultures creates new types of nationalisms."

Julie smiles and says, "Okay, Great job! All of you in the inner circle give yourself a pat on the back."

Light clapping follows as Julie instructs her students to change positions. Every student stands up and begins to move. There is a lot of talking and light-hearted laughter as students locate a new seat and declare a partner.

Julie tells the students in the inner circle to think of a question or a statement, and to think about their own forms of nationalism. She calls on Adan.

"The article is concerned with the present not the future," he says.

Leya, a Latina whose dark hair is highlighted with thick blonde streaks, says, "It's inherited because of your parents."

Salvador, a gentle giant with pleasant facial features, says, "Everything we do is based on progress."

When it comes around to Oleg, he says he doesn't have the article.

Julie says, "We'll skip you for now."

Regina, a girl with auburn hair and pale skin, says, "It's different for immigrants and natives."
Dylan adds, "The main argument is that nationalism is decided by the general populace. For example, Russian becomes the formal language rather than the French of the elites."

Pilar, a solemn Latina with big black-rimmed glasses, interjects, "There is a controversy between Chicana, Latina, and Hispanic which means different things to me, but to others it is the same thing. In Mexico, Chicano is bad because it's someone who is forgetting Mexican traditions, but here it is positive."

Mustafa moves to the inner circle and says, "Why don't East and West want to meet?" After asking his question, he immediately returns to his desk in the outer circle.

Salvador says, "The Russian example Dylan mentioned."

Trissa adds, "In the TV spectacular in China, the Han wear Armani suits to represent the future, and the minorities represent the past."

Salvador speaks again. "In 'Spectacles of the Past and Future' on page ten, I wonder if others agree that we need the past to anchor us?"

Emma answers: "The reason historians preserve artifacts is so we know how and where we come from. Washington said 'the better we know our past, the better we are prepared for the future'."

Pilar says, "Some of us don't know our histories."

Salvador adds, "We see past as a starting point. I don't see a solid story of my past."

Dylan jumps in and says, "He says we're very different from who we were in the past and that we feel we're related to it, but we have no idea."
Julie interrupts the flow of conversation: "Look at the last sentence of last paragraph on page ten: 'Our relationship to the past is today far more political, ideological, contested, fragmentary, and even opportunistic than in ages gone by.' What does that mean?"

Pilar looks around the circle and when nobody else takes the floor, she speaks. "I don't want to offend anyone, but some people create these stories. There's not hardcore evidence and we weren't there so we don't know if it's true. Like the Bible. I don't mean to offend anyone."

Mustafa responds, "Even if they're fake stories, we can still learn from the mistakes in stories."

Maylene, an Asian female with dimples framing her mouth, says, "The past is like a long game of telephone. Some parts get miscommunicated, some is left out."

Emma responds to Maylene: "History has been manipulated. For a long time it was written only by men to favor their side. An example is Native Americans and the settlers. We read history favoring their side."

Maylene adds, "I can't identify with it. Our essence is all the same whether we came from Africa or India. If you want to find yourself, that's good, but I think it's hard to keep categorizing ourselves."

Dylan interjects, "There was an article in 'The Onion' about all these things. In 2,500 BC, the Ancient Sumerians were confused as God creates the world again."

Laughter abounds.
Zaara brings the group back to topic. "Rather than trying to find ourselves, ideas are imposed on us."

Trissa comments, "People are proud of the empire that did all these things. People want to feel self-worth so they identify with what their ancestors did. They want to feel part of something bigger."

Antonio says sarcastically, "Like the Alamo."

Chantou says, "Like my sister, Chantrea. She gets mad that she's alien because she wasn't born here. She identifies as Cambodian."

Julie asks, "Do you think nationalism is a useful concept now?"

Mustafa jumps in. "No. That's what makes a problem between Egypt and Iraq."

Zaara adds, "In America, it's not that big a deal and in France everyone wants to know if I know anyone famous. Here we think Paris is a romantic city and I didn't think there's anything special about it."

Pilar asks, "What do we mean when we say 'American'? Are you from Central America? South America?"

Dylan adds, "Yeah, when I was in Canada they don't identify as American even though McDonald's is right there."

Pilar continues. "Labels are based on where you're born and what is embedded in your head. I grew up in a Mexican household where we speak Spanish and eat Mexican food. I am half Black but I never identify myself as Black. That's why people have a hard time opening up their minds to other identities." She pauses for a moment
before adding: "You are identified as Chicano if you don't speak Spanish or practice Mexican traditions in your home."

Leya adds, "Mexicans who are whiter."

Pilar responds, "They don't lose their culture, it was taken from them. They had to become American to have prosperity. Now we have a choice. There are some people who want to learn Spanish. It's complicated."

Julie interjects: "My husband identifies as Chicano but it's a political identification. In the sixties, you were beaten in school for speaking Spanish. In the sixties, there was a reawakening for Mexican-Americans and Chicanos. Chicano is a reclaiming and pride of a heritage." She continues: "It is important to have this conversation, especially in this state because it's a big part of our heritage."

The students appear to be deep in thought as Julie scans the room with her eyes.

"What did you think of this discussion?"

A variety of positive responses are heard from both circles. Julie smiles and says, "You may have thought this article was difficult but you all understood it."

Dylan asks, "What about having one big circle?" but Julie does not respond. She beams with delight as she says, "I thought that was a fabulous discussion."

Antonio leans over and with a big smile on his face, he comments to Maya, "That was great! I'm glad I came today. I was going to go to the library."

Maya smiles as she and Antonio pack up their things. The energy level in the classroom is alive and vibrating as students talk and laugh with one another on their way out the door.
An Interpretation and Evaluation of Julie Rios' Classroom

From my first day of observation to the last, it became clear to me that Julie's Advanced Placement World History class was, much like Julie herself, all business. Students entered the classroom bursting with life; enthusiastically sharing hugs and weekend plans with one another, but when the clock struck 10 o'clock students settled into their seats and silently awaited their teacher's instruction. The course objectives were clear, the curriculum was set, and every classroom activity and assignment proceeded in the service of one over-arching goal: to prepare students for the annual AP exam that would be held nine months later.

Despite her casual clothing and comportment, in the classroom Julie was the consummate professional. She was a down-to-earth and determined individual committed to her students' success, which, in her Advanced Placement World History course, equated to receiving passing scores on the annual exam. Julie generously shared skills she had picked up over the years as a history student and teacher, and as a reader for the AP exam. She taught her students how to master a significant body of material, take notes, recall information, and become familiar with the AP essay and multiple-choice exam format.

I noticed early on that Julie was friendly and respectful to her students without getting personal with them. Although she knew every student by name and often commented on their personal interests, Julie rarely disclosed information about herself, her family, or her life outside school. And despite her belief that personal relationships between teachers and students are vital to the process of teaching and learning, in the
classroom Julie expected her students to be on task and to restrict comments and questions to course related issues. Julie limited personal communications with her students to emails and hallways. For Julie, compartmentalizing her relationships with students was the best way to ensure learning effectiveness. And while she fully acknowledged how her students were feeling (e.g., whether they were physically ill or emotionally low), she preferred to have discussions regarding those aspects of her students' lives outside of class. According to Julie, this approach not only minimized disruptions to coursework, she never wanted students to feel put on the spot to discuss personal issues in front of others.

Julie's commitment to caring for her students' success without getting personal in the classroom can be understood as a commitment to teacher professionalism (Kramer, 2003; Milner & Tenore, 2010; Willing & Haney, 1994). Most educators and scholars who have attempted to define teacher professionalism agree that focusing on student learning is a teacher's number one priority (Phelps, 2006). And while prioritizing student learning naturally involves caring for students (Alder, 2002; Duncan-Andrade, 2007, 2009; Kramer, 2003; McLaughlin, 1991; Noddings, 2005; Valenzuela, 1999), there is a strong sentiment among educators that teacher professionalism demands that distance be maintained between teachers and students (Willing & Haney, 1994).

Willing and Haney (1994) suggest that teachers who strive to be "warm, helping, and nurturing to students" (p. 6) should also maintain a professional distance from their students in order to teach them appropriate cultural roles within the larger society. They also caution teachers to be aware of their own unmet needs in order to avoid co-
dependent relationships with students. Willing and Haney contend that self-disclosure should be avoided at all costs as it is often "a forerunner to a personal relationship" (p. 7). Hurst and Reding (2000) agree that teachers are important role models for students and, as such, they should avoid responding to any personal questions asked by their students. From this perspective, Julie's unwillingness to self-disclose or engage in personal conversations with her students in class can be understood as a way of modeling respectful professional behavior (Hurst & Reding, 2000; Kramer, 2003).

Although some scholars argue that professional distance helps students develop independence as learners (Wehlage, Rutter, Smith, Lesko, & Fernandez, 1989), others assert that interpersonal relationships between teachers and students are strongly associated with student achievement and motivation, and are a prerequisite for engaging students in learning activities (McLaughlin, 1991; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003; Wubbels, Den Brok, Veldman, & Van Tartwijk, 2008). Multicultural educators offer compelling evidence that certain students, especially students of color and those who are bicultural, benefit academically from personal relationships with their teachers (Alder, 2002; Brown, 2004; Cothran & Ennis, 2000; Cummins, 1986; Delpit, 2006; Duncan-Andrade, 2007, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1995; Milner & Tenore, 2010; Nieto, 1999; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003; Thayer-Bacon, 2000; Valenzuela, 1999; Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke, & Curran, 2004). Valenzuela (1999) asserts that in classrooms like Julie's—where the teacher's culture, race, and socioeconomic status vary significantly from her students'—relationships between teachers and students are entwined with power. Since teachers hold institutional power over students, it is important for them to be the initiators of
caring relationships (Valenzuela, 1999). Creating professional distance denies many students the relationships they require for academic achievement thereby alienating and disadvantaging them, especially those who are not members of the dominant culture (Nieto, 1999; Valenzuela, 1999).

Julie's particular brand of professionalism—a professionalism that eschews the personal in favor of a cooler approach to teaching and learning—could be attributed to the charter between herself, IMSD, and the College Board. AP curricula are fast-paced and rigorous, and syllabi must be approved by the College Board before a high school course is granted AP status. As Julie expressed during our interview, the breadth of material students needed to master in a nine month period of time discouraged even minor deviations from the schedule outlined in her syllabus. Therefore, despite her desire to create a more "interactive" environment in her Advanced Placement classroom, Julie believed that digressions from the syllabus could have a negative impact on her students' exam scores. From this perspective, the business-like atmosphere in Julie's AP classroom can be understood as a matter of practicality—the most efficient way for her to fulfill her professional responsibilities to her students, school administrators, and the College Board.

In the current climate of high-stakes testing, teacher professionalism often is measured by students' test results, leading many teachers to "turn their attentions to test scores and away from their students and their sense of educational purposes" (Rex & Nelson, 2004, p. 1292). In other words, testing often influences teaching. Since the primary goal of Advanced Placement courses is to prepare students to pass an annual
exam on a predetermined canon of knowledge, fostering learning potential beyond the defined curriculum is not seen as a positive or worthy aspect of the learning process (Munday, 2006). Although Julie expressed an interest in creating a more dialogic classroom where she incorporated her students' experiences and interests, she had not yet found a way to "de-center" herself as teacher.

Julie lamented "teaching to a test" and rejected the notion that exam results are the most important outcome of learning; however, she believed her AP course was beneficial for students, especially those who struggled financially. She told me that helping her students pass the AP exam gave them a "chance at something that could cost them literally tens of thousands of dollars." Julie expressed concerns over AP's focus on memorization and testing, however, the perceived financial incentives for students outweighed her aversion to the skills and drills format she felt obliged to follow. While it is true that a passing score on the AP World History exam typically improves a student's college application and exempts them from taking certain college courses, Julie's rationale overlooked the fact that more and more colleges (e.g., Cornell, Stanford, Yale) require students to take introductory courses even if they passed an AP course in the same subject (Marklein, 2006; Sneider, 2009).

For Julie, her primary professional responsibility as an Advanced Placement instructor was to ensure her students passed the exam. Although she, like many AP teachers, struggled with the breadth of material she needed to cover in a nine month course (Parker, Mosborg, Bransford, Vye, Wilkerson, & Abbott, 2011), Julie perceived value in the AP program that extended beyond the financial. Julie indicated that, based
on her own experience as a history major with a Master of Arts in East Asian Languages and Cultures, the essay skills she taught her students would help them learn how to think and write in an historical way, which she claimed would, "help them do exams in the history classes they take in college."

Despite the fact that Julie's class was often teacher-centered instead of student-centered, Julie believed that her pedagogical approach to AP World History played an instrumental role in helping her students succeed. It did not take long for me to realize that success in Julie's AP World History classroom was always illusive—something to be obtained and experienced at a future date: pass the AP exam, get credit for a college course, and then pass college essay tests. The question I found myself asking was: What learning potential did Julie's students miss out on when the daily focus of classroom activities privileged the future over the present and downplayed the significance of relationships?

Julie positioned herself within the classroom as the person possessing all the knowledge about the AP canon and exam; however, she failed to account for the many ways in which this pedagogical approach empowered her and not her students. Although Julie said she believed her students were capable of constructing knowledge, most often her students' potential to create or question knowledge was discouraged. The Socratic Seminar described earlier marked a rare moment in Julie's AP World History classroom when historical accounts were problematized and critiqued. Students engaged in a lively discussion about the many ways in which recorded history omits, trivializes, or presents a biased representation of the contributions of certain populations of people.
During the Socratic Seminar, Julie's students demonstrated that they were not only capable of understanding a graduate-level article addressing the contested and political nature of recorded history; they were also passionate about discussing it. And although Julie allowed her students to deviate from an established agenda during this Socratic Seminar, she did not follow up on most of their comments or encourage them to investigate alternative texts.

The following Friday, Julie facilitated a second Socratic Seminar focusing on an Advanced Placement Document Based Question (DBQ) that read:

Based on the following documents, analyze factors that shaped the modern Olympic movement from 1892 to 2002. Identify and explain what additional type of document(s) or sources would help you assess these factors.

The topic was timely because the 2010 Winter Olympics in Canada had just begun the previous week.

During this second Socratic Seminar, Julie encouraged her students to lead the discussion without her involvement. She asked for a volunteer to start with either a question or statement about the documents and Flora raised her hand: "I think the competition is crazy."

Piper followed with an earnest question: "Do you think the Olympics is used to prove a country's superiority?"

Without hesitation, Trissa jumped in with a response to Piper's question. "It's not like superiority, but it proves a point. It [the article] talks about Pakistan bringing shame on its country."

Laura added, "I think international competition brings countries together."
Immediately, Emma offered a rebuttal: "I slightly disagree. When you watch you can see the tension between the U.S. and Russia. We see a tremendous amount of pressure for us to beat them. It's a hold over from the Cold War."

Laura, who was listening intently to Emma, paused briefly before responding. "Do you really think there is still tension from the Cold War? Because it ended so long ago."

"Yes." Emma replied without missing a beat. "I was watching last night and the Russian skater said, 'I need to beat the U.S.' Maybe it's not the Cold War, but it's there."

The discussion proceeded at a rapid clip with students eagerly asking and answering one another's questions. They honed in on important issues related to gender inequality, racial integration, economic and geographic advantages of certain countries, and the positive and negative aspects of competition. Students were passionately engaged in the discussion, freely sharing their points of view when all of the sudden Julie interrupted: "It's very interesting to me that most of this conversation centers on misunderstanding how to read the question. So I'm going to have you reread the question." Julie read the question out loud, then asked: "What is that question asking?"

The students were silent. Like a helium balloon that had been carelessly punctured by a sharp object, the energy circulating between the students instantly dissipated.

Julie reminded her students that the purpose of the discussion was to answer the DBQ and to find effective ways of grouping the documents as they would be required to do on the Advanced Placement exam. "You really need to read the question!" Julie
admonished. "Your discussion is fascinating but you need to answer the question. If you answer the wrong question on the exam, what will happen?"

Like well-trained cadets, several students responded in unison: "Low score."

Julie scanned the circle of forlorn teenage faces. "If we're going to do Socratic Seminars with Document Based Questions, I'm going to insist you answer the question asked. In the next five minutes, regroup the documents based on the question. This discussion will help you write your essays this weekend."

After Julie's unwelcome interruption, enthusiasm for the conversation waned. The students no longer freely contributed to the discussion; rather, they remained silent until Julie prompted them to speak. A few minutes passed before Julie excused herself to talk to a visitor who had appeared in the doorway. As she walked to the door, she said, "Keep talking everyone. You don't need me. Keep talking about your groups."

The students hesitated. After a long pause, Chantou suggested that everyone look at the documents in order, starting with number one, to identify possible groups for each. Most of the students started flipping through their pages of documents, while others stared off into space. When Julie returned, there were only a few minutes of class remaining. She reminded everyone that their essays were due on Tuesday and that they would be grading one another's work. As the students prepared to leave, they talked quietly to their neighbors. The energy in the room was noticeably lower than it had been at the conclusion of the previous Socratic Seminar when the discussion had evolved organically and students had been allowed to focus on the many ways in which the text resonated (or did not resonate) with their lived experiences.
Julie's belief that she was constrained by the AP curriculum in turn constrained her students' potential to learn. During our interview, Julie told me:

[I]n AP world, it's almost, you know, they have to master this body of material. They have to know facts. They have to recall stuff. And as much as people say, the AP people say, that we're trying to foster analytical thinking and blah, blah, blah, three quarters of the test is about remembering stuff.

Although the AP World History exam tested students on their ability to recall historical "facts," the curriculum nonetheless provided fertile ground for Julie's students to reflect on their own histories and the veracity of the historical accounts they were expected to master. Her students were a diverse group of young adults—differing in gender, race, socioeconomic status, religion, etc.—whose different attitudes, beliefs, and experiences added a depth of understanding to the texts they studied. Unfortunately, most days Julie did not encourage her students to make connections between their lived experiences and the canon of facts they were learning. In *America on the Edge*, Giroux (2006b) calls on teachers to construct curricula that take advantage of the cultural resources students bring to school (p. 6). He suggests teachers take "the languages, histories, experiences, and voices of students seriously" (p. 6) by connecting content directly to students. In Julie's AP course, with its focus on memorizing discrete facts, the value of integrating personal experiences into classroom pedagogy was ignored.

Critical educators argue that building on students' knowledge and cultural resources is essential to learning (Delpit, 2006; Freire, 1970/2007; Giroux, 2004a; Nieto, 1999; Snider & Roehl, 2007). But connecting course content to lived experience is not a new idea. Almost a century ago, the progressive educator, John Dewey (1916), addressed the negative consequences of divorcing course material from experience:
If geography and history are taught as ready-made studies which a person studies simply because he is sent to school, it easily happens that a large number of statements about things remote and alien to everyday experience are learned. Activity is divided, and two separate worlds are built up, occupying activity at divided periods. No transmutation takes place; ordinary experience is not enlarged in meaning by getting its connections; what is studied is not animated and made real by entering into immediate activity. Ordinary experience is not even left as it was, narrow but vital. Rather, it loses something of its mobility and sensitiveness to suggestions. It is weighed down and pushed into a corner by a load of unassimilated information. It parts with its flexible responsiveness and alert eagerness for additional meaning. Mere amassing of information apart from the direct interests of life makes mind wooden; elasticity disappear. (p. 209)

In Julie's class, there were few opportunities for students to connect history to their lived experiences or to critique the historical accounts presented in their textbook. Although Julie allowed her students to problematize the text in light of their experiences during the first Socratic Seminar, in the second seminar she shut it down. Julie initially allowed students to lead the discussion without her direction; however, she quickly took control when students deviated from the structure she had established. When Julie interrupted her students, their natural curiosity and concern for issues of power and equality in the Olympics were squashed. Their passions were dampened when they were asked to return to an uncritical, structured discussion of the text.

Immediately after the second Socratic Seminar, Julie expressed to me that she hated to shut down the conversation, but that the rigorous curriculum did not allow time for her students to have provocative discussions. It became clear to me that in Julie's classroom, time was a commodity not to be wasted. Time was best spent practicing how to logically group evidence in order to make a compelling argument in response to an exam question. In Julie's classroom, it was a luxury to spend time questioning an author's bias, discussing whose histories are privileged and to what effect, or examining the
relevance of historical texts to students' present lives. Learning, in the context of Julie's AP World History course, was about the past and the future—acquiring knowledge of the past so it could be recalled on a future exam. The present lived experiences of students (and the impact these experiences had on their potential to learn) inside and outside the classroom were disregarded.

During our interview, Julie expressed conflicts surrounding her pedagogical priorities:

Um, I really like more of the, um, I like the Socratic Seminar kind of stuff, where it’s kid-centered and I’m just kinda helping. In my other classes I do a lot of projects and most of the time I’m just, again, going around and coaching and aiding. In World History a lot of times I feel like since the kids need to know stuff that I end up being kind of the center a lot of the time. Like saying: 'All right, let’s talk about major themes,' and then they have to respond to that instead of having them come up with it. Because there are some, it’s a little more right and wrong than most things, because of this exam. So, you know, one of my challenges is how do I make it more interactive. And I’m still struggling with that. This was my third year teaching this class and I still don’t feel like I’m really good at it. I’m definitely better than I was my first year, but I’m just starting to figure out how do you de-center the teacher in the high-stakes testing environment. And I’m not sure you can do it. I mean, I think I can move further than I am now, but I I just—this is what I was thinking about AP—I've got so much doubt about the whole set up in the high-stakes testing. And so, you know, it’s it's a little bit like, do I really let go and trust that they’re going to do what they need to do, um, knowing that some of them won’t? And, you know, again, it's all outcome, like what you want is an outcome. And if it were truly up to me, I would much rather, I would much prefer the kids determine what the outcome is and base what I do on what they need.

Although Julie prioritized the uncritical memorization and organization of the AP canon, her intentions were honorable—she wanted to make sure her students had the information they needed to pass the annual exam. However, by "teaching to a test" Julie deprived her students of deep learning: learning that created connections between their present lived experiences and the history they were studying; learning they could apply to
their present and future lives outside the classroom, and beyond the time-sensitive AP exam. More importantly, by excluding her own and her students' lived experiences from her pedagogy, Julie ignored her students' need for relationships and the role emotional connections with others play in the learning process (Bibby, 2009). Julie felt constrained by the curriculum and the test; therefore she imposed constraints on herself and her students.

The two Socratic Seminars I observed in Julie's AP World History classroom serve as barometers for understanding two conflicting pedagogies. In the first seminar, students passionately engaged in the process of working together to create knowledge about the impact historical events had on their present day realities. In the second seminar, students dutifully followed their teacher's instructions to arrive at a predetermined (and uncritical) end. Although it would be a mistake to position these two pedagogies as mutually exclusive, it is important to understand the ways in which high-stakes testing in general and AP in particular promote and reward conformity and mimesis (Parker et al., 2011).

It was not initially apparent to me during my observations; however, I have come to understand Julie's approach to professionalism and the conflicts she experienced in her AP classroom as a response to performativity. I argue that performativity—with its focus on the future and its deprecation of relationships—forecloses student learning.

During our interview, Julie expressed doubts about the structure of Advanced Placement, but felt pressured by a system that rewarded her to continually improve her students' exam scores. She told me:
When I first started teaching AP I thought: 'Oh, this is great. I can do this. I can teach them how to take this test. And then there's a goal. There's a defined piece of time. I know what I need to do. All I have to do is just do it.' You move them from point A to point Z and you worry about what their tests scores are. And then the second year I was like: 'I'm good at this. Now I can really get high scores.' And I did. The scores went up. And I'm sure this year the scores will go up again. But I'm like: 'What am I doing?' I'm absolutely falling into what I don't believe in—in education. I just don't believe in this. So why am I falling into this structure (strained laugh) that's making me do this? But part of it is you get rewarded for that. And it's really hard to say I don't care about that outcome.

Like many AP teachers, Julie experienced conflicts that extended beyond the strictly pedagogical—Julie experienced personal and political conflicts that have their roots in teacher performativity. It was apparent from Julie's incredulous tone of voice during this passage that she was disturbed by her own complicity in performativity. However, despite her internal conflict, Julie engaged in what Farrell and Morris (2004) refer to as "resigned compliance" (p. 96)—a form of complicity that is viewed as both undesirable and inevitable.

Beckmann and Cooper (2004) assert that the current shift in education from a public good to a private good de-professionalizes the work of teachers and redirects the focus of teaching from "promoting a caring, cohesive, democratic society" to promoting short-term performance objectives. Over the past ten years, scholars from around the globe have bemoaned the rise of neo-liberalism in education and the attendant erosion of teacher professionalism (Ball, 2003; Beckmann & Cooper, 2004; Blackmore, 2004; Hartley, 2003; Storey, 2007). The marketization of education—conceptualized by Ball as the privatization of a public service—is purported to make education "more productive and efficient" (Hartley, 2003, p. 83). Ball (2003) articulates this neo-liberal approach to education as performativity, which he defines as
a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgments, comparisons and displays as means of incentive, control, attrition, and change—based on rewards and sanctions (both material and symbolic). (p. 216)

According to Ball (2003), performativity requires teachers like Julie to "set aside personal beliefs and commitments and live an existence of calculation" (p. 215). Under the "terrors of performativity," (Ball, 2003, p. 216) the goal of teaching shifts from the care of students to the care of measurable outcomes (Ball, 2003). This supplanting of goals necessarily depends upon "the application and use of strategies in order to get things done" (Meng, 2009, p. 163), constituting an increasingly narrow approach to education.

Julie's challenges in her Advanced Placement World History classroom can be illuminated by Lyotard's (1984) and Butler's (1993/2011) conceptualizations of performativity. For Lyotard (1984), performativity is "efficiency measured according to an input/output ratio" (p. 88). He writes:

[Decision makers] allocate our lives for the growth of power. In matters of social justice and of scientific truth alike, the legitimization of that power is based on its optimizing the system's performance—efficiency. The application of this criterion to all of our games necessarily entails a certain level of terror, whether soft or hard: be operational (that is, commensurable) or disappear. (p. xxiv)

Butler (1993/2011) offers a different, yet compatible, understanding of performativity as a reiteration of norms which precede, constrain, and exceed the performer and in that sense cannot be taken as the fabrication of the performer's 'will' or 'choice'; further, what is 'performed' works to conceal, if not to disavow, what remains opaque, unconscious, unperformable. (p. 178)

Both Lyotard (1984) and Butler (1993/2011) are concerned with the connection between power and performativity. Although Lyotard focuses on "systems" and Butler focuses on the "historicity of norms" (p. 139), both agree that power works by foreclosing
effects and possibilities. Lyotard asserts that power establishes and organizes a set of systems that—through their implementation and maintenance—subordinate social institutions and their members to existing power. For Butler, performances constitute subjects. She argues that internalizing performances is at the heart of performativity; that "'performance' is not a singular 'act' or event, but a ritualized production, a ritual reiterated under and through constraint" (p. 60).

Julie had been performing "Advanced Placement Teacher" for three years, therefore it could be argued that she was enacting and reenacting unconscious forms of professional performativity. The reiterated rituals in Julie's Advanced Placement World History class included reading, note taking, structured essay writing, and testing. Through these structured rituals, Julie perceived that she was doing everything within her power to ensure that her students not only scored well on the AP annual exam, but that their scores reflected an improvement over the previous year. From Butler's perspective, Julie was not wholly responsible for her performance—it was outside or beyond her will—and her inability to imagine different ways she could teach the course can be understood as an aspect of performativity that conceals alternatives. It is important, however, to recognize that performativity is not something done to subjects like Julie by regimes of power; it is something she does to herself and her students (Ball, 2003).

In what follows, I examine performativity's focus on the future and its view of relationships as instrumental: how these two aspects of performativity influenced Julie's professional practice and her students' potential to learn.
Performativity, future orientation, and student learning. In Julie's classroom, performativity not only drove her curriculum and pedagogy—what she taught and how she taught—it defined instructor and student success. Performativity measures success through outcomes while completely ignoring the processual nature of learning. This emphasis on outcomes, although transparent to students, hides another troubling aspect of performativity: the privileging of the future over the present moment.

Most scholars agree that education is a future-oriented endeavor (Dewey, 1916; Hussman & Lens, 1999; Lynch, Lyons, & Cantillon, 2007; Phalet, Andriessen, & Lens, 2004). Dewey (1916) believed that education is growth; therefore, it necessarily involves movement from the present to the future. However, despite his acknowledgment that the future plays a role in education, Dewey perceived learning as an end in itself, indicating "it is imperative that every energy should be bent to making the present experience as rich and significant as possible" (p. 56). Dewey asserts that by fully realizing the potential in the present, individuals will naturally become "better fitted to cope with later requirements" (p. 56). Many contemporary scholars assert that education is not an end in itself, yet they are in agreement with Dewey that it is important for students to make connections between what they are learning in the classroom and their lives outside school—both in the present and the future (Phalet et al., 2004). According to Dewey, schools fail students by prioritizing future attainment over present experience.

Not surprisingly, future goals often motivate students to achieve in the present (Brown & Jones, 2004; Greene & DeBacker, 2004; Horstmanshof & Zimitat, 2007; McInerney, 2004; Phalet et al., 2004). Research on student motivation suggests that in
order for students to be "future oriented" (McInerney, 2004, p. 144) they must perceive a connection between doing well in school and success later in life. A future orientation appears particularly salient to minority students (Phalet et al., 2004; Slaughter-Defoe & Rubin, 2001). The belief that education can improve their future socio-economic status has been associated with minority students' educational attainment in the present (Day, Borkowski, Punzo, & Howsepian, 1994; Slaughter-Defoe & Rubin, 2001).

Understanding the connection between students' future orientations and their motivation to learn is important because motivation plays a role in both the type of learning students experience (Atherton, 2011) and their likelihood of retaining and transferring knowledge to new situations (Donovan, Bransford, & Pelligrino, 1999; Millis, 2010). In AP courses like Julie's that privilege future product over present process, students often engage in surface learning that "focuses on the uncritical acceptance of knowledge with an emphasis on memorization of unquestioned, unrelated facts" (Millis, 2010, p. 1). Since students who pursue surface learning are often extrinsically motivated by a desire to get a good grade or pass a test (Atherton, 2011), retention is usually temporary (Donovan et al., 1999; Millis, 2010). In contrast, deep learning is correlated with intrinsic motivation wherein learners are excited by challenging tasks and desirous of developing mastery. Deep learning "transforms factual information into usable knowledge" (Donovan et al., 1999), typically leading to long-term retention and the ability to apply knowledge to unfamiliar problems (Millis, 2010).

Although there is disagreement among scholars regarding the impact future orientations have on students' motivation to learn, I argue that it is imperative for AP
teachers like Julie to consider the type of learning her curriculum and pedagogy foster. McInerney (2004) asserts that a student's future orientation "is more likely than not to enhance intrinsic motivation" (p. 150), however, Phalet et al. (2004) found that students who are motivated exclusively by future goals view learning as strictly instrumental and are therefore extrinsically motivated. Research showing the prevalence of future orientations among minority students (e.g., Day et al., 1994; Phalet et al., 2004; Slaughter-Defoe & Rubin, 2001) is significant when considered in combination with research demonstrating a connection between surface learning, extrinsic motivation, and the inability to retain knowledge. Although it is impossible to know whether Julie's minority students were intrinsically or extrinsically motivated to learn the AP canon, the surface learning promoted in Julie's AP class could disadvantage her minority students in ways that are presently unaddressed, for example, by equipping them with knowledge they are unlikely to retain or apply to life outside school.

Although acquiring "factual knowledge" is an important aspect of learning—especially in AP courses that culminate in an annual exam—most educators agree that memorizing a broad corpus of material does not produce deep learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2008) and the "regurgitation of superficial understanding" (Danielson, 2007, p. 15) does not meet the needs of a student's present or future. By favoring biased accounts of history, limiting students' opportunities to question the official canon of knowledge, and preventing students from working together to create new knowledge informed by their lived experiences, Julie's AP course failed to teach students the skills of critique necessary for living in and changing an unjust society (Apple, 2004). For
students to thrive outside school, they need to build "knowledge that lasts longer than the
time it takes for a student to pass a test" (Danielson, 2007, p. 15).

Teachers like Julie—prompted by performativity to cover a significant amount of
material in a short period of time—often focus on breadth of knowledge not depth;
"factual knowledge rather than conceptual understanding" (Donovan et al., 1999).
During our interview, Julie expressed her concerns about the amount of material she was
expected to cover with her AP students:

[T]he problem I have with the AP about it being called a college class, is there
would not be such a class in college. Like, nobody would do world civilization
the way that we’re doing it. It's like, American history, maybe. Chinese history,
maybe. You know, like you do a survey course. But, you know, survey on world
history where you have to cover everything—if they did it like, they did it as a
100 level, an entry level history class—but the professor would pick things they
were interested in. They would just do that, and they would exclude everything
else. I don’t have that discretion as a high school teacher. And you're like if I
take that discretion, what are the chances gonna be that there’s gonna be a
question on there that I just chose to ignore. And in a college setting, that would
never happen. You’re the professor, you’re writing the exam. So it’s a little bit
like you’re asking me to do the impossible. Like nobody does this. And really it
rewards the kids who already can do it.

Despite Julie's acknowledgement that her AP World History curriculum exceeded
the scope of an equivalent college course, she was proud of her results. Forty-two
percent of the students I observed in Julie's AP World History class passed the annual
exam (Denver Public Schools, 2011). Julie's class had the highest pass rate for AP World
History in her district, which averaged a pass rate of 25.5% (Denver Public Schools,
2012). And although these results are impressive, the fact remains that 14 of Julie's 24
students did not pass the exam (J. Rios, personal communication, March 1, 2012), which
means that they invested nine months of their teenage lives acquiring knowledge they
were unable to retain and demonstrate on the test. Sadly, most of the students who failed the exam were minorities. I have found myself wondering: What are the chances that Julie's students—those who passed and those who failed—will be able to access this knowledge and transfer it to new situations in meaningful ways?

Surface learning may prepare some students to pass an exam (Atherton, 2011), however, it does not prepare students for the complexities of life or a future that is unknown, unpredictable, or unjust (Apple, 2004). I have argued that performativity engenders a future orientation that is problematic from the perspective of student motivation and depth of learning, as well as retention and transfer to other life situations. Another equally disturbing aspect of performativity, however, is the implicit message it communicates to students that the only value of the present moment is its relationship to the future. This is troublesome because it cuts off students from learning potential that exists only in the present moment.

For Julie the pressures of performativity were very real—they generated inner conflicts over what and how she taught her students. It is important, however, to recognize that despite Julie's pressures to conform, the systems of accountability established by performativity are not wholly external to the performances that legitimate them (Dewsbury, 2000). Although performativity is enacted through the repetition of norms, Butler (1993/2011) reminds us that we are never completely determined by those norms. Performativity establishes a false assumption—through its regulations, rewards, and sanctions—that there is limited mobility within existing structures of accountability. The technologies of performativity (Ball, 2003) suggest immutability; however, the skills
and drills pedagogical practices and strategies Julie employed most days only appeared
determinate because of the frequency with which they were reiterated.

Dewsbury (2000) provides insight into the shaky ground upon which
performativity rests when he compares it to a "frontier teetering in between the necessary
and the unexpected" (Dewsbury, 2000, p. 480). Although it would be impossible and
foolhardy to ignore the power relations that constrain Julie and other teachers from acting
"otherwise," Dewsbury reminds us that students are deprived of something significant
when teachers surrender to the demands of performativity: the realization of latent
potential.

Borrowing from Deleuze (1990) and Massumi (1992), Dewsbury (2000)
understands this frontier as virtual space and time—contemporaneous to the actual and
the present. Massumi (2002) clarifies:

The virtual, the pressing crowd of incipiencies and tendencies, is a realm of
potential. In potential is where futurity combines, unmediated, with pastness,
where outsides are infolded and sadness is happy (happy because the press to
action and expression is life). The virtual is a lived paradox where what are
normally opposites coexist, coalesce, and connect; where what cannot be
experienced cannot but be felt—albeit reduced and contained. For out of the
pressing crowd an individual action or expression will emerge and be registered
consciously. (p. 30-31)

For Massumi (2002) and Dewsbury (2000), the virtual is as real as the actual—it
is "a field of emergence" (Massumi, 2002, p. 35) of imperceptible potential. Dewsbury
tells us that the present cannot exist without the past and future; however, they are virtual.
In other words, the past and future (the virtual) are always influencing our present
moment (the actual), but that influence is not fixed. The virtual contains all past
experiences and potential futures (which are always in flux and changing in response to
the present moment). Dewsbury asserts that it is the virtual "force of the future upon the present" (p. 480) that makes action imaginable; however, from the vantage point of the present, our future is always unforeseeable potential.

We can see the workings of the virtual upon the actual in the two Socratic Seminars in Julie's class. For example, in the first seminar Pilar mentioned that she grew up in a Mexican household speaking Spanish and eating Mexican food. In that moment the virtual was pressing itself upon her actual experience in the present. Her past experiences influenced her present interpretation of the text and the meanings she assigned to it, while the force of an unknowable and unimaginable future was simultaneously prompting her to act—to share her personal insights and opinions with her peers. The discussion unfolded in an unexpected and unplanned manner: Pilar's peers validated her belief that history is a collection of stories created by people. In addition, several of Pilar's Asian, Latina/o, and Middle Eastern peers shared their beliefs that much of the history they studied in class did not resonate with them.

In that first Socratic Seminar, Julie did not constrain or direct her students' behavior. She allowed them to speak openly and honestly about the text and to share issues from their curriculum that emerged as significant to them. By abandoning her usual structured agenda, Julie invited her students to fully embrace the present moment of actual classroom life—a moment inseparable from the virtual; impregnated with unforeseeable potential (Massumi, 2002). During that first Socratic Seminar Julie's students had the potential to learn something beyond the pre-scripted and predictable—
something that could not happen when they were restricted to studying a canon of uncontested historical facts.

Julie embraced the unpredictable in the first Socratic Seminar, inviting her students to share their experiences, concerns, and opinions. During the free-flow of conversation, Pilar's and Leya's misunderstanding about the term "Chicano" was revealed, allowing Julie to explain its political origin and significance. That moment illustrated how the future floats in, around, and through the present without determining its direction. Julie could not have predicted her students' misunderstanding, and that unpredictability signals the latent potential in the present moment. Had Julie followed a pre-set or structured agenda that day, the misunderstanding would have gone unaddressed.

Despite its focus on future goals and its privileging of an official canon of knowledge, Julie's AP classroom always existed in the present-actual while the future remained a virtual force. Students' potential to learn was foreclosed when Julie's pedagogy focused on historical facts, essay formats, and structured forms of interaction. While it is not uncommon for teachers to create lesson plans and agendas on any given day, there is always the potential to deviate from the plan and for learning to take an unexpected turn. As the first Socratic Seminar illustrates, it is in these unplanned and unscripted moments that teachers and students experience agency (Zembylas, 2003).

During the second Socratic Seminar, Julie fought for her agenda by continually bringing students back to the purpose she had assigned for the discussion: to practice grouping documents in preparation for the annual AP exam. Although it is possible that
Julie's students were making private connections between the text and their personal experiences, their potential to create knowledge together was foreclosed.

These two Socratic Seminars also provide a glimpse into the affective aspect of potential. According to Massumi (2002) affect becomes potential at "the edge of the virtual, where it leaks into actual" (p. 43). In the moment when the virtual and the actual seep into one another potential is perceived and experienced as thought and emotion (Massumi, 2002). And it is in those moments when thought and emotion are perceived that we know that potential has been captured and released. Key to understanding potential is the realization that it is never exhausted; potential is infinite. Although potential may be captured and released in one moment, the next moment opens anew to unlimited potential. Massumi tells us that matter and events live in and through the escape of affect as much as they are directed by its capture. We become conscious of the capture while we are in the midst of it; therefore, this capture is a source of action.

Massumi (2002) asserts that perceptions of potential trigger change—"a negation of the determination: as the simply indeterminate" (p. 69). In other words, potential is experienced as something new: a new thought; a new feeling; a new action. From a performative perspective, the reiteration of norms always forecloses potential because norms are determinate. On the other hand, deviations from the norm foster potential, inviting something different and expansive into the mix. When deviations from the norm occurred in Julie's classroom, the capture and release of potential could be felt—the affect was palpable: just the mere rearranging of desks on the day of the first Socratic Seminar was enough to make Julie's students giddy. There was light-hearted laughter as students
took their seats, and as they got a feel for the freedom extended to them, students became passionately engaged in the discussion, sharing personal stories and opinions that would otherwise be unwelcome in the businesslike atmosphere of Julie's classroom. At the conclusion of the first seminar, the room was vibrating with energy as I overheard Antonio tell Maya: "That was great! I'm glad I came today." Even Julie was beaming as she told her students, "I thought that was a fabulous discussion."

Recent advances in neuroscience indicate that emotions are interconnected with cognition and therefore integral to the process of thinking and learning (Damasio, 1994). If, as Massumi (2002) asserts, emotions alert us that potential has been simultaneously fostered and foreclosed, then triggering emotions in educational contexts prompts teachers and students to act in new ways—to change. Massumi helps us recognize that performativity is antithetical to potential. In educational environments like Julie's AP classroom—wherein the future is privileged over the present by passively and uncritically passing along a predetermined canon of knowledge from teacher or textbook to student—performativity prevails and potential is foreclosed.

**Performativity, relationships, and knowledge construction.** In the current culture of performativity, many teachers' priorities have shifted from being passionate about people and the pursuit of knowledge to being passionate about results (Ball, 2003). Ball (2003) argues that by favoring technical utility, high-stakes testing, and dominant forms of knowledge, performativity promotes precarious educational relationships wherein teachers often care more about student outcomes than students. The emphasis performativity puts on outcomes not only downplays the importance of student well-
being (Bullough, Jr. & Pinnegar, 2009; Lynch et al., 2007), it ignores the role caring relationships play in knowledge construction and learning (Freire, 1970/2007; Lewis, 2008).

Many scholars argue that performativity reduces relationships between teachers and students to a form of instrumentality—a means to a predetermined end (Bourassa, 2011; Cho, 2005; Clegg & Rowland, 2010; Lewis, 2008). Lewis (2008) asserts that students suffer when their relationships with teachers and peers are instrumentalized. Since the emotional and interpersonal environment in the classroom is a motivating factor for many students, an instrumental approach to educational relationships can have a negative impact on students' motivation to learn (Stipek, 2002). Goodenow and Grady (1993) assert that "academic motivation is not a purely individual, intrapsychic state; rather, it grows out of a complex web of social and personal relationships" (p. 60). Stipek (2002) suggests that many students are motivated by feelings of being regarded positively by others; that connecting with others is "a basic human need and that people do not function well in environments where this need is not met" (p. 12).

Not only does a reductive approach to educational relationships have a negative affect on students' motivations to learn (Weinstein et al., 2004), it also impacts the process of knowledge acquisition and construction (Freire 1970/2007; Thompson & Gitlin, 1995). Over 40 years ago, Freire (1970/2007) made the connection between relationships and knowledge when he vehemently opposed the "banking concept of education" (p. 72) wherein the presumably knowledgeable teacher gives information to students who passively receive it. For Freire, knowledge is created through inquiry with
others and it is such inquiry that makes us human. He contends that the banking concept of education establishes a hierarchical relationship between teachers and students that must be transcended if students are to develop critical consciousness. Cho (2005) asserts that caring relationships are "necessary to inspire and embolden students to criticize and challenge the knowledge presented to them" (p. 91). In other words, when students have caring relationships with their teachers they are more likely to have the courage to question dominant knowledge claims (Cho, 2005).

Julie's pedagogy in her Advanced Placement World History class—driven primarily by the vast amounts of material she had to cover—eschewed an interactive, dialogic pedagogy in favor of a more structured, teacher-centered approach. Although she expressed a desire to change her pedagogy, Julie was conflicted. Not only was she unsure how to make changes; her skills and drills approach reaped significant rewards. Julie's students' AP exam scores for each of the past four years outperformed the previous year's results, providing Julie with a compelling reason to continue doing exactly what she had been doing. And although it may be tempting for Julie and other AP teachers to adopt the old adage "if it ain't broke, don't fix it," it is critical to remember that students' present and future lives are at stake. As Colin Powell states: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it' is the slogan of the complacent, the arrogant or the scared. It's an excuse for inaction, a call to non-arms" (Harai, 2002, pp. 257-258). Although I would not classify Julie as arrogant, she is arguably complacent and scared by the "terrors of performativity" (Ball, 2003, p. 216) that compel her to produce or disappear (Lyotard, 1984).
Despite the business-like atmosphere in Julie's classroom, she was always friendly and encouraging to her students. She never raised her voice in anger or expressed disapproval toward students during class, although she occasionally asked them to stop talking to one another if she perceived that they were interrupting the lesson. I never witnessed any personal conversations between Julie and her students; however, during our interview she expressed her belief that teacher-student relationships are important:

[Y]ou have to really have an emotional connection with students you teach, especially if you teach in an urban high school, um, because kids have to trust you and they have to know that you, you have the best intentions for them. And part of that is the relationship you build with them outside of class, so in the hallways, in um conversations with them that aren’t in class, and attending school events that they’re part of, and doing things they’re really interested in. If, like, kids ask me to be on their Passages I always do it because that’s another way for me to interact with them that isn’t in the classroom. Um, and a lot of times, I feel like the kids, the problems you have with kids, are when you isolate interactions to classrooms, and they don’t know you in a bigger context, because they tend to take that at face value. And like, 'You don’t like me' or 'You’re angry with me,' or 'You’re telling me what to do.' Whereas if they know me in the hallway as someone that’s gonna help them or somebody that’s going to say something to them even if they’re not doing well in my class, it plays into how they feel in my classroom.

Although Julie understood the value of building trusting relationships with her students, she believed bifurcating relationships was necessary. Although she did not specifically address performativity, Julie alluded to the pressures she was under to achieve defined outcomes and how those pressures prompted her to maintain strict boundaries between her relationships with students inside and outside class. She explained:

I do demand a lot more direct um attention in class than I would elsewhere. So I expect them to be on task. I expect them to, um, ask me questions related to class. But that’s because they know in the hallway I’m gonna be sending them an email or asking them 'How was your day?' or having non-academic conversation with them. And so, it’s sort of like—it’s a little bit of a compartmentalization, but it’s got to happen, because otherwise you can’t get the learning objectives met that
you need to meet with kids. I mean, I need them to focus on world history when they’re in here. We can’t have an emotional discussion about somebody’s parent or some bad thing that happened to them. Although I’m perfectly willing to say 'If you’re having a bad moment, go out in the hall.'

For Julie, the hallway was a sacred space for cultivating and nurturing relationships with students. Her classroom, on the other hand, was a workplace where (out of perceived necessity) relationships were hierarchical and utilitarian. While it is difficult to ignore the pressures performativity put on Julie's time and the many ways in which instrumental classroom relationships made teaching and learning more efficient (Hartley, 2003), this logic overlooks the ways performativity denies teachers and students the opportunity of working together to create knowledge and to become active agents in their own learning (Lewis, 2008).

During our interview I asked Julie about the type of knowledge privileged in her AP class:

Um, probably like book knowledge more than, than, um, personal experience or personal knowledge, although I try when I can to bring in personal, um, experience. Um, I do it a lot more in my ninth grade class than I do in this class, just because most of it is so historical that it’s hard to—you know, you can talk about that with the Latino kids about, like, 'This is where the mix of Spanish and other cultures come in' and why it’s not just, you know, and same with American—the kids that were born in the United States too, it's like all these different ethnicities and where they come from, and stuff like that. But it tends to be so fast and so topical that it’s really hard to get into personal connections.

While Julie acknowledged the importance of encouraging students to make personal connections to the AP curriculum, she failed to recognize how performativity privileges existing canons of knowledge that serve the political interests of those in power.

Although students may find it interesting and valuable to reflect upon their historical
roots, this level of reflection does not invite the construction or discussion of oppositional or subjugated knowledge (Collins, 2000).

Performativity's acceptance of master narratives as "normative truths" overlooks the inevitability that knowledge is "always provisional, open-ended and relational" (Thompson & Gitlin, 1995, p. 129). Although some might argue that the AP World History curriculum Julie taught was "factual," the historian Howard Zinn (1993/2002) reminds us that all recorded history reflects the biases, interests, and values of the historian and that "young people and everybody who reads history [should be] warned in advance that they should never count on any one source, but should go to many sources" (p. 11). Rather than learning history for history's sake, Zinn contends that the value is to be found in locating elements of history in the present in order that we might "enhances human values, humane values, values of brotherhood, sisterhood, peace, justice, and equality" (p. 11). When looked at from this perspective, performativity in general and Julie's AP course in particular devalues both "a love for knowledge and concern for social justice" (Clegg & Rowland, 2010, p. 721).

When I asked Julie if she believed students were capable of creating knowledge, her face lit up:

Absolutely. Absolutely. Um, again, this is one of those classes where it's just a harder connection for me to make. Um, because I just feel so, again, constrained by the outlines of what I have to cover in the text. Um, but generally yes, I absolutely believe kids construct—that's the most meaningful kind when you construct it yourself. Um, I don't know.
Julie once again revealed a conflict: she believed in the value of constructing knowledge, however, she also believed that it was necessary for her to disseminate the AP approved corpus of knowledge to her students.

Unfortunately, as Freire (1970/2007) warned, many well-intentioned teachers like Julie engage in the banking concept of education without realizing the dehumanizing effect it has on them and their students. For Freire, humanization—the process of becoming Subjects who know and act rather than objects that are known and acted upon—must be carried out in fellowship and solidarity. To achieve solidarity, Freire asserts, teachers "must be partners of the students in their relations with them" (p. 75). The kind of teacher-student partnerships Freire advocated cannot be forged when teachers transmit information to students who passively receive it. Thompson and Gitlin (1995) advocate a feminist pedagogy that goes beyond acknowledging the roles power, privilege, and politics play in knowledge construction to the reconstruction of knowledge. They suggest that in the process of reconstructing knowledge with others, groups and individuals will learn new ways of relating to one another. Thompson and Gitlin (1995) contend that reconstructing knowledge is "an emergent and embodied process" (p. 142) that destabilizes existing pedagogical relationships and shifts them in indeterminate ways.

Fueled by the Cartesian dualism that privileges reason over emotion, performativity ignores the affective and relational aspects of teaching and learning (Cho, 2005; Lynch et al., 2007). Performativity's focus on preparing students to become rational, self-determined citizens fails to acknowledge the interconnection between thinking and feeling (Lynch et al., 2007). In the current culture of performativity,
teacher-student relationships are often viewed as a means to a performative end (Bullough, Jr. & Pinnegar, 2009; Cho, 2005; Clegg & Rowland, 2010; Lewis 2008). Valenzuela (1999) laments: "Rather than centering students' learning around a moral ethic of caring that nurtures and values relationships, schools pursue a narrow, instrumental logic" (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 22). She contends that teachers often engage in inauthentic forms of caring that facilitate desired outcomes without requiring them to become invested in the lives of their students. Valenzuela refers to this type of inauthentic care as aesthetic caring—a form of caring that focuses on the practices and products of education rather than its people and processes.

By focusing on learning outcomes instead of processes, Julie ignored the ways in which her pedagogy and her relationships with students were deeply intertwined. As Zembylas (2007b) asserts, pedagogy is "the relational encounter among individuals through which possibilities for growth are created" (p. 332). Zembylas reminds us that all pedagogies are relational. Despite her casual, friendly, and encouraging nature, Julie's relationships with her students were hierarchical. And although teacher-student relationships are always asymmetrical (Bullough, Jr. & Pinnegar, 2009), Lewis (2008), like Freire (1970/2007), advocates for an education with students not for students wherein "the teacher is not outside but rather radically inside the multitude" (p. 258).

Lewis (2008) argues for an "immanent education" (p. 258) within which latent potential and agency against existing power can be cultivated. For Lewis, classrooms are "utopian stations" (p. 259) positioned between existing power structures and immanent democratic potential. For Lewis, classrooms are like Massumi's (2002) "seeping edge"
(p. 43) where students can foster their intellectual potential and their ability to act. Lewis acknowledges that performativity—with its hierarchical teacher-student relationships and predetermined curriculum and standards—impedes students' latent potentiality for democracy. For Lewis, democracy emerges from "the collective labor of the multitude to produce new forms of life across traditionally constituted boundaries" (p. 256). In Lewis' "utopian station"—as in Freire's (1970/2007) "problem-posing education" (p. 80)—the multitude is comprised of "relationships freed from strict, hierarchical divisions" (p. 256).

Despite the business-like atmosphere in Julie's classroom, her students understood the worth of personal relationships in learning. Their interactions before and after class demonstrated that they were a tight-knit group of teens who not only enjoyed one another's company; they truly cared for one another. I was initially surprised by all the hugging I observed both inside and outside the classroom, however, when I mentioned this to Julie she emailed me an article from the New York Times which speculated that hugging is the "hello" of the younger generation (Kershaw, 2009). According to Kershaw, sociologists contend that "teenagers who grew up in an era of organized play dates and close parental supervision are more cooperative with one another than previous generations—less cynical and individualistic and more loyal to the group" (p. A1).

Julie's students appeared to have a special bond with one another that helped alleviate the stress brought on by the heavy and time-consuming AP workload. The closeness Julie's students felt toward one another was more than personal—it extended to their academic pursuits. During a focus group held at the end of the year, Julie's students...
indicated that they not only commiserated with one another throughout the year, they also shared class notes with each other.

Although it was clear from students' comments that they "respected" and "liked" Julie, they clearly recognized that she was the only one with power in the classroom. When given an opportunity to say what they would do differently if they were the teacher, students unanimously agreed they would facilitate more "interactive stuff," more "group work," and more "talking." Students were likely unaware of the pressures Julie was under to increase her students' performance outcomes; however, it is interesting to note that the focus group was held after Julie's students had taken the annual AP exam and they knew firsthand the types of knowledge and skills demanded of them. In other words, when invited to view their AP World History course through the lens of hindsight, Julie's students indicated a preference for a more student-centered, dialogic classroom. Thompson (2008) asserts that there is significant learning potential in classroom talk and that "it is through externalizing our ideas that we socio-cognitively and emotionally create ourselves" (p. 254). Although Julie's students were willing to go along with her teacher-centered pedagogy without questioning her or the canon of knowledge she presented, they expressed a desire to integrate relationships into their learning environment.

The energy shifts in Julie's classroom before, during, and after class illuminated for me just how much Julie expected her students to leave at the door to her classroom (Miller, 2009). Julie's students, like most high school juniors, were young adults with dreams and aspirations for college. They also were managing friendships and family
dramas, and some were dealing with illnesses. Participating in Julie's AP World History course required students to accept, without question, a curriculum that allowed limited opportunities to reflect on or discuss the relevance of course material to their present and future, and to leave their personal lives and relationships outside the classroom when class was in session.

The Implications of Performativity on Power, Agency, and Social Justice in the Classroom

Julie's Advanced Placement World History pedagogy betrayed the perniciousness of performativity. It could be argued that Julie's complicity with performativity reflected a lack of concern for her students' present lives and learning potential; however, I assert that Julie's compliance exposed her inability to imagine herself as a professional capable of balancing a "charter to educate" with performativity's "mandate to train" (Hadden, 2000, p. 525). Julie unmasked an active internal struggle when she admitted that she wanted to move her pedagogy from teacher-centered to student-centered, however, she was unsure how to do it and questioned whether it was even possible given the rigors of the AP curriculum.

Julie's struggles shed light on performativity's stake in issues of power, agency, and social justice. The tensions Julie experienced—between her desire to create an interactive pedagogy and the demands of covering a significant body of material in a short period of time—were compounded by external pressures to continually improve her students' AP test scores. Under the "terrors of performativity" (Ball, 2003), teachers like Julie find themselves in the paradoxical position of being both victim and collaborator.
(Valenzuela, 1999), colonized and colonizer. When understood from this dichotomous perspective, the power relationships created by performativity are deterministic—there is no potential for personal or professional empowerment, agency, or justice.

Lyotard's (1984) conceptualization of performativity suggests that Julie's choices were limited—she could either produce or disappear. Butler (1993/2011), on the other hand, offers a more hopeful and transformative approach to Julie's dilemma. Despite the insidious nature of performativity, Butler (1990/1999) contends that we are never fully determined by regulations or norms. Through the discontinuity of norms, teachers like Julie can open up spaces for the unpredictable to emerge (Zembylas, 2003), allowing each member of the classroom to become an agent of the teaching and learning process who fosters potential.

I argued previously that potential is antithetical to performativity, suggesting that potential cannot be fostered under a regime of strict regulation and control. However, Burnard and White (2008) assert that although the challenges performativity places on teachers are complex, they can find creative ways to foster potential by working "outside the safe, the known, and the predictable" (p. 672). They believe that balance between performativity and potential can be achieved; however, they contend that teachers cannot wait for educational bureaucrats to show them the way because that would be contrary to the teacher agency they advocate (Burnard & White, 2008). Instead, they call on teachers to engage in pedagogical practices "arising from the professional artistry involved in valuing the process and outcomes of risk-taking, problematising knowledge, journeying
from the known to the unknown, and sharing the process of education with students" (p. 677).

There is little disagreement that the aim of education is to produce certain types of citizens, however, in the current culture of performativity there is significant debate over the type of citizens schools should produce (Cohen, 2006; Giroux, 2003; Lewis, 2008; Lynch et al., 2007; Wegwert, 2006). Cohen argues that schools should produce socially responsible "democratic citizens" and that knowledge acquisition alone will not accomplish that goal. He asserts that respect for others, commitment to justice, and the ability to collaborate are all important capacities of a democratic citizen (Cohen, 2006). Lynch et al. (2007) contend that performativity establishes consumption and individualism as defining characteristics of citizenship and that neoliberal education defines citizens as rational and economic rather than caring and relational. They make a distinction between educating students to be "performer citizens" who are concerned with academic achievements and measured by future economic success and "carer citizens" who, much like Cohen's democratic citizens, recognize the interdependencies among people.

Callan (1997) asserts that a liberal democracy requires "education that is dedicated to specific ideals of character" (p. 3) including respect for fellow citizens, openness to the perspectives of others, and a commitment to the good of society—a "virtuous citizen" who recognizes that care and justice are complementary virtues and not mutually exclusive as typically understood. Callen contends that students who are taught that relationships do not matter—whether through explicitly or implicitly downplaying
their importance—may grow up believing that adhering to rules and regulations is the sole responsibility of democratic citizenship (Callan, 1997). According to Wegwert (2006), such reductionist approaches to teaching and learning create a domesticated and "paralyzed citizen" who is "incapable of navigating the complexity of global Empire" (Lewis, 2008, p. 255). He argues that students educated under the terrors of performativity—taught that knowledge is static, relationships are impediments to learning, and compliance is the clearest path to success—are likely to grow up believing that freedom is paralyzing.

Leaning on the work of Hardt and Negiri (2001) to understand the relationship between education and the social, Lewis (2008) reminds us that performativity presents a distorted conception of freedom that is rooted in the uncritical adherence to the demands of teacher and test. In the current era of performativity, students are taught that if they do as they are told, they shall reap future rewards from a society that values "a global, technologically advanced, and information driven form of networked capitalism known as Empire" (Lewis, 2008, p. 249). This "paralyzed citizen" was understood by Dewey (1916) when he lamented that those in power "are simply interested in such training of the mind as will make their subjects better tools for their own intentions" (p. 95).

Throughout this chapter, I have discussed performativity as though it were a person—with aims, intentions, and purposes that are damaging to the present and future lives of teachers like Julie and her students. Performativity, like hegemony, is an abstraction that obscures its creators through a set of rules and regulations, an overly simplistic framework for understanding the complex ways in which the dominant social
class promotes its economic, ideological, and political interests. Through performativity, the educational colonizer hides behind the teacher, who hides behind the standardized curriculum and exams. Camouflaged as benevolent fathers committed to equality and justice for all students, performativity's generals seek to dominate students not as a means to an emancipatory end, but as an end in itself (De Lissovoy, 2010). Julie's students—the innocents in this shell game—have nowhere and nobody to hide behind other than compliance. For they, too, are performers and must fall in line with the efficiency model Lyotard (1984) critiques. Like Julie, her students are given two untenable (yet equally oppressive) options: produce or disappear.

DeLissovoy (2010) contends that student and teacher accountability to standards are first and foremost modes of subjection and only secondarily indexes of performance. Of particular interest to our understanding of Julie's classroom is De Lissovoy's assertion that presenting history as though it were objective and final "is a contemporary act of violence against present beings and possibilities" (p. 207). Giroux (2003) similarly argues that requiring students to memorize a series of historical dates and facts is an assault on student agency. If students are to become agents, they must be encouraged to question knowledge claims and to learn "what it means to use knowledge to understand the world—as well as to be able to influence those who are in power and help to mobilize those who are not" (p. 92).

Giroux (2008) contends that America has given up on the future of young people, especially youth of color and the poor. From Giroux's (2003) perspective, learning history must be more than a matter of passing a test; it must be about cultivating students'
democratic potential and agency. Yet despite performativity's emphasis on preparing students for the future, it fails to prepare students for a democratic future. Noble (1977) points out that standards and exams have no value in the market economy or the workplace. Although performativity is heavily influenced by the marketplace, research suggests that employees of the future will require creative and emotional capital—neither of which can be taught or measured through standard curricula or tests (Hartley, 2006).

Giroux (2004b) reminds us that hope for a new social order lies in ideas not in market ideologies; that ideas generate potential and that fostering potential is the surest way to foster freedom. Like Dewsbery (2000) and Massumi (2002), De Lissovoy (2010) recognizes the unlimited potential in the present to transform teachers and students into agents; however, such potential can only be fostered in classroom moments that exist outside "the logic of domination [that] saturates the space of education as a cognitive, emotional, and physical experience" (p. 213).

Like Freire (1970/2007), De Lissovoy (2010) believes that teachers and students can and must overcome traditional hierarchical relationships by recognizing that they are equal to their students. This is a challenging leap in light of the institutional authority teachers hold over students; nevertheless, De Lissovoy calls on teachers to appreciate and embrace our shared experiences of being human. He rightly reminds us that at the core, before power acts upon us, we are human. He does not deny or diminish the many ways in which individual identities garner power and mobility within an unjust society, however, he directs our attention to a focal point of solidarity—our shared humanness.
Under the terrors of performativity (Ball, 2003), teachers like Julie focus on producing results rather than empowering human beings and their potential. If Julie were to answer De Lissovoy's (2010) call she would see her students as more than objects of instruction and measurement—she would see them as human beings with latent potential; human beings that domination acts against and yet are capable of experiencing actual moments of solidarity and resistance to performativity's rules, regulations, and rigors.

Agency, from De Lissovoy's perspective, is not an alternative performance designed to subvert power; rather

agency depends not on the hope for some distant or total triumph, or on a philosophical sleight of hand that displaces the scene of struggle altogether, but instead on the recognition of a continuous series of present victories against power.  (p. 216)

De Lissovoy (2010) helps us understand human beings not as potential existing in Massumi's (2002) virtual—but as already actual. Human agency, on the other hand, exists as pure potentiality in each moment of classroom life that embraces alternative performances (Butler, 1993/2011; De Lissovoy, 2010). As O'Reilly (1998) reminds us, each moment of classroom life is "a little Sabbath" (p. 45) providing countless opportunities for transformation.

Although Julie committed herself to cultivating personal relationships with her students outside class, her classroom relationships did not recognize and account for the human beings who were subjects of power. Sadly, Julie's students were not the only ones denied agency and empowerment in the classroom; Julie's own humanness was not honored in her AP curriculum and pedagogy. Julie had institutional power over her students, yet she felt simultaneously disempowered by the constraints of performativity.
However, as Butler (1993/2011) reminds us, Julie's own agency to act otherwise was constrained, but not determined.

If Julie taught her students anything about agency, it was an agency directed toward individual rather than relational or social justice ends; an agency that understands capitalism and consumerism as an inevitability, not as a political or ideological choice. Giroux (2004b) tells us that we are in a moment of "crisis and potential" and that America's youth are our best hope for a different future. Social transformation will only occur if teachers and students nurture the present moment and the knowledge, relationships, and potential awaiting them right where they are, not in a distant, determined future.

For Julie, time was an enemy—there was so much to cover in so little time. Dialogic pedagogies like the Socratic Seminars took precious time away from the more practical and efficient skills and drills approach that Julie favored. Julie had nine months to ready her students for a journey she would not accompany them on—a journey that would begin with a test and would continue through college and beyond. If, as Lewis (2008) contends, classrooms are "embryonic societies" (p. 255), then what type of society was created over the span of nine months in Julie's classroom? The gestation period of a human is approximately nine months, after which a mother gives birth to a miracle: a baby. In nine months, many of Julie's students mastered the AP approved curriculum, essay format, and grading rubrics, but I wonder whether their potential for democratic citizenship was cultivated.
Through its focus on future achievement, its uncritical acquisition of knowledge, and its instrumentalization of teacher-student relationships, Julie's AP students learned that the value of the present moment is its future utility; that knowledge is given; and that relationships are little more than a means to an end. As Bullough, Jr. and Pinnegar (2009) remind us, in the current culture of performativity many teachers like Julie find themselves teaching "against their ideals and contrary to their practical wisdom" (p. 243). There is no question that it will take great courage and creativity for AP teachers like Julie to find a balance between their pedagogical commitments and the pressures of performativity (Burnard & White, 2008). At stake, however, are actual human beings—human beings with potential to construct knowledge in relationship with one another and to become empowered agents for social justice in the present and the future, inside and outside the classroom.
Chapter Three

"You Don't Want Them to See Your Weakness": Emotion and Student Learning

My tenth grade social studies teacher was a middle-aged White woman named Ms. Bellamy. She was what many of her students referred to as a hippie—she had long brown hair, she wore little or no make-up on her face, and she dressed in flowing skirts and sandals year-round. Ms. Bellamy had a big heart, but little tolerance for chaos in the classroom.

Ours was a crowded class that met after lunch when students were rowdy and ready for the school day to end. Despite her best efforts to make class interesting by showing films about other cultures, bringing in artifacts she had collected on her travels, and sharing exotic foods, there were a significant number of students who gave Ms. Bellamy a hard time. Although she tried to be friendly and kind, the back-talk eventually got to her and the classroom would deteriorate into a war of wills. It was not unusual for Ms. Bellamy to ask a student or two to leave, but they rarely did. Frequently, Ms. Bellamy would pick up the wall phone and call the vice principal, who would sometimes come to her aid and remove the disruptive student from class. Often, however, the vice principal was busy and Ms. Bellamy was left to battle it out on her own.
I will never forget the day Ms. Bellamy broke down and cried in front of the class. I do not recall anything out of the ordinary happening—one of the boys was likely cursing or talking back to her. But there she was, a woman in her early forties standing in front of 30 high school students, trying desperately to control the river of tears running down her cheeks. It was a miserable sight. I was overcome with anxiety and felt angry that my classmates had once again led the class astray. But I felt helpless to do anything about it, so I just sat quietly at my desk, praying for the moment to pass and for Ms. Bellamy to somehow regain her composure.

After that incident, Ms. Bellamy stayed away from class for an entire week. When she returned, the quirky, nature-loving woman we had known before had been replaced by her quieter, more solemn twin. I do not know what happened to Ms. Bellamy while she was away or what caused the troublemakers to change, but after the crying incident our class proceeded in a more mechanical, less mercurial manner. Ms. Bellamy no longer spoke dreamily of far away places or asked us to imagine ourselves living in a tribal culture. After the incident, Ms. Bellamy guided us through the tattered pages of our textbook without fanfare or fantasy. I felt glad when the year came to a close; happy I had survived the tidal wave of emotion that flooded Ms. Bellamy's classroom. Strangely, I never blamed her for the negative affect that permeated her class each day, but even as a teen I believed that Ms. Bellamy was not suited to be a teacher.

When I think back on high school and the teachers I had, Ms. Bellamy always comes to mind. I do not remember anything I learned from her that year, but I do remember the discomfort I felt in her classroom much of the time. As a teacher, I know
that my patience can be tested by students and that their emotions can affect their attitudes toward me and their peers, but I have not yet experienced an emotional breakdown the magnitude of Ms. Bellamy's. I often wonder: *If I were to feel as out-of-control as she did, would I continue to teach?*

I felt mixed emotions when Dolores Varela expressed interest in having me observe her tenth grade Cross-Cultural Communication class. I had met Dolores the previous year while working on a Photovoice project with several of my doctoral colleagues. She seemed a bit stressed by our presence in her classroom and at the time I characterized her interactions with her students as curt. In her email to me, Dolores indicated that she would prefer I observe "one of [her] more difficult classroom management classes" comprised of a "challenging" group of students she had taught the previous year. Despite my prior experience with her, I appreciated Dolores' honesty and openness, and sensing that she was committed to growing as a teacher, I agreed to observe her class.

Dolores' tenth grade Cross-Cultural Communication course was one of three sections taught at the International Magnet School of Denver (IMSD). After winter break, the Cross-Cultural Communication course changed to Economics. Both courses were part of the specialized foundations curriculum at IMSD and fell outside the state and district requirements for student achievement. Dolores was therefore not beholden to a set curriculum and was free to customize her pedagogy to meet the specific needs of her diverse students. Unlike most IMSD students, Dolores' tenth grade students were unique in that they had entered IMSD the previous year as ninth graders, rather than starting at
the school in sixth grade. Dolores taught geography to these students the previous year and believed that they did not buy into the "idea" of the school—that they were "challenging individuals" who "whined a lot."

Dolores explained to me that students at IMSD are not given a choice of courses or instructors—they enroll in the school and their schedules are assigned to them by school administrators. The year I observed her, Dolores taught two sections of the Cross-Cultural Communication course and one of her male colleagues, Joaquin Reyes, taught the third. Dolores indicated to me that her colleague "had different ideas about what the kids should be learning" and that she was constantly "bombarded" with requests from her students to do more entertaining things like the other class. When asked about her learning objectives, Dolores stated that in Cross-Cultural Communication she tries to teach her students to have "an open perspective," and in economics she strives to teach students that there are "different ways of thinking about how to get a society's needs and wants met." In the first part of the year, Dolores' students spent a significant amount of time studying the Holocaust, and in the second part of the year, each student created an individual business plan for a fictitious company.

On my first day of observation, the diverse group of lively teens was slow to arrive and take their seats. As they entered the room, I recognized many students from the Photovoice project the previous year. The students seemed comfortable with their peers—greeting one another with high fives, handshakes, and head nods. I noticed that as the lesson got under way, several students were engaged in independent activities, such as texting or reading a book. Rather than observing a community of learners
gathered together in the shared pursuit of knowledge, even on my first day of observation the students appeared disconnected and disengaged.

Scanning the classroom each day, students appeared to be physically present but intellectually absent. For example, when Dolores asked her students how many had not read the assigned reading, all but a few raised their hands. Although most students would enter the classroom with smiles on their faces and a friendly word to share with a peer, their countenance would soon shift to something more solemn. I wondered what it was that caused this change in energy from vibrant to insipid in the course of just minutes, and before long I became aware of my own flagging energy as the afternoon progressed.

As a teenage student, I did not grasp the full import of the emotional climate in Ms. Bellamy's classroom. But as a teacher observing Dolores' class, I felt a strange mixture of anger, compassion, and sadness. My anger stemmed from Dolores' aggressive behavior toward her students—she frequently barked at them to open their journals, take off their hats, or leave the room. My anger, however, was tempered by feelings of compassion for her. Dolores' lesson plans were detailed and thoughtful, which suggested she was seriously invested in helping her students learn. My sadness was more global. I lamented Dolores' constant efforts to control her students and the many missed opportunities for connection and learning. I also worried that these seemingly mundane classroom moments would leave deep scars on the students' hearts and minds. Although initially I was interested in the way communication fosters or forecloses student learning, I soon began to focus on the role emotions played in the process of teaching and learning in Dolores' classroom.
The portrait that follows is a candid account of my observations in Dolores' classroom. While the events portrayed here paint a rather bleak picture of the everyday life in Dolores' class, they bring to light the moments of anxiety, frustration, and fear that often arise during the course of teaching and learning (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). In this chapter, I examine the role of emotion in the teaching and learning process—the normative expectations for expressing or suppressing them, and the costs associated with such decisions. I present different approaches to classroom management and argue that Dolores' strategies constrain the affective climate and the type of relationships she created with her students. I provide an overview of emotional intelligence and emotional regulation, followed by an alternative reading of Dolores' classroom that moves beyond these limiting constructs to emotional discernment—a nontraditional way of fostering student learning based on Brennan's (1994) theory on the transmission of affect. I conclude with an evaluation of emotional discernment as a way to understand and mobilize power, agency, and social justice in the classroom.

A Portrait of a Tenth Grade Cross-Cultural Communication Class

It is 12:15 P.M. on a warm September afternoon when I arrive at Dolores Varela's classroom to observe her tenth grade Cross-Cultural Communication class for the first time. As I enter, I feel a gentle breeze of warm air coming from the row of open windows across the room from the door. The room is cheerful and welcoming as the afternoon sunlight casts a golden glow on the denim blue carpet, illuminating flecks of orange and tan. Dolores is sitting at her desk working on her computer while she finishes eating her lunch. There are four female students clustered beneath the windows
giggling softly as they, too, eat their lunches. I say hello to Dolores and she
acknowledges me with a quick but pleasant "hi" as I make my way to a desk at the back
of the room. The students talk casually with Dolores and she responds nonchalantly
without lifting her eyes from her computer screen.

The desks are arranged in a horseshoe shape—one half circle of desks is
positioned inside a larger half circle. I spot a few abandoned desks at the back of the
room, so I settle into one of them and notice that from where I sit Dolores is completely
hidden by her computer monitor. Behind her desk is a bulletin board with pictures of
students and a sign that reads: "What does it mean to be culturally sensitive and aware?"
Below the sign someone has scribbled, "Listen woman!" To the right of Dolores' desk in
the center of the front wall is a large green chalk board. Written on the board in large
print is:

Warm-up:

In "I Had a Hero" why did the author choose this title?

I continue to scan the room. To my right, flanked by two doors, is a wall of
bookshelves packed neatly with books. Mounted above the back door is a big clock and
behind me are two large tables—a desktop computer sits on top of the one closest to the
door and the other houses a pencil sharpener and a variety of magazines and supplies.
Hanging above the tables, as though they are watching over the room, are posters of
Eleanor Roosevelt, Cesar Chavez, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Near the
windows are two tall medal file cabinets, the tops of which are piled high with books.
At 12:30, one of the girls stands up and leaves the room without saying a word to Dolores or the others. As she exits the classroom, a few other students saunter in. At 12:32, Dolores gets up from her desk and walks out to the hallway. Although she has vanished from my sight, I can hear her say: "Okay guys, come on in and have a seat."

She returns to the classroom and, looking directly at the three girls who have just finished eating their lunches, she asks: "What is my rule about food in this class?"

One of the girls responds, "If it's not a distraction."

Dolores states matter-of-factly, "Your food is distracting, so put it away."

After looking around and noticing only eight students present, Dolores returns to the hallway and once again tells a group of students to come in. A throng of teens stroll into the room, talking loudly and laughing as they greet their friends. I take note of the diverse tenth graders, the majority of whom appear to be Latina/o. I marvel at three Latino boys with "Emo" hairstyles. All three have naturally dark hair that is spiked from front to back and on both sides of their heads. One boy with blond tips at the ends of his hair smiles at me and I recognize him from the Photovoice Project last year. Though most of the students are wearing the expected teenage attire of t-shirts, hoodies, and jeans, one gothic girl catches my eye. Her mop of dark hair cascades over her shoulders hiding her pale white face. She is wearing a black skirt, ripped black tights, black lace-up boots, and a black bustier over a black tank top. Black suede, lace-up armbands adorned with black fringe extend from her wrists to her elbows.

Dolores takes her place at the center of the room. She is a petite woman with an olive complexion and dark shoulder length hair, wearing small metal-framed glasses that
fit her face well. She is dressed casually in a sleeveless v-neck top made from a black and tan fabric, which she has paired with jeans. Hanging from one of her belt loops is a substantial cluster of keys. She calls out and the thunderous quality of her voice takes me by surprise: "Alright, good afternoon everybody. I just want to remind you, gentlemen, when you're out there playing football you need to stop at 12:20. Class begins at 12:30!"

I notice that many of the students are moving slowly. Some are still standing, backpacks resting on the tops of their desks. Dolores asks a Black female student named Danyelle to distribute an assignment sheet to each member of the class. As Danyelle makes her way around the room, Dolores announces to the class: "I have a new protocol today. When I need your attention I'll use this." She holds up a fragile glass bell and gives it a shake, emitting a soft and subtle pinging sound. "Isn't this better than yelling?" she inquires.

Sam, the only Black male in the class, says: "That's kind of annoying, Miss Varela."

Dolores shoots Sam a vexing look. "It could be much worse."

Without missing a beat, she continues. "I'll be returning your culture autobiographies. If you don't like your grade, I will let you revise it based on the feedback I've given you. Culture is about behavior, not the color of your skin. I'm looking for stories about how you learned certain values and behaviors."

Raul, a Latino male sitting directly in front of me, is rolling a foil gum wrapper into a makeshift joint while Juan, a Latino male seated to his right, checks his phone. Unaware, Dolores continues:
"If you haven't turned it in, I'll accept it late because I feel it is an important assignment. You're at an age when you're trying to discover who you are. I appreciate your openness. It is always powerful to examine yourself."

Xavier, the Latino male with the "Emo" hairstyle and blond tips, begins reading out loud from the assignment sheet Danyelle hands him: "Crossing cultures book assignment."

Dolores ignores him and directs her students' attention to the back of the assignment handout, telling them they are to choose one option from each of two columns—a writing component and an art component. She holds up examples of a picture and a brochure created by former students.

Emilio, a Latino boy with a serious demeanor, calls out, "That's not art!"

Danyelle interjects, "Graphic design is art!"

Dolores tells her students they can write an essay, a poem, even a letter to the main character.

Sam says, "Miss Ruiz won't let us write a poem."

Dolores responds: "I'm not Miss Ruiz and I'll let you write poetry."

Talking ensues as students discuss their options with their neighbors. Mario, a tall Latino male with a smile adorning his face, asks Dolores, "Can we do abstract art?"

Dolores answers, "Yes, you can."

Raul looks at Juan and says quietly, "Do we have to do this?"

Dolores rings the bell, however, it is difficult to hear its gentle sound over the din of teenage voices. "Let me know if you have questions."
Sam asks, "Can I do a poster and a book cover?"

Dolores responds dispassionately: "No. They're the same thing. Choose one from each column."

Hannah, a White female with long brown hair and an inquisitive face, asks, "If we write an essay, how long does it need to be?"

"You decide," Dolores replies.

Sofia, a Latina female with dark hair and dark eyes, inquires, "Why does it need to be about a young person of another culture?"

Dolores smiles for the first time. "Good question. This is Cross-Cultural Communication. I can't fly you to another country, but I'm trying to give you an experience through a book." Before moving on to the next topic, Dolores announces that the due date is Friday, October 16th.

"It is now time for your warm-up writing in your journals."

Kayla, a White female with a sign pinned to her shirt that reads "Free Vegetarian Hugs" shrieks and says, "There's a moth on your table!"

Hannah walks over to the table, lifts the glass bell, and a moth flies out. Screaming ensues. Dolores looks at me and says soberly, "So you can see my challenges."

Eduardo, another boy with an Emo hairstyle, asks Dolores if he can go get his journal from his locker and she says "yes." A White male, Roger, asks if they are turning in their journals today and Dolores tells him she will collect them on Tuesday after their vocabulary test.
There is a lot of talking going on and very little writing.

"Guys! Guys!" Dolores implores. "It's quiet. Focus!"

The class immediately quiets down. There is some whispering, but most of the students get busy writing a response to the warm-up question posted on the board.

Dolores goes to her computer and begins working. Kayla leans over and quietly asks Sam a question. Immediately, Dolores jumps up from her desk and walks over to them. "Why are you talking?" she barks at Sam. Kayla says that she asked him a question, however, Dolores is not satisfied. She tells Sam to go out to the hall.

Sam sighs deeply and exits the room. As I watch Sam leave, I get eye contact with Xavier. He smiles and waves at me and I smile back.

After a few minutes have elapsed, Dolores goes into the hall and returns with Sam trailing slowly behind her. He takes his seat as Dolores announces, "I need five people to participate in a scored discussion."

Several students raise their hands and after surveying the volunteers, Dolores writes five names on the chalkboard: Sam, Kayla, Hannah, Rayne, and Mario.

"Let's talk about scored discussions. In college you'll be asked to read and come to class prepared to discuss what you've read."

As I nod my head in agreement, Dolores acknowledges me and decides to introduce me. She tells her students that I teach at the University of Denver and that I'm pursuing a doctoral degree. The students all turn to look at me, smile, and respond to the introduction with a round of applause.
Without missing a beat, Dolores continues: "Unlike deliberation where we use evidence to support both sides, in this it is more of an exchange of ideas." Dolores explains how students will earn points for discussing in a positive way, for example: making a relevant comment, asking a clarifying question, or making an analogy. She passes out scoring sheets as she talks.

Raul looks over the sheet and asks, "Why is it bad to monopolize?"

Mario asks, "Why do you get points for recognizing irrelevant comments?"

Dolores answers their questions and then tells students that at a later date she will post each student's points in the room.

Raul calls out, "That's illegal!"

Dolores ignores his comment.

The five students gather at a round table in the center of the room and Dolores takes a seat next to me. She gives them six minutes to talk before the class session is over. At 1:55 P.M. Dolores stands up and rings the glass bell. She asks, "Is it Friday afternoon?" and many of the students respond "Yes!" before vacating the room.

A couple of weeks have passed and I arrive at 12:25 P.M. Dolores is talking to two male students I do not recognize while Hannah sits at a desk with her head buried in a notebook. Dolores tells the boys she needs to get some work done and they leave.

Hannah calls out enthusiastically: "Miss Varela, I'm working on my warm-up before class begins!"

I look at the chalk board and read:

Warm-up:
If Denver were attacked, would you join up to fight against the attackers?

Why or why not? Are gang members child soldiers? Why or why not?

Sofia and Andriana enter the classroom and approach Dolores. They tell her they need to leave early today and Dolores, ignoring their comment, says she needs to finish grading the vocabulary tests.

The girls continue to speak to Dolores who responds in an agitated tone, "I'm not going to finish this, am I?"

Sofia responds, "No. Look what time it is!"

I look at the clock. It is 12:35 P.M. and only a few students are present.

In a loud voice, Dolores calls out from her desk: "Okay, come in please!"

Several students enter the room.

Dolores stands up and walks to the front of the room. "Okay. Good afternoon. Let's get started. Everyone should have their journals out. The warm-up is on the board. I should have a visual to go along with it. Just give me a minute."

Dolores returns to her desk and after a few minutes a picture of child soldiers with bombs and machine guns is illuminated on a screen at the front of the room.


The students are talking as they settle into their desks.

Dolores rings the bell. When the talking continues, Dolores looks at a group of boys seated in front of me—Raul, Juan, Mario, Emilio, and Xavier—and says in an exasperated tone: "How many times do I have to tell you guys not to sit by each other?"
The boys snicker quietly and Dolores continues: “I want to encourage you to become more reflective in your journals.”

Juan interjects: "It's about quality, not quantity!"

"Yes," Dolores responds. "But sometimes you just put anything down."

From the corner of my eye I see Kayla waving her raised arm and then she says,"HELLO?!?"

Without fanfare, Dolores growls: "Kayla, leave the room. I'll make a call home."

Kayla stands up and with a smirk on her face, she slowly sashays out of the room.

Dolores continues, “Just to clarify, everything you write should be done in your journals. How many of you answered questions from Wednesday in your journals?"

Dolores looks around, but very few hands are raised. She continues: "You need to do that. I'll be reading them to see if you are taking notes. Writing is a great way to think."

Danyelle blurts out, "Miss, can I go get some water?"

Dolores ignores her and says she is going to be quiet now. She walks around the room and looks at students as they write. The students quickly settle down and begin working.

As she passes by his desk, Raul tells Dolores that he doesn't have papers and wonders what he can do. She tells him that he should write how being here illegally would affect his decision. When Dolores turns away he starts talking to Juan.

Dolores goes out into the hall where Kayla is waiting and the classroom immediately explodes into discussion. Dolores pops her head back in through the door and calls Sam outside. He says he is working on his warm-up and Rayne, the gothic girl,
says to him sweetly, "Just go." Sam gets up and as he makes his way to the door, Dolores pops back in and tells him to grab his journal. He goes back to his desk, gets his journal, and heads out to the hall. A few minutes later Dolores and Kayla return to the classroom and the talking promptly stops. Sam walks in behind them and Dolores sends him back out. A few of the students snicker as Sam turns to leave a second time.

Dolores takes a seat on a tall stool at the front of class and asks Eduardo what he wrote.

He responds, "If it is for something stupid, no. But if for something like racism I would."

Desi, a Black female, volunteers: "No. It's not my responsibility. Like in New York after 9/11. They didn't ask people to do it."

Hannah says, "No. I don't like violence. I would leave it up to the city to defend."

Kayla calls out, "No. I don't fight for anything but myself."

Around the room, gasps and groans are heard. Dolores states: "Kayla has a right to her own opinion."

Marisa, a Latina female I had not heard from before, speaks up: "I'm probably the only girl who would fight cos' this is my city and my home."

Sam, who had returned to the class just moments ago, responds: "I thought you liked Mexico better?"

A look of displeasure spreads over her face as Dolores snaps angrily at Sam: "Go down to Mr. Fields's office and explain why you're there."

With his eyes cast down to the carpet, Sam once again leaves the room.
Raul fills in the void: "Aren't child soldiers abducted and gang members volunteers?"

Marisa responds assertively: "Some gang members are abducted!"

Many students are now talking at the same time. Dolores calls out, "Remember the protocol! Raise your hands!" She then asks, "How many gangs are there in the U.S.?

Several students simultaneously call out numbers and Dolores, appearing frustrated, states again: "Raise your hands!"

She calls on Emilio who says "Millions."

Dolores clarifies: "Sixteen thousand with half a million members. With a raise of hands, who else would like to comment?" She looks around the room. "Danyelle?"

Danyelle sounds discouraged. "I don't remember cos' I raised my hand half an hour ago."

Dolores calls on Xavier who states: "Gang members have a chance to get out."

Marisa turns around, looks directly at Xavier, and asks incredulously, "Gangs?"

The tension in Dolores' face and body reveals her frustration. "Marisa, turn around and let Xavier speak!"

Xavier, however, does not continue speaking. Dolores, seemingly oblivious to the way her angry tone has lowered the energy in the classroom, launches into a story of a former student who told her that when he joined his gang, he joined for life. She says the former student was only 18 and that he felt trapped. "You might wonder why child
soldiers can't turn their guns on their captors. We're going to move into discussion. And I want you to use evidence from the text. Who would like to do a scored discussion?"

Raul volunteers and Dolores asks, "Raul, didn't you do it last time?"

Sofia and Andriana stand up and prepare to leave. Dolores says, "Bring me notes from counseling."

Andriana responds, "It's on your computer," to which Dolores states firmly, "I don't have anything. Tell them to email me."

There is a lot of discussion about who will participate in the scored discussion. When Dolores calls on Xavier, he tells her he has not done the reading. Dolores says, "Then you're not really prepared."

Once again, Dolores looks tense. She addresses the entire class: "We can't do scored discussions if you're not prepared. I get the sense that you all like this way of learning."

A student calls out loudly: "NO!"

Dolores asks how many students have not done the reading and more than half raise their hands. She says she is going to give everyone a chance to read and prepare themselves. As she turns toward her desk, the students explode into conversation. Without missing a beat, she spins around and snarls: "I'm actually giving you time to prepare and you're wasting it!"

Emilio raises his hand and Dolores says, "Emilio, get prepared for the discussion." He begins to speak and she snaps, "Emilio, read! Prepare for the discussion!"
I notice Juan and Mario both texting under their desks. I wonder if they are writing to one another and if so what they have to say. There is a tension in the room that is unmistakable. As I look at the students I see them looking at one another. Their expressions range from mild amusement to agitation. Giggling is heard and from behind her computer screen Dolores explodes: "I'm not sure what is so funny about child soldiers!" She stands up. "If all you ever do is sit and laugh and joke with your peers you'll never develop the type of communication you'll need later on in life."

Dolores then calls on six students to take their place at the discussion table—Xavier, Desi, Rayne, Marisa, Mario, and Juan. The discussion is strained. It appears that many of the students are still unprepared. When the time is up, Dolores says, "Now it is time for the outer circle to use your voices and comment on what you heard."

Kayla offers, "We just keep saying the same thing and nothing ever changes."

In a bored tone, Danyelle adds: "This stuff is constantly being shoved down our throats in school and in the news, but nothing changes so why don't we move on to something else?"

Emilio adds, "George Washington said we should focus on our own nation."

Dolores responds, "Africa is a continent with many valuable resources, including people, and the U.S. has exploited the continent and its resources. We have already involved ourselves in their affairs."

Without warning, Dolores shifts gears. "I'm giving you back your vocabulary papers. Don't comment to me when I hand them back. I'm going to give you all an
opportunity to make up your grade. I don't want to hear your voices. What you can do is bring it back ..."

Dolores' voice trails off. Many students are talking and Dolores stands rigidly in one place until they stop.

Dolores continues,"...and show me you understand the word. Corrections need to have substance to them. Grades close on Wednesday and I will not take anything after Wednesday."

Francisco, a soft-spoken Latino male, says, "Miss, they close on Friday."

Louder this time and without acknowledging Francisco, Dolores repeats herself: "Grades close on Wednesday. I will not take anything after Wednesday."

Dolores begins walking around the room distributing papers to students. When Kayla looks at her paper her expression changes from relaxed to upset. She calls out to nobody in particular: "I got a C with 3 out of 4. How do you get an A?" She then stands up and yells loudly: "THAT'S SO STUPID!"

Dolores, who is now on the other side of the room, jerks around and yells back: "Kayla! Stop it!"

It is now 2:00 and the students are expected at an all-school meeting in the auditorium. As they rush out of the classroom, Dolores tells Xavier and Emilio to stay behind.

Winter arrives, ice and snow cover the ground, and temperatures dip into the low teens. With the start of the new year there is a change in curriculum and Dolores' tenth grade Cross-Cultural Communication course becomes Economics. I attend class most
Fridays throughout the winter and observe Dolores and her students as they discuss the
different types of economic systems in the world, take pop quizzes, and plot supply and
demand on graphs. By spring, students begin working on individual business plans.

It is a warm Friday afternoon in April and I arrive at 12:25 P.M. Many of
Dolores' students are already seated. As I take my seat at my usual desk, the rest of the
students arrive.

Dolores stands in the front of the classroom with a serious look on her face as she
addresses her students: "Good afternoon, everyone. Take out your notebooks. Danyelle,
do you want to pass these out? Xavier, do you have your notebook?"

As Danyelle gets up and makes her way to the front of the class, Dolores
continues looking at Xavier and says, "Take out your notebook!"

Dolores hands Danyelle several stacks of paper and tells her to give all three to
each person. Danyelle begins distributing the handouts and Dolores, standing with her
hands on her hips, calls out: "Sam, are you getting kicked out today?"

Sam looks at Dolores, his brow furrowed indignantly, but he remains silent.

Dolores continues: "We're going to start with something called K W L." She
begins writing on an overhead slide:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Know</th>
<th>What I want to know</th>
<th>What I Learned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who owns the business, hierarchy of the company, and who are employees and what do they do?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Under the "Know" column, she writes: Who owns the business, hierarchy of the
company, and who are employees and what do they do? Under "What I want to know"
she writes: Is promoting from within important? What are some organization models?
Before filling in the third column, Dolores stops and says: "In order to raise capitol, you need a business plan. It helps you learn how to create a timeline which will help you next year when you have to define a project. The charts I gave you are top down organizations with people at the top making decisions. Anything else we want to add to the 'Know' side?"

When nobody responds, Dolores adds: "I hesitate to ask this, but what do we want to know?"

Mario says under his breath, "Why are we taking this class?"

Several students immediately respond with "Ooohhh!"

The fire in Dolores' eyes communicate that she is not pleased. "Do you really want to know that?"

Mario responds dispassionately: "No. I just asked because nobody else did."

Dolores continues without making further comment. "How about 'Why does organization matter?' Do we have any more questions to put under 'What we want to know?'"

Andriana asks: "What do you have to do to become a manager?" As Andriana speaks, Dolores writes on the overhead: What qualifications do managers need?

Roger inquires: "Are employees trained in multiple fields or do they focus on just one?"

Dolores lights up. "Ah! Specialization! Does everyone know what I mean by specialization? One person works in one job, another works in another job." Dolores adds to the overhead: Is it important for employees to specialize?
Rayne offers: "Does management get to decide how involved the government is?"

"No," Dolores responds. "But if I'm a large corporation like, say, Kaiser Permanente, I can influence laws by spending money. Most people don't like that, but that's how it works." As she speaks, Dolores writes on the overhead: What laws is my business bound by?

Dolores picks up the pages Danyelle handed out earlier. "Let's see what we can learn by looking at these organization charts. Do you want to start in small groups?"

Students respond with a lackluster, "Yeah."

Dolores removes the sheet from the overhead projector and replaces it with a chart. "You have three charts. They are three different types of business. You're going to diagram one of these organization charts for your business today."

Students begin talking to others seated near them. Dolores circulates around the room, listening in on group conversations. She notices Cierra rubbing Raul's arm and calls out from across the room: "Cierra, do I need to move you?"

Cierra looks embarrassed as she responds quietly, "No."

After several minutes pass, Dolores says, "Let's talk about what is common to every business. Let's get this going under 'Learned.'" As she is speaking, she removes the organization chart and replaces it with the previous sheet.

Several students are talking to their neighbors rather than paying attention to Dolores. "Okay, no side-talking! Do all of you know this already?"

Juan speaks out: "It's Friday. What do you expect?"

Dolores seems to ignore Juan's comment. "No?"
Danyelle, looking bored and resting her face in her hands, responds: "No we don't, Miss."

Dolores proceeds. "I ran a small computer consulting firm. I did everything: wrote bids, sent invoices, collected money. The organization chart will help you figure out how many employees you need and it will help you determine your budget."

The room is uncharacteristically quiet.

Dolores says, "We all need to pay taxes. Let's say Cierra you have a business and you get a call from the IRS. They say they have a problem with your 2008 tax return. What are you going to do?"

Cierra does not respond, so Dolores answers her own question: "That's why you keep records. We all need to pay taxes."

Roger whispers, "The devil's collector."

"If you have your records in order, well, you're okay" Dolores adds and continues, "Dina buys clothing from Mario who imports them from China. He has great Chinese designers. He tells Dina she owes him $10,000, but she doesn't have any record of it."

In a split second, Dolores' tone changes from informative to irritated. She glares at Eduardo and says, “Okay. I want you to get up and move over by Rayne."

Eduardo stands up and leaving his papers behind, he walks across the room and takes a seat next to Rayne.

Dolores huffs, "You'd think by this point in the year I wouldn't have to do this."

But she continues speaking as though the disruption had not occurred: "Mario sends an
invoice for $20,000 and Dina didn't have a record. He could take her to court if she doesn't pay."

I look around the room and most of the students are engaged in side conversations with their neighbors.

Danyelle asks: "Is a CFO the same as a treasurer?"

Dolores ignores Danyelle's question. "Francisco, are you with us? Take your headphones out and pick up your pencil. Thank you!"

Dolores writes on the overhead: Boards of Directors are for public corporations. Private corporations have President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary.

She continues, "Okay. Do you all think you can start on your own?"

Danyelle responds in a frustrated tone, "No."

Dolores speaks in a loud, angry voice: "Well, you're not listening and I'm not going to keep talking. I want to see a copy of your organization chart before you leave here today."

Eduardo stands up and walks over to the desk he just vacated, grabs his notebook, and returns to his new seat.

Dolores barks, "Emilio, do I need to move you, too?" Without pausing, she adds: "Francisco, you need to give me your headphones. And take your hat off."

Sam, who has been quiet all class session, is resting his head on his desk. Dolores approaches him and kneeling down in front of him, says, "Sam, you're supposed to be making your organization chart in your journal."

He ignores her and after a moment, Dolores walks away.
Dolores announces that they only have a few minutes left. She looks at Eduardo and says, "You're back to gossiping. If this were your job, you'd be fired."

Eduardo replies, "If I was getting paid, I'd take it seriously."

Dolores retorts tersely: "You are getting paid. In six years, you will understand."

She then turns away from Eduardo and addresses the entire class: "I need your quiet attention. These are due next week. Finalize them by Tuesday. We'll have computer time and if you need help, I can show you. I will need your draft on the way out the door."

The students pop out of their seats and line up at the front door to show their work to Dolores on their way out.

An Interpretation and Evaluation of Dolores Varela's Classroom

From my very first day of observation, I was struck by Dolores' authoritarian approach to classroom management. While some teachers strive to create a relaxed and friendly classroom climate that supports student autonomy, Dolores favored classroom management strategies that were primarily concerned with maintaining order through punitive measures. Dolores' classroom interactions with her students epitomized a traditional orientation toward students that was often aggressive rather than assertive (McPherson, Kearney, & Plax, 2003). It appeared that Dolores was operating under the belief that her tenth grade students were "irresponsible and undisciplined" (Woolfolk, Rosoff, & Hoy, 1990, p. 139) and therefore required a high level of control. I came to understand Dolores' constant surveillance of students and her frequent reprisals for talking to peers or expressing emotion as evidence of her conviction that chaos was
unwelcome in the classroom and that as a teacher she was responsible for maintaining an orderly environment.

For Dolores, classroom management seemed to be more than a means to an educational end; it was her priority. While it was evident that Dolores put a great deal of time and thought into her lesson plans and that she was passionate about her curriculum, she often ignored the relational aspects of teaching and learning that are the very foundation of effective classroom management (Burroughs, 2007). During one of our interviews, Dolores explicitly acknowledged that despite the fact that many of her peers endeavor to create friendly connections with their students, building relationships with students was not her number one priority. Ironically, Dolores' primary objective in both Cross-Cultural Communication and Economics was at odds with her actions in the classroom. Dolores stated that she tried to teach her students how to create "a more culturally aware and sensitive future world," yet often her classroom behavior did not demonstrate a commitment to those ideals. She confessed that she tried hard to get students to where she wanted them to be with the coursework and that when students misbehaved she became disappointed or frustrated, and then she often over-reacted.

Dolores' admission that her emotions often sabotaged her purposes as a teacher is not a unique experience. As Sutton and Wheatley (2003) acknowledge, teaching children often brings up negative emotions in teachers—such as anger, disgust, and sadness—making it difficult for teachers to focus on learning objectives or to behave consistently. While the climate in Dolores' classroom was noticeably volatile throughout the year, it was not always apparent who or what instigated the dramatic shifts in energy. Dolores'
anger and frustration with her students was often evident—from her language, her tone of her voice, her facial expressions, and her disciplinary actions—however, the students also contributed to the classroom dynamic (for example, when they ignored her instructions and talked back to her). It was as though Dolores and her students were constantly engaged in a frenzied freestyle dance between powerful individuals vying for attention and respect.

Recognizing the ways in which students express themselves and assert their growing sense of power is important in a classroom setting, especially a culturally diverse classroom like Dolores'. It is widely recognized among multicultural educators that students bring different cultural and communicative patterns to the classroom (Brown, 2004; Delpit, 2006; Nieto, 1999). For example, African American students are often verbally oriented and view speaking out while a teacher is talking as a form of call and response that signifies participation not disrespect (Brown, 2004). Whereas Dolores interpreted her students' side conversations and comments as acts of defiance and disrespect toward her, they were likely acting in ways that were comfortable and natural to their cultures outside the classroom.

Whereas classroom management was once equated with classroom discipline and what teachers do after students misbehave, scholars now recognize that effective classroom management depends on cooperation and the activities teachers and students willingly constitute together (Burroughs, 2007). Effective classroom management in urban schools includes curriculum and communication that comprises "the ability to respond appropriately to the emotional, social, ethnic, cultural, and cognitive needs of
students" (Brown, 2004, p. 268). It is more than a set of skills or strategies that teachers enact—classroom management is an interaction between and among teachers and students who agree to cooperate in a shared pursuit of knowledge (Brown, 2004; Burroughs, 2007). Traditionally, students have been characterized as passive recipients of teachers' actions, however, it is now commonly recognized that students are active participants in the classroom (Romi, Lewis, Roache, & Riley, 2011; McLaughlin, 1991). Teachers like Dolores clearly depend on student compliance to work through their planned curricula (Romi et al., 2011; McLaughlin, 1991). Without first garnering her students' cooperation, Dolores' class sessions regularly deteriorated into a type of Capoeira—a fluid fighting dance combining quick and unpredictable attacks and defensive maneuvers—yet with none of the grace, respect, or relationality.

Student misbehavior and teacher anger are well documented, especially with regard to the impact a teacher's classroom management strategies have on students' motivations to learn (Bondy, Ross, Gallingane, & Hambacher, 2007; Brown, 2004; McPherson et al., 2003; McPherson & Young, 2004; Monroe, 2006; Norris, 2003; Romi et al., 2011; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003; Thomas, Coard, Stevenson, Bentley, & Zamel, 2009; Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke, & Curran, 2004; Wentzel, 2003; Winograd, 2003; Woolfolk et al., 1990). Despite the many classroom management challenges high school teachers face, many educators have found meaningful ways of creating environments that support the achievement of diverse groups of students through mutual care, respect, and trust (Brown, 2004; Duncan-Andrade, 2007, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1995).
Approaches to classroom management that emphasize an ethic of caring are often referred to as culturally relevant (Ladson-Billings, 1994) or culturally responsive (Gay, 2000). Rather than dealing with disruptive behaviors in aggressive or punitive ways as Dolores often did, culturally responsive teachers rely on the power of their caring relationships to appeal to students (Alder, 2002; Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Brown, 2004). Bowers and Flinders assert that legitimate authority is conferred to teachers by students through reciprocal caring and respect. In other words, caring teachers need not rely on their institutional authority to gain student compliance. In culturally responsive teaching "control and caring are not opposing terms; but the form of control is transformed by the presence of care" (Bowers & Flinders, 1990, p. 15).

Dolores believed it was her responsibility as a teacher to mitigate chaos in the classroom, therefore, it could be argued that her efforts to control her students were a form of caring. During an interview Dolores told me:

I have to take on an authority position because ultimately I'm the one who's who's responsible. So it's, it's a really tough, you know, I like a democratic classroom. I like power sharing. But ultimately, if something happens to one of those kids, who are the parents coming to? They're coming to me. When that mother sees that her kid is failing four classes and I'm her advisor, who are they coming to talk to? So, you know, it's a fine line there.

Although it was clear that Dolores took her responsibility to her students and their parents seriously, she seemed to be unaware that her form of control (e.g., preemptive strikes, yelling, etc.) alienated her students and led them to disengage. In Dolores' classroom—a classroom bursting with energetic and culturally diverse teenage boys and girls—students' perceptions that their teacher cares for them and is desirous of building relationships with them is paramount to academic engagement and success (Alder, 2002;

A teacher's approach to classroom management has a significant impact on students' perceptions of their teachers, including teacher credibility (Chory, 2007; Horan, Chory, & Goodboy, 2010; Pogue & AhYun, 2006; Thweatt & McCrosky, 1998), fairness (Horan, et al., 2010; McPherson et al., 2003), caring (Brown, 2004), passion for subject (Winograd, 2003), and trustworthiness (McPherson & Young, 2004)—all necessary aspects of healthy teacher-student relationships. During the focus group held on the last day of class, Dolores' students candidly shared their perceptions of their teacher. Four Latino male students indicated that Dolores had class favorites whom she was more willing to help. One stated that Dolores unfairly gave leniency on assignments to some students and not to others. Many of these same students agreed that Dolores often singled out individuals.

Raul bemoaned his experience: "Once the teacher thinks you're bad, she thinks everything you say is bad or that you're having side conversations."

Emilio added: "Once she thinks you are bad, there's nothing you can do to change her mind."

When asked how they felt in Dolores' classroom, students willingly reported feeling "discounted," "hated," "isolated," "misunderstood," "ostracized," "singled out," and "unvalued." Sadly, five students said they were "angry" at Dolores, four said the class made them feel "anxious," and twelve said they felt "frustrated" in class. For many
students, the focus group was the first time they had been invited to tell Dolores how they felt. And although the conversation was spirited and open, there was a melancholic undertone. Dolores sat quietly in the back of the room while her students shared their candid responses to the focus group questions, revealing their perceptions that their teacher did not care for them—at least not in ways they valued.

Most of Dolores' students indicated that they really wanted to learn, but they had given up because the class was "unproductive." Emilio said he wished Dolores would put a desk in the hallway so students who were kicked out of class could continue to work. Most agreed that when Dolores was "stressed out"—when she lost her patience, adopted a frustrated tone of voice, relocated students to different desks, or kicked them out of the room—it was easier just to "kick back," "tune out," "give up," or "disengage." While detaching from classroom activities appeared to be the most common coping strategy Dolores' students' employed, Juan offered insight into the combative tendencies of several students: "When she starts yelling at you, you want to argue back and fight so you have to stand up for yourself or else she will walk all over you."

One of the most telling moments of the focus group was when students acknowledged that they contributed to the classroom climate. Although most students agreed that Dolores set the tone for class each day, they recognized that it trickled down to them. Juan indicated that it was "like a chain reaction," to which Roger added: "Both the teacher and the students are responsible for the chain reaction." Several students expressed remorse that they had disrupted the class at times; however, they still blamed Dolores for getting angry, singling out individuals, yelling at them, and kicking them out
of class. Sam expressed that he sincerely wished Dolores "listened better" and was more "laid back."

Studies indicate that teacher aggressiveness—even when provoked by a student's misbehavior—incites disruptive behavior in students (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003; Lewis, 2001). These negative teacher and student behaviors not only distract students from their schoolwork (Lewis & Riley, 2009; Romi et al., 2011; McPherson & Young, 2004), they lead to dissatisfaction in teacher-student relationships (McPherson et al., 2003). In Dolores' classroom, misbehavior clearly begets misbehavior. For example, one day Dolores took her students to a computer lab in the school library. After each student had located a seat at an available computer they started working on their business plans. Muted voices were heard from every corner of the room as students conferred with one another on their projects. I was seated near Sam and Danyelle who were talking quietly to each other. Dolores approached Sam and snapped at him: "Sam, I don't want to hear your voice," to which Sam replied apathetically, "I don't want to hear yours." Anger was visible on Dolores' face as she growled: "Sam, I'm serious!" Danyelle gazed into her lap and snickered quietly. Dolores turned to her and snarled: "Danyelle!" who replied timorously, "I'm sorry."

As Dolores walked away, Sam said under his breath: "All the niggers need to leave the library!" Danyelle nodded her head in agreement and added conspiratorially: "Really!"

In this scenario, Dolores' perception that Sam was misbehaving (i.e., talking to Danyelle rather than staying on task) led her to act in a way that Sam interpreted as
aggressive (i.e., telling him she did not want to hear his voice) which in turn led Sam to respond aggressively to her (i.e., telling her he did not want to hear her voice). As research indicates, it does not matter if students believe that their teacher's aggressiveness is justified: teacher aggressiveness almost always is perceived by students as inappropriate and leads to student misbehavior (Romi et al., 2011).

One of the most disturbing aspects of this incident was Sam's perception that Dolores had singled him out based on his race. As the only African American male in Dolores' class and the student who received the most negative attention from Dolores throughout the year, it is understandable why he might think that. Research supports Sam's perception, indicating that African American males have the highest rate of behavioral problems in school and that a main factor is teacher biases (Thomas et al., 2009). As Thomas et al. (2009) report:

Teachers are not immune from being influenced by overgeneralizations based on cultural differences, and whether intentional or not, they are susceptible to bringing their cultural beliefs and preconceived notions concerning the misinterpretation of the anger of African American males with them to the classroom. (pp. 194-195)

Sam's behavior in the library that day was no different than any other day. Like many of his White and Latina/o peers, Sam frequently talked with neighbors while class was in session. However, unlike many of his peers, Sam often willingly participated in class discussions. While Dolores sometimes showed appreciation for Sam's relevant contributions, she seemed more intolerant of his side conversations than those of others.
I cannot say whether Dolores had a biased opinion of Sam based on his race or gender, however, during one of our interviews she commented on her preconceived notions about certain students:

Students, you know, I get the sense that some of them (laugh) just come in and they're amused by the whole play out of the scenarios that you never know what might happen. Part of, as I'm trying to just deal with the classroom management stuff, there are days, and a lot of days like today, I probably started out that way—where I have to start out with this 'Come in here and don't mess with me' (laugh) 'Cos we've got stuff to do.' And I think that emotionally—I already know who the players are that are gonna mess with me, and like lately I've tried shutting them down right off the bat before they get started, and I think emotionally a few of those kids have felt targeted, because I don't really think it's their intent. . . . I had one of the student's parents call me, it must have been after Tuesday's class, to say the kid really felt targeted, and he knows sometimes he's not always good and he likes to cut-up, but you know, so it's definitely, I think emotionally there's a variety of things. I think there are some kids who just come in and are emotionally amused. And they actually probably enjoy that chaotic environment.

Of significance in this passage is Dolores' acknowledgement that she often tried to shut down students before they misbehaved. Reflecting back, I remember being stunned the day Dolores asked Sam in front of the entire class: "Are you getting kicked out today?" I was surprised by Dolores' expectation that Sam would misbehave, and the brazen way in which she called him out in front of his classroom peers. The impact of Dolores' preemption was visibly noticeable: Sam did not participate at all that day. He rested his head on his desk and stared into space for the entire afternoon, sufficiently unmotivated to engage in classroom activities or to enter into conversation with Dolores when she inquired about his progress. It is difficult to know how Sam behaved when I was not present, or whether Dolores had negative biases about African American males that affected her opinion and treatment of him. However, from where I sat, Sam's transgressions did not seem to warrant the types of punishments Dolores administered—
especially her most frequent form of reprisal of removing him from class and excluding him from learning opportunities.

Schwartz (2001) asserts that for punishments to have a positive impact on a student's future behavior, the punishments must model good behavior. In other words, the punishment must fit the infraction by helping the student: accept personal responsibility for his misbehavior, understand why behavior changes are necessary, and demonstrate a commitment to new behavior (Schwartz, 2001). As Noguera (2003) points out, when students are removed from the classroom for disruptive behavior, factors contributing to the misbehavior often remain unexplored and the long-term consequences of such punishment are unacknowledged. When I asked Dolores what happened when she removed students from the classroom, she said she would go out to the hallway, talk to the student, cool down, figure out what the problem is, and reassess.

It is commonly accepted that disruptive students make it difficult for other students to learn and that removing them from the classroom will improve the learning environment for others (Noguera, 2003). Lewis and Riley (2009) found that when teachers publicly discipline a student, the entire class loses focus. Disciplinary distractions elicit emotional responses from other members of the class often provoking increased arousal and misbehavior by other students (Lewis & Riley, 2009; Noguera, 2003). Duncan-Andrade (2009) suggests that classrooms are "micro-ecosystems" (p. 190) and that emotions are transferrable from one student to another. He writes:

We may think that if we send out the 'disobedient' child, we have removed the pain from our system. It simply does not work that way. Rather, when we exclude a child, we introduce another social stressor into the micro-ecosystem. We rationalize the exclusion by telling ourselves that we have pulled a weed from
the garden, allowing for a healthier environment for the other children to grow. This ignores the fact that every student in our classroom is part of a delicate balance built on interdependency. . . . As educators we tend to seriously underestimate the impact our response has on the other students in the class. They are watching us as we interact with their peers. (p. 190)

During the focus group, Emilio expressed the solidarity he felt with his peers:

"Our sophomore class is the most united class from school. We students stick together. If we don't like something, we all stick together and help each other." Many of Dolores' students expressed feeling uncomfortable when she kicked their peers out of class. Solidarity among students was apparent during my observations, for example, I witnessed students standing up for one another, such as when Kayla attempted to explain to Dolores why Sam was talking to her, or when Rayne gently encouraged Sam to "just go" when Dolores called him outside.

Scholarship on classroom management presents two significant choices for teachers: 1) work cooperatively with students to involve them in learning, or 2) discipline students once they have misbehaved (Burroughs, 2007). Although on the surface it appears that Dolores subscribed to the second approach, her preemptive strategy to shut down students "right off the bat before they get started" reflects a more nuanced, often overlooked aspect of classroom management: emotions.

During our two interviews, Dolores talked at great length about emotions: her own, her students, and how the combination of their multiple and often conflicting emotions complicated and created a challenging classroom climate. Dolores confessed several times to experiencing feelings of anxiety, fear, and frustration stemming from her desire to "do a good job." Not only did Dolores attribute her negative emotions to the
pressure she puts on herself to do a good job, she also admitted she tried hard to "hide" or "suppress" her emotions "because you don't want [students] to see your weaknesses."

Dolores stated that she does not like a chaotic classroom and as the sole authority in the classroom, it is her responsibility to maintain order by "balancing emotions." Although she claimed she would like to create a more open environment where students felt welcome and comfortable, she believed she faced unusual challenges because some of her students were "mean and obnoxious" and came to class ready to "mess" with her. Her perception that it was her responsibility to balance the emotions in the classroom, combined with her perception that some of the students set out to intentionally disrupt her agenda, led Dolores to act in ways that some scholars would label as "teacher misbehavior" (Lewis & Riley, 2009; Romi et al., 2011; McPherson, Kearney, & Plax, 2006).

Teacher misbehavior refers to any action by a teacher that de-motivates or distracts students from learning (Lewis & Riley, 2009; Romi et al., 2011; McPherson et al., 2006). Lewis and Riley (2009) assert that teacher misbehavior can be broken down into several categories: legal/illegal, conscious/unconscious, and acts of commission/omission. Illegal acts of teacher misbehavior are fairly straightforward (e.g., sexual or physical abuse) and tend to affect few students. Legal acts of teacher misbehavior are more insidious and potentially detrimental to the long-term learning and well-being of large populations of students. Examples of teacher misbehavior include: negative criticism, public embarrassment and humiliation, and yelling in anger (Lewis & Riley, 2009). Based on these definitions, Dolores engaged in a legal act of conscious
omission the day she repeatedly ignored Emilio when he raised his hand to ask her a question. She engaged in a legal act of unconscious commission another day when she barked at a student, "Come on, Hector. Give me an answer. You're not in second grade."

Although Dolores acknowledged that she sometimes "overreacted," it was clear from our interviews that she blamed her students for her emotional reactions and that her aggressive behavior was triggered by her disappointment in them. Understanding what constitutes teacher misbehavior is informative; however, it does not explain the emotional aspects of teaching and learning in a theoretically rigorous way. Emotions in educational contexts have been examined primarily through the constructs of emotional intelligence and emotional regulation. In the next section, I provide an overview of both constructs and then use them to interpret Dolores' classroom interactions with the goal of revealing the possibilities and limitations of each.

**Emotional intelligence and emotional regulation.** Emotional intelligence is a psychological construct that refers to an individual's "ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 189). Building on Howard Gardner's (1983) theory of multiple intelligences and later popularized by Daniel Goleman (1995), Salovey and Mayer (1990) were the first psychologists to conceptualize the term, bringing together scholarship from many sub-fields of psychology. They contend that a significant aspect of emotional intelligence is accurately appraising and expressing emotion, that emotional intelligence is a competence or skill, and that those who can process emotional information quickly and accurately can respond more
appropriately to emotion-laden events. Appraising and responding to the emotions of others—being able "to comprehend another's feelings and re-experience them oneself" (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 194)—is also a key aspect of emotional intelligence. Empathy, according to Salovey and Mayer, signifies the epitome of the emotionally intelligent person.

Another important aspect of emotional intelligence is emotional regulation. Salovey and Mayer (1990) suggest that people can regulate their own emotions by: engaging in activities that elicit positive emotions; associating with people who help them maintain a positive mood and minimize negative moods; thinking positive thoughts; and recognizing that all emotions and moods are temporary. Emotionally intelligent individuals can also "motivate others charismatically toward a worthwhile end" (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 198) by suppressing their own emotions. The psychological rationale for regulating emotions is based on the belief that "individuals seek to maximize time spent in pleasant affective states and to terminate negative emotions" (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 197).

Emotional intelligence helps individuals develop a positive mood conducive to creativity and problem solving, as well as a more positive future orientation (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). More importantly, and forming the foundation for Salovey's and Mayer's (1990) theory, is the belief that people with positive attitudes "construct interpersonal experiences that lead to better outcomes and greater rewards for themselves and others" (p. 200).
According to Salovey and Mayer (1990) some people are incapable of emotional intelligence due to their inability to recognize emotions or regulate them. Salovey and Mayer, and Goleman (1995), assert that individuals who are incapable of regulating their emotions are likely to lead unfulfilling lives due to alienating interpersonal relationships with others. Psychologists Baumeister, Heatherton, and Tice (1994) suggest that self-regulation is an important aspect of social life and that there are many reasons why people fail at it. Their theory offers possible insight into Dolores' emotions in the classroom and the impact they had on her students.

A teacher's failure to self-regulate can negatively impact student learning.

Baumeister et al. (1994) do not specifically advocate for emotional regulation, however, they submit that self-regulation failure is responsible for many social problems, such as addiction, anger, violence, and crime. They suggest that self-regulation is "a vital aspect of human adaptation to life" (p. 12) and that there are two processes of adaptation people follow: 1) changing the environment to fit the self, or 2) changing the self to fit the environment. Self-regulation applies to the second adaptive strategy.

Baumeister et al. (1994) define self-regulation as:

any effort by a human being to alter its own responses. These responses may include actions, thoughts, feeling, desires, and performances. In the absence of regulation, the person would respond to the particular situation in a certain way, whether because of learning, habit, inclination, or even innate tendencies. Self-regulation prevents this normal and natural response from occurring and substitutes another response (or lack of response) in its place. (p. 7)

Baumeister et al. (1994) offer three explanations for people's failure at self-regulation: 1) they have conflicting goals, 2) they try to control things that cannot be controlled, and 3) they devote their self-regulating efforts toward protecting their own
emotions instead of focusing on the problem that gave rise to them. Each of these explanations can offer insight into Dolores' behavior in the classroom.

One possibility for Dolores' failure at self-regulation can be attributed to her conflicting goals for openness and control. During our interviews, Dolores asserted that she wanted to create an open and welcoming classroom climate for her students while also maintaining a high level of control over them—two goals that are seemingly at odds with one another. According to Woolfolk et al. (1990), a teacher's control ideology can be measured on a continuum with custodial at one extreme and humanistic at the other. Dolores' drive to control her students through punitive measures can be described as custodial. The "watchful mistrust" that characterizes the custodial control ideology is in opposition to the humanistic perspective which favors an open, cooperative climate that meets the needs of a diverse group of students.

When I asked Dolores about her teaching philosophy, she revealed her desire for student autonomy:

[My philosophy really is to have this open environment where where kids are testing their voices, they are learning through each other, you know, as well as me. I mean, I need to give them background knowledge. Um, I want them to have challenging material that they’re they’re working with. It’s not about rote memorizing. It’s really about thinking through things. Um, so I guess that’s my main philosophy. I I want kids to be able to think for themselves later on and and know where to find information.

In this passage, Dolores expressed her motivational orientation to support her students' independence from her by encouraging students to experiment with ideas through collaboration with peers. However, when I later asked Dolores about the type of classroom environment she tried to create, she exposed a conflict:
I really want an open environment. Um I don’t like the whole central authority figure thing, but I have to like, I feel like I have to balance (laugh) because ultimately I’m responsible, too. So I don’t want a chaotic classroom. You know, I want there to be like this balance between, this balance between a central authority and allowing students’ expression and making students feel welcome and comfortable and like it’s a place where they can open up. That’s really what I want my classroom to be.

Woolfolk et al. (1990) assert that teachers either motivate students through control or by supporting their autonomy. Not surprisingly, they suggest that custodial teachers typically try to motivate students through the use of control. As Baumeister et al. (1994) assert, when people have conflicting goals, it makes it more difficult, if not impossible, for them to self-regulate. It is important to note that Dolores recognized she had a conflict; however, rather than understanding her conflict as a battle between teacher control and student autonomy, she viewed her conflict as a form of friction between her teaching philosophy and her emotions:

[S]ometimes I have a really difficult time with that classroom because I have my philosophy . . . I really think that my emotional level sometimes almost defeats my purposes of trying to get my class where I want it to be, because I try too hard. And so and then I’m disappointed when it’s not working, and then that feeds into my emotion, and then maybe I’ll over-react or maybe they’ll be—I don’t know, I, this class here I really struggle with trying to figure out the emotional balance for myself. I do tend to put a lot of pressure on myself to want to do a good job. And um I can’t say I figured out how to really do a good job in that class yet. So emotionally that does that does create a little thing for me.

While Dolores clearly saw her emotions as an impediment to fulfilling her teaching objectives, she did not recognize that her feelings of disappointment over things "not working" were likely emerging from two different conflicts: 1) her desire for a controlled yet open classroom and 2) her desire for structured yet autonomous learning.
Each of these conflicts can be understood as an example of cognitive dissonance wherein Dolores' beliefs and actions were incongruent (Festinger, 1957). Typically, individuals who experience cognitive dissonance seek to bring their actions and beliefs into alignment, either by changing their actions or their beliefs. Caine and Caine (2001) warn that when a person is confronted with cognitive dissonance, they are "thrown into genuine emotional and personal turmoil until the contradiction is resolved" (p. 3-10).

Although Dolores recognized and reflected on the dissonance between her teaching goals and the emotions arising from her attempts to implement them, I believe she failed to reconcile the dissonance (and therefore remained emotionally conflicted) because her reflection did not move into reflexivity.

Although often conflated, reflection and reflexivity represent different processes. Fassett and Warren (2007) distinguish between the two, indicating that "the first suggests a mirroring or accounting of the past, while the second suggests an important motion, back and forth, between one's actions and how those implicate one in social phenomena" (p. 48). Fassett and Warren compare reflexivity to Freire's (1970/2007) notion of praxis, which integrates serious intellectual reflection with action. According to Freire (1970/2007), thought without action or action without thought will not lead to liberation.

During my two interviews with Dolores, she reflected on her students, course curriculum, teaching philosophy, approach to classroom management, and her emotions. However, she never engaged in what Chubbuck and Zembylas (2008) refer to as "emotional reflexivity"—an interrogation of what is (or is not) working, how she was implicated in
the success or failure of her curriculum and pedagogy, and how she could enhance the learning potential of all her students.

In educational environments like Dolores' it is imperative that teachers move beyond reflection into reflexivity—to engage in continual and unrelenting "painful self-critique to determine more appropriate future actions" (Duncan-Andrade, 2009, p. 189). Such critique and action would enable Dolores to recognize and take action to resolve her conflicting goals and that, according to Baumeister et al. (1994), would make it possible for her to self-regulate.

Dolores was poised on the threshold of reflexivity—she reflected on what was not working; however, she did not take action. Had Dolores moved from reflection to reflexivity she could have resolved her cognitive dissonance thereby reducing her emotional turmoil and, more importantly, improving her students' potential to learn.

A second possibility for Dolores' failure to self-regulate her emotions could be that she was trying to control something she could not control—what her students think, feel, or do. For example, Dolores anticipated and tried to control Sam's behavior the day she shut him down before class started. Although on the surface Dolores' action appeared successful (i.e., Sam did not participate at all that day), it had an unanticipated deleterious effect on his academic work (i.e., Dolores could not motivate Sam to do his assignment). Even though Dolores expressed an explicit desire to shut down her students before they messed with her, I doubt it was her desire to interfere with their learning. This clearly demonstrates that there are often unexpected consequences when oversimplified solutions are applied to complex problems. Dolores' preemptive strike could have done more than
impact Sam's potential to learn—it likely had a dehumanizing effect on Sam that impacted his self-identity (Duncan-Andrade, 2007).

On a daily basis, Dolores appeared to overlook something that Duncan-Andrade (2007) recognized in the urban schools he studied:

[T]he students most likely to change the world were also the ones most likely to struggle in a typical classroom environment. They would not be the favorite student; but the bane of the teacher's existence; the agent of change would not be prone to follow the rules, but rather to test the boundaries. (p. 625)

If Dolores truly wanted to reach Sam and minimize his disruptive behavior, she could start by changing her perceptions of him—seeing him as a future agent of change rather than a troublemaker. Although Dolores could not control Sam's thoughts, feelings, or actions, we know from the literature on student motivation and the focus group with Dolores' students that a teacher's behavior does impact students' perceptions and motivations to learn. As Baumeister et al. (1994) suggest, it is important to know what we have the power to control. Teachers can only control their own thoughts, feelings, and actions; however, they can have a powerful positive or negative impact on students.

A third possibility for Dolores' failure to self-regulate her emotions could be that she was more concerned about her own emotions than the problems that gave rise to them. In our second interview, Dolores brought up the idea of balance again, demonstrating her concern for her own emotions:

So I feel frustrated, I have that feeling of frustration in the classroom. And so, you know, I I probably—like if I thought about it, it’s the fear that I’m not doing a good job with the students that I wanna do. And then I think, I look at my students, and it’s like, okay, so when I have them acting out, when somebody’s mad at me because, you know, I’m telling them to put their phone away or do whatever, what is that emotion about really for them? But I definitely feel it. And today was a great example of emotion in the classroom, you know. Like
Adella was really angry with me because of the meeting I had with her mother this morning. And Caterina is her best friend, so Caterina was angry with me. And um Kayla was just silly Kayla. . . .So there's all these little emotional things going on. They’re all like going on at once in the room and so so for me when I think about all these emotions, especially in that class, because I I don't know what it is about that class. Last class of the day, the personality dynamics in that class are really interesting. And um ya I could have probably ten different emotions happening in that class at once, and then I have to balance mine against it all.

Dolores talked a lot about balancing her emotions with her students' emotions, which can be interpreted as her desire to self-regulate. However, during our interviews, she indicated other struggles she was facing with this particular class, such as balancing order with openness, fun with seriousness, and her use of power with her students' use of power. As evidenced from her interview transcripts, balance represented a state Dolores wanted to capture and contain in her classroom. Evoking images of tightropes and teeter-totters, Dolores' reference to balance implied a desire to find harmony, poise, and equilibrium in the precarious presence of her teenage students. Dolores mentioned several times that she was responsible for finding the balance, not taking into account that her students played an essential role in achieving it.

That Dolores sought to balance her students' emotions, desires, and needs with her own should be read as a sign of hope—hope that she is capable of finding a way out of her anxiety, fear, and frustration to a more reflexive and relational approach to teaching. Fassett and Warren (2007) conceptualize balance as a form of tension necessary for movement. They remind us that the muscles in the front and back of the body are always exerting opposing forces that enable the body to stand, walk, and run. In much the same way, the aspects of classroom life that Dolores struggled so hard to balance can be
understood as classroom dialectics, without which learning (as a form of movement) could not commence. I argue that the teaching and learning process is marked by tensions—that it is a delicate balancing act that requires both teachers and students to keep it moving. If Dolores were to recognize this, she could give up the struggles that are causing her emotional pain and ride the teeter-totter with her students—recognizing that sometimes she will be up, other times she will be down, but she must always stay in relation to her students.

It is clear from my privileged position as an observer and interviewer that there were many incidents in which Dolores visibly did not regulate her emotions. Salovey and Mayer (1990) would likely argue that Dolores' inability to regulate her emotions made it difficult for her to create meaningful relationships with her students and to achieve her pedagogical goals. I agree that Dolores' frequent emotional displays had a negative impact on herself and her students; however, there are compelling arguments against self-regulation in the classroom, to which I now turn.

**A teacher's failure to self-regulate can positively impact student learning.**

Although there has been a significant amount of educational research on emotional intelligence in the past decade, most has focused on social emotional learning as a way to improve students' social skills through the development of self-control (Hoffman, 2009). Emotional intelligence has been praised for bringing the significance of emotion in education to light; however, it also has been highly criticized for focusing on individual processes, such as management and regulation, and for ignoring the social and cultural influences on an individual's emotions (Zembylas, 2007c). Most scholarship on
emotional intelligence in education also ignores issues of politics and power embedded in emotional discourses and norms of behavior (Boler, 1999; Zembylas, 2005, 2007a, 2007c, 2007d). Zembylas (2003, 2005) contends that power influences discourses about emotion (e.g., which emotions are appropriate, who can express them, when they can be expressed, and how they are to be interpreted) and that these discourses, in turn, influence emotional displays.

Debates over emotional intelligence in schools abound (Boler, 1999; Chubbuck & Zembylas, 2008; Hoffman, 2009; Kristjansson, 2006; Zembylas, 2003). Boler (1999) and Zembylas (2005) critique emotional intelligence in schools, arguing that it has a colonizing effect on both teachers and students. Scholars assert that emotional intelligence, the feeling rules it advocates, and the norms of behavior it advances are ideological (Chubbuck & Zembylas, 2008; Hoffman, 2009; Zembylas, 2005, 2007a). Zembylas (2007a) contends that emotions are central to power relations in the classroom and that teachers and students must go beyond limited, normalized understandings of certain emotions as bad (such as anger) in order to uncover the political interests served by emotional labels, rules, and expected norms of behavior. He argues that labels, rules, and norms are ideological and perpetuate domination by shutting down spaces for struggle and emancipation (Zembylas, 2007a). Chubbuck and Zembylas (2008) state that the words we use to label emotions "serve specific purposes in the process of creating and negotiating reality" (p. 279).

Many education and communication scholars agree that emotion and cognition are connected; therefore attempts to regulate or ignore emotions in educational
environments are detrimental to student learning (Cooks, 2003; Harris, 2003; Simpson, 2008; Waterhouse, 2006; Yep, 2007; Zembylas, 2003, 2006). And while recent scholarship on the drawbacks of emotional intelligence and the benefits of anger in the classroom abound (e.g., Boler, 1999; Kristjánsson, 2006; Simpson, 2006; Zembylas, 2007a), these scholars advocate the expression of moral anger (anger over injustices) not defensive anger (anger over perceived threats to self) (Boler, 1999; Zembylas, 2007a; Zembylas & Boler, 2002). Dolores' aggressiveness in the classroom can be understood as a form of defensive anger, not as a catalyst for social change. The irony of her emotional outbursts is concerning, but sadly not unique—in her drive to control her students, Dolores lost control of herself.

In light of the debates over emotional intelligence and regulation in schools, it is important to understand the alternatives. Zembylas (2005) argues that emotional intelligence binds teachers and students to emotional rules that "reflect historical patterns of patriarchy, bureaucracy, and efficiency" (pp. 20-21) that render them either "deviant" or "normal." And while Zembylas and others (e.g., Boler, 1999; Kristjánsson, 2006; Simpson, 2006) advocate teacher and student liberation from emotional rules, they are not advocating for an un-policed display of emotion from every member of the classroom as this would likely create inconceivable obstacles to the teaching and learning process. They are not envisioning chaos; they are envisioning a higher level of emotional awareness and the construction of new emotional rules that are

not about self-preservation in any sense, but the willingness to be vulnerable in empathizing with others and exercising openness and flexibility in acting to transform these emotions, acts, practices, and thoughts. (Zembylas, 2005, p. 40)
In other words, arguments against emotional intelligence and regulation in schools are arguments against manipulating emotions "charismatically" (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 198) and for developing an awareness of the complexity of emotion and learning new ways to use emotion in mutually empowering ways.

Although emotional intelligence and self-regulation provide an explanatory framework for examining Dolores' classroom misbehavior, these constructs do not tell us much about emotions—what they are, how they arise, or the impact they have on teachers and students. These are important considerations in educational environments where thirty or more students and a teacher are gathered together in a small space over the course of an entire year. In the next section, I offer an alternative analysis of Dolores' classroom using interdisciplinary scholarship on affect from neuroscience and critical/cultural studies in an effort to shed new light on teacher-student interactions and the impact emotions have on student learning.

**Moving beyond emotional intelligence and emotional regulation to emotional discernment.** There has been an increased interest in emotion in educational scholarship in the past two decades (Berlak, 2004; Boler, 1997, 1999; Chubbuck & Zembylas, 2008; Glass, 2004; Hargreaves, 1998; Knight-Diop & Oesterreich, 2009; Tatum, 1992; Zembylas 2003, 2007c; Zembylas & Boler, 2002). Much of this interest emerged from the recognition that emotion is inextricably linked to teaching and learning (Boler, 1999; Hargreaves, 1998, 2000; Knight-Diop & Oesterreich, 2009), despite the fact that it is systematically denigrated and devalued (Boler, 1999) and its political roots ignored (Zembylas, 2003, 2007a). Education scholars taking up the study of emotion recognize
that emotions are sites of knowledge and therefore, catalysts for transformation (Boler, 1999; Chubbuck & Zembylas, 2008; Knight-Diop & Oesterreich, 2009). These scholars understand that emotion and reason cannot be separated, and when they are it is a purely theoretical (as well as ideological and political) move (Zembylas, 2005).

Zembylas (2003, 2005), one of the most prolific scholars on emotion in educational contexts, looks to neurologist Antonio Damasio to understand the connection between emotion and cognition. According to Damasio (1994) emotion starts in the brain as an evaluation process "which is responding to the content of thoughts relative to a particular entity or event" (p. 139). Each individual has unique dispositional responses, which cause physiological effects. As physiological changes occur, they are constantly sending signals to the brain through the nervous system, creating a circuit in which the brain and other parts of the body engage in a constantly changing process of neural and physiological activity. In addition, emotions release chemicals (such as hormones) into the bloodstream, which travel to the brain further modifying the processing of neural signals. This neuroscientific explanation of the interdependence of emotion and cognition, while unapologetically simplified here, provides the foundation for understanding the significance of emotion in a student's potential to learn.

*Emotions can foster a student's potential to learn.* To understand potential, I turn to philosopher and social theorist, Brian Massumi (2002). Potential, for Massumi, is a vehicle for understanding affect. Massumi conceptualizes affect as energy that permeates all matter and events—an intensity outside of consciousness that is ripe with indeterminate potential. He asserts that once perception occurs (i.e., judgments are made
and experienced as thoughts and emotions), potential is foreclosed. It is through bodily sensation that affect becomes known. For Massumi, emotion is the moment when the body becomes aware of affect's presence—the body senses affect's transformative force and cognitively and sociolinguistically fixes the quality of the experience. Like Damasio (1994, 2000), Massumi recognizes that emotion always accompanies thought. Emotion is of significance to Massumi because emotion is how the body becomes aware of affect's presence and the foreclosure of potential.

Without potential there would be no forward movement of individuals or changes in structures (Massumi, 2002). For Massumi, matter and events live in and through the escape of affect as much as they are directed by its capture. In other words, potential (the unimaginable and infinite) must be foreclosed in order for it to continue—if potential were ever fully realized, it would cease to exist. Key to Massumi's theory of affect is that when we foreclose potential—through thought and emotion—we can become aware of it and this capture can be a source of action. Massumi asserts that emotion is a conscious perception that forecloses potential, however, alongside this conscious perception is the unconscious perception that something has been unactualized. When awareness of this side-perception becomes conscious it can be analyzed and potential can be fostered. For Massumi, the value of understanding emotion as the capture and release of potential is its ability to make us aware of our vitality and our ability to change.

When, for example, Dolores felt disappointed by her students, the physiological changes she experienced (e.g., the flush of frustration) were indications that she had foreclosed all other potential judgments about her students. If, in those moments, she had
been aware that her disappointment was just one of an infinite number of judgments she could have made about her students, she could have glimpsed her potential to respond differently (e.g., in a more productive and less aggressive manner). Through this awareness Dolores could have recognized that she was not constrained by her negative judgments (thoughts and emotions); rather, there is potential in every present and subsequent moment to respond in infinite ways. In other words, in the moment when Dolores consciously recognized she was frustrated by her students' perceived misbehavior, she could have acknowledged other ways of perceiving them (i.e., rather than perceiving them as "mean and obnoxious" she could view them as lively teens who were excited about the upcoming weekend or future agents of change who were learning to test boundaries). This new awareness could have given rise to an infinite number of potentially non-aggressive responses. As Massumi (2002) reminds us, emotion alerts us of our potential to change—to perceive and act differently.

Massumi (2002) contends that individuals who are aware when affect takes hold in the form of thoughts and emotions are likely to have positive perceptions about their potential—they recognize the vast energy available to them. Individuals who are not aware when affect takes hold are likely to have negative perceptions about their potential, which they perceive as foreclosed by other people and events rather than their own judgments. In Dolores' case, her frequent frustration and subsequent aggressive behavior toward her students indicates her perception that her potential in the classroom is limited not by her own judgments, but by her students' behavior. Such a limited perception robs
Dolores of her agency in the classroom, as she unconsciously believes that she is at the whim of her students.

Massumi’s (2002) theory of affect and his explication of potential offer new ways for understanding the significant role emotions play in the classroom, especially as it relates to students' potential to learn. We know that a teacher's behavior impacts students' motivations to learn (Lewis & Riley, 2009; McPherson & Young, 2004; Romi et al., 2011); however, Massumi's theory helps us understand how students' emotions impact their potential to learn. Just as Dolores' negative emotions foreclosed her potential to think and behave positively toward her students, her students' negative emotions toward Dolores foreclosed their potential to learn. For example, the day Dolores called out Sam at the beginning of class, his demeanor immediately shifted from animated to listless. Usually a lively and talkative teen, Sam's dejection was apparent in his languid body and his lack of participation in class. His negative emotions foreclosed his potential to learn that day.

While Massumi's (2002) theory hinges on an individual's agency to recognize the ways in which emotion cultivates and stifles one's own potential, philosopher and social theorist, Teresa Brennan (2004), proposes a theory on the transmission of affect that emphasizes the individual and social nature of emotions. While hegemonic discourses such as individualism and meritocracy assert that learning is within the control of individual students, Brennan's theory offers a generative approach to understanding what educators have known for a long time: classrooms are living things—amalgamations of cultural, economic, historical, political, social, and emotional conditions that influence
and are influenced by the people living within them (Ayers, 2001; Dewey, 1916; Duncan-Andrade, 2009; Eisner, 2002).

**The transmission of affect in classrooms impacts students' potential to learn.**

Arguing against psychological theories that view the origin of affects as internal to the individual experiencing them, Brennan (2004) understands affects as both individual and environmental. Of significance to Brennan's theory is the "foundational fantasy" (p. 12); a term she uses to describe the illusion that individuals are self-contained. The foundational fantasy begins in infancy, but follows most of us throughout our lives, showing up whenever we make negative judgments about others. For Brennan, emotions are affects, which she defines as a "physiological shift accompanying a judgment" (p. 5), and "feelings are sensations that have found a match in words" (p. 19). When we judge, we are "possessed by the affects" (p. 119).

Of significance to Brennan (2004) is the knowledge communicated through the senses; according to her, sensory knowledge is meaningful only if it can be named. The senses communicate body knowledge, however, Brennan contends that the "foundational fantasy" of self-containment (p. 12) and the privileging of reason over emotion have shut us off from bodily knowledge that could lead to healthier bodies (through less illness) and healthier minds (through limited experiences of negative affects).

The foundational fantasy of self-containment coincides with the projection, or transmission, of negative affects onto others. Brennan (2004) asserts:

The self-contained subject maintains itself by projecting out the affects that would otherwise interfere with its agency (anxiety and any sense of inferiority) in a series of affective judgments that are then carried by the other. (p. 113)
As Brennan contends, the senses are interpreted in one of two ways: by the ego, which censors and potentially misreads them, or through the body without self-interest (pp. 136-137). In a drive to defend itself, the ego pushes its negative affects onto others. In Dolores' case, her self-proclaimed anxiety and fear that she was not "doing a good job" was exacerbated when her students behaved in ways she deemed disrespectful and inappropriate. Her ego was threatened by her students; therefore, she projected her frustration onto them through her angry words, tone of voice, and punishments.

Studies have shown that affects have biological implications (Brennan, 2004). While not all people will respond similarly to affective stimuli, Brennan cites evidence from neuroscience indicating that affective shifts often are accompanied by increases or decreases in hormones. Affects can arise from individual historical factors (e.g. genetics, personal experiences) or environmental factors (e.g. other people or organisms), or from a combination of both, explaining why two people might respond differently to the same interaction or situation.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to determine the source of affects, however we can learn to discern them. Brennan (2004) asserts that the more an individual is able to resist an affective impulse (i.e., withhold external expression of it), the more that person can learn how the impulse takes hold and how it differs from one's natural state. She claims that when we react impulsively to an affect, we miss the opportunity to observe its genesis. Discernment is the process whereby affects pass from sensory registration to cognitive reflection (Brennan, 2004). For discernment to occur, it is important to be alert to the moment when the affect overcomes us. Put more simply, the process of
discernment begins with an affect that is registered as a bodily sensation that one then reflects upon and puts into words, thereby converting the affect into a feeling.

Discernment is possible only when the ego does not judge. When discernment is successful, we are no longer at the whim of affects. Instead, we are able to remain "self-possessed" (Brennan, 2004, p. 119). Without the ability to discern feelings, we are vulnerable to "affective flotsam" (Brennan, 2004, p. 94); a wild ride of uncontrollable and indiscernible emotions that not only take their toll on our individual bodies, but on the bodies of others. The inability (or unwillingness) to discern feelings can cause us to overlook significant factors contributing to affects and to engage in emotional outbursts that may hurt ourselves and others. For example, when Dolores perceived a student as misbehaving, she felt her heart rate quicken, and reacted impulsively in an aggressive manner; she missed the opportunity to practice discernment—a process that would have enabled her to reflect on the student behavior that gave rise to the emotion and rather than reacting to it, consider ways to work with students to change the unwanted behavior or to channel their energies in more productive ways.

It is widely accepted that emotions influence body health, for better or worse. For example, recent studies in the field of cardiology reveal that people who suffer from depression and anxiety are at higher risk for heart attacks (Ibrahim & Shreim, 2006). The heart plays a vital role in a person's cognitive and emotional health, and likewise a person's psychological health has a significant influence on heart health. It is therefore essential that teachers take responsibility for their own affective health by learning to
discern affects in order to resist projecting negative affects onto students, or introjecting
(i.e., unconsciously incorporating into themselves) students' negative affects.

A strong ethical code is a compelling reason for discerning affects (Brennan, 2004). Brennan argues that the ego, the aspect of oneself that believes in self-containment, is unable to discern because of its obsession with self-preservation. Self-containment is a fantasy that distorts our perceptions. For example, anger can result from imaginary insults that threaten the ego's prestige (Brennan, 2004). The ego makes negative judgments and projects them onto others, not only giving the projector the illusion that she is in a position of superiority in relation to others, but at the same time freeing herself from the negative effects of her own affects. Through this process of projection and introjection, the projector lightens his or her affective load while simultaneously increasing the affective load of the receivers. As a result of the foundational fantasy of self-containment, the person projecting the affects sees himself as separate and detached from others despite the scientific evidence that they are intimately connected through the very act of transmitting affects.

Dolores' inability (or unwillingness) to discern may be undergirded by the foundational fantasy of self-containment, leading her to believe that she is just one against many and that, as the teacher, it is her responsibility to control the classroom. By projecting her anger onto her students, Dolores relieved herself of her negative affect by transmitting it to her students who, in her opinion, deserved it for misbehaving. She failed to recognize that by transmitting her affect she not only punished her students, she punished herself. She may have temporarily lightened her affective load, but her
students' responses, in the form of affective projections, gave it right back to her. Dolores' position of authority in the classroom gave her the ability to significantly impact the affective dispositions of her students, for better or worse.

Discernment, then, is a form of consciousness that allows us to prevent hurting others with our projections or being hurt by the projections of others. The refusal to project or introject affects, Brennan (2004) asserts, is a form of kindness and love—a willingness to see others in a good light; to give our "living attention" (Brennan, 2004, p. 34) to others without concern for ourselves. Brennan looks to religious principles, such as the Christian edict to turn the other cheek, as examples of resisting the transmission of affect. To discern, a process which is necessary if we hope to resist affects, we must not project affects; we must be detached from all affects in order to attend to the negative affects at the moment they take hold of us. However, examining the course of affects takes attention. As long as we are living in the fantasy of self-containment and the ego is involved, the attention required for discernment is impossible to achieve. Brennan stresses that the detachment from affects required for discernment is different from the detachment from others experienced by the self-contained individual. The detachment necessary for discernment allows us to resist the transmission of affect—to evaluate our inner states and the origin of affects without being consumed by them (Brennan, 2004).

In order for Dolores to practice discernment, she would need to acknowledge her fear and frustration without projecting them onto her students. This would require her to accept that she and her students are not separate—just as they share the air they breathe; they share and mutually construct an affective climate. Dolores also would give her
students the benefit of the doubt rather than attributing the worst intentions to their actions. Dolores' concern for herself at the expense of others indicates that her ego was controlling her judgments about herself, her students, and the affective space they share.

One of the most interesting aspects of Brennan's theory is her examination of the transmission of affect in groups. She suggests that the emotions of two people "are not the same as the emotions of one plus one" (Brennan, 2004, p. 51). She contends that affects are compounded by interpersonal interactions; however, they can be inhibited by "codes of restraint" (p. 51). Brennan critiques group psychology's emphasis on individual rationality (which she ties to the foundational fantasy of self-containment) and its contention that cognition, not emotion, determines agency. She leans on the work of Wilfred Bion, a psychoanalyst known for his work in group dynamics, who asserted that groups are bound together by work tasks and affective ties. Although Bion contends that either of these modes could dominate in a group at any given time, when negative affects take over (e.g. anxiety, fear, hate), communication that was previously effective becomes ineffective (Brennan, 2004).

In her articulation of the transmission of affect in groups, Brennan (2004) acknowledges that group members often carry "affective refuse" (p. 67) with them into group encounters, creating hooks or "attractors" (p. 68) that render some members more susceptible to the transmission of affect than others. Attractors, however, are not necessary for affect to spread among group members—affect can "override an individual's personal affective response" (p. 68), although for some more than others. To better understand the transmission of affect in groups, Brennan looks to neuroscience and
the study of entrainment: a form of transmission "whereby one person's or one group's nervous and hormonal systems are brought into alignment with another's" (p. 9).

Entrainment, or the contagion of emotions, is an often overlooked aspect of Goleman's (1995) work on emotional intelligence that provides insight into how emotions are transmitted between individuals. Both Brennan (2004) and Goleman assert that emotions are transferred subtly through visual and auditory cues—body movements, gestures, and tones of voice. However, while Goleman focuses exclusively on behavioral entrainment, Brennan focuses on chemical entrainment. In behavioral entrainment visual and auditory cues evoke a form of synchrony or mimesis, whereas in chemical entrainment olfactory (as well as visual and auditory) cues create a change in hormones (Brennan, 2004). A common example of chemical entrainment is pheromones—hormones that are created internally and emitted externally by one person and transmitted through the unconscious sense of smell to members of the same species, causing a change in the others' hormones which leads to changes in affective dispositions (Brennan, 2004). Pheromones are transmitted through the air, demonstrating that members of the same species are physiologically connected to each other as we literally breathe in the other.

Recent scholarship in neuroscience has also found that nervous entrainment—the affect of one nervous system on another—can be activated by smell, sound, and vision (Brennan, 2004). Smell, sound, and vision are all forms of vibrations, albeit different frequencies, which are most often unconscious. Of significance, however, is that sound and vision can be used consciously. Melodic rhythms have been found to create a sense of well-being and tend to unite people, whereas dissonant sounds tend to separate. The
same is true for visual images. All forms of entrainment are "social in origin but physical in their effects" (Brennan, 2004, p. 71). Therefore, in Dolores' classroom, her agitated demeanor and harsh tone of voice were likely a source of chemical and rhythmic entrainment that literally changed the physiology and affective dispositions of her students.

Looking back, Dolores' use of preemptive strikes primed the class for affective battle and her emotional projections created a cycle of reactions between her and her students that was detrimental to the classroom climate in general and individuals in particular. Seen from this light, Dolores' aggressive behavior is just the tip of the iceberg—what can be observed and articulated is only one small aspect of an invisible dynamic constituting the classroom climate or "micro-ecosystem" (Duncan-Andrade, 2009, p. 190). Duncan-Andrade reminds us that micro-ecosystems are based on a principle of interdependency wherein "both pain and healing are transferable from person to person" (p. 190). Brennan (2004) offers us a scientific explanation for the classroom phenomenon educators like Duncan-Andrade recognize but heretofore have been unable to explain: teachers may be unable control the emotional toxins students are exposed to outside the classroom, but they can control how they react to those toxins inside the classroom. Through emotional discernment, Brennan offers teachers like Dolores the potential to change.

Brennan (2004) argues that many in the scientific community resist her hypothesis because of the foundational fantasy of self-containment and the view that individuals are rational agents. I contend that regardless of one's willingness to embrace
the transmission of affect as Brennan has theorized it, it is difficult to ignore the ways in which auditory, olfactory, and visual images affect individuals, and the ways in which one individual affects others.

**The Implications of Emotion on Power, Agency, and Social Justice in the Classroom**

Dolores' approach to classroom management and the conflicts she experienced in her tenth grade classroom provide a portal for understanding the role emotions play in the teaching and learning process. While Dolores' interviews revealed a teacher who takes her responsibilities seriously and is struggling to "do a good job," her classroom practices illuminated the ways in which a teacher's moment-by-moment thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are often at odds with her educational goals. Dolores claimed she wanted an open classroom climate; however, her actions rarely demonstrated that commitment and often undermined it. Her intolerance for chaos in the classroom—founded on a belief that it is an unwelcome deterrent to teaching and learning—translated into a drive for control. Ironically, Dolores' efforts to control her students invited chaos, exposing the classroom as a critical battleground for power, agency, and social justice.

While many scholars of classroom management advocate order over chaos, others contend that chaos in the classroom is not only useful, but one of the unexpected pleasures of teaching (Bleakley, 1999; Cvetek, 2008; Edgoose, 2010). Leaning on the work of Hannah Arendt, Edgoose (2010) suggests that to expect classrooms to function in a controlled fashion denies "the plurality of agents" (Arendt, 1958, p. 220) and the unpredictability of human interaction. As Dolores demonstrated, human unpredictability can cause a great deal of frustration, but for Arendt, this frustration is a small price to pay
for the unlimited potential unpredictability fosters. Constable (2010) similarly argues that chaos is a "dynamic disorder" that "disrupts a fascist order" (p. 140) thereby creating a "condition of possibility" (p. 151).

Dolores' frequent statements about the importance of balancing emotions revealed her desire to resolve the tensions circulating in her classroom. Her statements also exposed her support (whether conscious or unconscious) for the Cartesian tradition that views emotion and cognition as separate processes, and advocates for the control of emotions in educational contexts (Boler, 1999; Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Chubbuck & Zembylas, 2008; Zembylas, 2005). Despite evidence that emotion and cognition are interdependent processes (Damasio, 1994), they have been set in opposition in much the same way that chaos has been set in opposition to order (Lutz, 1986). Interestingly, western cultural assumptions that emotions are irrational have led to its association with chaos; just as assumptions surrounding the rationality of thought have led to its association with order (Lutz, 1986). Recognizing the powerful legacy of Cartesianism that undergirds educational traditions helps us understand the genesis of Dolores' philosophies about classroom management. However, her inability to control not only her students' emotions but her own point to the fruitlessness of the rationalist approach. Each of these culturally constituted binaries—emotion/cognition and chaos/order—is deeply embedded in instructional traditions, as evidenced by the vast literature on classroom management, emotional intelligence, and emotional regulation.

Another binary influenced by Cartesian thought is the belief that the mind and body are separate, and from this emerges a belief in the "self-constituting individual"
(Bowers & Flinders, 1990, p. 243) who is "a rational being, autonomous from all outside influences" (Bowers & Flinders, 1990, p. 92). Brennan (2004) refers to this as the fantasy of self-containment and she is not alone in her rejection of the illusion of separateness. As Shotter and Gergen (1989) argue, the belief that we are "self-contained, self-controlled individuals, owing nothing to others for our nature" (p. x) is a function of discursive power. Rose (1996) contends that the way we make sense of ourselves as individuals is based on our socialization into historical and cultural meaning-making processes that view human beings as "stable, unified, totalized, individualized, internalized" (p. 169). This perspective aligns with Dolores' need to maintain balance in her classroom and her belief that she is capable of doing so without involving her students in the process.

Understanding that the connection between and among teachers and students extends beneath the surface of their institutional and discursive constructions is a radical departure from existing literature on educational relationships. Rose (1996) argues that bodies are not merely bodies, but assemblages or relationships not delineated by the envelope of the skin, but link up the 'outside' and 'inside' . . . [and] that 'materialist' appeals to corporeality as the 'material' upon which culture works are not very good to think with. (pp. 184-185)

Although Rose agrees that individual subjects are discursively constituted, he asserts that we are constituted beneath the level of the flesh. Rose, like Butler (1993/2011), is concerned with how forces of power inscribe the body and constrain action, as well as how such forces influence particular relations to oneself.
Rose (1996) acknowledges that human beings "are acted upon" as though we were certain kinds of individualized selves (based on status, race, gender, age, etc.) and looks to Deleuze and Guattari (1987) who contend that human beings are "relations of movement and rest between molecules or particles, capacities to affect and be affected" (p. 261). Rose asserts that human beings do not think of ourselves as movements because we have been formed as subjects, ignoring the assemblages through which we are constituted into individual forms (p. 171). In Dolores' classroom, we can see how she acted upon her students as certain kinds of individuals based on judgments she made about them (e.g., "they are mean," "obnoxious," "whiners," "complainers," etc.). Dolores appeared unaware that her judgments were shaped by the educational institution and its favoring of hierarchical teacher-student relationships, both of which ignore the ways in which she was part of each of her students and each of her students were part of her. In this light, the tensions Dolores was fighting to bring into balance (tensions over control, emotional expression, and power) were merely molecules moving in, through, between, and among herself and her students.

In Dolores' classroom, we come to understand "what humans are enabled to do through the forms into which they are machinated or composed" (Rose, 1996, p. 182). What Rose considers human capabilities (or Massumi calls potentialities) are constantly changing depending upon the assemblages of people, places, and events. Rose asserts that

the questions to be addressed concern not 'the constitution of the self' but the linkages established between the human and other humans, objects, forces, procedures, the connections and flows made possible, the becomings and capacities engendered, the possibilities thus foreclosed, the machinic connections
formed that produce and channel the relations humans establish with themselves, the assemblages of which they form elements, relays, resources, or forces. (p. 182)

Rose reminds us that Dolores and her students constitute and constrain one another, and Brennan tells us how. Through an understanding of the transmission of affect, it is clear to see how each member of Dolores' class is trapped in a vicious cycle of negative affect. Like members of a family who pass a cold back and forth, Dolores and her students regularly transmit negative affects onto and into one another.

Humans are capable of change, but only if we change our assemblages—the links between ourselves and our environment (Rose, 1996). In other words, we need to change the way we interact. Brennan's (2004) theory on the transmission of affect confirms that changing the words we use, our tones of voice, and our gestures are a good place to start because they draw us into the process of entrainment. However, to escape the prison of negative affect we must learn to discern—to pay attention to emotions as they take hold of us and refuse to project them onto others. At the heart of emotional discernment is love—a willingness to see others in a positive light and to give them our living attention without self-interest (Brennan, 2004).

Rose does not dispute the materiality of the body, the embodied nature of being, or the ways in which bodies are "governed by regulatory norms" (Butler, 1993/2011, p. xxiv). Rather, he raises questions about the value of thinking of bodily surfaces as the principal sphere of subjectification and offers an entry point into understanding the ways in which human beings constitute one another from the inside out.
Dolores' conception of power is that it can be shared; however, she sees sharing power with her tenth grade students as tantamount to losing control. During an interview she told me:

My tenth graders—it's tough. Because um I don't necessarily want all the power. I want to give up that power and I want them um to share in power. And I think there's a lot of times that's happening, power sharing is happening, but there's other times when I have to rip it back because I feel like that it's not in control. . . . And it's it's a really tough balancing act for me in that class, very tough, because they very easily abuse the power, very easily.

As this passage illustrates, Dolores viewed power in the classroom as a type of tug of war. Implicit in this metaphor is that there are two opposing teams vying for control, rather than a teacher and students—interdependent human beings—working together to share power in ways that are empowering for everyone.

Foucault's (1978) conceptualization of power as a strategic relation provides insight into Dolores' understanding of power as a struggle between opposing forces that are both seeking domination. His recognition that power and resistance are always coextensive is important because it reminds us that resistance is a form of power (i.e., it too seeks to control). We can see this when Dolores and Sam both try to silence the other by saying "I don't want to hear your voice." Allen (2008) rejects Foucault's assumption that power is always exercised in strategic ways. She problematizes Foucault's insistence that individuals are always created and constrained by power and the way this conceptualization of power forecloses individual agency. Allen's (1999) conception of power, which builds on the work of Foucault, Butler, and Arendt, recognizes that domination, empowerment, and solidarity can coexist. Defining power as "the ability or capacity of an actor or set of actors to act" (p. 127), Allen conceptualizes it as taking
three separate but interrelated forms: *power-over* (the potential to constrain the choices of others), *power-to* (the capacity to act or resist), and *power-with* (the ability to act together with others).

In Dolores' classroom, she has *power-over* her students by virtue of her institutional authority. She constrains students' choices when she decides what and how learning will occur, what counts as student misbehavior, and the disciplinary measures she will take. Her students—although incapable of constraining Dolores' choices due to their subordinate position in the classroom—have the *power-to* either comply with Dolores or to resist her. Contrary to Foucault's (1980) assertion that we are always constrained by power relations, Allen's (1999) conceptualization of *power-to* demonstrates how members of subordinated groups retain the *power-to* act. As Allen makes clear, the *power-to* act may include: 1) acts of voluntary submission to dominance (for example, when students answered the warm-up questions in their journals or when Danyelle apologized to Dolores for snickering); 2) acts of resistance to dominance (for example, when students talked back to Dolores or talked to their peers after Dolores instructed them to be quiet); or 3) acts aimed at dominating another. For example, one day Dolores was walking around the room looking over students' shoulders and talking with them about their business plans. As she passed Juan, he called out to her: "You need to start grading this. You're a bad teacher for not grading us in a timely fashion." In this instance, Juan was exercising his *power-to* act in a way that could be considered an act of dominance rather than an act of resistance.
It would be easy to view Juan's demonstration of power as a positive act in light of Dolores' frequent aggression. However, in light of our understanding about the fantasy of self-containment and the way emotions foreclose potential, we know that Juan's negative judgment about Dolores not only foreclosed his potential in that moment, it likely was transmitted to his peers, foreclosing their potential as well. We know from Emilio's comment during the focus group that these particular students felt a heightened sense of solidarity to "stick together" especially when they did not like something. These students identified and united with one another, however, it is unlikely that they realized they were united in physiological ways that caused them to feel one another's pain in moments of stress.

The disciplinary approach to classroom management Dolores favored involved the use of punitive measures to deal with misbehaving students (Burroughs, 2007)—a retroactive approach to classroom management that Allen (1999) would describe as power-over. If Dolores were to embrace a collaborative approach, she would jettison preemptive strikes and punitive measures (such as removing students from class) that interfere with her students' potential to learn. Encouraging each member of the classroom community to work together to create a positive learning environment is an example of power-with, which Allen describes as "a collective ability that results from the receptivity and reciprocity that characterize the relations among individual members of the collectivity" (p. 126). Allen makes an important point regarding power-with: in order for a group to exercise power-with each member of the group must exercise power-to.
Looking at power through the lens of Brennan's theory of affect, teachers who recognize that self-containment is a fantasy would also recognize that power-with is the only true form of power they can exercise. Brennan would not dispute the existence of discursive or structural power—after all, these are material manifestations of the ego—however, she would likely point out that to exert power-over another is to exert power-over oneself. That is to say, in Dolores' drive to exert power-over Sam by controlling his behavior in class ("I don't want to hear your voice"), the negative affect she projected onto him came right back at her ("I don't want to hear yours").

Massumi's (2002) and Brennan's (2004) theories of affect highlight the complexity of agency and social justice in the classroom. On the surface, it would appear that teachers and students are at the mercy of affects, which constrains their agency. Although Massumi tells us that judgments are experienced as thoughts and emotions which foreclose potential, Brennan asserts that we can learn to discern emotions (i.e., recognize and reflect on affects rather than reacting to them). For Massumi, agency is understood as a choice to judge or not to judge—to foreclose or foster individual potential. For Brennan, agency is what happens at the moment of discernment when we decide to resist projecting affects; a decision which can have a significant impact on others. For Massumi, potential (and agency) are captured and released at the moment of judgment. However, as Brennan asserts, by recognizing emotion when it takes hold (after judgment) we can actually help foster others' potential.

For Brennan, discerning emotions is very different from regulating emotions. Unlike emotional regulation, discernment does not deny emotions or manipulate the
expression of them to achieve a desired end. Rather, through discernment we remove ourselves from the transmission of affect so as not to interfere with other people's potential. Only when teachers learn to resist affects can they become agents who are not controlled by emotions.

I have come to view Dolores' negative judgments about her students and their behavior as a form of injustice. Duncan-Andrade (2007) asserts that social justice pedagogy is "a set of teaching practices that aim to create equitable social and academic outcomes for students in urban schools" (p. 618). Although it could be argued that—through her carefully constructed lesson plans—Dolores endeavored to provide her tenth grade students with a solid education in Cross-Cultural Communication and economics, her aggressive classroom management style created an affective climate that negatively impacted her students' potential to learn. As Gale and Densmore (2000) contend, "the various ways in which systems and teachers deal with students can be just as much an affront to the socially just provision of education" (p. 9) as curriculum and pedagogy. Dolores' negative judgments likely reflect traditional power discourses about teachers and students, the process of teaching and learning, authority, and classroom management. However, these dominant discourses do not have to constrain her. Rather than fighting her students, Dolores and other urban educators can fight against educational traditions and norms that perpetuate inequity.

Massumi (2002) and Brennan (2004) offer a way out of the dualisms that, through a teacher's unconscious acceptance, perpetuate injustice. Dolores' classroom offers us a living, breathing example of how a teacher's negative affect can foreclose her students'
potential to learn. It is easy to imagine the fertile climate for growth that positive affect
could create. Through Massumi and Brennan we garner hope for new ways of
understanding power, agency, and social justice in urban classrooms. They offer an
explanation of what is going on beneath "the envelope of the skin" (Rose, 1996, p. 185).
To practice emotional discernment, as Brennan suggests, teachers need to become
reflexive about their pedagogies—what is (and is not) working, how they are implicated
in it, how they can improve it, and then take action. Most importantly, they must realize
that separateness is an illusion—bodies and minds are one, thoughts and emotions are
one, teachers and students are one.
Chapter Four

"Can I Kick It?": Relationality and Student Learning

My sixth grade teacher, Sister Albina, was a member of the Carmelite Sisters of Charity; however, she was anything but charitable. She, like most of the other nuns who taught at the parish school I attended, was a teacher by default—a vocation imposed on her by a religious order rather than a love of children or education. Yards of musty black cloth concealed everything but her pale face and hands, eliciting a noxious blend of fear and reverence in my sixth grade self.

I still recall countless mornings, my little blonde head hung solemnly over a bowl of soggy cornflakes, as I begged my mother to let me stay home. At that tender time in my life, school was not enjoyable; learning was not fun. The mysterious lady in black rarely cracked a smile or said a kind word to me. She called me by my family name, never used my given, and found fault in almost everything I did. I learned to lay low in class—keeping my eyes fixed on my desk or buried deep in a book—avoiding the disapproving gaze of the mean one who kept careful watch over me and my fellow sixth grade sinners.
My success in sixth grade was mostly a matter of mimesis: it depended upon how well I could reproduce what I had been taught. I discovered early on that questions were often interpreted as defiance and that these transgressions were punishable by any number of public humiliations. So I opened my eyes and my ears, closed my vulnerable heart, and made it through sixth grade with my little kid spirit dampened from far too many defeats.

With the exception of kindergarten, the classrooms of my youth were mostly disorienting, often terrifying, spaces. It was in the courtyard and classrooms of my high school that I discovered a love for learning and recognized the potential of schools to be places of revelation and transformation. So when I discovered that the International Magnet School of Denver served students in grades six through twelve, I resolved to restrict my study to the higher grades. However, due to scheduling conflicts and the limited number of high school teachers who were willing to open their classrooms to the gaze of another, I apprehensively agreed to observe a sixth grade Cultural Studies class taught by Joaquin Reyes.

Initially I wondered whether I could sit through an entire year of sixth grade—again. The painful memories of my own sixth grade experience, however, quickly gave way to happier recollections of strong friendships fashioned from shared interests, swapped lunches, secret crushes, and a growing understanding of what it meant to be a child in a world run by adults. As I reflected on the complexity and significance of preadolescence, I grew excited to meet Joaquin and his sixth grade students.
Although we had one brief telephone conversation and exchanged a few emails over the summer, Joaquin and I did not meet face to face prior to my first day of observation. I heard from my advisor that Joaquin was an outstanding teacher, but I was completely unprepared for his quietly dynamic and captivating presence, and the youthful exuberance of his sixth grade students. Joaquin's 31 students represented one-quarter of the incoming students new to IMSD that year, each of whom had made it through a rigorous selection process that rejected two students for every one accepted.

The school's commitment to diversity was evident in Joaquin's first year cohort. Recognizing that diversity means many things, the administration's selection process starts with an applicant's expressed interest in one of five world languages (Chinese, French, Italian, Japanese, or Spanish). Other factors are then considered, such as ethnicity, socioeconomic status, academic performance, and personal references. The school's administration rejects a shallow definition of diversity and, as the principal informed me, they "do not cherry pick top students." IMSD is interested in what KnowledgeWorks (2008) refers to as "deep diversity." They seek to bring together students from neighborhoods near and far; representing different levels and definitions of affluence; disparate knowledge, skills, and talents; various religious beliefs and points of view; unique family and community experiences; and individual motivations for learning world languages and pursuing international studies.

Joaquin's sixth grade Cultural Studies course provides incoming sixth graders with an important introduction to the school's special emphasis on international studies. As part of the specialized foundations curriculum at IMSD, Joaquin's course falls outside
the state and district requirements for student achievement. As long as his course meets
the school's mission for intercultural competency and community, Joaquin is free to
customize his curriculum and pedagogy.

A significant focus of Joaquin's sixth grade Cultural Studies class was on the
Universals of Culture—artifacts, behaviors, and institutions that are present in every
culture. Joaquin's objectives were for students to learn how to analyze various cultures
using these universals. Unlike traditional content-driven social studies courses, Joaquin's
class focused on the Universals of Culture as an analytical lens for understanding and
comparing different cultures. The Universals of Culture form the foundation for the work
students will engage in throughout their tenure at IMSD. Human rights and social justice
issues—such as child soldiers in Africa and women's oppression in Afghanistan—were
important elements of Joaquin's pedagogy designed to develop students' cultural
awareness through abstract thinking and analytical skills. Joaquin admitted that although
he was passionate about these issues, the student culture at IMSD has shaped the focus of
his class. Since most IMSD high school students are concerned about social justice
issues, Joaquin tried to introduce these topics into the conversation and assignments with
his middle school students despite his recognition that it is often difficult getting sixth
graders who are concrete thinkers to reflect on the more abstract issues of privilege and
inequality.

From my first day of observation through the last, Joaquin's classroom percolated
with positive energy. At first I attributed this vitality to Joaquin's commitment to
inclusivity, for despite the dissimilitude among students they appeared to accept and
embrace one another without question or conflict. As the year progressed, I began to focus exclusively on the ineffable quality that made Joaquin's classroom such a joy for me to visit. I frequently found myself reflecting on my own educational experiences as both a student and a teacher, remembering with great sadness and regret that sixth grade was anything but joyful for me. Although the initial purpose of my study was to better understand how the communication between teachers and students fosters or forecloses students' potential to learn, I quickly realized there was something more going on here that was responsible for this invigorating learning environment.

The portrait that follows is a modest rendering of a culturally relevant teacher and his students. While this representation is no more than a snapshot of events I observed while in the field, my hope is that it captures the "embodied and embedded" (Benhabib, 1992, p. 6) texture and tone of the classroom space, the unique individuals who inhabited it, and the impact their relationships had on student learning. The daily goings-on in Joaquin's classroom may appear, upon first reading, rather ordinary and mundane; however, I challenge you to read beneath the words and actions, to look beyond the what of classroom life to the how.

In this chapter, I examine Joaquin's commitment to relationality as an integral part of the learning process. Although relationships between students and teachers are both understudied and undervalued in the U.S. (Bibby, 2009), this interpretation and evaluation of Joaquin's class demonstrates that caring and mutually empowering relationships are the most direct (although not the easiest) route to student engagement and learning. By emphasizing critical reflection and dialogue, Joaquin establishes a
classroom culture of communication and relationality that are unique even in an alternative magnet school like IMSD. I pay particular attention to Joaquin's classroom rituals—those moments of classroom life that stimulate the social, emotional, and playful natures of teachers and students. I follow up with an examination of Joaquin's unique relational approach to teaching and learning and what it can teach us about issues of power, agency, and social justice in the classroom.

A Portrait of a Sixth Grade Cultural Studies Classroom

It is 7:59 A.M. on a warm September morning when I first meet Joaquin Reyes and his spirited sixth graders. After walking the first-floor hallway for some time looking for Room 123, I finally find Joaquin standing inside the back door to his classroom welcoming his students to their first class of the day. It is a Friday and school has been in session for only six short weeks. The sixth-graders, new to the school this year, enthusiastically greet their teacher and each other.

Room 123 is a large, lively space with a wall of windows facing the Rocky Mountains. Although the majestic mountain view is obscured by a row of modest houses lining the street across from the school, the early light and crisp morning air nevertheless find their way into the classroom through a few open windows. Opposite the windows are two doors separated by a wall of honey-colored cabinetry with deep shelves overflowing with well-worn books and stacks of colorful paper. On the front and back walls are white boards, flanked by posters of Malcolm X and John Coltrane, and whimsical student drawings of what appear to be family crests or coats of arm. A dozen
sizeable tables are temporarily abandoned along the perimeter of the room framing a
large circle of chairs. Within the circle is one round table.

A slender girl with ivory skin and disheveled shoulder-length hair catches my eye
as she takes a seat near the wall of windows and balances a bright pink pencil bag on top
of her head. She sits up straight and tall, seemingly oblivious to the commotion of bodies
scurrying around her as they scramble to locate seats. An overhead projector at the front
of the room illuminates the first prompt of the day:

Welcome to the Boogie Down!

Today is Friday, September 25

Please get your journal and a pen/pencil.

Thank you!

Joaquin, a ruggedly handsome thirty-something Latino, looks like he would be
more comfortable on a soccer field than in a sixth grade classroom. His closely shaven
face and head, and his muscular frame barely visible beneath an oversized Mexican
futbol jersey, reveal a man who is both athletic and proud of his heritage. After all his
students have arrived, Joaquin makes his way to the middle of the classroom and in a
kind but gravelly voice he reminds students to grab their journals. A significant number
of students, many of whom were already seated, stand up and make their way to the back
of the room. They cluster around a table and most wait quietly as, one by one, they dig
through a blue plastic milk crate until each has retrieved their journals. The few students
who remain seated appear to have anticipated their teacher's request by grabbing their
journals on the way in the door.
It takes less than five minutes before all 31 students are back in their seats. The soft sound of children's voices can be heard as students talk animatedly with their neighbors. I allow my gaze to scan the circle and I am instantly enchanted by the brilliant constellation of students. A radiant range of skin tones, hair colors, bright eyes, and vibrant colored t-shirts enliven the space. I count 19 females and 12 males. The majority of students appear to be Latina/o; however, I remind myself that looks can be deceiving. As I glance from one student to the next, I am surprised by the dramatic range of differences in physical development between and among the female and male students. Some students display the unsophisticated markers of childhood—bad haircuts, elbow scrapes, and unadorned cotton t-shirts—while others exhibit signs of puberty in all its splendor—carefully coifed hair, perfectly manicured nails, and trendy teenage fashion and jewelry.

In a distinctly masculine yet melodious tone Joaquin calls out, "Can I kick it?"

Talking ceases immediately as students straighten up in their chairs and respond with unbounded delight: "Yes, you can!"

"We have Tribal Council today, but before we do that there were two interesting speakers here this week and I want you to write a paragraph in your journal on which one most resonated with you. Ten minutes. No talking."

Instantly, excited but hushed voices are heard around the circle. Ignoring the low rumble, Joaquin walks to the back of the room and writes the names of the two speakers on the white board. From the circle the sound of an anonymous student is heard saying
"shhh" and without turning away from the white board Joaquin responds matter-of-factly, "That's my job."

The students are soon quiet and, balancing their journals on their laps, they work intently on their writing assignment. The only sounds in the room are the shuffling of paper and pre-teen feet. Ten short minutes later, a buzzer goes off. Joaquin, now seated at his desk in the front of the room, stands up and says, "Alrighty. Where are my magic cards?" He rummages around his overcrowded desk, locates a stack of index cards, flips through them, and while walking to the middle of the room, reads the names of eight students and tells them to take their places in the inner circle. Without hesitation, all eight students stand up and make their way to the round table at the center of the room. Before joining the students at the table, Joaquin announces: "Keep in mind that those in the outer circle, your job is just to listen. If you don't pay attention, you can lose points."

Joaquin then turns his undivided attention to the eight students seated at the table. He picks up a timer and says, "We'll go for 13 minutes on each conversation. The clock is ticking, so anyone who wants to introduce the topic can begin." As Joaquin takes a seat, Stephano, a Latino boy with a slight build and a serious face, picks up a sheet of paper from the table and quietly reads a question related to an essay about a Peace Corp volunteer: "Why did John find the situation humorous?" The students at the table hang back for some time before Lucas, a genial Latino wearing a perpetual smile, jumps in and says, "The guy had an old camera that took better pictures than the passport photo."

Less than five minutes have passed and the students seated in the outside circle are getting restless. Two boys, a tall Black male named James and a Latino male named
Felix, are playing tug-a-war with a pen. Leonardo, an animated and energetic Latino, pretends to steal a bagged lunch from his White friend, Alex. The boys look one another in the eyes and quietly chuckle.

I return my attention back to Tribal Council just as Joaquin asks which one of the students would like to read the next question. Perla, a fashionably dressed Latina wearing black jeans and a deep purple t-shirt reads: "What did you learn from the situation?"

Without hesitation, Alida, a quietly composed Latina with deep brown eyes and curly dark hair responds, "You don't need fancy stuff to make things."

Lucas adds, "Everything advanced is not necessarily better."

Joaquin suggests that students move on to the next question. Monica, a Latina student in a powder blue hoodie asks the group, "How long do you think you could go without technology?"

After a long pause, Perla states, "I probably couldn't go more than a day without my IPod or phone."

Rihanna, a Black female with bright eyes adds, "A couple of days without TV, longer without a computer."

Lucas smiles at the girl and playfully interjects, "You can watch TV on the computer!"

Joaquin looks at another Latino who hasn't said a word, "How about you Carlos?" Carlos responds, "It would be boring without a phone or IPod."
Just as the buzzer goes off, Jon, a tall pale-skinned boy with light brown hair and wire-rimmed glasses adds: "I think I could go a long time because I don't watch much TV."

Joaquin stands up and says to the entire class, "Let's give Tribal Council a round of applause." The students in the outside circle look up and clap.

Joaquin picks up his magic cards again and calls the names of eight new students. As the new students stand up and make their way to the Tribal Council table, the first round of students locate vacant seats in the outer circle. This continues for another 40 minutes until every student has participated in a Tribal Council conversation. At the conclusion of each round, Joaquin calls out to the class, "Let's give Tribal Council a round of applause." When the buzzer goes off for the last time, there are three minutes remaining in the 90-minute session. Many of the students are already standing while others are stuffing books and pencils into their backpacks. Joaquin stands in the center of the classroom and calls out, "Can I kick it?" The teacher's question momentarily stops the action and then, without missing a beat, the students turn toward him and answer in unison: "Yes, you can!" Joaquin wishes the kids a good weekend as they head for the door, dropping their journals in the blue plastic crate on their way out.

I return to Room 123 most Fridays for the remainder of the academic year. On my second visit, which is week seven of the academic year, Joaquin reminds his students to pick up their journals before taking their seats. The chairs are no longer arranged in a circle. Now the tables are scattered throughout the room with three or four students assigned to each. As before, the overhead welcomes students to the "Boogie Down" and
prompts them to get their journals and a pencil. Once students are settled in their seats, Joaquin changes the overhead to reflect their writing prompt:

Focus, October 2

Good morning!

Please review this week’s readings and writings. Then find an example of how they relate to the Universals of Culture.

You have fifteen minutes.

Thank you!

Most students open their journals and immediately begin writing. I notice that Alida is looking around the room. When her eyes make contact with mine, she smiles sweetly and opens her journal. Joaquin walks around the room looking over the children's shoulders, smiling, and quietly answering questions or commenting on something a student has written. Joaquin's smile is engaging and sincere and I think to myself that were it not for his infectious smile, his serious demeanor and hyper-masculine physique could intimidate these young kids.

I have taken a seat at the back of the room so as not to be in the way. Joaquin approaches me and I ask him about the Universals of Culture. He refers me to a poster near the door that lists the eight universals: Arts, Play and Recreation; Language and Nonverbal Communication; Social Organization; Social Control; Conflict and Warfare; Economic Organization; Education; and World View and Religion.

Joaquin's deep voice interrupts the quiet: "Everything we do in this class relates to the Universals of Culture. Review the readings and the things that you wrote. Go
through and figure out one thing that relates to one of the eight Universals of Culture. Choose just one. For example, for social control, Vlad the Impaler controlled his kingdom by killing people.” Joaquin pauses a moment before adding: "It should be about a paragraph, so five to six sentences."

A few minutes later a buzzer goes off and Joaquin says, "Okay, we'll let a few people share. Celina, what did you write?"

A petite Latina student with delicate facial features and a soft voice responds, "World religion. The story made us think past Dracula."

Joaquin gently pushes her. "How does that relate to world religions? What do they believe?"

Celina states confidently, "They believe in more mythical things."

Joaquin affirms her. "Yes. In Romania, they have a lot of mythical beliefs. Let's thank Celina. In unison, the students say, "Thank you Celina."

Joaquin calls on three more students before moving on to Tribal Council, asking students to thank each speaker for their contribution. After calling the first group to Tribal Council Joaquin reminds those not participating to listen. "A lot of you are great at sharing ideas, but not so good at listening. We need to work on that. Starting next week the outer circle will have a writing thing that I'll tell you about. Today just listen."

On week eight, I arrive at 8:01 a.m. Joaquin is collecting permission slips from students as they enter through the rear door to the classroom. As students enter the room they cluster around the blue bin, backpacks bumping as many hug one another and wait for their turn to dig for their journals. Journals in hand, students make their way to their
seats. As before, the overhead welcomes students to the "Boogie Down" and prompts them to get their journals and a pencil. Today, however, Joaquin does not verbally remind his students to pick up their journals. It appears that only eight weeks into the school year, a routine is firmly in place.

Once everyone is inside and seated, Joaquin calls out in his deep but soothing voice, "Can I kick it?" When only a few students respond, Joaquin repeats in a louder voice: "Can I kick it?" The students respond with a bit more energy, but Joaquin is still unsatisfied. "I will keep doing it until I have everyone's attention. CAN I KICK IT?" Alerted that they have failed to meet their teacher's expectations, the students make up for their previous poor performance with an exuberant, "YES, YOU CAN!!!"

Joaquin smiles and after a momentary pause, he asks, "What is a myth?"

A slender White female, Mimi, responds, "An imaginary story."

Joaquin adds that some are supernatural, and Alex interjects, "Another kind is just a fun story, like a fairy tale."

Joaquin asks his students, "Are myths and fairy tales the same?"

Leonardo responds confidently, "No. Fairy tales have fairies."

Joaquin presses. "Can myths involve people who really lived?"

Lucas answers, "Yes. Dracula."

"Who has heard the story of George Washington and the cherry tree?" Joaquin asks. Several arms shoot up into the air. "Who wants to tell the story?" Hands begin to wave with a sense of urgency and delight as a dozen students vie for their teacher's attention.
Joaquin calls on Jacob, a tall White male, who tells a quick version of the story. Joaquin listens intently to Jacob's rendition of the story and when the student finishes speaking Joaquin walks slowly to the overhead and changes it. He then states, "The story of King Arthur is the type of myth Mimi mentioned. It didn't really exist."

Joaquin directs the students' attention to the overhead.

Focus, October 9

Good morning!

Why is mythology important to a culture? What may we learn about a culture through its myths? Use examples to support your claims.

You have ten minutes.

Thank you!

As he sets his timer, Joaquin tells students they have ten minutes. He walks around the room asking if anyone else has a permission slip to turn in for the movie today. As he passes me, he tells me there is one objectionable scene that he will fast-forward through, and he did not want to create any problems for himself with parents.

The timer goes off and Joaquin tells students to take three minutes to talk to a neighbor about what they wrote. The delicate sound of young voices grows increasingly louder as students begin sharing their ideas with one another. Stephano raises his hand and asks Joaquin if he can get a drink of water, to which Joaquin pleasantly responds, "Yes."

"Can I kick it?" Joaquin calls out, to which his students reply in an uproarious "YES, YOU CAN!" Joaquin tells his students that King Arthur is a feature film and that the cool thing about a feature film is that it has good special effects. "The bad thing is
they don't stop in the middle of a battle scene." In a moment of exuberant animation, Joaquin grabs an imaginary sword and swings it, slicing the air. The children burst into smiles and giggles. He continues, "I'm going to help you with background and connect to the Universals of Culture."

Joaquin changes the overhead to a slide entitled "Social Organization" that lists the ethnic groups in Britannia. "Some groups are voluntary," Joaquin says as he quickly scans the room. He says, "I see the soccer players seated together," referring to a group of male students who wave proudly to their peers, "and even softball players," to which several girls giggle. Joaquin continues, "Sometimes people of the same nationality hang together with people like them. Nothing's wrong with that." Joaquin smiles broadly before adding, "I see some guilty faces! I grew up in Five Points with African-American and Mexican people, so most of my friends reflect that."

Next Joaquin puts up a slide entitled "Social Control" that lists the different forms of power in Britannia. He says, "Social control is another theme. You will want to see who has power and how they exert it." After a brief pause, Joaquin asks, "Do I have power?"

Several students respond "Yes."

"How do I have power?" Joaquin asks.

A few students respond, "You're a teacher."

An appreciative smile spreads across Joaquin's face and he says, "You've all been raised to respect teachers, I can tell." After a brief pause, Joaquin asks, "How does the Roman Empire get its power?"
James, the only Black male in the class responds, "They're big."

A White male named Noah adds, "Their the strongest army in the world."

As Joaquin changes the overhead to a slide entitled "Conflict and Warfare," he states, "One thing you may not like about this film is there are a lot of battle scenes. I'm sure everyone in this room has been in a conflict with friends, siblings, someone you don't like, or your parents. I want you to look at why these people are in conflict."

Joaquin changes the overhead one more time. The last slide lists all the main characters in the movie. Joaquin mentions that the last two characters on the list are bad guys and that they are both Saxons. Several students boo loudly and Joaquin says with a grin, "Let's not boo the Saxons. There are probably descendents in this room!"

Joaquin then states, "We've never watched movies in this class. I think they are a great teaching and learning tool. I'll pause occasionally to explain something or to do a quick write. It will probably take three days to get through it."

Jacob inquires, "How many quick writes will we do?"

"Two or three per day. It will help you hold your thinking."

A Latino student named Jaime asks if he can close the door and a White male named Izsak asks if he can close the blinds. Joaquin nods yes and says enthusiastically, "I'm so happy! When I first started teaching there was only one TV in the whole school that I had to wheel to my room. We truly have a Boogie Down theatre! You can sit wherever you want, but I reserve the right as teacher man to move you to protect your learning experience."
The excitement in the room grows in intensity. Students chat with their neighbors as they unpack sodas, candy, and bags of popcorn and chips from their backpacks and settle into their seats. Joaquin starts the film and the students cheer wildly.

Leonardo calls out, "Can you play it in Spanish?"

Joaquin nods and responds, "I'll put on subtitles. Okay, nice and quiet."
The students are enraptured; their full attention is directed toward the movie screen. About fifteen minutes into the film, Joaquin pauses it and puts up an overhead slide labeled "Quick Write #1" with four different questions on it. Joaquin tells students to select one question to answer and to "Write, write, write!" The room is quiet; the only sound is that of pens scratching their way across paper.

"Remember, it's a sprint not a marathon. Even if you think you are out of ideas, come up with some anyway."

The smell of buttered popcorn permeates the room. A timer goes off and Joaquin instructs his students to take three minutes to talk to their neighbors. Immediately conversations ensue. I can tell from the lilt and volume of their voices that the students are excited. After two more sessions of watching the film and writing in their journals, it is time for class to end. The room is abuzz with activity as students clear their desks and talk with neighbors about the movie. "Can I kick it?" Joaquin asks to a lukewarm response. Louder this time, he repeats: "Can I kick it?"

The students stop what they are doing and direct their attention to their teacher, and reply, "YES YOU CAN!" Joaquin's warm smile indicates to me that he is pleased.
He tells his students to have a wonderful weekend as they grab their trash and backpacks and head for the door.

By week ten, the weather has changed. A thin layer of frost covers the lawn outside the school. Students have traded in their shorts and tank tops for long pants and shoes with socks. I arrive at 8:02 a.m. and class is already under way. Joaquin is standing at the front of the room explaining the writing prompt when something causes him to change directions. "If another person asks if they are changing seats ..." his voice trails off, but then he continues, "I've only had 180 minutes of planning and my priority is developing lesson plans that are interesting and important. Seating arrangements are not as important."

The students become quiet and then Mimi breaks the silence: "Some people weren't here when you talked about seating changes earlier this week."

Joaquin apologizes: "I'm sorry if I sounded snippy, but several people have asked me about it today." Joaquin looks repentant as he turns on the overhead and students get to work writing in their journals.

Focus, November 6

Good morning!

Please review your homework.

In your opinion, was the person who designed the building you chose more interested in its use or its appearance? Or was it both?

Please explain in at least six sentences.

You have ten minutes.
Thank you!

I hear jazz music playing softly in the background as students begin writing. Occasionally, a student gets up to sharpen his or her pencil. After only five minutes, Jon puts his pen down and removes a large hardcover book from his backpack and begins reading.

When the buzzer goes off, Joaquin tells students to take a few minutes to talk with their neighbors about what they wrote. Immediately students begin talking to one another. I notice Rihanna and Alida are seated together but not speaking and I wonder why. The buzzer goes off three minutes later and Joaquin asks, "Can I kick it?" The response is weak. Joaquin asks again, "CAN I KICK IT?" The response is louder, but still not strong: "Yes, you can." Joaquin responds with a hint of doubt in his voice, "I don't feel like I can kick it!" This time the students respond energetically, "YES YOU CAN!"

Joaquin shows students a series of buildings on the overhead and asks them to silently write in their journals whether they think each building was designed for beauty or function. As Joaquin changes each overhead, there are audible gasps and sounds of excitement as he shows them the flame-like structures of the Dubai Towers, Frank Lloyd Wright's "Fallingwater" residence in Pennsylvania, and Antoni Gaudi's cathedral in Barcelona, Spain. When Joaquin puts up a picture of the Empire State Building, students groan loudly. Without hesitation, Joaquin says, "Okay, let's do a different one" and puts up a picture of Notre Dame Cathedral. After Joaquin explains that their homework assignment is to design and draw a building, he gives his students time to brainstorm
types of buildings with one another. At 9:30, students stand up, put on their jackets, zip up their backpacks, and line up by the back door. Joaquin reminds them to leave their journals and tells them to have a good day as they exit the room.

An Interpretation and Evaluation of Joaquin Reyes' Classroom

One of the first things that caught my attention was Joaquin's easy-going attitude about student interactions during class. While other teachers work hard to maintain order and control, Joaquin embraced a relaxed atmosphere wherein students were allowed to talk quietly with neighbors during independent work time. I soon realized that Joaquin's laissez faire approach to independent work denoted his understanding that relationships are at the heart of learning. Rather than discouraging student relationships, Joaquin created lesson plans and activities that encouraged student interaction. Moreover, Joaquin's pedagogical approach reflected his commitment to making sure that every student had multiple opportunities to both listen and be heard, whether during class discussions about the daily focus question, during Tribal Council, or during table conversations following quick writes about a film.

Joaquin's use of journals demonstrated his commitment to reflection as a means of developing a personal point of view. Every Friday, students were expected to pick up their journals on the way into class and to spend ten minutes responding to the focus question illuminated on the overhead. Most questions were designed to elicit student preferences or opinions emerging from reflection on class discussions, books they had read, and films they had watched. During our interview, Joaquin indicated that by emphasizing reflection and analysis using the Universals of Culture, he hoped his
students would "emerge with a sort of open-mindedness to a diversity of cultures and an awareness of issues that impact cultures around the world." A by-product of Joaquin's curriculum—a curriculum that highlighted the application of universal principles to a variety of case studies—was a learning environment wherein student diversity was understood as natural and generative of caring and respectful intercultural relationships between and among teacher and students.

Like many educators, Joaquin demonstrated an understanding that care, respect, and trust are necessary conditions for creating a healthy and productive teaching and learning environment (Bibby, 2009; Edwards-Groves, Kemmis, Hardy, & Ponte, 2010; Nieto, 1999; Noddings, 2005; Thayer-Bacon, 2000). His words, actions, and interactions with his students demonstrated his rejection of educational theories that advocate social distance between teachers and students as a mark of professionalism (Bibby, 2009) or as a means of promoting student independence (Wehlage, Rutter, Smith, Lesko, & Fernandez, 1989). Joaquin recognized that relationships are a necessary prerequisite for learning (Cothran & Ennis, 2000)—that we learn and come to know in relation with others (Thayer-Bacon, 2000).

Feminist theorists refer to the type of relationships Joaquin cultivates with his students as relationality. Whereas the broad term relationship can describe any number of personal and professional associations, relationality refers to relationships that are interdependent connections among individuals who are committed to fostering each other's growth and empowerment (Miller, 1976). Although differentials in power and knowledge (as well as race, gender, and class) are an inescapable reality in educational
environments, relationality endeavors to mitigate many of the historically and politically imposed negative effects of these differences through its focus on mutuality.

Relationality recognizes that many aspects of the self develop within the context of relationships (Thayer-Bacon, 2000; Worell, 2001). Relational theorists challenge the Western privileging of individuation and autonomy as the primary goals of human development, suggesting that the goal of development is to foster connections across difference, and that these connections result in increased energy to act (Miller, 1976). In many ways, the feminist concept of relationality evident in Joaquin's classroom is compatible with the communitarian ethos of the Third Way—an "ethopolitics of community" (Rose, 2000, p. 1408) committed to linking the left and the right, the personal and the political. According to Rose (1999; 2000), the Third Way offers an expanded understanding of an individual's relationship to community, providing a map for living in community that is grounded in mutual responsibility and common purpose. For Rose and others committed to the Third Way, society is not a thing that is external to human circumstances or experiences. Society is comprised of communities of belonging—relationships distinguished by mutuality and cooperation (Rose, 1999). Like Joaquin, proponents of the Third Way are dedicated to human development and social justice.

In Joaquin's classroom, traditional forms of power and control were jettisoned in favor of mutuality. Through his lesson plans and classroom activities, and the way Joaquin emphasized relationality over traditional hierarchical teacher-student relationships, Joaquin created an environment comprised of students with a teacher rather
than students and a teacher (Bibby, 2009). There was a clear sense that Joaquin and his students were learning together—that they were working through problems and creating knowledge together through conversation and relationship. For example, there were no predetermined or correct answers to the questions Joaquin created for Tribal Council. Questions were designed to get everyone, including Joaquin, thinking and dialoguing about their own impressions and interpretations of a book or film. When he contributed to a discussion, Joaquin's responses were not afforded greater worth than his students'. He may have pushed his students to elaborate on their answers, but this was only to uncover their thought processes not to get them to a predetermined correct answer.

Although students were graded on individual assignments, Joaquin's class had a group orientation that was a dramatic departure from traditional classrooms that privilege the autonomous individual. In Joaquin's class, there was a significant amount of collaboration and sharing among students. For example, after each focus writing activity all students had an opportunity to partake in conversations about their writing with one or two peers. During my interview with Joaquin, he indicated that he has been influenced by bell hooks and her conceptualization of education as a practice of freedom. And while he acknowledged that his students are not yet free people, he believes in providing as many moments as possible where they can exercise freedom in the classroom. For hooks and Joaquin, having students write in their journals and then share what they have written with one another is one way of "creating a climate of free expression" (hooks, 1994, p.44) where multiple voices and perspectives are recognized and respected. This activity is just one example of Joaquin's commitment to mutuality and a decentralized classroom,
which stands in stark contrast to other teachers who exert a high level of control over students and the products of their learning.

For Joaquin, the process of learning was just as important as the products of learning. Whereas many teachers are content-driven—striving to get through large quantities of material and have students demonstrate learning through tests and multiple choice exams—Joaquin's class was dialogue-driven. He embraced the process of making sense through reflection and communication: through journal writing, small group discussions, and peer conversations. Joaquin described his class to me:

Um it's sort of almost like a shared oral inquiry where, you know, we'll talk about some issue and [students] will ask me questions and I rarely just give an answer. Like if they say, 'Well, why would somebody do this?' And I'll instead turn and say, 'Well, what do you think? That's a great question. I have some ideas, but I don't know. So let's put our heads together and think why somebody would do this.' . . . So, um, it's a lot of questioning, a lot of us asking questions and making connections and just sort of thinking out loud. It's definitely the way we process as a class.

Hicks, Larson, Nelson, Olds, and Johnston's (2008) research on the influence of collaboration on health program outcomes offers important insights into the importance of process quality in teaching and learning. They found two features present in collaborations that lead to tangible results: strong process leadership and an open process (Hicks et al., 2008). Strong process leadership requires a move away from a hierarchical model of leadership wherein the leader imposes a particular point of view. Instead, process leaders facilitate "the expression of divergent points of view in a manner that respects difference yet fosters convergence and making sure that all stakeholders feel competent, trusted, and valued throughout the process" (Hicks et al., 2008, p. 457). Unlike collaborations that aim to define problems and seek mutually acceptable solutions,
in the case of teaching and learning, I interpret convergence to mean common focus of attention and commitment to the process. Participants will perceive the collaborative process as open if it is free from manipulation and all participants are treated equally (Hicks et al., 2008). In Joaquin's classroom, students trusted that their opinions were just as valid as their teacher's, and that everyone would be treated as an equal member of the learning community.

Learning processes that highlight strong process leadership and openness, as defined by Hicks et al. (2008), lead to learning products that differ significantly from those generated through traditional teaching and learning practices (such as teacher-centered lectures and multiple choice exams).

When people perceive that they are being treated fairly—understood as positive attributions of trust, neutrality, and standing—they will, in turn, feel valued, respected, and cared for by the group. The result is that they will come to see their individual identity in terms of their group membership: an identification that, in turn, results in an increased commitment to the group's projects and goals. Moreover, they will come to see the integrity of the process as an expression of the integrity of the group itself. (Hicks et al, p. 458)

In a classroom like Joaquin's where relationality is understood as critical to learning, an open process necessarily leads to relationality, which in turn fosters learning.

The relationships Joaquin created with his students were more than mere associations between independent and separate individuals thrown together, by fate, in a classroom for the duration of a year. Joaquin's vision of his students was deeply nuanced. He not only recognized each student as unique, but he saw the potential to thrive within each of them, and valued each as a meaningful contributor to and creator of their mutual
learning community. Joaquin also realized that some students have learning needs that require a personalized approach. During our interview, Joaquin told me:

I think any instructional approach privileges some and marginalizes others. And, um, you know it's why it's why I think it's so important—this is my own philosophy coming out—but but I think all teachers need to be critical theorists because you can never have an approach that works for everybody or maximizes everybody's potential. Um, you have to be aware. For example, I have a discussion-based class. That marginalizes kids who don't have confidence, kids who don't feel like they speak well, kids who get nervous speaking in front of others, um, you know, second language learners, students who have recently learned English or are in the process of learning English, students who don't express themselves well speaking. . . . I've had to make adjustments to my approach. I have one little girl in sixth grade who is petrified of speaking and it was to the point where she was crying with her mom, like, and her mom emailed me. She says, you know, she's had these issues with speaking since she was really little. She was supposed to do a presentation last year and she didn't, and she just refused to do it. And so we've we've adapted the way we do it so that I will have one-on-one conversations with her. So I will give her the questions—we'll sit somewhere that's you know fairly you know like we'll sit in the hall or something and I'll just ask questions and she'll tell me. And that's been good. It's not where ideally she would be, but I think it's giving her a sense that, 'okay, there is a way I can do this and there is a safe place where I can practice until I'm ready to to get in there.'

For Joaquin, addressing his students' individual learning needs is always dependent upon developing an open and trusting relationship. Joaquin understood that his institutional authority as a teacher uniquely positioned him to play a pivotal role in fostering relationality and learning (Bibby, 2009). He recognized that learning is "bound up in the unconscious emotional flows of relationships" (Bibby, 2009, p. 52). In our interview, Joaquin acknowledged the connection between emotionality and relationships:

If a kid doesn't like you, if they feel like you don't respect them, if they feel like you look down on them, then that kid is going to pose many problems for you. Um, or you know, they'll pose no problems for you, and you'll see them doing it, but they just don't get much out of what they're doing. They're such emotional beings. . . . So I always try to take advantage of every opportunity to cultivate positive relationships with all the kids. So, a lot of teachers, not here so much, but
in other schools that I've sort of either worked in or just been in, they complain about doing things like lunch duty and hall duty. And yeah, it takes away from our time. But at the same time what other chance is there for me to be around the kids where I'm not like giving them instruction and its non-academic? . . . I talk to every kid I see in the hall. And if they're, you know, if they're representing a team or something like that, I'll talk to them about that. I just look for ways to just really make a connection. Because if they feel connected when they walk into your classroom, then that's 90 percent of any management issues you may have. And it supports the kid and and they'll want to be there. And if they want to be there, then my job is way easier. If they just look forward to your class—it's so so important for them to be invested emotionally in what they are doing.

Joaquin acknowledged that strained relationships with teachers can cause students to either act out in class or withdraw into themselves, and that both are detrimental to student learning. Stephen Krashen's (1982) theory on second language acquisition offers insights into the many ways in which negative affect can impact a student's willingness or ability to learn. He states that when affective conditions are not optimal, an "affective filter" is created causing a mental block that inhibits learning. Krashen contends that negative affect toward teachers is most often generated when students are constantly exposed to corrections by their teacher, and that this negative affect has a deep impact on students' attitudes toward their teachers as well as coursework. Bibby (2009) found that students who lack relationships with their teachers find it hard to digest or process information because they are either focused on the blocked relationship or on their anger toward the teacher who is blocking it. Mayes and Crossan (2007) assert that students' willingness to persist despite difficulties is often based on feelings that their teachers are "genuinely interested" in their formal learning as well as their personal development. They lament that many educators are neither able (because they lack the interpersonal skills) nor willing (because they refuse to invest the time and energy) to pursue
relationships with students (Mayes & Crossan, 2007). Joaquin understood that
relationality is both a responsibility and a reward of teaching.

Joaquin admitted that many teachers do not like lunch or hall duty because it takes
time away from their other responsibilities (such as planning, grading, advising, etc.).
What he implied but did not articulate is that lunch and hall duty require emotional
energy. Bibby (2009) suggests that the emotional work of teacher-student relationships
can be overwhelming for teachers who interact with hundreds of students each day.
Many education scholars acknowledge that teaching is emotional work (Bibby, 2009;
Boler, 1999; Edwards et al., 2010; Zembylas, 2005) and that trying to ignore the
emotional investment necessary to teach is akin to avoiding relationality. As Bibby
argues, avoiding relationships with students can "block growth and learning in [teachers]
as well as their students" (p. 53).

If, as Bibby (2009) asserts, learning is bound up in relationships and relationships
require emotional work, then it is important for teachers concerned about educational
equity to embrace emotion and build authentic and caring relationships with students.
Although Joaquin's commitment to relationality was made obvious to me through his
words and actions both inside and outside the classroom, he admitted that it is hard work.
During our interview, Joaquin explained the difficulties he faced overcoming certain
biases:

Um, you know, my dad came here with no money, you know, from Mexico City
in the seventies. And so I have a heart for my Mexican immigrant kids. And
they're of my culture and they're of my people and I see them struggle all over the
place. And so I have this inclination to protect them. Um, same thing with the
African-American kids who I grew up with. You know, I mean, I didn't grow up
with other Mexican kids you know in the old neighborhood. I grew up in a Black
neighborhood. . . Um so again, just given some of my experiences with race, there are definitely people that I have historically treated differently because of their race um because of my own experiences with these folks. So I've had to become really conscious of all of that stuff.

Joaquin's connection to his Mexican and African-American students has deep roots reaching all the way back to his childhood, however, he works hard not to give preferential treatment to any student.

Joaquin was not only reflexive about the challenges he faced because of his connection to certain students based on their race, he also reflected on the challenges of working with younger kids. Although Joaquin has been teaching for eleven years and has a Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction, this was only his third year at IMSD and his second year teaching middle-schoolers. Before joining IMSD, he taught at an alternative high school serving students who had been unsuccessful in traditional schools. Joaquin admitted that he did not initially want to teach sixth graders and that his first year was exceptionally difficult. That he can be intimidating to young kids was really brought home during his first year when he made a couple of sixth graders cry. He had never made a high school kid cry and through careful reflection he learned to see himself through a young person's eyes. While he always strived to respect each student, Joaquin believes that working with younger children requires that he recognize each child as precious.

I start with this sort of understanding that all of these kids in this room are somebody's babies. They're somebody's pride and joy. They mean the world to somebody. And um, you know, so I have to approach them that way, and try to keep an understanding there. But also know that there are times when you have to be really firm and you have to be very direct. And I I think they need that. I think they like that.
Joaquin told me that being a father of a five-year-old daughter taught him how to interact with his younger students. He also attributed his new sensitivity and success with younger kids to his experiences coaching the girl's soccer team at IMSD. For Joaquin, listening to students and paying attention to them are two important aspects of strong relationships. And his students agreed. During a focus group on the last day of class, a Latina student stated, "I think the communication between the students and the teacher in this class is good. Mr. Reyes, you're pretty easy to talk to." This statement inspired a flurry of input from other students:

"I agree!" Lucas exclaimed enthusiastically.

"We can always talk to you when we need to," added Alex.

"You're always open to our questions," Rihanna stated.

And in an uncharacteristic use of his native language, Leonardo interjected "Muy tambien!"

Monica added with sincerity and a bit of surprise, "You never get mad!"

Jacob wrapped up the conversation with a heartfelt observation: "I feel very respected, especially by Mr. Reyes. This class, I get really involved and everyone listens, especially the teacher."

For Joaquin, a big part of building positive relationships with his kids is making learning fun. Like hooks (1994), Joaquin believes in bringing a lot of energy and passion into every classroom activity and developing approaches to learning that are enjoyable for his students. One of the ways Joaquin accomplished this was by trying to make kids feel like they were not working very hard when they were learning. He liked it when his
kids thought learning was easy because he knew how difficult it was for them to process the information he presented. For example, in the spring Joaquin had his sixth graders read *The Breadwinner*, a book about an eleven-year-old girl in Taliban-era Afghanistan who loses her brother to a land mine and is forced to become the breadwinner for her family. Joaquin's students were expected to read the book, analyze it using the Universals of Culture, and put themselves in the shoes of the main characters. Joaquin acknowledged that this was tough work for sixth graders, yet he was amazed at the level of enthusiasm and depth with which his young students approached the assignment.

One of the most significant ways I observed Joaquin foster relationality between and among himself and his students while making learning fun was through classroom rituals. I argue that Joaquin's rituals—classroom moments that nurture his students' social, emotional, and playful natures—foster learning.

In four short words, Joaquin's soulful query to his students focused everyone's attention in a moment that transcended space and time. With one seemingly simple question, "Can I kick it?" and the rehearsed yet resounding response, "Yes, you can!" Joaquin and his students were instantaneously engaged in an embodied activity. Collins (2004) explains the significance of bodies gathered together in one place:

> When human bodies are together in the same place, there is a physical attunement: currents of feeling, a sense of wariness or interest, a palpable change in the atmosphere. The bodies are paying attention to each other, whether at first there is any great conscious awareness of it or not. (p. 34)

Collins (2004) leans heavily on Durkheim (1912/1995) to explicate the intersubjectivity that occurs when two or more people are co-present and their focus of attention is unified. Even a simple response, when said in harmony, creates an emotional
intensity that increases participants' commitment to the group and its practices, and in turn, relations among group members are strengthened (Knottnerus, 2006). These moments of "heightened intersubjectivity" (Collins, 2004, p. 35) lead to a state of "collective effervescence" (Durkheim, 1912/1995, p. 228) or "collective consciousness" (Durkheim, 1912/1995, p. 445)—a form of energy made possible only when a group of people with common focus are gathered together in "dense bodily assembly" (Collins, 2004, p. 82) and are actively rather than passively participating. Intersubjectivity and collective effervescence, according to Collins and Durkheim, are trademarks of ritual.

Although there is little consensus on what distinguishes a ritual from other human activities (Brown, 2003), most scholars agree that rituals are social experiences that evoke emotional responses and create a sense of belonging and solidarity amongst participants (Brown, 2003; Collins, 2004; Knottnerus, 2006; Marshall, 2002). Scholars who define rituals exclusively as sacred or symbolic acts might argue that Joaquin's "Can I kick it?" call-and-response routine was merely one teacher's imaginative way of garnering his students' attention. However, regardless of the intention behind the act, I interpret this and Joaquin's other carefully calculated routines (e.g., welcoming his students each morning to the "Boogie Down," starting class with 10 minutes of focused journal writing, weekly Tribal Councils, etc.) as rituals—moments wherein a teacher and his students embraced and constructively channeled their emotions and energies toward individual and collective action (Collins, 2004).

In what follows, I examine the social, emotional, and playful aspects of Joaquin's classroom rituals: how they constituted the relationality between and among Joaquin and
his students, and the learning that took place in the classroom. I would like to emphasize that the social, emotional, and playful aspects of ritual are neither discrete nor exhaustive; however, they highlight features of ritual that are significant to the process of teaching and learning.

Rituals are social experiences with social implications. Rituals are a form of social experience that extends beyond the ritual moment to the greater society (Collins, 2004; Durkheim 1912/1995; Knottnerus, 2006). Marshall (2002) asserts that "both the antecedents and the consequences of ritual practice remain patently social" (p. 369). Rituals "can play a pivotal role in social life profoundly affecting the nature and strength of social relations between the members of society" (Knottnerus, 2006, p. 3). Building on Durkheim's theory, Collins asserts that society is made up of "groups of people assembled in particular places who feel solidarity with each other through the effects of ritual participation and ritually charged symbolism" (p. 41). In other words, the sense of community and commitment generated between and among ritual participants are at the root of social life.

There is significant debate whether rituals are "hegemonic instruments" (Brown, 2003) for expressing and reinforcing the status quo social order or mechanisms for social change (Rothenbuhler, 1998). Recent ritual studies have applied performance theory to better understand the ways in which rituals produce, reproduce, or challenge culture (Brown, 2003). A performance approach views ritual as fluid and contingent, therefore constituting meanings that are fluid and contingent (Brown, 2003). Rather than understanding a ritual as having one static meaning for all participants, a performance
approach recognizes that ritual participants vary in positionalities and points of view, and that ritual meanings will therefore vary.

Understanding ritual as performance illuminates its constitutive nature. Victor Turner (1986) reminds us that performances are not simply reflections or expressions of culture, but may be active agents in creating culture. Recognizing that the moment of enactment of the ritual performance creates reality and meaning for its participants rather than merely expressing or reflecting pre-existing meanings and realities has significant implications for Joaquin and his students. The question is: *What meanings and realities are created through Joaquin's call-and-response ritual?*

Although scripts are a necessary part of all performances and have a bearing on ritual action, Brown (2003) asserts that scripts tell us little about what takes place as a ritual unfolds. Focusing on the ritual performance rather than the script "*privileges the moment . . . the experiential over the cognitive, reception over intentionality or design, construction over (re)presentation*" (Brown, 2003, p. 11). While Brown argues that scholarship privileging ritual scripts over performances occlude cultural indeterminacies emerging from rituals, I argue that scripts can tell us a great deal about the culture of ritual leaders and participants, and inform our understanding of the culture (i.e., the meanings and realities) created through ritual performance.

For example, on week nine of the academic year, the students responded weakly to Joaquin's first "Can I kick it?" request. Rather than reprimanding his students, Joaquin simply smiled and in a conspiratorial tone, told them, "When you respond you need to put
a bit of funk in it—a little stank. You've got to add some excitement." He then added enthusiastically, "This is from one of my favorite songs called 'Can I kick it?'"

Without missing a beat, Jacob asked if "Boogie Down" is also from a song and Joaquin, displaying an appreciative grin, said, "'Boogie Down' refers to the Bronx and I use it because it refers to hip hop."

Although this brief exchange was the only explanation Joaquin offered regarding the significance of these ritual scripts, I later learned that "Can I kick it?" is the title of a hip hop song by the group A Tribe Called Quest. The song, set against the backdrop melody of Lou Reed's "Take a Walk on the Wild Side," features a chorus wherein one rapper calls out in repetition "Can I kick it?" to three other members of the group who respond repeatedly "Yes, you can!"

Joaquin's choice to use these personally meaningful expressions to engage his sixth graders not only reveal a great deal about him and his background, it offers insight into the culture he sought to create in his classroom. During class, Joaquin frequently mentioned his Mexican heritage and that he grew up in the Five Points area of Denver; an historic neighborhood known as the "Harlem of the West" due to its history during the first half of the twenty-first century as a predominantly Black community and a mecca for jazz musicians. By the time Joaquin was born, the area had lost much of its commercial musical appeal due to crime, drugs, and urban flight. Although the area is still home to a significant Black population, almost 60% of its current residents, like Joaquin, are Latino (Five Points Business District, 2009).
Joaquin often shared with his students that most of his friends growing up were Black, and that many of those friends fell into gangs. Although Joaquin found his way out of Five Points through education, he still is very much connected to the neighborhood, its people, and his memories of growing up there. Considering the rich musical history of his childhood neighborhood, it is not surprising that Joaquin has an affinity for jazz and hip hop, and that his classroom décor and routines reflect his urban upbringing.

Joaquin's "Can I kick it?" call-and-response script was more than a visibly effective attention-getting device that got energies circulating between and among teacher and students. Call-and-response has its roots in "field hollers" and songs created by plantation slaves "to keep their spirits up while they were doing hard manual labor such as picking cotton" (SoundJunction, 2006). These hollers made their way into Black churches in America and eventually found their way into blues and hip hop (Charlton, 2004); two musical genres that resonate deeply with Joaquin's background and his commitment to creating an inclusive multicultural environment for his students.

It is difficult to dismiss the script as incidental to the ritual, as Brown (2003) would have us do, when considering Joaquin's appreciation for and connection to hip hop; the personal meaning he attaches to the song "Can I kick it?"; and the rich historical background of call-and-response discourse in African-American communities. Although it became clear on week nine that students did not understand the significance of the words they had been hollering, I contend that the act of chanting these specific words created a very different reality and meaning for each ritual participant than would have
been created if Joaquin were merely to call out "Can I have your attention?" There were elements of relationality and play in Joaquin's query that cannot be overlooked.

Joaquin's choice to embrace hip hop culture as the inspiration for his rituals can be understood as a resistive act against the devaluation of African-American culture in many schools and communities across the U.S. Whereas many members of mainstream society equate hip hop music to gangs, Joaquin reclaimed both the music and gang members as part of his culture—a culture that is likely familiar to some of his students and unfamiliar to others. While he was clearly not promoting either the music or the gangs, through his integration of these significant cultural emblems into his pedagogy, Joaquin worked to remove the stigmas that people who listen to hip hop music or know gang members are incapable of academic success.

By sharing the personal significance of his call-and-response ritual, Joaquin provided an opportunity for his students to reflect on and develop the open-mindedness to diversity that he strives to cultivate in his classroom. While he worked hard not to favor his Mexican and African-American students, he also did not deny his own heritage and upbringing. He embraced his positionality in overt ways, becoming a role model for his majority Mexican students, and helping them develop a sense of "shared identity" (Thayer-Bacon, 2008, p. 124). Thayer-Bacon asserts that it is critical for all students to see and hear from members of their own culture who are making significant contributions to society. Whereas White students see and hear examples of success almost everywhere they turn, students of color often have a more difficult time locating models of success due to underrepresentation, stereotypical representations, and Whitestream curriculum
(Grande, 2004; Thayer-Bacon, 2008; Urrieta, 2004). Through his ritual scripts and his disclosure of their personal meaning, Joaquin served as a highly credible role model for all of his students.

Knottnerus (2006) asserts that "collective ritual events are a type of social experience, which can affect individuals, collective arrangements, and social developments" (p. 3). If this is true, and I believe it is, then through his rituals Joaquin was creating opportunities for his students to embrace both familiar and unfamiliar cultural themes. Through these ritual moments of heightened intersubjectivity, Joaquin and his students were learning new ways of understanding and appreciating diversity that will follow them outside the classroom into the social world where it is greatly needed.

**Rituals are emotional experiences with implications for learning.** While it is widely agreed that rituals create an emotional intensity among ritual members, there is little known about how rituals evoke emotion and to what effect. Collins (2004) theorizes that when individual bodies are assembled in one place that their mutual focus of attention and emotions are contagious, resulting in (among other things) group solidarity and emotional energy or "EE," which includes feelings of confidence, enthusiasm, and initiative for taking action. He posits that participants' emotions are unconsciously synchronized through rhythmic entrainment—a process whereby individuals literally "keep the beat" with one another's gestures and vocal pitch (Collins, 2004, p. 78). Collins looks to fellow sociologist Jonathan Turner (2002) to support his claim that "emotional contagion is a socio-physiological fact" (p. 78). Turner's study of primates led him to conclude that the neurology of human beings has evolved beyond the
sensory dominance of olfaction so that face-to-face interaction (primarily a visual and secondarily an auditory experience) "almost always revolves around trying to establish emotional overtones, moods and meanings" (p. 64) and that "it is emotions that attune and bind individuals together" (p. 67).

The phenomenon of entrainment offers insight into how rituals evoke emotion. Cultural studies scholar Teresa Brennan (2004) looks to chemical entrainment to build her theory on the transmission of affect. Whereas the rhythmic entrainment explained by Collins (2004) and Turner (2002) depends on visual and auditory cues to evoke a form of synchrony or mimesis, chemical entrainment relies on olfactory (as well as visual and auditory) cues which create a change in hormones (Brennan, 2004). Hormones (for example, pheromones) are transmitted through the unconscious sense of smell to members of the same species, changing their hormones and affective dispositions (Brennan, 2004).

That chemical shifts associated with emotions are transmitted undetected between and among individuals through the sense of smell is not surprising in light of Turner's (2002) observation that the olfactory bulb is outside the control of the neocortex (the part of the brain necessary for processing all other sensory modalities). Since olfaction is the oldest and least dominant sense in human beings, it is understandable that emotions triggered by smell would be unconscious, as compared to conscious visual or auditory stimuli (such as seeing or hearing about a disturbing event and then consciously relating what you have seen or heard to a disturbing emotional response).
Brennan's (2004) theory of chemical entrainment extends Collins' (2004) and Turners' (2002) theories of rhythmic entrainment, explaining how emotional effervescence is constituted during ritual. Entrainment can occur through body movement, gestures, and tones of voice, as well as through other forms of visual or aural stimulation. For example, pictures of angry faces have been found to increase levels of testosterone in men and women (van Honk et al., 1999) and auditory stimulation has been found to not only create a sense of well-being and synchronize body rhythms within a group (Alcorta & Sosis, 2005; Brennan, 2004), it increased norepinephrine levels in college students (Hirokawa & Ohira, 2003). Based on this compelling evidence, Brennan concludes that all forms of entrainment are "social in origin but physical in their effects" (Brennan, p. 71).

Collins (2004), Turner (2002), and Brennan (2004) each offer explanations for how rituals can generate emotional energy and group solidarity. However, while Collins and Turner focus on visual and auditory cues that can be evoked consciously or unconsciously, Brennan highlights the unconscious olfactory cues that lead to chemical entrainment. In Joaquin's class, it is likely that rhythmic entrainment is at play during the call-and-response ritual. Although I do not know whether Joaquin was aware of the power in tone of voice to create positive emotional energy in his classroom, his ceaseless insistence that students turn their attention over to him and demonstrate their presence through a highly energetic response to his call unconsciously brought his students into emotional alignment with one another, thereby enabling them to get down to the work of learning. And while the call-and-response ritual may have evoked rhythmic entrainment,
according to Brennan, chemical entrainment is also at play in the classroom during ritual events.

Although I witnessed only positive affect while observing Joaquin and his students, a very interesting thing happened one day when I observed the same group of students with a substitute teacher. The emotional energy in the classroom that day was chaotic and negative. The teacher, a woman in her mid-to-late fifties, was a strict disciplinarian. Not only was she unfamiliar with Joaquin's classroom rules and routines, she seemed to view his students as adversaries rather than allies. She was brusque with her instructions, impatient with her responses, and intolerant of student interaction. Although I felt empathy for the substitute who knew little about her charges or their classroom culture, I was heartsick for the students who were innocents in this unfair yet familiar institutional drama that introduces uninitiated authoritative teachers into a well-established relational learning community.

This experience caused me to question whose affect is privileged, if any, during classroom rituals and activities. Collins (2004) conceptualizes the emotional energy emerging from rituals as a positive energy that "has a powerful motivating effect upon the individual" (p. 39). He also states, however, that many rituals (and he considers every interpersonal encounter a ritual) are energy draining rather than energy increasing. He asserts that the difference in energy created through ritual is in direct proportion to the mutual focus of attention of participants. If participants are distracted and their attention is scattered, shared emotions do not build up and the result is boredom, fatigue, depression, or a desire to flee (Collins, 2004).
If everything hinges upon a mutual focus of attention and this alone causes rhythmic entrainment to occur, then it is easy to understand why the emotional energy in Joaquin's Cultural Studies class was so low during his absence. First of all, the substitute was late for class that morning, immediately setting a negative tone for the morning. As the students and I stood outside the classroom awaiting her arrival, they crowded around me complaining that the substitute had them studying geography all week. They were clearly upset and frustrated by the teacher's lack of knowledge that theirs was a cultural studies class. And although I had not been at school earlier in the week, it became obvious to me that the substitute teacher and the students had reached an impasse that had depleted all their energies. When I realized that the substitute was going to be late, I invited the students into the classroom, turned on the lights, and instructed them to grab their journals and write about something they learned over winter break. When the substitute finally blew into the room ten minutes later, she brought with her a tornado of confusion as she put a halt to the journal writing ritual I had initiated and directed the students' attention to her geography agenda. Her tone and demeanor, and her intolerance for chit chat and bathroom breaks, was a drastic departure from Joaquin's relaxed and sensitive style. When one of the students, Jacob, was asked to read out loud but instead chose to sing the text, the teacher was not amused. As she stood in the center of the room with a scowl on her face, the students chuckled and chortled, elevating the militant mood for a fleeting moment of collective effervescence and solidarity, proving to me that despite their institutional authority, teachers are not necessarily more privileged with regard to affective transmission.
Brennan's (2004) theories of discernment and living attention offer insight into the dramatic differences in emotional energy when Joaquin was in the classroom as compared to the substitute. Brennan defines discernment as a form of consciousness that allows an individual to prevent hurting others with his or her projections, or from being hurt by the projections of others. Brennan asserts that the refusal to project or introject affects is a form of kindness and love—a willingness to see others in a good light; to give our living attention to others without concern for ourselves.

Brennan (2004) equates living attention with love, thereby offering an explanation for the different levels of emotional energy in Joaquin's classroom versus the substitute's:

When we love, the other feels it. When we love those who are not like us, even though they don't think like us or read the same books or read at all, those others feel it. Sometimes the other even listens, because the love allows them to lower their own shield (of projected affects or judgments) and permit entry to a new idea. To love and forgive is to remove oneself from the loop [of the transmission of affect]. This is why the act of real forgiveness can be entirely selfish. The forgiver is the beneficiary, insofar as he or she is then free of transmitting a negative affect, and so free from attracting more of the same. (p. 133)

Although Joaquin never talked about love and I never discussed Brennan's (2004) theory with him, it was obvious to me that Joaquin practiced "living attention" (Brennan, 2004, p. 34) with his students. He saw each of his students in a positive light and gave his attention to them without concern for himself. In his classroom, Joaquin was a selfless presence who gave everything he had to his students. While it is true that he occasionally became irritated, for example, when the students kept asking him about their new seating arrangements, he immediately brought himself back to center and apologized, allowing the class to move forward without affective refuse muddying up the space. When Joaquin and his students were engaged in Tribal Council, his undivided
attention and selfless interest in his students created a circulation of emotion—positivity, solidarity, and relationality—necessary for fostering learning. His ritual of asking the students in the outer circle to thank Tribal Council participants was another way he helped create solidarity and relationality between members of the inner and outer circles.

**Rituals are playful experiences that foster learning.** Play is an important element of many rituals (Droogers, 2004; Kapferer, 2004; Turner, 1982). Droogers points out that "playful and serious are not necessarily opposite" (p. 138). Huizinga (1949/2002) coined the phrase *homo ludens* to account for the playful nature of human beings. He asserts that one only need look at dogs to recognize the natural tendency of animals to play. Huizinga is quick to point out that play goes beyond the biological and physical—it is an irrational but unavoidable social function. Huizinga boldly proclaims that play can be found in all cultures, most noticeably in their language. Metaphors and myths, for example, provide a playful and poetic expression for ordinary aspects of life (Huizinga, 1949/2002).

Like ritual, play is "the stepping out of 'real' life into a temporary sphere of activity with a disposition all its own" (Huizinga, 1949/2002, p. 8). The world of play is often the world of pretend—a world wherein children are consciously aware that they are fabricating an alternate reality. Play arises in a uniquely fashioned temporary world created from the familiar furnishings of the ordinary world (Huizinga, 1949/2002). However, the pretend nature of a playful activity "does not by any means prevent it from proceeding with the utmost seriousness, with an absorption, a devotion that passes into rapture" (Huizinga, 1949/2002, p. 8).
Similar to ritual, play transcends the demands of life and releases built up energy and tension (Scheff, 1979). Scheff (1979) reminds us: "Repeated episodes of overwhelming distress are unavoidable even in the course of what appears to be the most normal life" (p. 116). Emotions are disciplined or repressed for a variety of reasons, not the least of which comes about from social expectations for emotional management. It is common for school children to experience anger, embarrassment, fear, frustration, and hurt as they are learning; however, through repeated admonishments not to shed tears or express anger in public, children learn to discipline or repress their emotional distress. Rituals and play, according to Scheff, are both means through which individuals and groups can release or discharge emotions, resulting in a state of well-being.

Engaging students in playful rituals can therefore serve as an emotion-releasing activity. Joaquin's desire to make learning fun is demonstrated in his imaginative framing of classroom rituals. For example, Joaquin's Tribal Council was a playful way of conceptualizing a small group discussion. Upstairs, Joaquin's colleague, Dolores Varela, facilitated the same activity; however, she referred to it as a "Scored Discussion." Joaquin's simple shift in language, as Huizinga (1949/2002) reminds us, fed the playful nature of students by transporting them to an island in the center of the room where they could talk freely about a book they all had read or a movie they all had seen. The students participating in Tribal Council occupied an exclusive environment where they had the living attention of their caring teacher. This shift matters in the current climate of high stakes testing, which often conscripts unwilling participants into scored learning. Although Joaquin scored each student's participation in Tribal Council, his playful ritual
intervened on this mode of education and provided students with alternative ways of learning, being, and feeling in the classroom.

Tribal Council was a time when Joaquin could draw out the quieter kids and push all of his students to think more deeply about the topic of discussion. Although most often the discussion topic was quite serious, there were frequent moments of levity and laughter coming from the inner circle. One day, as Joaquin prepared to take his seat at the table, he said to his students, "I hope you don't mind sitting next to your big, stinky teacher. I shouldn't smell too bad; I bathed this week." The students at the Tribal Council table snickered at one another before bursting into unrestrained laughter as Joaquin took his seat.

By transcending the usual boundaries of reality through ritualized play, the classroom thus becomes a space where "people can open themselves to each other" (Hyde, 2006, p. 159). Hyde rightly places responsibility for classroom climate squarely on the teacher's shoulders: "The challenge before the teacher is one of acknowledgment, of transforming space and time in order to create a dwelling place where learning can happen in a caring (caressing) environment and where people can feel at home" (p. 164). Home is not a metaphor typically applied to a classroom, although Hyde argues that it should be. Borrowing liberally from Rybcynski, Hyde defines home as

a place of security, convenience, cordiality, relaxation, happiness, and love; a place that encourages the development of personal relationships and strong family ties; a place where one need not worry about 'being oneself;' in short, a place of genuine care and comfort. . . . a haven of shelter and forgiveness. (p. 98)
For Hyde, a home is a refuge from the outside world created as much by the furnishings as the people present. It is a place where one can call out, "Where art thou?" and know that, without a doubt, one will receive the loving response, "Here I am" (Hyde, 2006). For young people especially, classrooms are extensions of home. They are places that have the potential to offer comfort and love, as much as they are places that have the potential to evoke fear and frustration. As Joaquin recognized, students need to feel that they are cared for and supported—they need to know that when they call out, "Where art thou?" that he will respond with a kind and loving "Here I am!"

Acknowledgment and caring, however, are a two-way street. Hyde asserts, "The teaching environment is energized and actualized by the emotional involvement that people have with each other and with their subjects of study" (Hyde, 2006, p. 164). This emotional involvement necessarily includes teachers and students creating a reciprocal relationship in which every member of the classroom becomes responsible for giving and receiving (Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke, & Curran, 2004). Just as teachers need to be responsive to students, students need to be responsive to their teachers (Noddings, 2005). According to Noddings, "caring is a way of being in relation" rather than merely a virtue or attribute (p. 17). And although there are no specific behaviors that define caring, the cornerstone of a caring encounter is when the cared-for demonstrates "reception, recognition, and response" (Nodding, 2005, p. 16) of the care and attention offered by the "carer" (Noddings, 2005, p. 16). Caring relationships are often unequal, in that the cared-for may be temporarily or permanently unable to care for another. However, it is often the simple response from the cared-for that gives the carer the energy and motivation to
continue caring (Noddings, 2005). In this regard, caring relationships are founded on reciprocity and mutuality as opposed to equality.

So when a teacher issues the call, "Where art thou?" or in the case of Joaquin, "Can I kick it?" he and the continuity of a caring relationship vitally depend upon students responding with an enthusiastic "Here I am!" or "Yes, you can!" Unless and until all bodies and minds have unified their focus of attention and a caring relationship has been established, learning cannot commence. One way Joaquin unified the bodies and minds of his students was through his playful call-and-response ritual.

**The Implications of Relationality on Power, Agency, and Social Justice in the Classroom**

Joaquin's curriculum and pedagogy reinforced each other, highlighting knowledge of, appreciation for, and open-mindedness to difference. While his hyper-masculine appearance and powerful demeanor may be trademarks of his urban upbringing, Joaquin's pedagogy was unmistakably feminist. Gilligan (1982) argues that women are more caring and relational than men, however, Okin (1989) asserts that this claim is flawed because female gender roles have been socially constructed and all analyses of gendered capabilities take place within a gender-structured society. In other words, to be caring and relational is not the exclusive domain of women, and neither is feminism. A feminist pedagogy "demands the integration of egalitarian content and process" (Schniedewind, 1990, p. 12) including: mutual respect, trust, and community; shared leadership; cooperative structures; cognitive and affective learning; and action.
Schniedewind's (1990) conceptualization of feminist pedagogy highlights process over product—a move that confronts issues of power, agency, and social justice head on. In stark contrast to traditional educational practices and discourses that favor members of the dominant group (from the language that is spoken to the histories that are taught) and reinscribe power relations between teachers and students (through assessments and discipline), feminist pedagogies value relationality, encourage everyone's voice to be heard and respected, embrace diversity, and acknowledge emotion as an integral aspect of cognition. Joaquin subverts educational norms by viewing difference as an asset rather than a deficit (Gale & Densmore, 2000; Nieto, 1999), and by rejecting the belief that teachers are experts, students are novices (Freire, 1970/2007; De Lissovoy, 2010), and that teachers must retain a professional distance from students (Bibby, 2009).

Issues of power, agency, and social justice, however, are not easily addressed by simple pedagogical choices. If we accept Foucault's (1980) theory that power is located within relationships and that nobody escapes its effects, then it is difficult to deny that teachers have power over students. Foucault's theory that individuals are always subjected to power yet always have the capacity to act leads to a paradoxical view of agency. Allen (1999) suggests that this paradox "denies the grip that power relations have on us" (p. 55) and looks to Butler's (1993/2011) theory of performativity to resolve this paradox. Butler extends Foucault by adopting Derrida's conception of citationality, indicating that all performances are merely citations of established norms of behavior. However, because it is necessary for norms to be cited in order for them to maintain their efficacy, individuals are never completely determined by them (Butler, 1993/2011).
While Allen agrees with Foucault and Butler that we cannot escape power, she asserts that power can be transformed. In other words, every individual has the agency to either cite or subvert norms (Allen, 1999).

Allen's (1999) feminist approach to power helps illuminate how Joaquin transforms his institutional *power-over* his students into *power-with* his students. Allen rejects the false dichotomy that situates domination and empowerment in exclusive opposition (either one or the other) and asserts instead that both domination and empowerment are aspects of power that can coexist within the same relationship. For example, the contextual conditions that enabled Joaquin to dominate his students (i.e., his size, age, knowledge, and position as teacher) also afforded him the potential to empower his students. Both are examples of *power-over*. Joaquin's decision to use his *power-over* his students in ways that empowered them grant them the *power-to* act in ways that were authentic rather than conforming to oppressive practices and behaviors that were expected of them. Through his commitment to relationality, Joaquin's orientation toward power was decidedly *power-with*—a form of power that presupposes both *power-over* and *power-to* (Allen, 1999). Although there were certainly times when Joaquin's *power-over* his students could be interpreted as dominating rather than empowering (for instance, when he dictated the books they read, the films they watched, the content of lesson plans and classroom activities), I argue that he employed these constraints in service of an empowering pedagogy that encouraged critical reflection, dialogue, and relationality.
As stated earlier, Joaquin believes that education is the practice of freedom and therefore, each of his pedagogical decisions was designed to help his students experience freedom to the greatest extent possible. That he had authority over his students was never in question; however, the way Joaquin shared his power-with his students made a difference in what and how they learned.

As a critical theorist, Joaquin understands the many ways in which dominant power seeks to constrain educational environments (e.g., through standardized curriculum and testing, what counts as knowledge). Unlike many social studies teachers who design curricula that pass along an undisputed canon of so-called facts, critical theorists like Joaquin recognize the contested nature of such facts and seek to design curricula that put students in the driver's seats of their own learning—learning that encompasses developing a personal point of view and then sharing it with others who may disagree. Kincheloe (2008) reminds us that pedagogy is infused with issues of power: "Any time teachers develop a pedagogy, they are concurrently constructing a political vision. The two acts are inseparable" (p. 9). Joaquin takes a political stand regarding learning and knowledge by encouraging his students to bring their personal experiences and histories into the learning environment and to bring their classroom learning into their personal lives.

In contrast with other teachers and schools who view test scores as a measure of successful learning, Joaquin knows learning is happening when students start intermingling school knowledge and personal knowledge. He told me:

[I]n this era of the kind of assessment and stuff that is sort of mandated, it's it's a difficult counterpoint to that to say 'stop thinking about your grades, stop thinking
about your test scores, start thinking about your learning.' . . . the more that they’re speaking about their learning, the more they’re formulating opinions and and that kind of thing, that’s definitely um putting them on the road towards towards that idea of success and where they’re going with their learning. But I think for me [success is] whenever they start applying their learning and applying what they’re getting outside of the confines of a classroom. Cos we’ve created in our schools this this situation where everything is so contextual that it almost doesn’t exist anywhere else. And um, so when they start doing that, when they start moving things back and forth and kind of start cross pollinating this other stuff, that feels really successful.

Joaquin's pedagogy and use of power highlight agency—his own and that of his students. In traditional hierarchical teacher-student relationships, mutuality is more difficult because teachers are positioned as experts and students as novices; a power relation built around domination and subordination (De Lissovoy, 2010). Freire (1970/2007) referred to this model of teaching and learning as the "banking concept of education" (p. 72). He compared teachers to bank clerks, knowledge to bank deposits, and students to bank accounts. In traditional classrooms, neither the teacher-experts nor the student-novices are actively engaged in the process of constructing knowledge or building relationships. In other words, their agency is constrained. Nieto (1999), like Joaquin, supports Freire's notion that teachers and students are co-investigators of knowledge, asserting that "learner agency is thus at the heart of the active construction of knowledge" (p. 2).

During our interview, Joaquin referenced the influence Paulo Freire has had on his pedagogy and his understanding of power relationships between teachers and students:

[Freire] writes about how the word is something that he sees as almost being just sacrosanct. That power is embedded in the word, knowledge is embedded in the word, and so in order for all parties in the classroom to move forward, including
the instructor, there has to be this sort of open approach to the word, and this sort of questioning and listening and that sort of thing.

Freire (1970/2007) states that dialogue is not possible in the absence of love—that "love is at the same time the foundation of dialogue and dialogue itself" (p. 89). He goes on to say that dialogue and love "cannot exist in a relation of domination" (p. 89) and that dialogue is an act of freedom that must generate other acts of freedom, otherwise it is not love. De Lissovoy (2010) agrees that love is a necessary ingredient for dialogue and that it must take precedence over teacher certitude. Dialogue only serves an emancipatory role in classroom environments, such as Joaquin's, wherein the teacher refuses to claim authority over the final word.

DeLissovoy (2010) asserts: "Dialogue must take place under the sign of equality rather than authority" (p. 213). He recognizes that teacher and student roles are never equal, however, he advocates for the "essential equality" (p. 213) of all human beings—a sensitivity to difference that recognizes sameness "with regard to humanity, agency, and intelligence" (p. 214). De Lissovoy critiques the poststructuralist conception of power adopted by Foucault and Butler in which agency is always tied to relations of power that are limiting. Instead, De Lissovoy suggests that agency is a human potential that pre-exists the poststructuralist subject—that agency is a moment outside of domination. De Lissovoy's views of power and agency are not incommensurable with Allen's (1999). She argues that power-over is a form of power that can be used for the domination or empowerment of others. In other words, teachers such as Joaquin have institutional power-over students, however, this power-over can be used to encourage student agency—to engender students' power-to act in authentic ways. Still, in both
conceptualizations of power, the possibility for domination exists. De Lissovoy, however, offers new ways of thinking about teachers and students as humans first and subjects second—more than objects of teaching and learning, "more than figures of dominance and subjection" (p. 211).

Although I agree with Foucault (1980) and Butler (1993/2011) that power is located within relationships and there is no escaping it, I embrace Allen's (1999) conceptualization of power as taking several separate but interrelated forms. After observing Joaquin and his sixth grade students, I have come to understand what it means for a teacher to share power—to use power-with students in order to create something more participatory and emancipatory than traditional educational roles allow. Joaquin's commitment to relationality is a commitment to empowering his students—a commitment to rejecting traditional educational strategies designed to elicit shallow conformity in favor of an open approach to learning that values student's perspectives on complex issues through reflection and dialogue.

I have come to view Joaquin's commitment to relationality as a commitment to social justice. Bell's (1997) recognition that social justice is both a process and a goal of "full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs" (p. 3) speaks directly to Joaquin's pedagogy. As Simpson (2006) states: "A pedagogical response to social justice demands that instructors clearly state that all lives always matter" (p. 88). Joaquin demonstrated over and over again throughout the year that each and every one of his students was deeply valued as a human being, a student, and a contributor to the learning community.
Sadly, relationships between teachers and students are not the focus of most educational theories and scholarship (Bibby, 2009). Recognizing the ties between Joaquin's commitment to relationality and social justice is therefore a significant move.

Chubbuck and Zembylas (2008) define socially just teaching as a teacher's effort to transform policies and enact pedagogies that improve the learning and life opportunities of typically underserved students while equipping and empowering them to work for a more socially just society themselves. (p. 284).

They add that socially just teaching also encourages "students who are part of the dominant culture . . . [to] embrace their own role as allies in the creation of a more just society" (Chubbuck & Zembylas, 2008, p. 283).

For Joaquin, fostering relationships with students was much more than an empty classroom management strategy. He was committed to relationality—a type of relationship grounded in mutuality, reciprocity, and an understanding of an essential human equality that defies traditional educational hierarchies. Joaquin demonstrated his commitment to relationality through his words, actions, and interactions—through a pedagogy that favored process over product, empowerment over domination. Joaquin did not blindly accept traditional educational practices and roles that subordinate relationality to professionalism or students to teachers. Joaquin's pedagogy was unabashedly political; it recognized the connections between cognition and emotion, emotion and relationship, relationship and learning.

Joaquin understands that classrooms are political terrains and that every choice he makes—from curriculum to pedagogy to classroom rituals—is tied to issues of power, agency, and social justice. Through the application of the Universals of Culture to case
studies, Joaquin's students learned to analyze and appreciate the similarities and differences among the diverse cultures of the world. Through reflection and dialogue, students learned that their points of view matter and that by sharing with one another, they can expand their visions of the world. And through the performance of playful rituals, the emotional connection between and among teacher and students was enhanced, relationships were fostered, and learning became a responsibility and a reward for teacher and students—a joyful experience founded on love, respect, acknowledgement, and living attention.
Chapter Five

"The Apples aren't because we're Hungry": Desire and Student Learning

When I escaped the confines of parochial school and entered a public high school in the fall of 1973, I was liberated from the oppressive environment created by the Catholic school nuns who dominated my educational experience up to that point. The prospects of high school were promising—I could choose from a variety of courses, establish my own schedule, and study with teachers who were educated in their academic field.

My liberation from Catholic school occurred during the turbulence of adolescence when, coincidentally, my father abandoned my family, thereby forcing my mother to return to work and rendering her incapable of paying private school tuition for her seven children. After the strict discipline of my parochial school, the public high school intimidated me. Not only was I subjected daily to students who thought nothing of cursing, smoking, or cutting class, I was confronted with the realization that my economic disadvantage cast me into a less-than-desirable social class. My high school student body was, like me, predominately White; however, my family’s financial situation required me to work, which provided me a partial portal into the lives of my
minority peers with whom I shared a common experience of economic lack in a community that was otherwise overflowing with privilege.

I rejoiced in my newfound freedom—I made new friends and discovered, for the first time, that I could be academically invigorated. In my freshman year, I took an introductory course in mass communication where I caught the attention of my teacher, Mr. Martin, who invited me to join the high school newspaper staff in my sophomore year. In my junior year I was awarded the coveted position of Feature Page Editor and Mr. Martin began grooming me to take over as Editor-in-Chief the following year. Mr. Martin assured me that the prestigious promotion would ensure my acceptance into the School of Journalism at San Francisco State University. Life was good, at least for a while. Unfortunately, it was becoming increasingly difficult for me to juggle my responsibilities at home, at school, and at work. I began to cut class, although I did not fail any of my courses and I never missed a newspaper deadline. I loved high school and even though I had earned enough credits to graduate early in my senior year, the prospect of becoming Editor-in-Chief of the high school newspaper was my greatest aspiration.

Late one May afternoon, with just two weeks remaining in my junior year, I was summoned to my counselor’s office—the counselor was a woman I had never met before that day. I went immediately to her office, where I was told to take a seat in a large waiting room. As I sat there perusing college information pamphlets, I wondered why I had never before been aware of this vast resource of information. I was nervous, although I was not sure why: I had never been in trouble at school and from my perspective everything was going according to plan.
I felt a sense of relief when I was invited into the counselor’s office and I saw Mr. Martin sitting there. I immediately relaxed, assuming that this was his way of formally telling me that I had been selected as the next Editor-in-Chief. However, the counselor, a complete stranger, told me that Mr. Martin had asked her to mediate this meeting because he had some news that I might not want to hear. The stranger told me that I would not be the next Editor-in-Chief; that Mr. Martin was sorry, but he had selected another student who was, in his opinion, "less talented, but more responsible" than me.

I was devastated. My heart began to beat rapidly and I felt sweat burst from every pore on my teenage body. Mr. Martin sat there quietly, staring at the floor. I, too, remained silent. The counselor asked if there was anything I wanted to say, and I shook my head to indicate "No." I was afraid that if I tried to speak that I would cry and for some reason I didn’t want the adults to see me break down.

As I left the counseling office that afternoon, I felt as though my life was over. No previous experience—not even my father’s departure—had ever caused me such intense grief. Never before had I felt such a profound sense of disappointment and personal failure. I trudged home from school that day in a daze of disbelief. I do not remember much that followed, but I know I did not attend the newspaper class for the rest of the semester. I never again spoke to Mr. Martin and he never made any attempts to speak to me.

I was completely disillusioned and with only two weeks left of my junior year I made the decision to petition for early graduation. I gave up my desire to pursue a bachelor’s degree in journalism, believing that I could not handle the rigors of college
life. I was too young at the time to understand the significance of that choice and since neither my parents nor my older siblings had attended a four-year college, my mother simply encouraged me to find a good, steady job.

I felt anger and resentment toward Mr. Martin for many years. Although I eventually came to understand his reasons for giving the editorship to another student, I was upset that he had not said anything to me. Why didn’t he ask me why I was skipping class or tell me that my poor attendance was threatening to jeopardize my promotion to Editor-in-Chief? I realize that Mr. Martin had a lot of students; however, there was only one person he had promised to promote and that person was me. Certainly he could have taken ten minutes out of his day to express his concern.

I graduated from high school at the age of 17 and a friend's father helped me get a job at an insurance company, marking the beginning of a 25-year career in the corporate world. I cared little about the insurance industry, yet my incessant insecurities over my lack of education fed a personal pursuit for perfection that sent me soaring up the corporate ladder. I discovered early on that my work ethic and enterprising spirit—which were honed in parochial school and heightened as a result of my high school disappointment—made me a valuable commodity to be exploited by an endless string of enterprising capitalists, and I was willing to play their game.

I allowed one disappointment in high school to seal my fate as a failure in the pursuit of my desires. And I know I am not alone. The world is full of people who never come close to realizing their potential; who never have a supportive teacher who encourages their blossoming talent. I have often thought that one person could have
made all the difference in the world to me. If only there had been one caring teacher who could have reassured me that the loss of that coveted promotion was a sad but significant stepping-stone in my journey through life, my career path might have been very different.

I started taking night classes soon after high school and over a decade later I finally obtained my bachelors degree. Late in my undergraduate studies, I read Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and, reflecting on my own educational history, I became aware of the connection between education and freedom. As Freire (1970/2007) tells us:

"Freedom is acquired by conquest, not by gift. It must be pursued constantly and responsibly. Freedom is not an ideal located outside of man [or woman]; nor is it an idea which becomes myth. It is rather the indispensable condition for the quest for human completion." (p. 47)

Freire (1970/2007) reminded me that without freedom, we cannot live authentically. Inauthentic living occurs when we internalize dominant interests and ideologies; we become "spectators" in life rather than "actors" (Freire, 1970/2007, p. 48). It took many years and several failed attempts before I finally garnered the courage to walk away from my corporate career. I finally reached a point where staying felt like a jail sentence to an inauthentic life. When I resigned from my position and enrolled in a master's program in communication studies, my deepest desire was to help young people on the thresholds of their careers develop the skills they need to successfully fulfill their dreams.

Through this ethnographic field study, I have endeavored to forsake the role of the spectator and assume the position of witness/actor. I returned to secondary school to see if things had changed—to see if advances in consciousness, knowledge, and technology
had improved K-12 education. I wanted to bear witness to teacher and student experiences in school—to tell their stories and to learn from them. According to Boler (1999), a spectator occupies a position of privilege that is marked by "distance and separation" (p. 184). A spectator sees events through "inscribed habits of (in)attention" (p. 180)—those beliefs, values, and assumptions we have acquired through our on-going education, both inside and outside classroom walls. Whereas cornerstones of spectating include "static truth and fixed certainty" (Boler, 1999, p. 186), witnesses have a moral obligation to examine our relationship to and implication in the lives of others; to recognize that situations are contextual, dynamic, and defy closure (Boler, 1999). To become a witness, I had to acknowledge the many ways my histories and positionalities influenced my interpretation and evaluation of what I saw, heard, and felt.

In the forward to Freire's (1970/2007) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Richard Shaull writes:

> There is no such thing as a neutral educational process. Education either functions as an instrument that is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it becomes "the practice of freedom," the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world. (p. 34)

There was a time after high school when I thought my education was over—that I had gone as far as my talents could take me. But the force of my desire to learn and grow pulled me back to school and it was in school that I was assigned Paulo Freire's influential book and my passion for teaching was ignited. Although I have been a teacher for only nine years, in less than a decade I have experienced significant growth—both personally and professionally. Much of my growth occurred during the course of this
field study while I was abundantly immersed in the processes of teaching and learning: I contemporaneously observed Julie, Dolores, and Joaquin; took graduate courses; and taught undergraduates. During this fruitful period, I began to reconcile my desires as a student with my desires as a teacher, and to grow closer to revealing the authentic self that was hidden by shame for much of my life.

Although I have always been affected by my teachers and my students, it is only in recent years that I have invited my students to openly share their thoughts, feelings, and desires about course content, classroom communication, and the relationships we are creating both inside and outside of class. I now allow myself to be openly affected by my students—what they say, do, think, and feel—and most of my students (although sometimes reluctantly at first) allow themselves to be affected by me. Parker Palmer (1993) suggests that teachers who desire to know and be known by their students do so "not simply for the sake of warm feelings, but to do the difficult things that teaching and learning require" (p. xvii). My experiences in classrooms—as a student, a teacher, and a researcher—have taught me that there is no shame in being affected by others. For it is through affect that potential is unleashed (Massumi, 2002).

My observations, interviews, and focus groups at IMSD taught me that Julie, Dolores, Joaquin, and their students affected one another in subtle and significant ways. In what follows, I offer a final portrait of one of my last days at IMSD when I had the opportunity to observe all three teachers and their students in the same space. I then examine teacher and student desire—a "pervasive quality" (Eisner, 1998, p. 104) that was present in all three classrooms I observed at IMSD. I conclude with an assessment of the
energetic force of desire and a discussion of how the circulation of desire in classrooms can empower teachers and students to become agents capable of creating social justice both inside and outside school.

A Portrait of an All-School Meeting

It is Friday, April 30th. There are only three weeks remaining in the academic year and Dolores' class is just coming to an end. She and I have arranged to complete our second interview after the all-school meeting, which is scheduled to start in ten minutes downstairs. Dolores instructs her students to line up single-file and several students ask her what the meeting is about. She smiles and says, "It's a surprise." A man I have never seen before enters Dolores' classroom and tells her it is time to go. Dolores instructs her students to follow her down the stairs to the auditorium. I trail along behind them.

The auditorium is configured like a large theatre with a sizeable stage at the front and enough upholstered seats to fit approximately five hundred people. Portable folding chairs have been set up at the ends of each aisle today to accommodate teachers and staff. Dolores claims one of the portable chairs and tells me to sit next to her. As I relax into my seat, my senses are overwhelmed by the frenzy of activity in this crowded space. The smell of sweat, sweet perfume, and men's cologne assault me. I look around the room and notice that Joaquin is seated toward the front of the theatre with a group of students I don't recognize. I see Julie standing at the base of the stage; she is smiling as she talks with another teacher. The room is bubbling with anticipation. I overhear several students talking and from what I can tell, the purpose of the meeting is a mystery.
Several students—many of whom I recognize from Julie’s class—are standing on the stage near a large table overflowing with a wide assortment of apples. Dylan—the lighthearted young man who frequently skipped or danced into Julie's classroom—takes his place behind the podium and speaks into the microphone: "The apples aren't because we're hungry. They are here to celebrate our wonderful staff members!" As if on cue, a burst of applause fills the auditorium.

Dylan introduces Denise and Ed, "the head girl and the head guy." I recognize Denise and Ed from Passages presentations I attended recently, although I don’t know either of them. There is more applause as Denise calls out enthusiastically: "We want to appreciate the teachers and staff, the lunch ladies, and the custodians.

Ed squeezes next to Denise so he can speak into the microphone: "Everyone here who makes IMSD the place it is!"

Denise indicates that Maya—another one of Julie's students—will be handing out awards to the janitorial staff. Maya climbs the stairs to the stage and after taking her place behind the podium, she tells everyone, "When you see the janitorial staff in the halls, you need to say 'Hi' and show your appreciation." She then recognizes the janitorial staff by name, each of which is followed by loud applause.

Ed and Denise take turns recognizing different staff by category and individual names—office staff, lunch staff, teaching assistants, custodians, support staff, and counselors. As each member of the IMSD community is acknowledged, they walk up on the stage and are invited to select an apple. Throughout the presentation, applause is heard. Students demonstrate their most notable enthusiasm for the lunch staff.
When it is time to acknowledge the teachers, Ed asks students to hold their applause until the end of the assembly. Ed starts introducing teachers by name and as they climb the stairs to the stage, students disregard the instruction and clap anyway. When Joaquin's name is called, students of all ages jump to their feet, and hoot and holler "Rey-Es, Rey-Es, Rey-Es". I see many of the sixth graders I know cheering for their teacher with fierce appreciation and I am overcome with emotion. Joaquin walks casually to the stage, smiles humbly at the crowd, chooses an apple, and returns to his seat. Three other male teachers receive a significant amount of applause; however, none elicit the same rock star reception as Joaquin. Dolores leans over and whispers in my ear that the male teachers are the most popular at the school. She also tells me that IMSD students recently created a continuum for the faculty ranking them based on humor and seriousness, and that she thinks she falls somewhere in the middle. When Julie's name is called, there is some applause, but nothing like the ovations received by her four male peers. She smiles as she climbs the stairs and selects her apple. When Dolores' name is called, I applaud, however, the lack of student acknowledgement and praise is noticeable. As Dolores vacates her seat to claim her apple, I feel my heart sink into my stomach. As a teacher and someone who has spent an entire year in each of these three teachers' classrooms, it is impossible for me not to compare the reactions they received from their students and to wonder how each is feeling at this very moment.

After all the teachers and staff are acknowledged, the lights go out and we are shown a video montage of everyday life at IMSD. A picture of Joaquin flashes on the
screen and students cheer, clap, and holler their approval once again. A few other teachers receive some applause, but not to the deafening degree of Joaquin's.

At the conclusion of the video, Ed invites students to line up and give a tribute to any or all of their teachers. Immediately, dozens of students jump to their feet and, standing behind the tall podium, acknowledge their teachers for "being nice," "listening," or "not flipping out when students went wild." A Latino male acknowledges Julie for "challenging" him. Over a dozen students honor Joaquin.

Desire: A Pervasive Quality in Classrooms

As I looked back on the year I spent at IMSD observing these three hardworking teachers and their diverse students, I struggled to find one characteristic or quality they had in common that would illuminate the imperfect process of teaching and learning that is so often sustained by successes, fraught with failures, and laden with longings for something better, deeper, and more transformative. Although Julie, Dolores, and Joaquin each taught different classes with distinctive course objectives, curricula, and pedagogical philosophies, these teachers and their students were united by one driving force: Desire.

During class observations and interviews, each teacher shared with me specific desires they had for themselves, their students, and their classrooms. Although there were some desires that all three teachers had in common—such as their wish to de-center themselves in the classroom and share power with their students—most of their desires were finely nuanced and revealed salient and often contradictory aspects of each teacher's personal and professional wants, needs, and commitments. For example, in addition to Julie's desire to help her students prepare for and pass the annual AP exam, she was eager
to coach students and help them "find intrinsic value in what they're doing." Dolores' desire to balance emotions and minimize chaos in the classroom was complicated by her yearning for a "democratic classroom where students can speak their minds." And while Joaquin was deeply committed to building relationships with students and making learning fun, he also welcomed conflict in his classroom. He told me: "You want to discomfort [students] a little bit, but you don't want it to be so upsetting that it distracts from their ability to really understand what is going on."

Desire in educational scholarship often highlights the sexual and libidinal—as in the case of sexual harassment or consensual teacher-student improprieties (e.g., Albrecht-Crane, 2003; Bracher, 2002; Gallop, 1992, 1998). However, Albrecht-Crane (2003) urges us to look beyond the "dangerous and contentious" (p. 567) aspects of desire in educational contexts and to recognize desire as affect's economy: "an energy, a subfield of sorts, that permeates what we do and who we are to the extent that it underwrites and enables existence as such" (p. 566). For Albrecht-Crane, as well as Deleuze and Guattari (1987), desire is an immanent force that mobilizes affect.

Of significance to Deleuze and Guattari (1987) are the interactions from which desires emerge:

Desire is never separable from complex assemblages that necessarily tie into molecular levels, from micro-formations already shaping postures, attitudes, perceptions, expectations, semiotic systems, etc. Desire is never an undifferentiated instinctual energy, but itself results from a highly developed, engineered setup rich in interactions. (p. 215)

For Deleuze and Guattari, assemblages represent the "intermingling" (p. 82) of bodies, discourses, and actions. These assemblages both constitute desire and are constituted by
desire. Deleuze and Guattari state that assemblages take two primary forms: content and expression. In a classroom, for example, these assemblages would include institutional policies and practices (e.g., curriculum and assessments), the ways individual teachers and students enact them (e.g., pedagogical strategies and communication norms or violations), individual and collective attitudes and beliefs about them (e.g., agreement with or critiques of policies and practices), as well as interactions with people outside the classroom (e.g., other teachers and students, administrative personnel, parents, and members of the community).

These assemblages, according to Deleuze and Guattari (1987), form a recursive loop of desire: the assemblages impact teacher and student desires and teacher and student desires impact the assemblages. Take Joaquin for example. The curriculum IMSD entrusted him to teach impacted his desires (i.e., he wanted to make sure his students learned the Universals of Culture so they would have a strong foundation for their future at IMSD) and his personal desires impacted his curriculum (i.e., he was concerned about human rights and social justice therefore he built those issues into his curriculum). Joaquin was unique because he also took his students' desires into consideration when creating his curriculum. As he mentioned to me during our interview:

I also have put sort of a social justice and human rights kind of um spin on a lot of these things because I think—part of it's because it's it's stuff that I'm passionate about, but also because the student culture here has kind of created that um that desire for human rights issues and social justice issues. So I feel like, well, if we're gonna be talking about child soldiers and the invisible children and things like that [in all-school meetings] then we should start thinking about human rights issues immediately like and get [students] sort of addressing them.
Joaquin's decision to include human rights and social justice issues in his curriculum was driven as much by his students' desires as his own. This demonstrates how the assemblage of IMSD and its students—together with their multiple (and in this case, compatible) desires—intermingled with Joaquin's own desires to impact the decisions he made regarding his course curriculum. In the process of its unfolding, Joaquin's curriculum created new assemblages (based on the communication between and among Joaquin and his students, their emotional and intellectual responses to the content and to one another, etc.), which created new desires, both individual and collective.

If desire is affect's economy—as Albrecht-Crane (2003) asserts—and affect alerts us to potential—as Massumi (2002) asserts—then it stands to reason that desire not only mobilizes affect, it mobilizes potential. Understanding desire from this perspective is promising; it reminds us that although teachers may have desires they have heretofore been unable to manifest in their classrooms, those desires represent virtual potential that is latent but not lost. Such an understanding of desire's transformative properties offers hope in pedagogical situations that on the surface may appear unworkable. After all, what is hope but the expectation of obtaining (or actualizing) a cherished desire?

To gain a full understanding of desire's potential in teaching and learning, it is important to recognize that it is not an emotion (Zembylas, 2007b); rather, desire "drives" affect (Albrecht-Crane, 2003). Desire leads us to the "seeping edge" (Massumi, 2002, p. 43) of affect where the virtual and the actual meet; and it is in this space and moment of meeting that potential is captured as well as foreclosed (Massumi, 2002). Whereas affect is a ubiquitous and invisible energy that mobilizes potential, it is desire that mobilizes
affect. Desire, then, precedes potential and emotion; it is a type of precognition of the possible with all the indeterminacy of potential. To put it plainly, when we admit to a desire, we imagine an outcome, but the path to its realization is not completely imaginable—there are aspects of its fulfillment that are inconceivable to us. Whereas "the possible" is understood as something thinkable or doable based on current conditions, potential is absolute openness. Although everyday connotations of possibility are expansive, in Massumi's hands possibility becomes a form of closure determined by what is knowable and imaginable. Potential, in contrast, invites the unknowable and unimaginable into the mix. Massumi (2002) defines potential as "the immanence of a thing to its still indeterminate variation" (p. 9).

As precursors to potential, teacher and student desires can mobilize learning. Following Deleuze and Guattari, Zembylas (2007b) views desire as an "immanent force" (p. 338) that produces teachers and students; teaching and learning. Zembylas understands desire as a "process of becoming" (p. 338) that is often ignored in educational contexts that relate desire to affect, and affect to emotions, and understand emotions as separate from and disruptive to rationality. Zembylas proposes a "pedagogy of desire" wherein "desire is not outside the relations between teachers and students; it is a productive force that constitutes being-in-the-world and produces teachers and students as creative, imaginative agents" (p. 340). He states:

A pedagogy of desire dissociates itself from instrumental purposes of education in order to embrace neglected aspects of learning and teaching such as joy, pleasure, happiness, and transgression; it educates visionaries, not bureaucrats. (p. 340)
Zembylas (2007b) does not prescribe specific pedagogical strategies for teachers, but asserts that when teachers and students open up and share their desires, new relations are formed and from them emerge new pedagogies with indeterminate potential. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) and Massumi (2002) help us understand that desire, as an antecedent to affect and potential, privileges the present moment of classroom life. As I argued in earlier chapters, affect is omnipresent—it simultaneously permeates the virtual and the actual yet remains unrecognizable to human beings until judgments are made and experienced as thought and emotion. It is through the bodily sensation created by the interconnected processes of thought and emotion that affect becomes known and potential is fostered or foreclosed (Massumi, 2002). It is therefore only in the present-actual moment, through present-actual corporeal bodies, that the indeterminacies of desire can be channeled and potential realized. When desires are ignored in educational contexts—through the uncritical transmission of dominant canons of knowledge, traditional hierarchical teacher-student interactions, or the subordination of emotion to reason—potential is therefore foreclosed.

A pedagogy of desire "recognizes that learning discourses and performances are not absolutely determining [and] can begin to provide teachers and students with spaces for reconstituting their relations" (Zembylas, 2007b, p. 343). Although Zembylas rejects Lacan's theory of desire because it is based on a psychoanalytic approach that views desire as something illusive and never achieved, I believe that Lacan's theory of four discourses is fruitful when thinking through the different ways in which Julie, Dolores, and Joaquin each negotiate desire through their classroom communication with students.
When applied to educational contexts, all four discourses—master, university, hysteric, and analyst—recognize that teacher and student desires intermingle and form unique assemblages in the present moment of classroom life.

For education to be successful, Bracher (2002) tells us "it must engage the identities and desires of students, teachers, and the government and public who pay the bills" (p. 94). Bracher examines four common pedagogical strategies—authoritarian, establishment, resistance, and critical—through the lens of Lacan's four discourses in order to explore "the various forms and educational consequences of the dialectic between the teacher's desires and the students' desires" (p. 103). Lacan's four discourses are based on the premise that recognition is the most basic of human desires (Bracher, 2002). Bracher's explication of these different discourses and pedagogical approaches help illuminate the three classrooms I observed at IMSD and offer a starting point from which to examine the various ways a teacher's desires can be in opposition to or complicit with students' desires and the impact such desires have on student learning.

I look first to interview transcripts to identify each teacher's explicit desires for her or his classroom, and then I look to my classroom observations to explicate how those desires were either mobilized or dismissed in the classroom.

**Julie's classroom: An example of establishment pedagogy.** At the root of Julie's desires for her classroom was a drive to help her students learn. During our interview, she shared that she wanted her students to learn facts, how to take notes, and how to think and write in an historical way. Concurrent with Julie's concrete academic desires were a set of abstract desires for her students to find meaning in what they were
learning; to develop mutual respect; and to participate in a more inclusive, interactive, student-centered pedagogy. Although in theory Julie's concrete and abstract desires were not mutually exclusive, in practice it was difficult for Julie to unify them. As discussed in chapter two, performativity imposed significant pressure on Julie to perform; pressures that were multiplied by the time-bound nature of the Advanced Placement course and annual exam. According to Julie, the significant amount of material she needed to cover and the limited amount of time she had made it difficult for her to incorporate more interactive and student-centered pedagogies like the unstructured Socratic Seminars she and her students enjoyed so much.

Julie may not have created an inclusive, interactive, student-centered classroom the year I observed her; however, her admission that she had "doubt about the whole set up in high stakes testing" and that she was "still struggling" indicated to me that her desire was alive and active; that potential for change was immanent. Bracher's (2002) establishment pedagogy offers a way of thinking about the role desire played in Julie's Advanced Placement World History classroom and provides an opening for examining alternative approaches that could be more empowering for both Julie and her students.

Establishment pedagogy, as conceptualized by Bracher (2002), is based on Lacan's discourse of the university. This pedagogical strategy is driven by a teacher's desire for her students to "identify not with certain ideals or values but with an established system of knowledge, know-how, and/or practices" (Bracher, 2002, pp. 106-107). Teachers who practice Lacan's university discourse view themselves as transmitters of knowledge that they have mastered, but not created themselves (Alcorn,
Establishment pedagogy fulfills many teachers' desires for mastery of knowledge; a desire they try to pass along to their students (Bracher, 2002). Bracher (2002) asserts that although establishment pedagogy may fulfill a student's desire to master knowledge, this desire for mastery may be driven by the social value they believe it will accrue for them rather than a desire to grapple with "human needs or solving problems" (p. 107). Bracher argues that a student's desire to master knowledge—as opposed to critiquing or constructing it—may have limited value outside the academic setting within which it is acquired.

Establishment pedagogy is successful when a teacher is able to pass her desire for knowledge mastery onto her students (Bracher, 2002). On the surface, this pedagogy can appear empowering to teachers and students because of its potential to fulfill their mutual desire for mastery (Bracher, 2002). In other words, this pedagogy enables both teacher and students to achieve the basic human desire for recognition—the teacher receives recognition for possessing the knowledge her students desire and students receive recognition for acquiring it (Bracher, 2002). Some students enter classrooms already possessing a personal desire to master knowledge, while others are persuaded by the teacher (through her enthusiasm, knowledge, or, in the case of Julie's AP students, through the promise of a worthwhile reward). Other students, however, may not share the teacher's desire for mastery. These students will either fight against the teacher's program or repress their own desires while performing the necessary requirements of the course in order to obtain the reward (Bracher, 2002). Students who resist a teacher's push for mastery may do so because they find the acquisition of dominant knowledge
Those who repress their own desires in favor of their teacher's prescribed program may pay a significant price for performing "the good student" (Bracher, 2002, p. 98), for example, when what they are learning devalues or ignores their identities, cultures, experiences, or histories (Bracher, 2002). As Bracher (2002) states:

Students, too, desire to protect and defend the identity-bearing systems of knowledge/belief that they bring to the classroom. This desire often produces a resistance—sometimes overt and conscious, other times tacit and unconscious—to embracing, understanding, or even entertaining the systems of knowledge that their teachers are trying to impart to them. To give up their knowledge or to see it ignored or criticized involves relinquishing the identity-supporting mastery, agency, and significance provided by the knowledge. (p. 97)

While it is reasonable to assume that most, if not all, of Julie's students were desirous of mastering the AP curriculum considering they each made a conscious decision to take the course, it was evident from my observations that Julie's students had other desires. Although Julie did not explicitly encourage her students to make connections between the course readings and their personal experiences, the students' enthusiastic participation in the first Socratic Seminar demonstrated their basic desire to share and be recognized for their unique cultural perspectives. During the first seminar, several students revealed their basic desire for recognition. Pilar, a Latina student, questioned the veracity of the "stories" they were studying by saying "Some of us don't know our histories. … people create these stories. … we weren't there so we don't know if it's true." Both Salvadore, a Latino student, and Maylene, an Asian student, indicated during the conversation that the histories they were studying did not resonate with them. Zaara, a Middle-Eastern student, commented that "ideas are imposed on us."
Trissa, the only Black student in the class, attempted to rationalize the importance of history when she stated: "People want to feel self-worth so they identify with what their ancestors did."

It was clear that Antonio, a Latino student, did not find Trissa's rationale compelling when he responded sardonically: "Like the Alamo."

Emma, a White female student, acknowledged the gender bias in much of history when she stated: "For a long time it was written only by men to favor their side."

As the first Socratic Seminar illustrates, Julie's students—the majority of whom were racial minorities—embraced the opportunity to express their desires for recognition. Although most days these students went along with Julie's pedagogy—dutifully taking notes, memorizing material from their text, and writing essays that followed the AP rubric—it was clear from their engagement in the first Socratic Seminar and from their comments during the focus group that their desires exceeded the mere mastery of the approved canon of knowledge. Their words and actions demonstrated a desire to reflect on the relevance of the curriculum to their personal lives and cultural experiences, to critique knowledge claims, and to forge relationships with one another. As Alcorn (2002) emphasizes, personal experiences are of little value in the discourse of the university, which values "facts, evidence, and logic" (Alcorn, 2002, p. 83).

Julie's establishment pedagogy, undergirded by the discourse of the university, mandated that students "flatten their personal desires in order to receive knowledge" (Alcorn, 2002, p. 84). By asking students to repress all other desires in order to master a dominant canon of knowledge, establishment teachers delimit the circulation of desire...
and its attendant potential in its many forms including learning, relationships, and the creation of new, more liberating and democratic pedagogies.

**Dolores' classroom: An example of authoritarian pedagogy.** During our two interviews, Dolores expressed many desires for her students and for herself. For the most part, Dolores' desires for her students related to specific skills, dispositions, or commitments she hoped to teach them. For example, she wanted her students to: think for themselves; know where to locate information; express opinions supported by evidence; develop an open perspective that demonstrated cultural awareness and sensitivity; identify their biases; and learn to collaborate rather than debate. Additionally, Dolores shared many desires she had for herself, including: starting each day anew; being respected by her students; modeling agency for her students; balancing her emotions; and wanting her students and the general public to think she was a good teacher. As I discussed in chapter three, many of Dolores' desires for herself and her students conflicted, which made it difficult for her to actualize them. Emotions—her own and her students'—often interfered with Dolores' ability to accomplish the teaching and learning goals she had established for her class. Ironically, Dolores' desire to "do a good job" led to negative emotions—anxiety, fear, and frustration—that not only made her other desires difficult to achieve, but those emotions also negatively impacted her students' potential to learn.

Although Dolores was unable to achieve many of her expressed desires during the year I observed her, the sheer number of desires she articulated revealed to me that she was an individual whose commitment to teaching was both earnest and resolute. Dolores'
desire to do a good job and to be perceived as a good teacher likely played a role in her
decision to welcome me into her classroom—demonstrating to me that she was open and
receptive to trying new approaches to teaching and learning that could generate new,
potentially less conflicting, desires for herself and her students. In order to understand
how Dolores could mobilize desire in her classroom to increase her students' potential to
learn, it is first necessary to examine the way Dolores managed desire in her tenth grade
Cultural Studies classroom.

During the year I observed her, Dolores' pedagogy could best be described as
authoritarian. Bracher (2002) conceptualizes authoritarian pedagogy through the lens of
Lacan's discourse of the master (Bracher, 2002). Lacan's theory of the master discourse
highlights the master's desire for students to identify with the master's beliefs and values
(Bracher, 2002). According to Alcorn (2002): "The discourse of the master circulates the
master's desire in social space, but as it functions, it also restricts desire. Only those
desires given value by the master's symptoms circulate" (p. 72). Although some students'
desires may be in alignment with their teacher's beliefs and values, authoritative
pedagogy is often experienced as alienating for students who are expected to reject, or at
the very least repress, their own desires in favor of the master's (Bracher, 2002).

Teachers who adopt the discourse of the master often assume a defensive stance
in order to protect their beliefs and values (Alcorn, 2002). While Alcorn (2002) suggests
that a master's defensiveness is often masking a fear about her own "incompleteness as a
subject" (p. 72), Bracher (2002) maintains that teachers become defensive or aggressive
when they "feel threatened or deprived of recognition that they believe is their due" (p.
The authoritarian teacher, more than any other, is motivated by the basic human desire for recognition (Bracher, 2002). In their quest for recognition, authoritarian teachers often "lose sight of the aims of education" (Bracher, 2002, p. 105) and direct their efforts toward gaining attention by trying to impress students with their charisma, knowledge, or even through acts of aggression (Bracher, 2002). As Bracher points out, a teacher's aggressive behavior may generate negative feelings in students, however, many authoritarian teachers view negative recognition as better than no recognition at all.

Alcorn (2002) indicates that masters have a significant amount of control in the social situations over which they preside:

Because desire can never be fully repressed, spontaneous and open relationships with others are threatening to the master, and relations to others are often controlled by use of polarized value terms taught by the master. Masters preside over social situations where there are good others and bad others. Bad others are enemies; their speech is evil and false; it threatens the social order. Good others are those who, like Orwell's citizens in *1984*, repeat Big Brother's slogans with happiness and conviction. (p. 74)

Although masters have the power to circulate desire, Alcorn makes clear that authoritative and defensive declarations "impede the circulation and understanding of human desire" (p. 55). As Bracher (2002) laments, authoritarian pedagogy (consciously or unconsciously) often instills in students a passive resignation to authority that renders them ill equipped to deal with problems in the world outside the classroom.

Dolores' desire for control and order catalyzed an authoritative approach to pedagogy that routinely disregarded her students' desires for an open and dialogic classroom. Dolores believed that control was necessary and important in her classroom; therefore, she became upset when her beliefs and values were challenged by her students.
For example, during our interview Dolores expressed a desire to share power with her students, however, during my visits to her classroom I observed that students who disrupted the order were often punished. Dolores admitted that she often had to take the power back from her students. As she told me: "I think there's a lot of times power sharing is happening, but there's other times when I have to rip it back because I feel like it's not in control."

During the focus group at the end of the year, Raul and Emilio both indicated that Dolores had labeled them as "bad" and that once she did that, there was nothing they could do to change her mind. Several other students stated that Dolores did not respect or value their opinions. For example, Juan bemoaned: "The class is a bit one-sided at times. The teacher will go on and on without considering our opinions."

Roger nodded his head in agreement and added: "We are disregarded."

Danyelle offered insight into the moments when Dolores became defensive and argumentative: "I think the communication between students is better than the communication with our teacher because with students you can say what's on your mind and the teacher takes it personal and we tend to argue a lot."

Sam shed some light on why the communication among students was better than it was with their teacher: "They're at your level and the teacher is at another level."

Desi indicated that despite Dolores' lack of interest in hearing students' opinions, she liked hearing what her peers had to say: "I think we have a lot of really good ideas, like when we did our business plans, we often piggybacked on each other's ideas."
Several students expressed interest in working with partners and groups. Roger declared that he felt he was "much more proficient when working with a partner" than alone.

Juan added: "Communicating with other students is very helpful because they can help you with what you don't understand."

Roger took the opportunity to offer a suggestion: "I'd split up the class into semi-groups and throughout the year you are responsible to each other and pulling your own weight."

The students' comments and suggestions during the focus group illuminated their desires for a more dialogic classroom where they could work together and openly communicate with one another. Interestingly, during one of our interviews Dolores expressed a desire for collaboration; however, she understood collaboration merely as a positive alternative to debate. Collaborative learning, however, involves much more than getting along or reaching a consensus. As Nieto (1999) suggests:

Collaborative learning is based on several related principles, and two are especially central to our discussion here: that creating a more equal status among students at different levels of achievement can result in higher achievement for all; and that working on common problems enhances interethnic understanding and solidarity. (p. 94)

Nieto emphasizes that collaboration in educational contexts reinforces the connection between student learning and relationships by encouraging students to share and learn from each other's different backgrounds and skills.

Dolores' authoritarian pedagogy, motivated by the discourse of the master, privileged her own desires over those of her students (Alcorn, 2002; Bracher, 2002).
During my observations, Dolores frequently encouraged her students to think critically about course content; however, she never initiated discussions about the classroom climate or invited her students to weigh in on the type of classroom they desired to create. Dolores not only avoided talking to her students about their personal desires as learners, citizens, and human beings, she often ignored student desires that were relevant to the current lesson, expectations for an assignment, or a grade they received on homework.

Although Dolores did not inquire into her students' desires, they often shared what was on their minds, even if it got them in trouble. The students' willingness to question Dolores' practices (for example, the day Juan told Dolores she was a bad teacher for not grading their business plans in a timely fashion) demonstrates Lacan's discourse of the hysteric—a form of discourse that does not carry as much power as master or university discourse, however, "the hysteric responds to the master's lack with a demand for something more" (Alcorn, 2002, p. 75). The master typically tries to silence the discourse of the hysteric by labeling it as "bad." In Dolores' classroom, attempts by Raul and Emilio to assert their agency and proclaim their desires were met with reprimands, punishments, and "polarized value terms" (Alcorn, 2002, p. 74) they were unable to shake.

Democracy "requires that all subjects freely speak their desires and that all subjects listen non-defensively, seeking to find where and how blockages in desire can be set free by more and better talk" (Alcorn, 2002, p. 76). Understanding desire as a precursor to affect helps us recognize how interfering with students' desires in the classroom can negatively impact their potential to learn. As Alcorn reminds us, in order
for desire to have transformative potential, it must circulate between and among people (Alcorn, 2002). The master discourse—with its unidirectional flow of desire from the teacher to the students—cuts off the circulation of desire in a classroom. The discourse of the hysteric, however, has the power to shake up the order of things and get desire circulating (Alcorn, 2002). The hysteric reminds the master that others have desires they are longing to share.

**Joaquin's classroom: An example of critical pedagogy.** When I interviewed Joaquin at the end of the year, he identified himself as a critical theorist. By that time, I had already concluded from my observations of his class that Joaquin's pedagogy was designed to cultivate the development of his students' critical consciousness. During my interview with Joaquin, the desires he had for his students implicitly revealed his commitments to critical pedagogy. For example, Joaquin expressed a desire to help students: develop their analytical skills; question society's assumptions; critique their privilege; name things they do not know but want to know; maximize their potential; think out loud; express opinions; integrate their personal experiences into what they are learning; "study things for their own sake" because they are worth thinking and knowing about; and develop a love of lifelong learning. Joaquin also shared many desires he had for his teaching practice, including: being responsive to and reassuring students as they develop their identities; providing students with emotional support; helping students build their confidence; building relationships with students; treating all students equitably; adjusting to each student's individual needs; and fostering "profound" moments. Joaquin
also indicated that although many teachers avoid it, he never wanted to stop reflecting on his teaching practice.

Joaquin mentioned to me that he was inspired by Paulo Freire; however, he acknowledged that some of Freire's ideas were "a little abstract and hard to apply in a practical way." Despite the theoretical nature of Freire's philosophy, Joaquin found creative ways to animate Freire's concepts. Joaquin energized concrete moments of classroom life with activities that promoted critical thinking, dialogue, reflection, and relationality. Although Joaquin's desires for his students and his teaching practice were multifaceted and complex, he fulfilled most, if not all, of them. Each of Joaquin's desires in some way reflected his commitment to create an empowering learning experience for his students that maximized their potential.

In critical pedagogy—the pedagogical approach Bracher (2002) connects to Lacan's discourse of the analyst—"teachers identify with their students' desire for identity" (Bracher, 2002, p. 111) and endeavor "to help them develop their full potentials" (Bracher, 2002, p. 110). Critical pedagogy is driven by a teacher's desire for students to become empowered agents capable of achieving social justice (Bracher, 2002). Bracher distinguishes the role desire plays in critical pedagogy when he tells us that in the other pedagogical modes teachers desire that their students identify with some aspect of the teacher's identity, such as the teacher's ideals, values, or enjoyments (authoritarian pedagogy), the teacher's knowledge or belief system (establishment pedagogy), or the teacher's lack of or desire for a particular identity (resistance pedagogy). Whereas the latter three desires involve practices that, in benefiting the teacher, may fail to help or may even harm the students, critical pedagogy's desire entails practices that are, strictly speaking, satisfying to the teacher only insofar as they benefit the students. Thus critical pedagogy's desire entails the importance of avoiding the imposition of the teacher's ideals, values, beliefs, desires, or enjoyments on the students. (p. 111)
Teachers who adopt the discourse of the analyst through critical pedagogy help their students recognize and name their own desires (Alcorn, 2002). For Lacan, the analyst discourse is the least defensive of the four discourses (Alcorn, 2002). Through discourse, the analyst (teacher) and the analysands (students) learn "new modes of relating to desires that are in discourse and this means relating to other people and their desires with a lower level of defense" (Alcorn, 2002, p. 88). Because desires are "multiply and powerfully influenced by one's social positioning" (Bracher, 2002, p. 114), an individual's investments in her/his own desires are often threatened when confronted with the competing desires of others. In critical pedagogy, the teacher recognizes that each student has individual desires and investments that may differ greatly from his own. Therefore, a primary goal of critical pedagogy is learning to be in relation to others who have different, often opposing, desires (Bracher, 2002). Such an open approach to individual desires allows teachers and students to tap into their individual and collective potential and to imagine new ways of thinking and being in the world (Zembylas, 2007b).

Most students have a desire to develop a sense of identity in relation to others (Bracher, 2002). In classrooms, teachers and students may have opposing desires that are driven by differences in race, class, and gender and the attitudes, beliefs, experiences, and values emerging from these subjective identities and positionalities (Bracher, 2002). Not only are these differences likely to create some level of opposition between and among teachers and students, often times individual students experience conflicting desires emerging from intersecting aspects of their own identities (Bracher, 2002). For example, a Latina student whose parents are upper middle class may have opposing desires
emerging from the beliefs that she can achieve "the American dream" and that racism and sexism in society may make it more difficult for her to achieve her dreams than her White and male peers.

Critical pedagogy provides a forum wherein students' conflicting individual and collective desires can be acknowledged, reflected upon, discussed, and potentially aligned. Understanding critical pedagogy from the perspective of Lacan's discourse of the analyst reminds teachers that their responsibility is to help students recognize their own desires—the genesis as well as the implications—rather than expecting students to embrace the teacher's desires. In their roles as "co-investigators" (Freire, 1970/2007, p. 81) with students, critical pedagogues freely share their own desires without imposing them on students. Critical pedagogues make their teaching goals explicit without coercing students to adopt them. For example, they share with students their desire "to foster in students the desire to acquire the knowledge, skills, and understanding of the subject matter being studied" (Bracher, 2002, pp. 116-117). Teachers who practice critical pedagogy seek to help students identify and cultivate their own desires rather than ignore and forsake them. Teachers foster their students' desires to learn by considering their students' identities, positionalities, learning styles, and desires when preparing lesson plans (Bracher, 2002). In order to maximize their students' opportunities to learn, critical teachers not only allow time for reflection and discussion, they work hard to create open and supportive classroom environments that value personal experience as a means of contextualizing challenging course content (Bracher, 2002).
During our interview Joaquin referenced eros—a term that, according to Zembylas (2007b), "refers to the overflowing passionate desire that motivates us to teach and learn and engage in emotional, erotic experiences, often indistinguishable from love" (p. 342). Joaquin told me:

bell hooks writes about the eros of education and where she talks about there's this like this um that there will be times in a learning space where the vibe is just electric. And you don't know what it is, and you don't know exactly what's going on, but it comes from this feeling that everybody's in the same place and everybody's working, you know, on the same problem and everybody's kind of dealing with that. And I kind of strive for that.

Joaquin's desire to invite eros into his classroom was evident every time he called out to his students, "Can I kick it?" When students aligned their attention and responded with a unified "Yes, you can!" emotional energy was circulated between and among Joaquin and his students creating the "electric" vibe Joaquin was striving for. Durkheim (1912/1995) would call this "collective effervescence" (p. 228): a form of "heightened intersubjectivity" (Collins, 2004, p. 35) that strengthens relations among group members (Knottnerus, 2006).

Joaquin's commitment to mutuality and reciprocity was evident when he responded to his students' questions and concerns, no matter how trivial or seemingly silly they appeared. For example, one day Joaquin mentioned to his students a book by a Cuban author that was written going backwards in time.

Alex asked: "Can't you just read a book backwards?"

Joaquin responded earnestly: "It wouldn't make much sense because of the order of the words. But can you clarify your question, or, are you just being silly?"

Alex responded that he was just being silly, and Joaquin smiled.
Another day when Joaquin and his students were discussing the beauty and function of buildings, students moaned loudly when Joaquin put a picture of the Empire State Building on the overhead. Joaquin immediately moved on to another picture—choosing in that moment to follow the energetic flow of his students' desires rather than asserting *his power* and *his desire* to fulfill a predetermined agenda. Joaquin understood that listening to and responding to students' questions and concerns was a form of honoring their desires. By acknowledging students' individual and collective desires, Joaquin satisfied their basic human desire for recognition. In addition, by allowing their desires to circulate in the classroom, Joaquin and his students created a learning environment ripe with unlimited potential.

**The Implications of Desire on Power, Agency, and Social Justice in the Classroom**

The ethnographic field study described in these many pages started with desire and ends with desire—a desire to understand how teachers and students foster and foreclose learning potential through communication. In this final examination of the three classrooms I observed, I leaned on Bracher's (2002) formulation of common pedagogical strategies, informed by Lacan's four discourses, in order to highlight the nature of desire in the teaching and learning process.

After spending a year at IMSD I have come to recognize desire as a function of classroom communication that constitutes reality for teachers and students. Desire was a "pervasive quality" (Eisner, 1998, p. 104) in the three classrooms I observed and I agree with Zembylas (2007b) that all acts of "teaching and learning are basically acts of desire" (p. 333). All teachers and students enter classrooms with particular desires and as the
process of teaching and learning gets underway, new assemblages are formed and new desires emerge (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Teachers committed to student learning naturally desire to foster their students' potential to learn, however, as I discovered from interviewing and observing Julie, Dolores, and Joaquin, teachers' desires vary significantly depending upon their learning objectives and philosophies, as well as the degree to which teachers honor their students' desires.

Power in classrooms is afforded to those whose desires are privileged (Alcorn, 2002; Bracher, 2002). Authoritarian and establishment pedagogies seek to control desires rather than circulate them thereby disempowering both teachers and students (Bracher, 2002). Alcorn (2002) asserts that although power determines desire, desire can also determine power. Alcorn suggests that the human desire for recognition motivates many individuals to adopt the desires of those with power, thereby reinforcing existing power relations. For example, an authoritarian teacher passes to students her desire for deference to authority; or, an establishment teacher passes to students her desire for mastery of dominant knowledge claims and, in turn, the students' desires for authority or dominant knowledge reify the teacher's power. However, when students resist their teacher's desires they put their own desires into circulation in the classroom, thereby exposing the boundaries of a teacher's power (Bracher, 2002).

Alcorn (2002) contends: "Desire is the effect of a social relationship" (p. 71). He suggests that people follow others—adopt their desires—because they want to. Desire is therefore understood as an avenue for agency, although as Butler (1997) reminds us, we
cannot completely separate our subjectivities and desires from the social and political structures that constitute them. Diprose (1999) summarizes Butler's thesis:

[S]ubjection to power involves the internalization of norms; this process of internalization forms the psyche in that "it fabricates the distinction between interior and exterior life" [Butler, 1999, p. 19], and this formation is equivalent to the emergence of reflexivity, the capacity for self-reflection that opposes and transforms the desire, power and norms that constitute it [Butler, 1999]. While norms are preserved through the formative action of power, this process of subordination also constitutes agency (psyche) and hence the ability to subvert the condition of one's production. (p. 126)

Butler asserts that although power influences our individual desires, our ability to engage in reflexivity—to recognize the influence power has on our desires—enables us to resist them. Alcorn (2002) and Bracher (2002) remind us, however, that it is not always in our best interest to reject or deny the desires of those in power. Students often elicit rewards for succumbing to the desires of authoritarian or establishment teachers. For example, in Julie's classroom, students who mastered the official AP canon of knowledge were more likely to pass the annual exam, which would conceivably improve their college applications. Conversely, resisting the desires of the authority or establishment often results in negative consequences. For example, in Dolores' classroom, students who interfered with her desire for order were punished.

Students who practice the discourse of the hysteric (i.e., students who resist or protest against their teacher's desires) interfere with their teacher's discourse, effectively putting their own desires into circulation in the classroom (Alcorn, 2002). Students who practice the discourse of the analyst recognize that, like themselves, teachers also have desires. Students who recognize that their teachers have desires often respond to the imposition of their teachers' desires with more consciousness and less defensiveness
(Alcorn, 2002). Bracher (2002) reminds us that the desires of authoritarian and establishment teachers may be resisted and subverted by students who enact the discourses of the hysteric and analyst. Alcorn (2002) tells us that these students are the most effective in circulating desire in the classroom.

Although by now it should be clear that desire is the antecedent to affect (and not a feeling or an emotion), it is important to reiterate that the circulation of desire is connected to but distinctly different from the transmission of affect discussed in earlier chapters. To summarize, desire is a force that emerges from the complex assemblages of bodies, discourses, and actions (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). When a desire emerges within an individual—consciously or unconsciously—affect is mobilized and it simultaneously fosters and forecloses potential. Potential is experienced in present-actual time-space as thoughts and emotions (Massumi, 2002). Although an individual's desire can mobilize affect and foster the individual's potential, when there is an open flow of desires expressed among individuals (e.g., through reflection and dialogue), desires circulate, affect is mobilized, potential is captured and released, and emotions are experienced and transmitted between and among individuals. In this way, the circulation of desire and the transmission of emotion form a recursive loop. When they are circulated, desires "mobilize creative, transgressive and pleasurable forces within teaching and learning environments" (p. 331). When desires circulate in a classroom in the manner Deleuze and Guattari (1987) propose, teachers and students experience "collective effervescence" (Durkheim, 1912/1995, p. 228).
Critical pedagogy, as Bracher (2002) conceptualizes it, offers an alternative to authoritarian and establishment pedagogies that can empower teachers and students through the circulation of teacher and student desires (Bracher, 2002). Alcorn (2002) claims that questioning is a means for circulating desire:

We all know that asking questions and responding to them are important exercises necessary for exercise of democratic processes. Often, however, we do not realize that questions emerge only when people experience the desire to ask a question and feel the freedom to be able to act on that desire. Furthermore, expressed questions have an effect on a social body only where there is context that provides space for the question to shift desire into different discursive directions. This shift, importantly, will not occur when the master has the power to silence an expressed question with a simple repetition of his demand. (p. 91)

The portraits of Julie, Dolores, and Joaquin illuminate how a teacher's approach and understanding of the role of questions in the classroom impacts the circulation of desire. For example, Dolores would often ignore her students' questions. In so doing, she denied their basic desire for recognition and shut down its circulation. As Hyde (2006) tells us, when a student asks a teacher "Where art thou?" he desires to hear "Here I am!" Joaquin, on the other hand, constructed his entire pedagogical philosophy around dialogue and questions. As he told me:

[Students are really asserting their identities and that ability to question, like I said, if we can harness that, we have people going out into the world with real critical consciousness and with an ability to question things that are being assumed in society.

Joaquin's attitude about questioning in the classroom was undergirded by his desire to help his students develop a critical consciousness that empowers them in his classroom and beyond.
Campbell (2002) asserts that teachers like Joaquin who incorporate the discourse of the analyst into their pedagogies recognize the pedagogical relationship as an ethical relationship, which entails the teacher's recognition of the difference of the Other and responsibility to the Other. It is a relationship between speaking subjects, a social bond in which those subjects share a desire, neither for teaching as mastery nor for learning as repetition, but for knowledge (savoir). (p. 87)

Alcorn (2002) asserts: "Both desire and knowledge must circulate freely and must interact in order for social justice to make progress" (p. 8). He goes on to say: "Teaching, if it is to change culture through desire, must rely on dialogue that engages, expresses, and draws into motion the play of human desire" (p. 40). He also reminds us that knowledge rarely causes people to change; desires do. With regard to matters of social justice, Alcorn asserts: "Oppression results whenever desires are cut off from expression and circulation" (pp. 66-67). When viewed from this vantage point, it is easy to recognize the ways in which authoritarian and establishment pedagogies create unjust environments for students by foreclosing their desires and thereby foreclosing their potential to learn.

Desire, then, can be understood as a form of agency only when it is allowed to flow freely in a classroom. Teachers who want to increase the circulation of desire in their classrooms can do so by loosening their desire for control. By encouraging students to reflect on and share their desires—and how they align with or oppose the desires of others—teachers can fulfill their own desires to de-center themselves and to create more democratic classrooms where power is truly shared.
As I argued in chapter two, performativity creates obstacles for teachers that are difficult but not impossible to navigate. Under the "terrors of performativity" (Ball, 2003, p. 216), time is a commodity best utilized in the service of future outcomes. And although measurable outcomes are touted as having social value, they have very little instrumentality outside the classroom. Teachers who want to empower their students and foster student agency must devote more time to activities that will add value to the present and future lives of students rather than promoting knowledge that purportedly has social value, but does not promote or address social justice.

As I argued in chapter three, emotions are largely understood as the enemy of reason. The Cartesian tradition which is dominant in Western education creates educational subjects who are unprepared to address the emotional aspects of teaching and learning (Zembylas, 2005). Although this binary has been debunked by neuroscience, which tells us that emotions and cognition are linked (Damasio, 1994), most educators either ignore emotions or believe they should be regulated (Zembylas, 2005). Teachers who are interested in empowering their students will learn that when they resist making negative judgments about students, they and their students become agents capable of accessing unlimited potential to act in new and socially just ways.

As I argued in chapter four, relationality is a type of relationship motivated by a commitment to mutual empowerment and growth. Relationality in educational contexts focuses on mutuality and reciprocity—a move away from hierarchical teacher-student relationships to a more egalitarian form of interaction that emphasizes individual and collective agency through dialogue and reflection (Schniedewind, 1990). Teachers who
value empowerment, agency, and social justice will reject their expert status, celebrate student diversity, embrace educational processes over products, and acknowledge the connection between emotion and learning.

In this study, I started out with a desire to understand how student potential is fostered and foreclosed through communication. In the process, I came to understand how performativity, emotion, and relationality are constructed through and implicated in teacher and student communication. I began this study with a belief that communication is constitutive—that it creates, recreates, and changes reality for teachers and students (Stewart, 1995; Nainby et al., 2003). However, through the course of this study I have come to a more nuanced understanding of communication that is not limited to the words we use, our tones of voice, our facial expressions, or our body movements; it also includes emotion. Emotion, as neuroscience tells us, is not something separate from our thoughts and our bodies (Damasio, 1994); it saturates our every idea, word, tone of voice, facial expression, and body movement. Our emotions bathe every one of our senses, setting in motion a process of entrainment whereby we transmit our seemingly individual emotions onto others (Brennan, 2004). Understanding that communication is constitutive and emotion is a form of communication represents a significant departure from the view that communication is merely instrumental and representational. This expanded understanding of communication compels us to recognize that it is not only what teachers and students say or do that matters, but what they think and feel. The judgments we make have an energetic force that unleashes or restrains potential.
De Lissovoy (2010) and Freire (1970/2007) tell us that teachers committed to democratic education must come to see their students as human beings first and students second. This shift in thinking—although easier said than done—can change the way teachers and students relate. Teachers who understand that recognition is the most basic human desire selflessly give their students the living attention that Brennan (1994) advocates. They put self-interest aside and invite their students to share their personal experiences and desires for learning with one another. The IMSD all-school meeting at the end of the year demonstrated just how a teacher's living attention promotes relationality with students—a relationality undergirded by authentic reciprocity that transcends the boundaries of the classroom. During the assembly, students had the opportunity to honor their teachers. I observed that the recognition Julie, Dolores, and Joaquin received was in direct proportion to the recognition they gave their students throughout the year. Teachers who understand that recognition is the basic human desire also understand that through the process of giving students living attention, they will receive the acknowledgement they desire in return.

As I argued in the opening chapter, I view classroom communication as a form of hidden curriculum that can intentionally or unintentionally foster or foreclose a student's potential to learn. I hope I have demonstrated in this dissertation that there is so much hidden beneath the surfaces of our skin that impacts our linguistic expression, the timbre of an utterance, and our countenance and demeanor. Teachers have the power to decide whether their communication will be a hidden treasure they will share with students
without self interest, or whether their communication will be a hidden weapon used against students.
Notes

1 To ensure confidentiality, pseudonyms are used throughout this dissertation. The names of all schools, teachers, and students have been changed.

2 Magnet schools are public elementary or secondary schools subject to the same performance standards as other district schools; however, they offer a specialized curriculum designed to attract a diverse student body. Magnet schools are voluntary and open to students outside traditional geographic boundaries (Chen, 2007).

3 According to the College Board, "All students who are willing to accept the challenge of a rigorous academic curriculum should be considered for admission to AP courses. The Board encourages the elimination of barriers that restrict access to AP courses for students from ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in the AP program. Schools should make every effort to ensure that their AP classes reflect the diversity of their student population" (College Board, 2007).

4 "Passages" is a graduation requirement for all high school students at IMSD. "Passages" includes two experiential projects and one 15-page research paper (International Magnet School of Denver, 2009).

5 All courses must be authorized by the College Board before they can be labeled "AP." The College Board provides prospective AP teachers with a Course Description including course content, goals, and sample exams. Each year, AP instructors must submit an AP Audit Form to the College Board outlining the content they will cover, specific assignments, and how requirements will be met. Once the College Board approves the course, the AP Audit Form is forwarded to an external college faculty reviewer for final approval (College Board, 2012).

6 Thanks to Dr. Carol Samson, a former AP teacher, for this insight.

7 Photovoice is a concept created by Wang and Burris (1997) as a means of engaging community members in the knowledge production process in order that "they may record and catalyze change in their communities, rather than stand as passive subjects of other people's intentions and images" (p. 371). In January-February 2009, Dolores' tenth grade social studies students were invited to define globalization through an original photograph and essay.

Ladson-Billings (1995) identifies three aims of culturally relevant teaching: 1) students experience academic achievement, 2) students demonstrate cultural competency, and 3) students understand and critique the existing social order. It is significant that students develop a community of collaborative learning rather than competition, and that they maintain relationships with one another and their teacher.
References


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Appendix A

Interview Protocol for Teachers at IMSD

1. How do you describe your teaching style?

2. How do you view your role in the classroom?

3. What are your learning objectives for your students?
   a. What types of classroom experiences/lesson plans/assignments do you create to help students meet those objectives?
   b. How do you assess your students' progress with regard to those objectives?

4. How do you define student success in your class?

5. Do you believe that some students are more likely to succeed in your class than others? Please explain.

6. What type of classroom environment do you hope to create?
   a. How do you accomplish this?
   b. Do you think there are aspects of the environment that help or hinder student learning? Explain.

7. How do you describe the communication that occurs between you and your students during class?

8. How would you describe the emotional climate in your classroom?
   a. Do you and students freely express emotions?
   b. How comfortable are you with the expression of emotion in the classroom?
   c. Do you believe emotions play a role in the teaching and learning process? Explain.

9. What sources of knowledge are privileged in your classroom?
   a. Do you believe students are capable of critiquing knowledge claims for themselves?
   b. Do you believe students are capable of creating knowledge for themselves?
   c. Are students' experiences incorporated into the curriculum as valid forms of knowledge? Explain.
   d. Does communication play a role in the construction of knowledge in your classroom?
Interview Protocol for Teachers at IMSD (continued)

10. Do you embrace pluralism in your classroom?
   a. Are students encouraged to practice tolerance or do you strive for more
      meaningful connections among students? Explain.
   b. How do you and students manage conflicting points of view that arise in
      the classroom?

11. Is it important for you to help students develop the following and if so, how do
    you endeavor to do this:
   a. Critical thinking skills?
   b. Civic consciousness?
   c. Agency?

12. How would you describe the power distribution in your classroom?

13. If students become restless or disruptive during class, what do you do?
Appendix B

Focus Group Protocol for Students at IMSD

1. How would you describe the communication between you and your teacher in this classroom?
   a. Do you think the communication between you and your teacher helps or hinders your learning? Please explain.

2. How would you describe the communication between you and other students in this classroom?
   a. Do you think the communication between you and other students in this classroom helps or hinders your learning? Please explain.

3. Think about what you have learned in this class over the past year. Think about your head, heart, and feet, and identify something you now:
   a. Know (head)
   b. Feel (heart)
   c. Will do (feet)

4. Do you think you gained knowledge or skills in this class that are valuable to you now or will be valuable to you later in life? Please explain.

5. Are you interested in the subject of this course?
   a. If "yes," what about the subject is interesting to you?
   b. If "no," are there any aspects of the course that are interesting to you that you would have liked to spend more time studying?

6. Are you motivated to learn in this class?
   a. If "yes," what motivates you?
   b. If "no," what might have helped motivate you?

7. Do you believe that some students are more likely to succeed in this class than other students? Please explain.

8. How do you feel about this class?
   a. If you had to choose one emotion word to describe your overall feeling of this classroom, what would that word be?
   b. What emotions have you experienced while you were in this classroom this past year? Please give an example of a time when you felt that way.
   c. How do you feel when your teacher or other students express emotions in class?
Focus Group Protocol for Students at IMSD (continued)

d. Do you believe that your emotions or the emotions of others affect your ability or willingness to learn in this class?

9. What responsibility do you have for creating a comfortable environment where all members of the class can learn?

10. Do you believe your teacher respects you, your experiences, and your personal point of view? Please give an example.
   a. How does it make you feel believing that your teacher respects/disrespects you, your experiences, and your personal point of view?
   b. Do you think your belief about your teacher's respect/disrespect affects your ability or willingness to learn in this classroom?

11. If you were the teacher of this class, what, if anything, would you do the same or differently?

12. (High school students, only): How would you describe the distribution of power in this classroom?