

De-emphasizing Gender in Talk about Texts:
Literature Response, Discussion, and Gender within a Classroom Community of Practice

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my daughter, Jacqueline, who has always been my inspiration to achieve more than I ever thought was possible, and to my son-in-law, Todd, who showed me, through example, that “the highest reward for man’s toil is not what he gets for it, but what he becomes by it.” (*John Ruskin*)

Abstract

Drawing on and reexamining theories on gender and literacy, derived from research performed between 1974 and 2002, this qualitative study explored the gender assumptions and expectations of 19 preservice and practicing secondary language arts teachers in a graduate level adolescent literature course. The theoretical framework was structured around a social constructionist lens, including reader response, gender, and communities of practice theories. The methodology employed ethnographic methods, as well as critical discourse analysis and conversational analysis techniques.

This four-month study examined the ways the participants learned in a classroom community of practice and how that functioned. It also explored the ways class members identified with or resisted gender expectations in their book discussion groups and how their individual communities of practice may have influenced those expectations. It looked at the kind of discourses that were maintained and disrupted in the discussion groups, as well as the participants' responses to literature within the classroom community, and within their personal blogs and written responses. The group conversational dynamics provided an additional lens on gender beliefs and power relations. The participants showed diversity within gender that suggested that their varied communities of practice, including this classroom community of practice, most likely influenced their gender beliefs and their response to literature.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Research

“I like a good story! Its hard to put down a good story. I do really like when there’s meaning attached to that story rather than a plain old adventure yarn.”

“I prefer science fiction short stories. Some science fiction gets a little bit heavy and a little bit out there, but it explores so many different themes, that a lot of other fiction can’t, that I really enjoy it. Contemporary realistic fiction is probably my favorite.”

Research Problem

These statements were made by two of the participants in this study. Research from the last thirty years might lead one to guess that a female made the first statement and a male made the second.

Often, literature is seen as a gendered medium and reading is seen as a gendered practice (Bleich, 1986; Cherland, 1994a; Flynn, 1983; Linkin, 1993; Holland, 1977; Millard, 1997). There have been several studies that indicated that males and females consider literature in different ways (Bleich, 1986; Flynn, 1983; Holland, 1977). Some theorists have looked at whether the gender of the author has an effect on the reader (Linkin, 1993; Millard, 1997) and some have examined the question of whether males and females have difficulty identifying with characters of a different gender (Gabriel & Smithson, 1990; Millard, 1997).

When we are discussing children’s and adolescent literature, we often talk about “boy books” and “girl books.” The premise behind this kind of thinking is that reading is gendered and that males have different text preferences and practices than females.

Much of the research on gender and literature preference is more than ten years old, yet I

still hear my students, practicing and preservice teachers, say, “I don’t know if I would use that book in my classroom because it would only appeal to girls” or “boys won’t read a book with a female protagonist.” This demonstrates the continuing pertinence of the question of whether literacy practices are gendered, and what that might look like today. Perceptions about gender have changed since the studies mentioned above were completed, and it is possible that gender socialization has also changed enough to affect societal discourses.

Is gender as influential as we often assume? It is fluid, contested, and elusive, so even within cultural norms there are many who do not fit into the normative standard (Connell, 2005). It is an important factor in our identity construction and it permeates every facet of our lives (West & Zimmerman, 1987). If we view gender as a community of practice (Paechter, 2003b), our construction of gender is formed through local experiences and the expectations of the communities of practice in which we belong. In terms of literacy practices, there may be variations within gender as well as across genders.

The reader is an essential factor in any literary experience and the reader approaches the text through the lens of their sociocultural or psychological identity constructions (Gee, 1990/2008). These constructions are reflective of our interpretive communities and are based on shared assumptions about language, the nature of knowledge, cultural models, and social expectations (Gee, 1990/2008). These invisible, common sense assumptions are the basis for ideology (Fairclough, 2001). Of course,

some of these ideologies are more dominant and accepted than others. “Ideologies are closely linked to power, because the nature of the ideological assumptions embedded in particular conventions themselves, depends on the power relations which underlie the conventions” (Fairclough, 2001, p. 2). Ideologies are often local constructions built on the values of the communities in which we claim membership.

Experiences with literacy help shape our ideologies. Reading is “a constructive act done in conjunction with mediating texts and the cultural-historical context in which reading takes place” (Smagorinsky, 2001, p. 137). The texts that are read or written and the social and cultural contexts in which they are read or written position readers within discourses of gender and sexuality (Davies, 1990). “Because gender is a cultural construction and reading is a social practice, gender is also unavoidably present in reading” (Cherland, 1994a, p. 13). Since women have different life experiences than men, they develop different identities, which often cause them to take up texts differently than men (Cherland, 1994a; Millard, 1997). This is not an innate attribute. It is due to societal discourses that define certain texts and activities as feminine or masculine. The social discourses on gender that normalize certain characteristics and practices as male or female have a great influence on how we see ourselves in relation to many activities, including literacy practices. Gender roles in texts play a part in the ways men and women see themselves positioned in society (Connell, 2005; Millard, 1997).

Language is a social practice. It creates meaning and meaning is subjective and constantly in flux. Groups and institutions are the “sources that authorize and legitimate

the meaning of a word” (Gee, 1990/2008, p. 11). Signifiers have no meaning until they are constituted in language through discourse. Meaning is not fixed; it is negotiated through discourse. It is contextual, cultural, and historical, and is often negotiated through individual interactions.

Meanings are ultimately rooted in negotiation between different social practices with different interests by people who share or seek to share some common ground. Power plays an important role in these negotiations. The negotiations can be settled for the time, in which case meaning becomes conventional and routine. But the settlement can be reopened (Gee, 1990/2008, p. 12).

Those meanings can become conventional and invisible in the sense that we accept them without thinking about them. Power comes into play when we police or contest certain meanings. Some terms are more value-laden than others and imply that something is normative or correct or proper and vice-versa (Gee, 1990/2008). They are often socially contested because they can limit access to cultural capital, such as knowledge or skills, which can provide one with enhanced social mobility (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). For example, what does good mother or poor student mean to you? What are the assumptions that go along with those terms? Whose standards create what defines a poor student?

Discourses can give us power or they can marginalize us (Fairclough, 2001). They are social conventions that interact with the identities we take up in any particular context. Those social conventions define what is good or bad, normal or ‘other’ in terms of an identity. Gee (1990/2008) distinguishes *discourse* as “language in use”,

interpersonal conversations, stories, etc., from *Discourse* (capital D) a socially negotiated way of speaking or acting. Discourses (capital D) allow others to recognize who we are and what we do in a socially understandable way (Gee, 1999/2005). We construct identities within these discourses so we can be recognized as a male or a female, a reader or a nonreader, a good student or a poor student. Discourse (capital D) helps formulate the beliefs and assumptions that we use to operate socially. It is what cued you to determine whether the authors of the quotes at the beginning of this chapter were masculine or feminine. Would it surprise you to know that both speakers are male?

Our beliefs are social constructions. They are connected to membership in specific groups. For example, we may perform our gender differently in a university classroom than in a family group. Often our beliefs and assumptions are cultural and may exist in larger populations. For example, many members of the dominant culture in the United States have similar beliefs and expectations about what a mother should act like. Those beliefs are so deeply inculcated that they have become invisible to us. In one of the courses I teach, I show students a triangle and an unstructured, circle-like figure. I ask them which figure represents motherhood. Nearly every student chooses the circle. When asked why they chose that figure, they invariably say that mothers are soft, emotional, and loving. The circle represents those traits, whereas the triangle has sharp edges and represents hardness and intractability to many of them. The students choose the soft representation even when they say their own mother is sharp and unemotional. This cultural expectation of motherhood is so strong that it overrides personal experience.

Knowledge cannot be neutral (Lather, 1991). Therefore all discourse, written and spoken, is political and has the potential to reify, invalidate, or modify our worldview. Our expectations influence how we understand what we read and our values are influenced by our culture. The reaction a reader has to a text is based on that value system. If our culture values monogamy, we may find it difficult to identify with and understand the viewpoint of a character in a text about a polygamous culture. In our heteronormative society, texts that normalize gay male or lesbian experiences often cause dissonance between our gender role expectations and social reality.

Gender and literacy are constructs that have been created from cultural expectations and social discourses that have developed over time. Both constructs use language to produce meanings and practices that position humans within a specific social structure. The implications of language, or discourse, may be invisible to the speaker and the listener, but they serve to resist or maintain the dominant social order. Social structures are always in flux because human beings have the agency to resist and reshape discourses and social structures (Ortner, 1996). We may resist and develop identities that alter or defy cultural norms through our use of literacy practices. Media that resist dominant social structures, termed “redressive texts,” can offer readers ways to explore their beliefs about gender and sexuality vicariously through fictional characters (Marsh & Stolle, 2006).

The problem with the notion of gendered reading is that it assumes that all readers take up social constructs the same way. It also avoids looking at the ways we resist social

and cultural constructs. Gender practices are neither innate nor omnipresent. When we look at literacy through the lens of gender, what are we seeing and what are we missing? This type of essentialist thinking is reductionist and it creates a “norm” for how males and females are expected to respond to literacy. There are economic, social, and cultural factors that also influence identity and response to literature. Therefore, it is likely that each reader’s personal experiences and identity construction would create a unique reading of a text.

Gender is a fluid construct and we may resist and transform it as much as we conform to it. The idea that literacy is gendered can lead to essentializing pedagogical responses that promote gender differences, whether it is an assumption about the types of texts males or females prefer to read, a push for additional male teachers in order to more fully engage boys rather than focusing on hiring more competent teachers who can engage all students, or even a belief that single sex education is the answer to the ‘gender gap’ in reading. Research that can show a diversity of reader response within gender is important in terms of how we look at literacy and pedagogy. Rather than making sweeping generalizations, we can value the complexity of readers and their responses to literacy. We can look at other dynamics that come to play in reading assessments, such as socioeconomic issues, and begin to formulate more nuanced pedagogical responses that will address those factors. This is important in the light of educational policy because we are designing curriculum and selecting texts based on perceived gender needs or preferences.

The Purpose of the Study

If the way we receive literature is influenced by individual life and literacy experiences that shape our cultural and social assumptions and beliefs, then it plays an important part in our literacy practices. The purpose of this study was to examine preservice and practicing teachers' responses to literature in order to revisit the notion of gendered literacy. It questioned whether assumptions, based on research more than ten years old, should be used to guide pedagogical decision-making. Since it is likely that gender expectations have changed over the last twenty-five years, I looked at the assumptions about gender and literacy that the participants in this study brought to the literature they studied and to which they responded. I sought to understand how those assumptions and expectations shaped their responses to the texts, and how the texts and the socially situated classroom discourse reproduced or resisted the gender norms described in earlier research. I also examined how the classroom in this study functioned as a community of practice. If there was a diversity of response within gender in this group, did the premise that gender is a community of practice (Paechter, 2003b) help explain that diversity?

Through examining preservice and practicing teachers' responses to literature, I looked at the gender expectations that influenced their responses and the ways that they resisted and/or reproduced gender expectations. This is significant because a teacher's invisible beliefs and assumptions could affect the text selections they make in the classroom, the way they teach a text and, therefore, influence their students' responses to

texts. In addition, if gender and gendered reading influence literacy practices, then it is important to look at how gendered response might be examined in the classroom.

Research Questions

The questions I explored were:

1. Was there a diversity of response to literature within gender?
2. What was the role of the participants' background and identity in their gender beliefs and expectations and how did those beliefs and expectations affect their responses to texts?
3. In what ways did the norms and expectations of this classroom community of practice influence the participants' reading and discussions?
4. What was the role of group configurations in the participants' discussions of literary texts?
5. Was there a diversity of interactional practices within gender?

To answer these questions, I examined evidence of the participants' gender beliefs and attitudes affecting their literature responses, and whether the responses were varied within gender. Another factor that I examined was the role of the classroom community of practice in the participant responses and in the discussion groups. I considered influences such as classroom dynamics, instructor expectations, the participants' personal histories and identities, their socially situated identities, their gender beliefs and expectations, and the impact of this research project. I also noted whether the subjects'

communities of practice, including the community of practice in this classroom, helped me understand any variations or commonalities in gender beliefs, expectations, and responses. To determine the influence of a text, I focused on the responses and discussion of one of the required course texts, *Luna* by Julie Anne Peters. I looked at the kinds of gender messages the participants perceived in the book, and their resistance to or compliance with those messages.

In the next chapter, I discuss my theoretical framework, including theories on reader response, gender, and communities of practice. In addition, I examine the relevant literature on gender as it relates to reading, response to literature, literature discussions, reading preferences, and communities of practice.

Chapter 2: Review of Related Literature

“I really liked the fact that it was an adventure story. I kind of knew it was going to be an adventure story, but I wasn't sure what kind. I knew there were going to be creatures, but I was afraid that not many things were going to happen and then all of a sudden they are boarded by pirates and are crash landing on a tropical island and they're exploring. I felt like, this is like every game I played as a kid in my backyard with my friends. So that's why, for me, I really connected to it.” - Male

“Any other teenage boy would have been completely swayed by Kate and would have let her tell him to do anything and he would have done it. To an extent he does that, but that's after a lot of persuading. He's so focused on his job, and he is so proud of it, and you see that later, when what's his face says, ‘you can tell that you're meant to do this’. I just kept thinking about all the different lenses you could put on this book. The classism was so interesting...the way they don't actually get to choose what they want to do, even though they have all this money and he's totally jealous of that. But then they're jealous of him. I thought that was really interesting. That's the kind of stuff that I thought added to the book, too. It definitely didn't need that to still be a good book, but I think that's probably what is sincere.” - Female

- Participants in a small group discussion of *Airborn*, by Kenneth Oppel.

Theoretical Framework

No examination of gender and literacy practices would be complete without a discussion of the investigator's theoretical perspective on texts, readers, and the sociocultural context of the reading. This study looked at gender, a social construction, and its influence on literacy practices, such as how we respond to what we read. Because we understand how to perform gender through our experiences with our communities, family, friends, media, and a variety of other influences, my research was guided by social constructionism, which looks at learning as external and socially mediated. Within that framework, my major conceptual underpinnings include theories on reader response, gender, and communities of practice. Reader response theory helped me look at the ways

the participants responded to the texts they read. Gender theory added the element of language as a site of struggle to reader response theory and it demonstrated how language can confer or restrict power in society. Gender theory also helped me evaluate ideas about gender differences and commonalities. Communities of practice theory provided a vehicle to explain those similarities and differences in gender practices.

Social constructionism. While a few theorists consider social constructionism and social constructivism interchangeable, many differentiate between the two perspectives. Both positions agree that cognitive development occurs within a social and cultural context (Hruby, 2001). However, social constructivism looks at cognition as an internal process and social constructionism views knowledge development as an external process, occurring during the negotiation of understanding in a discursive interaction (Hruby, 2001). Hruby, paraphrasing Green, states, “while constructivism deals with knowledge formation *in the head*, constructionism deals with knowledge formation *outside the head between participants in a social relationship*” (2001, p. 51).

Social constructionist theory posits that our understanding of the world around us, and our place in it, comes from social negotiations. Our reality is constructed through language and social interaction. For example, money is just an object, a piece of paper or metal, until we negotiate its value. It is its social construction that gives money its power.

Social interactions also help us understand the discursive patterns of our culture. Discourses allow others to recognize who we are and what we do in a socially understandable way (Gee, 1999/2005). We construct identities within these discourses so

we can be recognized as a male or female, a European American or an African American, a reader or a nonreader, a good student or a poor student, and so on. Foucault believed that discourses are “constitutive” (Fairclough, 1992). They help constitute our reality. Objects have no meaning until they are created in language. The term mother is given meaning by our social discourse on mothers. One can look at Mother Teresa and see a mother as sacrificing, loving, and saintly or one can look at the term stepmother and our childhood socialization through fairy tales helps us conjure up notions of evil and wicked. These discourses also help give us power or marginalize us (Fairclough, 2001). They create social conventions that interact with the identities we take up in a particular context. Those social conventions define what is good or bad, normal or “other” in terms of an identity.

Identity is formed through discourses that are created and recreated over the course of one’s experiences. Those discourses help us understand who we are, how to act in the world, and how to make sense of the actions of others (Gee, 1999/2005). Gee (2001) states that “human language has two primary functions... to scaffold the performance of action in the world, including social activities and interactions; to scaffold human affiliation in cultures and social groups and institutions through creating and enticing others to take certain perspectives on experience” (p. 715).

Vygotsky’s work is most often categorized as social constructivism because he placed the act of cognition within the head. However, I consider his work within my social constructionist framework because it was seminal to my understanding of the social construction of knowledge and it provides a background for Lave and Wenger’s

(1991/2007) theory of legitimate peripheral participation, an element of communities of practice theory. Communities of practice theory provides a way to examine the relationship between our fluid, possibly conflicting identities, societal Discourses, and the performative nature of gender. It helps us understand how we learned to enact our gender in so many different ways.

Communities of practice. Learning is a social process. Vygotsky (1978) theorized that children learn through social interaction and the guidance of others who are more knowledgeable. He called the difference between the learner's actual level of development and their potential level of development the "zone of proximal development." It is in this zone that someone who is more knowledgeable can guide the learner to a more advanced level. The knowledgeable other bridges, or scaffolds, the way for the child to move beyond their limits (Vygotsky, 1978).

We learn from our interactions with others. When that interaction is with a "more knowledgeable other" it is an apprenticeship model of learning (Vygotsky, 1978). The more knowledgeable other, the master, guides the apprentice, through demonstration and interpretation, so the learner can make sense of new ideas. In the communities of practice model, learning is seen as a social process similar to apprenticeships, in which knowledge and meaning are co-constructed through social interactions between a master and an apprentice.

A newcomer to the community learns how to be a member of the group through legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991/2007). Newcomers are on the

periphery, but they have a goal of becoming a master in the community. There are multiple possible positionings within the community and new members are the farthest from the center, or mastery (Lave and Wenger, 1991/2007). The neophyte participates in and learns the community practices simultaneously. However, the practices they take part in are less complex than those of the fully participating members. As novices engage in the community practices, they decide whether they want to take up the roles and expectations that are sanctioned by the group. If the newcomer resists the schema prescribed by the community, he or she will remain in the periphery or move to another group. Those members who accept the constructs of the community of practice will move further and further into the group until they become masters who help define the practices of the community (Lave and Wenger, 1991/2007).

An example of this would be a gay male in the community of practice of a football team. The global expectation of a football player is that he is male, heterosexual, muscular, physically large, athletic, and so on. An openly gay male in this community would be on the periphery because he would not fit the community assumption of heterosexuality. He would remain on the periphery or he might move to another community that shares his belief system. He might be able to enter into the original community of practice if it was one that was inclusive of gay males, or if he excelled in one of the other community expectations. If he was an outstanding quarterback, for example, he might be able to move toward mastery in that community, although his sexual orientation may prevent him from ever gaining full mastery.

We learn many things in our communities of practice, including what kinds of attitudes and beliefs are expected of us within that community. Those expectations are communicated to us through language in the form of discourse.

The negotiations which constitute meaning are limited by values emanating from ‘communities’ ...or from attempts by people to establish and stabilize, perhaps only for here and now, enough common ground to agree on meaning (Gee, 1990/2008, p. 12).

The apprenticeship model helps explain why there are many variations on gender socialization. Masculinity and femininity are learned within communities of practice. Children are placed in a gender community of practice based on their genitalia. Once they are legitimate peripheral participants within their gender community, they are apprenticed on how to perform gender properly according to the community’s shared values (Paechter, 2003a). This ranges from how they are dressed to the toys they are given, to less visible ways of being male or female, such as managing emotional responses. This comes from community beliefs like “boys don’t cry” and “women are more nurturing than men.”

Instead of viewing gender as a universal construct that essentializes masculinity and femininity, the communities of practice lens considers the local, evolving, and multiple ways we perform gender. Looking at gender as a community of practice allows for the fluid nature of masculinity and femininity. We can cross gender boundaries depending on the context of a given situation. For example, I am a female, and when I

put on make-up I am within the boundaries of traditional femininity, however I may then repair the faucet in the bathroom, which is within the boundaries of traditional masculinity. These boundaries are socially constructed and therefore permeable.

A community of practice is composed of “the informal social systems that develop over time as people engage in a shared enterprise” (Lewis and Ketter, 2004, p. 118). When people belong to a group that has shared goals and interests, the participants learn through interaction with each other and develop practices that help them achieve those goals. In addition, individuals’ identities are shaped and changed by their participation in a community of practice (Lewis, Enciso & Moje, 2007). Our memberships in communities of practice show us what is expected of us in the various roles we take up. They help us make sense of our social and cultural worlds; therefore, we learn how to be who we are through those communities. We have commonalities and shared goals with other members of our communities of practice so we jointly interpret gender, class, ethnicity, and other social constructs (Wenger, 1998). Our communities of practice provide us with models of behavior and thinking. These cultural models are like movies that play in our mind and show us how to be and how to act in different contexts (Gee, 1990/2008). This helps us know what is implicit and expected. Each cultural model has a set of discourses that are socially accepted ways of speaking, acting, believing, and feeling that identifies us as belonging to a certain group or culture (Gee, 1990/2008).

Learning is often socially situated, meaning it is collaborative, contextual, and cultural. We learn by participating in daily life and interacting with others. Because of this, the construction of what knowledge is valid and valuable is done within the context of the activities we engage in and the communities in which we belong. A shared negotiation of meaning within communities of practice is very important to socially situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991/2007). Literacy practices are a major part of the negotiation of meaning.

While we are taught gender roles within our local communities of practice, we are able to resist through the influence of the other communities of practice we belong to and through media that exposes us to other ways of thinking. “Most people are simultaneously members of a number of communities of masculine and feminine practice in the different contexts of their lives; their multiple memberships change the various communities of practice to which they belong” (Paechter, 2003b, p. 72). Popular culture and the media play an important role in challenging gender roles and expectations within communities and among communities (Paechter, 2003b). Gender expectations will be reinforced or resisted through texts that are read and by the other communities of practice of which each person is a member. Ideologies are dependant on power relations and ideologies are often local constructions built on the values of the communities in which we claim membership (Fairclough, 2001). Therefore, it is necessary to examine the language and texts that help constitute and contest gender roles and expectations.

Undoubtedly, there are societal gender norms and cultural gender expectations, however it is important to look at how we take up those norms and expectations. If our communities of practice are local and our gender norms are constructed through our memberships in multiple, and often conflicting, communities of practice, we each could take up gender in different ways. We may resist some of the societal expectations, if they conflict with our local practices, and accept the norms of our communities. Therefore, a woman who grew up in a highly educated family and who maintained memberships in groups that valued intellectual acuity, may reject a notion that females are less competent than men in math and science and may take up the expectation, constructed in many of her communities of practice, that women are intelligent and capable of the same intellectual tasks as men. That same woman, if she belonged to communities of practice that prized traditional household roles, may take up a societal expectation that women's careers are secondary to motherhood, and she may choose to stay home with her children and be the primary caregiver. These views may appear to somewhat conflict, however they are indicative of the ways our communities of practice can oppose one another.

Because communities of practice are often local, we can expect to see many variations on the construction of gender. This allows us to move away from binary thinking and look at gender as a complex, fluid, and ever-changing construction. If we accept this model of gender, we can expect to see a wide variety of responses and gendered actions from any person. Binary-based pedagogical strategies oversimplify the reasons some students do not connect with literature and why they may respond to literature in different ways.

Gender theory. Our conception of gender guides us in our beliefs about who we are and how we should perform our identity. An essentialist construction of gender views masculinity or femininity as characterized by specific features or traits. These traits are seen as evident in all males or all females. A positivist construction sees gender as based on patterns that are ascribed to men and women. These patterns are socially constructed assumptions about gender. Semiotic constructions are based on the symbolic differences between masculinity and femininity, i.e. femininity is not masculinity. A normative construction defines a normal and an abnormal, a standard of what masculinity or femininity should be (Connell, 2005). Few people can meet the cultural standards of gender. Connell (2005) asks, “[w]hat is ‘normative’ about a norm hardly anyone meets?” (p. 70). A better conception of gender is that it is a set of practices that males and females engage in on a daily basis (Connell, 2005).

Sex, sexuality, and gender are different constructs. Sex is biological. Gender and sexuality are social and cultural constructions (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Societies usually have one dominant, and many marginalized, views on the criteria that categorize people as male or female. The criteria are learned through socialization and their performance is often so naturalized that it is invisible to the actor and the audience. In fact, gender is so much a part of life that,

a person engaged in virtually any activity may be held accountable for performance of that activity as a *woman* or a *man*, and their incumbency in one or

the other sex category can be used to legitimate or discredit their other activities (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p.136)

Gendered actions are not innate; they are learned and performative (Butler, 1990/2006). It is the act of performing gender that constitutes it. Through hegemonic discourses that coerce people to maintain the “core” construction of gender, society enforces ritual performances of sexuality and gender that are seen as natural (Butler, 1990/2006). Masculinity and femininity are “simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture” (Connell, 2005, p.71). Different masculinities and femininities can be produced in the same setting. They are fluid rather than fixed. These different ways of performing gender can be dominant, in alliance, or subordinate to one another (Connell, 2005).

There are institutional and social structures that cultivate the status quo in gender. Although power is negotiated and exercised rather than possessed (Foucault, 1991), power relations allow men the potential to be dominant over women. Production keeps men in economic control and the emotional/sexual connection in social relationships maintains the dominance of heterosexuality (Connell, 2005). Gender also connects with other social structures, such as race and class (Connell, 2005). For example, there is White masculinity and working class masculinity that are constructed in relation to other races, classes, and genders.

Hegemonic masculinity is “the configuration of gender practice ... which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women” (Connell, 2005, p. 77). In addition, dominance and subordination exists between groups of men. Hegemonic masculinity does not mean total control, and men who reject it can be exploited and intimidated. However, both dominant and subordinate groups of men are complicit in a hegemony that allows them to realize the “patriarchal dividend” of dominance over women (Connell, 2005, p. 79).

Some gender identities are valued more than others. Women are often expected to be passive and compliant. Females who do not meet those expectations can be viewed as hard and bitchy. Men are often expected to be heterosexual, competitive, and independent. Even within hegemonic masculinity, some males are marginalized because they do not fit into the male role that is accepted by society, through physical size, recreational habits, or sexual orientation.

Standard notions of how males and females should act are often invisible to us. The performance of masculinity is often viewed as natural, ‘boys will be boys’ behaviors. These invisible male characteristics are seen as universal. This normalization of masculinity works to maintain hegemony. This is particularly true of White, heterosexual, middle class men. They are not viewed as White, heterosexual, or middle class. They are just men. Masculinity is not gendered, heterosexuality is not an orientation, and Whiteness is not raced. This means that males who are not White, heterosexual, or middle class are seen as other, defined by their opposition to the

dominant “norm”, and they are marginalized. However, all men must prove their masculinity and heterosexuality repeatedly in order to maintain this normalcy. “If masculinity were natural, boys would not have to police gendered behaviors of themselves and their peers on the playground, and boys and men would not need to continuously prove that they are not feminine” (Wannamaker, 2008, p. 128).

This kind of binary thinking also affects our view of femininity, and is still maintained through societal discourse. One only needs to look at the portrayal of gender in advertisements (see Figure 1), television, and other media to find examples of gender socialization (Canadian Club Whisky: Metrosexual, n.d.; Ubisoft MyWord Coach: Carrie, n.d.).

Figure 1. 2010 Canadian Club and My Word Coach magazine ads

The figure consists of two side-by-side advertisements. The left advertisement is for Canadian Club Whisky. At the top, a photograph shows a man in a light-colored shirt and khaki pants standing on a wooden dock next to a boat. Another man in a hat and sunglasses is also visible. Below the photo, the headline reads "YOUR DAD WAS NOT A METROSEXUAL". Underneath, smaller text says: "He didn't do pilates. Motonutrio. Or drink pink cocktails. Your Dad drank whisky cocktails. Made with Canadian Club. Served in a rocks glass. They tasted good. They were effortless. DAMN RIGHT YOUR DAD DRANK IT". At the bottom, there are four small inset photos showing different scenes, and the Canadian Club logo is at the bottom right.

The right advertisement is for My Word Coach. At the top, text reads: "Carrie's mom told her a larger vocabulary equals a larger paycheck. Well, Carrie thought, that information could certainly _____ well for her shoe collection." Below this text are three high-heeled shoes: a yellow pump, a purple pump, and a silver strappy sandal. Under each shoe is a radio button and a word: "mean" under the yellow shoe, "bode" under the purple shoe, and "PORTEND" under the silver shoe. At the bottom right is a pink handheld game device with a screen showing the word "PORTEND" and a keyboard. The My Word Coach logo is at the bottom right.

Reader response theory. Like our identity and our views on gender, our response to literature is socially and culturally constructed. The ways we take up texts are

influenced by our culture, our community, and its expectations. In addition, the texts we read influence our view of the world, particularly if they are reinforced by our community's values.

Reader response theory developed before social constructionism, however many of its concepts are based on the social construction of knowledge, so I have included it under the umbrella of social constructionism. Reader response theory conceptualizes reading as a sociocultural activity. It helps explain how readers connect and engage with texts. It emphasizes the role the reader has in the creation of the literary experience. It moves away from the theories of the New Critics, who considered the text the most important factor in the determination of literary meaning. Reader response theorists focus on the reader's experience of the text rather than the text itself. The text reflects the author's values, experiences, and their vision of their expected reader, but meaning does not reside in the text. The reader constructs meaning during the act of reading. Each reader creates their own version of the work through the interplay of his or her social values, personal experiences, and cultural expectations, with the text.

One of the earliest, and most influential reader response theorists, Louise Rosenblatt (1938/1995), believed that readers make sense of what they read through a transaction between the reader's beliefs and assumptions and the text. She felt that reading is a social act that is created through the transaction between the reader, the author, and the text. This exchange creates the meaning in the text. She called this transactional theory. Because reading is a two-way process, it is a transaction rather than

an interaction. Both the text and the reader are transformed (Rosenblatt, 1938/1995). Since each reader has a different set of values and experiences, there is no one correct interpretation of a text because each reading is unique.

Rosenblatt (1938/1995) believed that language is nothing but marks on the page until the reader creates meaning from the symbols. The marks must be linked to meaning by the reader's set of assumptions, cultural influences, and predispositions. The words are fixed but they are symbols that evoke a response from the reader. Meaning is created during the act of reading, when the reader and his or her experience and influences transact with the set of symbols that make up the text and a personal response "evokes the poem" (Rosenblatt (1938/1995). The text, like the earlier examples of motherhood and money, does not have significance until that evocation. During reading, we take in the language and allow it to connect with our senses to trigger a response based on our experiences.

A poem, then, must be thought of as an event in time. It is not an object or an ideal entity. It is an occurrence, a coming-together, a compenetration, of a reader and a text. The reader brings to the text his past experience; the encounter gives rise to a new experience, a poem. This becomes part of the ongoing stream of his life, to be reflected on from any angle important to him as a human being— aesthetic, ethical, or metaphysical (Rosenblatt, 1964, p. 126).

The meaning that is "evoked" from a text incorporates the identity and worldview of both author and reader. It is a social transaction. Therefore, there is no one true

reading of any text. In addition, Rosenblatt proposed, “there is no generic reader, that each reader is unique” because we all have different social and cultural experiences (Rosenblatt, 1938/1995, p. xix). We are all socialized through a myriad of communities of practice.

Other reader response theorists saw reading as a somewhat different process. Iser (1978) posited that the text exists separately of the reader, but there are gaps in the text that the reader must fill with their own culturally constructed meanings. This interaction between reader and text produces a unique experience. Therefore, there is no objective meaning within a text. There is only a reader’s actual or potential experience with it. Iser (1978) postulated that each text has a “real reader,” who has had an actual experience with the text, and a “‘hypothetical’ reader, upon whom all possible actualizations of the text may be projected” (Iser, 1978, p. 27). The text is written for the hypothetical “ideal reader,” who possesses all the social and cultural competencies to “fulfill the potential meaning of the text” (Iser, 1978, p. 29). This ideal reader cannot actually exist because they would have to be able to construct all the possible meanings that can be created from the text.

Stanley Fish (1980) theorized that readers share in an “interpretive community,” a culturally constructed set of assumptions and understandings. Meaning in texts is made using a set of “interpretive strategies” that “give texts their shape” and that are derived from the community or culture in which the reader resides. Readers who are members of the author’s interpretive community are insiders who share the author’s interpretive

strategies and meaning. Readers who come from outside the author's discursive community derive different meanings from the text because their interpretive strategies are different (Fish, 1980).

Reading is temporal and historic. We read a text at a specific point in our life. At that time, we bring our personal history to the reading of the text. We may be going through, or have experienced, events in our lives that will help us evoke a particular meaning for that text. If we read the same text again, at another time, changes in the fund of our life experiences and our literary base will influence our creation of meaning, which may be different than the meaning we created in the first reading. A text that we read when we are newly married might mean something different if we read it after experiencing a divorce. "The perceiver sees even a structured object or environment in the way that his past experience and habits determine" (Rosenblatt, 1978/1994, p. 19).

Because reading is a social event, we never read alone. We are always in the company of the author and the communities in which we continuously renegotiate meaning. In addition, we may read with others in mind, a teacher, a friend, or a family member. We tie our preconceived notions of those other people into our reading. We may be predisposed to read a text in a specific way because we know that our community of readers has certain expectations about what we should take away from the text. We might see a character as similar to our father and we will view the character's world through our father's eyes. We might even add, subconsciously, traits to that character that are not in the text because our father has those traits. Later we might read the same text

and view the character differently, not as our father, because our relationship has changed and we understand our father differently.

One criticism of reader response theory is that it does not examine how social and cultural discourses work to position us in ways that we may not even recognize (Cherland, 1994b; Lewis, 2001). We respond via beliefs that are so deeply acculturated that they have become invisible to us. Therefore, readers view texts through lenses that often reflect the dominant discourse instead of through their own unique and individual interpretations. This makes it difficult for us to really understand and empathize with narratives of those outside our own cultural experience.

In addition, we are socialized to reproduce conventional discourses, so we often resist texts that reject those traditional cultural conventions. In some cases, readers rewrite the text so it conforms to their expectations (Gabriel & Smithson, 1990). This is a poststructuralist conception of language and discourse. Discourses can conflict with one another, even within a single group or community. Due to this conflict, we may or may not accept the discourses we are positioned in by society (Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2007).

Louise Rosenblatt countered these charges by saying that she maintained her “linking of reader-response theory with the need for readers to be critical of the assumptions embodied in the literary work as experienced and also of the culturally acquired assumptions they themselves brought to the transaction” (1993, p. 385). She also stated that while she recognized the power of social and cultural factors in shaping

beliefs, she believed that human agency provides many possibilities for resistance (Rosenblatt, 1993).

It is possible for a reader to resist the dominant ideology in a text if they are aware of alternative discourses. This is where teaching critical reading comes into play. If readers are offered methodology to make the normative messages visible, they are able to determine if they want to accept that discourse.

Gendered reading. In her study of sixth grade girls, Cherland (1994a) found that gender could be constructed by the texts that are read and the context in which they are read. She found that the children she studied thought in terms of “girls’ books and boys’ books” (p. 146). In addition, the girls tended to respond to their emotions and feelings about the characters in the books. However, the boys, and the girls in male dominated book discussions, connected to what the characters did. The fact that girls in the predominantly male groups responded in the “male” way demonstrates that the gendered response may be more of a social construction than a biological imperative. This supports Paechter’s (2003b) thesis that gender is a community of practice because the composition of the discussion group determined the kind of response that was privileged.

By viewing reading as gendered, we create specific assumptions on how readers take up texts. These beliefs are based on social and cultural expectations rather than innate characteristics. A great deal of research has looked at the biological determination of gender differences (Blakemore, Berenbaum, & Liben, 2009; Brizendine, 2006; Brody, 1985; Fine, 2010; Halpern, 2010; Money & Ehrhardt, 1972), however “[t]here is little

evidence even of weak biological determination of group differences in simple individual behaviors. And the evidence of cross-cultural and historical diversity in gender is overwhelming” (Connell, 2005, p. 47).

Certainly, there are many ways that texts help construct our gender roles and there are many ways that society positions readers within those roles, however there are also ways readers can challenge gender roles within texts. Literature can provide the means to resist the power structures that maintain repressive gender roles in our society. Redressive texts, media that resists dominant social structures, offer readers opportunities to explore their beliefs about gender vicariously through fictional characters (Christian-Smith, 1990; Marsh & Stolle, 2006).

Gender and literacy. We read in the context of our socialization, and our training as gendered beings is one of the strongest forms of socialization. Beginning in infancy, we are trained to perform masculinity or femininity in ways that are acceptable to our communities. In addition, gender permeates all facets of our lives (West and Zimmerman, 1987). The societal discourses on gender that normalize certain characteristics and practices as male or female have a great influence on how we construct our identity and how we see ourselves in relation to many activities, including literacy practices (Moje & Luke, 2009).

Gender is constructed through cultural expectations and social discourses that have developed over time (Lorber, 1994). It is a “powerful ideological device, which produces, reproduces, and legitimates the choices and limits that are predicated on sex

category” (West and Zimmerman, 1987, p. 147). Both gender and literacy position us within specific social structures that are mediated by language, which helps us make sense of the beliefs and expectations that we encounter in daily life (Gee, 1990/2008). However, our literacy and gender practices are continuously challenged as we seek membership in various communities, so even within cultural norms there are many who do not fit into the normative standard (Connell, 2005). This supports the idea that there are many differences across gender, as well as between genders. Baxter (2002) writes that the

tendency in research to treat the articulations of males and females as manifestations of a rather ‘fixed’ masculinity and femininity has at least two implications. First, it precludes the view that our identities are multiply constructed according to a range of culturally salient categories other than gender, such as age, class, ethnic background, status, and peer approval. Secondly, the final fixing of people as males and females confirms the inevitability of a gender dichotomy and closes down the range of possibilities for resistance or change (p. 7).

Gender roles in texts play a part in the ways males and females see themselves positioned in society. This positioning normalizes certain practices and defines others as abnormal. For example, as Elaine Millard (1997) notes, it is less socially acceptable for boys to engage in ‘feminine’ activities than it is for girls to act ‘masculine’. She notes, “(e)ngaging tomboys abound in children’s stories, but there are far fewer literary

examples of sissies” (p. 23). This implies that ‘feminine’ boys are more likely to be positioned as abnormal or socially deviant than girls who have masculine traits (Connell, 2005; Smiler & Gelman, 2008). Regardless of the wider range of acceptable ‘feminine’ options, girls often learn that they must eventually take up socially accepted gender traits. In children’s literature, we often see the tomboys return to their ‘proper’ feminine role and the sissies prove themselves as ‘true men’ in the end, reproducing the dominant societal discourses on gender (Millard, 1997).

In her research on gender and reading, Millard (1997) found boys and girls to be “differently literate.” She did not see this as innate, but due to societal discourses that define certain practices as feminine or masculine. Josephine Peyton Young’s (2000) comment, “the gender order is important to keep in mind when thinking about boys and literacy because it works to limit the way boys and men read, write, think, act, value, and talk about literature and other texts” (p. 320) is applicable to women as well.

The intersection of gender and literacy has been of interest to educators for the last forty years, and there have been many investigations of males and/or females reading. However, much of that research is at least fifteen years old (Alvermann, et al, 1997; Bleich, 1986; Cherland, 1994a; Christian-Smith, 1990; Evans, 1997; Finders, 1997; Flynn, 1983; Holland, 1977; Millard, 1997; Moore, 1997; Radway, 1984; Smith, 1997). While those studies were enlightening and contributed much to the field of literacy, there have been societal changes over the last few decades that have affected gender beliefs. Research shows that men and women display increasingly less differentiation in their sex

role attitudes (Loo & Thorpe, 1998), however men still feel more compelled than women to maintain stereotypical gender characteristics (Smiler & Gelman, 2008; Twenge, 1997; Vogel, Wester, Heesacker, & Madon, 2003). There is a need for new research that looks at gender and literacy to investigate if and how social changes have altered the way males and females respond to the texts they read. This study explores the current gender beliefs in this community of teachers, and how these readers take up texts in today's world.

I contend that Rosenblatt (1938/1995) was correct in her belief that there is “no generic reader” and, therefore, there is no representative gendered reader. Our notions of gender are created through participation in communities of practice and those communities are local and changing (Paechter, 2003b). There are institutional expectations that work to maintain the status quo, and those beliefs have great influence on our identity construction. However, it is important to remember that most of us have agency and the ability to position ourselves within structures of power (Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2007). Since gender and literacy are both constructs that are continually contested and rebuilt (Gee, 1990/2008), we cannot define a specific response to text as characteristic of a gender. The idea of reading as inherently gendered essentializes males and females and maintains a social binary that keeps men and women in opposition.

In the next section I examine research on gender and response to literature, including some of the sociocultural factors that can confound the study of gender and literacy, reading preferences, the characteristics of gendered reading, how gender has been shown to affect the discussion of texts, and alternative and resistant responses to

literature and literacy practices. Finally, I explore research on the way gender is influenced by our communities of practice.

Related Literature

Gender, race, and socioeconomic status. Gender is always in play and it competes and interacts with a number of other cultural factors. “Individuals can simultaneously belong to several social identity groups, including age, race, and gender” (Boston & Baxley, 2007). Often, studies on gender do not also investigate the confounding issues of ethnicity and socioeconomic status (Phillips, 1998). However, it is essential to examine the intersection of race, class, and gender when generalizing about literacy practices. Beliefs about reading and gender are part of response to literature, so those attitudes must be examined as well.

In the light of research that suggests that reading motivation, particularly in males, declines steadily as students progress through school (Anderson, Wilson & Fielding, 1988; McKenna, Kear, & Ellsworth, 1995) and fears about a ‘gender gap’ in education, it is important to look at sociocultural issues that may confound research on gender and literacy. Mead (2006) provides evidence that middle class boys score better on school reading assessments than girls in lower socioeconomic groups. She also shows that there is just a minute difference in the number of middle and upper class males and females in terms of college enrollments. This is only evident when one factors in socioeconomic status. Chatterji (2006) looked at reading achievement gaps using data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study. She found that reading gaps were associated more with

socioeconomic status than with race or gender. While there were some differences between African American and White children, those factors were mediated later on by school attendance and the amount of reading done outside of school (specifically, in the home).

The complication of gender by race and class was investigated in Esposito's (2011) study of women in higher education. She found that gender is a "racialised position." Not every participant constructed gender in the same way. The "Hill girls" were seen as "rich White students" by the "City style" women, who were Black and of lower socioeconomic backgrounds (p. 95). While the "Hill girls" had more economic and social capital (Bourdieu, 1986), their academic positioning was not one of power.

Femininity is often not connected to 'good' students. Since the Hill girl cares about her feminine presentation of self above and beyond all things, she can be dismissed as not a 'good' student. In fact, she is seen as engaging in frivolous feminine pursuits, more concerned with lipstick than with learning (Esposito, 2011, p. 98).

Regardless of the conflicted position of the "Hill girls," the "City style" women saw themselves as less privileged and with fewer discourse options to choose from due to their race. Esposito's study reveals the ways that gender is linked to race and class, as well as the limited possibilities some women have in constructing their feminine subjectivities.

One excellent example of the intersection of class and gender is Bronwyn Davies' (2003) examination of the gender beliefs of children who were from three socioeconomic backgrounds. The girls with the lowest economic status saw women as victims. One of the girls, Anna, made a comment that "men can do different things to us, that we can't do" (p. 74). In a different conversation, Anna discussed her lack of connection with a particular movie because she did not believe that the female character would have felt "safe enough" to sail a ship (p. 73). Rosie, another participant, responded with, "She had to, her husband was missing" (p. 73). The implication is that women would not take on an adventurous or heroic role unless they were forced to by life's circumstances.

The more middle class girls positioned themselves using a different discourse. They did not view themselves as victims. They were happy to be female, but they had to be smart to come out on top. Jennifer said, "I don't want to rely on my husband or things like that... like divorces and everything you see you never know if there is going to be a divorce" (p. 80). The girls defined themselves according to the dominant discourses on beauty, but they knew that their identity would have to change when they got older. They would have to rely on their wisdom and their experience because they no longer would fit the societal standards of beauty.

The high-income girls seemed even more empowered, however that empowerment came from strict adherence to the dominant narrative on femininity and beauty, and they included specific rules of demeanor in that discourse. They knew the male/female expectations of attractiveness were not equitable. However, they saw that

female role as a choice. Clearly, there were other women who did not make the same choices and who did not hold the same power they did. Tiffany made comments that the girls at less elite schools did not act like girls because they swore and did not speak properly (p. 88). The girls with high socioeconomic status perceived the male/female binary as equalizing. They were willing to trade on their role as a woman in order to get what they needed. It was women who made the ‘right’ choices who gained economic advantages and were superior to those who did not follow the rules of the discourse. Those women wielded power over men.

The girls from all three economic backgrounds created their narrative on femininity from their perceptions of other women in their communities of practice and from the media. All of their discourses relied on the male/female binary. Rosie knew how vulnerable she was as a female because she had observed it first hand. She spoke of her mother’s friend, whose husband “acts like the boss of the house and he’s more like her father than her husband” (p. 76). Jennifer was acutely aware of divorce and its potential ramifications for the women in marriage. She had seen that many women lose power as the result of a divorce. The high-income girls had a clear understanding of the discourse they had to reflect in order to retain their power as women. They had to “keep fit,” shave their legs, dress in way that showed off their bodies, and wear makeup and jewelry. In other words, they had to attract men and continue to attract men if they wanted to stay powerful.

Finders' (1997) study provides evidence that socioeconomic status has an influence on the gender beliefs of middle school girls. The Social Queens, of higher socioeconomic status, were defined by their attractiveness to males. When one of the boys made a suggestive remark in a Queen's yearbook, it gave her social capital. Being sexualized by males was something valuable. The Tough Cookies, from a lower socioeconomic status, learned their gender beliefs from their mothers rather than their peer group. This gave them a sense of femininity as deeply connected to the family.

It is clear that we cannot successfully examine gender and response to literature without an awareness of all the other factors that intersect to create identity. Gender does not stand alone, however it is often seen as a single contributing factor to literacy practices.

Gender and response to literature. While the majority of the empirical studies on gender and reader response were done with elementary and secondary students (Alvermann, et al, 1997; Cherland, 1994a; Evans, 1997; Finders, 1997; Millard, 1997; Moore, 1997; Smith, 1997), some studies have looked at college students' responses to literature (Bleich, 1986; Flynn, 1983; Holland, 1977). Elizabeth Flynn's (1983) research on college freshmen in a composition class suggests that the reader has one of three responses to the text; they can resist the text and remain unchanged by it (dominance); they can allow the text to become so powerful that it essentially replaces the self (submission); or the reader and the text can interact enough to provide a learning experience without losing their sense of self (mutuality). Flynn noted that male students

would respond to disturbing texts by rejecting them or trying to dominate them, whereas female students were more able to find a balance between involvement with the text and critical detachment (mutuality). This allowed the females to interpret the text more effectively. In addition, the women were more likely to try to understand the characters before judging them, whereas the men were less empathetic.

In a university literature course, David Bleich (1986) studied seven of his students' responses to their reading. He found that males responded in an analytical manner and females attempted to understand the text. Bleich noticed that males were more focused on the authorial voice, while females fell into the story world with little thought of the author. One interesting result of the study was that this effect only occurred when the participants read prose. When the students read poetry their responses were similar. Bleich (1986) hypothesized that

The salient parameter was the perception of the "voice" in literature. Men and women both perceived a strong lyric voice in the poetry, usually seeing it as the author's voice, while in the narrative, men perceived a strong narrative voice, but women experience the narrative as a "world", without a particularly strong sense that this world was narrated into existence (p. 239).

While they are interesting discussions of the literacy practices in specific classrooms, both of these studies relied on the investigator's personal assumptions about gender. Bleich (1986) states, "Because of their greater fluency of inference, women 'see' feelings in the story more quickly than men do" (p. 259). However, he does not provide

any evidence to back up the idea that females have a different ability to infer than males do. While Flynn (1983) concluded that women tended to read with “critical detachment” (p. 251), Bleich (1986) found that men were more analytical readers who tended to keep outside of the story world. These two findings are contradictory and demonstrate the subjective nature of assumptions about gendered characteristics and literature response.

In addition, Bleich’s (1986) study showed that the differentiation in literacy practices was limited to prose. This was never satisfactorily explained in the study. His participant group was quite small and he was one of the group members. Another confounding issue is that he was their professor, and thus held a great deal of power over the students.

Gender and reading preferences. Several recent studies have investigated text preferences and gender (Love & Hamston, 2003; Merisuo-Storm, 2006; Millard, 1997; Smith & Wilhelm, 2002; Schultheis, 1990; Twist & Siansbury, 2009). Millard (1997) surveyed the reading habits of 255 11 year-olds, and backed that up with observation of their classroom reading preferences, and interview data. She found that males and females had different literary practices’, however, her data showed that their genre preferences are very comparable. Boys said their favorite genre was action/adventure (24.6%), humor (6%), and science fiction (5.3%) over nonfiction (4.5%). Girls had similar genre interests in that they preferred horror (14%), action/adventure (9.1%), and humor (7.4%), over romance (1.7%), or “teenage fiction” (5.8%). Millard qualified these findings by stating that the texts preferred by girls still had a relationship-based plotline.

She noted that only one of the eight authors preferred by the boys was female (12.5%). Four of the thirteen authors preferred by girls were male (31%). Schultheis (1990) surveyed 240 high school juniors and found that females preferred romance, realistic fiction, and humor (in that order). Males preferred adventure, science fiction, and humor (in that order).

According to Millard (1997), girls are more likely to enjoy fiction, particularly realistic fiction that depicts relationships and employs strong character development. In her study of middle school students, nine of the girls' thirteen favorite authors wrote "teenage" (realistic) fiction, romance, or horror novels. This aligns with the societal view of women as more emotional and validated by their relationships with others. Realistic fiction is also the literary genre that is often favored by female teachers (Love & Hamston, 2003; Smith & Wilhelm, 2002).

Some research has shown that boys prefer to read materials that are not usually privileged in the classroom, like comics, graphic novels, nonfiction, magazines, and digital media (Love & Hamston, 2003; Smith & Wilhelm, 2002). Boys' reading choices and attitudes about reading appear to stem from the traditional masculine discourses that have created gender norms (Kehler & Greig, 2005). In terms of fiction, the boys in Millard's (1997) study often chose to read action and/or humor over books that emphasize relationships between characters.

Literacy researchers often discuss the notion that readers prefer protagonists that are of the same gender as the reader (Beyard-Tyler & Sullivan, 1980; Prosenjak, 1997;

Smith & Wilhelm, 2002). As noted earlier, Millard (1997) noticed that males preferred male authors and females were more likely to read materials by female authors. That data has been contradicted in other studies. In an interesting quantitative study, Bortolussi, Dixon, & Sopcák (2010) corroborated Schultheis's (1990) earlier findings that both males and females preferred texts with male protagonists, which is confounded by genre, author notoriety, and social pressure. It appears that the data on gender and reading preferences is inconclusive.

Characteristics of gendered reading. Several researchers have theorized that there are certain male and female characteristics that can be applied to discussions of gendered reading. They posit that males show competition with the author, text, or character, are hierarchical in terms of power, have an ethic of justice, and are more apt to reject or accept a text on face value (Gilligan, 1982/1993; Linkin, 1993; Tannen, 1990). Females are more likely to connect to community, have an ethic of caring, tend toward cooperation, and attempt to understand the text before making judgment (Gilligan, 1982/1993; Linkin, 1993; Tannen, 1990). In addition, females are seen as more interested in feelings, emotions, and relationships, while males tend to be more detached, intellectual, and analytical (Holland, 1977). These characteristics are not related to sex, but are socially constructed gendered traits.

While not intending to study gender, Norman Holland (1977) discovered that it played a role in how his literature students responded to Shakespeare's play, *King Lear*. The female students were affected by the relationship between Lear and his daughter,

Cordelia, and the male students wrote about Lear's helplessness, or lack of power, in the face of her death. Holland concluded that the students brought their gender socialization to the reading of the text and that the text changed for them because of it. This reinforces other theorists' ideas that men are concerned with justice and power, while women are more connected to relationships (Bleich, 1986; Cherland, 1992, Gilligan, 1982/1993; Holland, 1977).

The idea that female readers focus more on relationships and male readers are more interested in action was demonstrated in several studies (Bleich, 1986; Cherland, 1992, Holland, 1977). In case study research on college students, Bobbie Lee Hanley (1998) found that the female participants were more focused on the relationships and romantic elements in a text. They connected personally to the characters and their responses were more emotional. Male participants were more drawn to action and adventure. The subjects identified more with same gender characters.

While Meredith Cherland's study (1994a) of sixth grade girls found that the participants had traditionally female reading preferences, like adolescent romance series, and they tended to focus on relationships in their reading, she also discovered that they often used their reading as a way to resist the gender expectations in their communities of practice. In addition, Cherland found that while girls in same sex discussion groups displayed an interest in the human connections in the readings, girls who were in discussion groups with boys did not respond to the text in terms of relationships and

emotion. Cherland saw this as a response to the dominance of the boys' viewpoint, although it could also be viewed as diversity of response within gender.

There are other factors that could influence the literary responses of the students in mixed gender groups, including an affiliation with the group as a community of practice. It is also possible that the commonality of response in the single gender discussion groups could be a reaction to policing of gender norms within groups or the desire to conform to the expectations of a social group.

Gender and discussions about texts. Cherland (1994a) noted that the students in her research used "gendered talk" when discussing texts. She found that girls used a "discourse of feeling" and boys used a "discourse of action." Karen Evans (1997) noticed the same kinds of talk in her study of fifth graders in book discussion groups, however she avoided gendering her findings by viewing the types of talk as interdependent rather than in opposition. She contemplated the possibility that "feeling talk can be active and ... action talk can be rooted in emotion" (p. 164). While Evans attempted to avoid stereotyping the ways students discussed the texts, their responses to power appeared to fit into the dominant gender belief system. The all female group was cooperative and did not vie for dominance.

Research has indicated that women's voices have been silenced or marginalized in the classroom (AAUW, 1995; O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky, 1999). Cindy O'Donnell-Allen and Peter Smagorinsky (1999) suggest that female voices tend to be "tentative", "nurturing", "indirect", "powerless", and "connected with other speakers"

while male voices are “louder, more competitive, (and) more certain” (p. 36). This impacts the way the discussion of texts are structured. In their evaluation of a discussion strategy called “body biography,” a visual depiction of a literary character’s traits and relationships within the text, the authors noted that twelfth grade girls in a discussion group were inclusive, collaborative, and open to joint interpretation of text. O’Donnell-Allen and Smagorinsky (1999) viewed this teaching strategy as a way to facilitate the development of “both individual and group power” within the classroom (p. 37).

There are different ways students can show submission in the classroom. One is through their silence, although that can also be an act of resistance (Evans, Alvermann, & Anders, 1998), and another can be in the type of talk that is used. Alvermann, Commeyras, et al. (1997) studied the kinds of discursive practices that university researchers and middle school students used in their classroom discussions of texts. They discovered that the participants tended to have four types of gendered talk: self-depreciating (or “sorry talk”), discriminatory talk, exclusionary talk, and talk desiring neutrality. Self-depreciating talk was the way females “tacitly acknowledged their diminished status by qualifying or apologizing for, their contributions to classroom talk” (p. 86). The participants used discriminatory talk when they felt that they were being oppressed by standards or norms that were not equal. Some topics made students feel uncomfortable. This included gender issues, sex discrimination, and sexual harassment. During discussions about these subjects, students “frequently resorted to talk that was aimed at silencing or excluding the contributions of one sex or the other” (p. 89). This

was categorized as exclusionary talk. In the cases where participants did not want to disrupt the community status quo, they tried to show neutrality in their talk.

According to Aries (1982), female students tend to take up discussion topics set by male students rather than proffer their own ideas. Females are more likely to be interested in relationship building than in competition, while men are more apt to question the reasoning of other group members (Aries, 1982; Baxter, 2002; Tannen, 1990). In other research, females in discussion groups were reticent about speaking up and tended to moderate their comments in order to avoid offending members of the group. In contrast, their written responses were strong, analytical, and well reasoned. The authors hypothesized that this was because the written work was not intended to be read by other class members (Fox, 1990). This correlates with studies that have found that females are seen as more supportive and more likely to follow classroom rules, such as raising one's hand before being nominated to speak (Baxter, 2002; Jones, 1989; LaFrance, 1991; Lakoff, 1975).

In a differing interpretation of student talk about texts, David Moore (1997) looked at gender and literacy through the lens of social enactment theory, which views “students and teachers negotiating relationships with each other that define the rights, roles, and responsibilities of being literate” (p. 509). This is a process of social mediation, where acceptable actions and beliefs are constructed jointly. Moore looked at the ways talk has been defined as gendered in previous studies, including turn taking, interruptions, question initiation, and other patterns of communication. He also looked at

the multiple and shifting gendered subjectivities within a high school English classroom. The author found that student response could not be essentialized in terms of gender because individual actions were contextual. While some responses reflected traditional gendered discourse, there were always exceptions. Student subjectivities were varied and overlapping. Moore (1997) wrote,

Rather than considering Alex or Heather in terms of being *male* or *female*, this study points to features associated with each of them being *human, person, individual, and decision maker*. Viewing students this way emphasizes their agency, their potentials for facing choices, making decisions, and realizing consequences. (p. 525)

These studies point to the value of examining both talk and ways of talking, including silences and mutual interpretation strategies, in order to get a more accurate picture of what happens in literature discussion groups. In addition, it is important to take the mix of personalities, and genders, into consideration when analyzing group interactions.

Alternative and oppositional responses to texts. Discourses are socially accepted ways of speaking, acting, believing, and feeling that identify one as belonging to a certain group or culture (Gee, 1990/2008). These discourses can conflict with one another, even within a single group or community. Due to this conflict, we may or may not accept the discourses in which we are positioned socially (Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2007). We may resist and develop identities that alter or defy cultural norms through our

use of literacy practices (Blackburn, 2002/2003; Davies, 1990; Lewis & del Valle, 2009).

This resistance is a form of agency.

It is useful to look at the “strategies” and “tactics” we use when resisting identities and literacy practices (de Certeau, 1984). Strategies are behaviors that work within power structures, such as going to school or completing one’s homework. Tactics are a type of practice that resists power and social structures in a subversive manner. A tactic is a form of agency. It usually does not change the power structure, although the power structure may incorporate the tactical action and therefore may be altered. Most often, it is a way to disrupt the dominant mode in a shadowy sense, without destroying it. De Certeau (1984) says, “a tactic insinuates itself into the other’s place, fragmentarily, without taking it over in its entirety, without being able to keep it at a distance” (p. xix). The tactic uses the resources at hand. It “is always on the watch for opportunities that must be seized ‘on the wing’” (de Certeau, 1984, p. xix).

An example of this kind of tactic, or seized opportunity, can be seen in Cynthia Lewis’s (1997) examination of literature discussions in a middle school classroom. One of the boys, James, had little academic status within the class, particularly within the space of the literacy discussion. His most common mode of resistance was to come to class unprepared, to avoid contributing to the literature discussions, or to act in a disruptive manner. In general, the other students in his group discounted any contributions he made. However, when the group discussed a horror novel, James seized

the opportunity to display his knowledge of the genre. He, through a tactic that employed 'subversive' literature, became the group leader.

Another example of the use of tactics is seen in Mollie Blackburn's (2002/2003) study of a lesbian adolescent who was a member of an out-of-school literacy group. Justine's method of resistance in school had been to avoid any display, literary or other, of her sexual orientation. After she was confronted on the street and called a "dyke," Justine positioned herself as "hated and unsafe" (Blackburn, 2002/2003, p. 317). After Justine heard a poem that showed lesbians in a positive way, she used the poem to create a video. She showed the video at school for a class assignment. In this way, she used the strategy of completing her assignment and used the tactic of incorporating her sexual orientation in the topic. She did not change the structure of the classroom, but she altered it slightly with the shadow of her resistance.

Blackburn's (2002/2003) literacy group provided a "third space" for Justine. Third space is "a discursive space in which alternative and competing discourses and positionings transform conflict and difference into rich zones of collaboration and learning" (Gutierrez, Baquedano-Lopez, & Alvarez, 2001, p. 127). By providing Justine with an example of poetry that positioned lesbians as beautiful and loving, Blackburn opened up the space that allowed Justine to resist and transform her own identity as a lesbian.

Within Blackburn's literacy group, Justine was able to experience an "identity transformation" (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998, p. 72-73). In this

experience, a person's identity becomes "diffused" or disrupted. This forces the person to view him or herself in a new, possibly even negative, light. Then their identity is "reconstituted" (Holland, et al, 1998, p. 72-73). The negative view is ameliorated and a sense of normalcy returns. Holland, et al. (1998) say,

In the formation of a new identity an individual comes, with the social encouragement and insistence of others, to interpret the world in new ways, and to position herself and emotionally invest herself in that world. Individuals do this through participating in group activities, learning to produce and enact cultural forms particular to that world, and taking up these forms as devices for mediating their own conception of self and world (p. 73).

Justine was able to construct an identity that allowed her to feel safe, was resistant to the verbal abuse of outsiders, and that positioned her so she could openly express her sexual orientation within the power structure of school.

The poem Blackburn (2002/2003) used, and the horror novel James read (Lewis, 1997), can be seen as "redressive texts" (Marsh & Stolle, 2006, p. 48). These are print, aural, and visual media that resist dominant social structures. They can offer readers ways to explore their beliefs about gender and sexuality vicariously through fictional characters (Marsh & Stolle, 2006). The video Justine created became a redressive text for her peers. She may have provided a space for some of the other students to examine their beliefs about homosexuality.

Sometimes resistance is more subtle. While the romance novels read by Linda Christian-Smith's (1990) 29 female participants promoted the dominant discourse of femininity, they also provided the women with a venue for observing and evaluating heterosexual female norms presented in the texts. Christian-Smith noted that the women preferred protagonists who were intelligent and resourceful. They took great pleasure in reading about women who outsmarted men and they aspired to emulate those heroines. They wanted to be seen as capable and assertive. This conflicted with their desire to be attractive and loved by men. Through oppositional readings, the women rewrote the discourse of feminine submission, found in many romance novels, to be one of empowerment.

Sally Smith's (2000) study of sixth grade girls in an after school book club looked at the way reading allowed the participants to live vicariously through the characters in the books they read. The participants were able to escape their "good girl" identities through redressive texts that allowed them to participate in the unsafe worlds of the young adult novels they read. Their responses demonstrated a sense of agency that was otherwise absent in their lives. The club was a safe "third space" (Gutierrez, Baquedano-Lopez, & Alvarez, 2001) for the girls to explore the notions of sexuality, rape, and prostitution.

In Margaret J. Finders' (1997) investigation of literacy and adolescent girls, she noted that the Social Queens' "literate underlife, those practices that occur away from and in resistance to schooling, became a useful tool to mark status and document one as an

insider in this group” (p.54-55). They used note passing, yearbook signing, and reading of teen magazines to designate group membership, as well as exclusion from the group. These were often used surreptitiously. The girls would read magazines hidden inside of their notebooks to keep from being noticed by their teachers or parents. The notes they passed contained coded messages that they deemed private or in defiance of adult expectations. They erased faces or blacked out messages in an attempt to rewrite their yearbook.

Evans, Alvermann, and Anders (1998) found that girls, who were continuously excluded from discussion group conversations by the boys in the group, chose silence as a form of resistance. They saw this as a way of challenging the power exercised by the males in the group. The authors proposed that silence, rather than always being a response to oppression, may be a way of participating within one’s own comfort level.

Communities of practice and gender. Communities of practice are groups with a shared goal that develop practices intended to help them achieve that goal. When people belong to a group that has common goals and similar interests, the participants learn through interaction with each other and are better able to achieve those goals (Wenger, 1998). In addition, individuals’ identities are shaped and changed by their participation in a community of practice (Lewis, Enciso & Moje, 2007). Therefore, a discussion group or classroom that is able to create a community of practice has a better chance to influence the members’ identities as readers.

Using a dance metaphor to describe the way space is used to socially situate learners, Hirst and Cooper (2008) looked at the methods that one classroom community of practice used to reinforce gender expectations. The teacher changed student seating arrangements in order to modify behavior, develop same gender relationships, and to aid in her teaching tasks. In doing so, she promoted specific ways of being gendered. “Good girls” were paired with “bad boys” to promote better study skills. However, this positioned certain girls as caregivers and supporters of boys rather than as actors working toward their own educational goals. In addition, it constructed males as requiring female moderation for their “boys will be boys” actions rather than making them responsible for their own behavior. The teacher also paired boys with other boys so they will not be “considered, by ... male peers, as dancing too closely with the girls” (p. 437). This reified the boys’ belief that masculinity is the rejection of femininity (Connell, 1987).

Finders (1997) study of middle school girls’ literacy practices is an excellent example of the ways communities of practice can influence identity. Both the Social Queens and the Tough Cookies had distinct practices that were necessary for membership in the group. The Social Queens used specific language when referring to each other, such as “best bud.” They also used language to denote those who did not belong to their community of practice, like “woof-woofs.” The Tough Cookies used the term “air-heads” to denote those who were outside of their community of practice.

Mastery within the Social Queens was indicated by certain practices. Only a master within the community of practice was allowed to sign the yearbook of another

master, however it was a social plus for peripheral or nonmembers to have their book signed by a Social Queen. The Cookies did not buy yearbooks and were, therefore, on the extreme periphery of membership in the middle school girls' community of practice. However, disinterest in a yearbook was one of the practices that moved them into mastery of the Tough Cookies' community of practice. This is an example of conflict between one's different communities of practice.

Membership in the Queens also included a social component. To be a Social Queen one had to participate in a wide variety of extracurricular activities. This gave them a greater opportunity to influence others around them. This moved the Queens away from the sphere of influence of their family communities of practice, however their families saw the distancing as an expected step toward mastery of adulthood. Their parents saw popularity and social engagement as equally as important as learning. The parents of the Tough Cookies, however, felt that learning was far more important than social activities. They wanted their children to maintain strong family ties. This practice conflicted with the communities of practice of the other middle school girls and placed the Cookies on the perimeter of the Queens' community.

In addition, these two communities of practice defined their gender differently. The Social Queens were defined by their sexuality and often signed notes and yearbooks with "stay sweet and sexy." This is an interesting conflict of identity with the juxtaposition of "sweet," giving the connotation of 'good girl', and "sexy," giving the connotation of 'bad girl.' Their gender beliefs were influenced by literacy practices, such

as reading teen magazines, and their peer group. The Tough Cookies also had a conflicting sense of femininity as traditional, homemaker, and nurturer, and feminist, independent, and strong. Their sense of gender came from their family community of practices, where their mothers were masters.

Conclusion

Reader response theory helps us consider the multiplicity of factors involved in response to texts. There are many social, economic, and cultural aspects involved in identity construction, which plays an important role in the way we take up literature (Gee, 1999/2005). Gender is an essential element in how we build identity, but it is mitigated by other influences. For example, there are cultural distinctions, such as race, class, and religion that intersect with gender. Even within the feminist movement, there are cultural groups who resist the notion of a shared female experience. Fisher (2001) writes,

Women's experiences may be a rich source of knowledge about daily encounters with oppression, but such experiences may not add up to a single, coherent standpoint. Strong feelings may supply important clues to the character of gender injustice, but participants in feminist discourse cannot assume a shared interpretation of those feelings (p. 59).

Gender theory provides us with a basis to resist the notion of masculinity and femininity as a universal construction. Gender is performed in ways that are learned in the different social and cultural communities we inhabit. Therefore, we may perform

gender in a variety of ways, depending on which community we share at the moment of performance (Paechter, 2003b). How then can we make assumptions about a shared interpretation of literature based on gender?

In the next chapter, I describe the research site and participants. In addition, I explain the methodology employed in this study and the techniques used to analyze the resultant data.

Chapter 3: Design and Methodology

“I’m a character development kind of person. I really like first person narratives. Because I like to know what’s going on in people’s heads. I’m a big fan of the coming of age books, which is why I think I like the young adult books so much. I really like to know what makes people tick. Like defining moments in peoples lives, whether or not they’re fictional or real. But I find that really fascinating. Character development and relationships, in a broad way, not necessarily romantic relationships, also family relationships, friendships, all those kinds of things.” – Female participant

“Once I hit junior high I started reading classics, what are traditionally canonized books. I really got into poetry and liked poetry through high school and most of college. Later in college I switched more to short stories. I’ve always read novels too. But currently I’m reading short stories. I like short story collections and flash fiction. I’ve been obsessed with that lately. I think it’s such phenomenal challenge to tell a short story in a page and make it interesting and worth reading.” – Male participant

Introduction

This study investigated the ways that preservice and practicing secondary English Language Arts teachers responded to texts in a graduate level adolescent literature course. The purpose of the study was to discover what was happening within this specific interpretive community as the students created meaning from the texts that were read and discussed. I examined the participants’ responses in order to discover the role of group interactions and the part the text played in their construction of meaning. I explored the norms and expectations of the group so I could understand how gender contributed to their interpretations and interactions. I also identified what factors played a role in their gender identity, exploring the function of the participants’ background in the construction of their gender assumptions and expectations. My intention was to discover the layers of influences that interrelated in their practices. This was important

because those layers had been built, contested, reified, and altered over the course of their lives by a variety of communities of practice.

The study also reexamined research, on gender and reading, gender and response to literature, and gender and conversation, which had been done in the 1970's, 1980's, and 1990's. I looked at the findings of the earlier studies and used those outcomes to create the analytic factors used in my study, in an attempt to determine if the results of those investigations, which have influenced literacy practices, are still applicable given the social changes that have occurred in the last twenty to forty years.

This chapter presents the design of the study, participants and site, data sources, validity issues, analytic instruments, analytic strategies, human subject issues, and my role as a researcher.

Research Design

In this qualitative study, I employed ethnographic methods, collecting data in the form of personal and audio taped classroom observations, field notes, written artifacts (course assignments, handouts, and written electronic and paper responses), and audiotape semi-structured interviews. I analyzed the data using open and axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), as well as critical discourse analysis techniques to examine the group interactions (Fairclough, 2001). This helped me understand the ways the dynamics in the small and whole group discussions acted upon the responses the participants had to the texts.

I chose qualitative methodology because I was attempting to understand the participants' multiple realities within the context of their prior experiences and within the natural setting of their classroom. I wanted to discover how they made meaning from the texts they read and how they influenced or were influenced by others in the group (Maxwell, 2005). My hope was to learn whether the participants' communities of practice had an influence on their construction of gender and how gender functioned in their responses to the literature read for the course. To facilitate this, I explored the assumptions and expectations the participants held about gender. I examined the ways the subjects identified with the gender expectations in their discussion groups and how that influenced their responses to literature. I also investigated the kind of discourses that were maintained and disrupted in the discussion groups. I looked for patterns of response that either reified or resisted dominant gender assumptions in our culture, and for any differences in response within gender.

The observation, interview, and written response data allowed me to look at the intersection of the participants' responses to literature, communities of practice, and gender within their classroom community. The data sources provided me with information about the participants' gendered language, gender assumptions, and resistance to gender roles and expectations. The observational and written data provided insight into the participants' views on literature, as well as additional information on their membership in other communities of practice.

Site. Northern University (NU) is an urban university located in the Midwestern United States (all names and places are pseudonyms). It is situated within a large, growing metropolitan area that has a population of over three million. The entire metropolitan area covers thirteen counties and more than 6,000 square miles (Market Quick Facts, n.d.). About 85% of the area residents are White.

There are over 50,000 students enrolled at NU. The student body is 53% female and 47% male. Demographically, the student population is 71.6% Caucasian, 8% Asian or Pacific Islander, 4.1% Black or African American, 2.1% Hispanic, less than 1% Native American, and 5.9% unknown (Campus demographics, n.d.).

Participants. I used purposeful sampling to select the study participants. I chose this type of sampling because I was hoping to obtain a population that I knew would yield the best data for my purpose (Patton, 1990). All of the participants were preservice or practicing secondary English Language Arts teachers who were working toward a Masters in Education degree, except one participant who was working on a doctorate in Literacy Education. They were enrolled in a graduate level adolescent literature course during the fall 2009 term. The course met one evening a week for 2 hours and 40 minutes per class session. There were 13 in-class sessions and one session that met at a campus event. All of the students in the course had the opportunity to participate in the study. All of the class members, and the instructor, agreed to participate and were included in the study. This allowed me to generate as varied a field of data as possible.

University students in this field of study tend to be White and from the middle class (Education statistics, n.d.). In addition, the level of their schooling and their interest in secondary English education predisposes them to value literacy. In this way, they are representative of the economic and sociocultural backgrounds that predominate in secondary education in the United States. The group included one Somali male and one self-identified lesbian. The subject group was slightly gender imbalanced, with eight males (42%) and eleven females (58%), plus the female instructor. In addition, the group was 95% White. This also reflects the population of the national secondary school teaching community, which is approximately 57% female and 84% Caucasian (Education statistics, n.d.).

Within the larger group, I selected a case group of two women and two men to interview outside of class. This allowed me to look at their gender assumptions and responses to literature in a more focused manner. The interview subjects were selected using purposeful sampling (Patton, 1990). I observed all the students for several classes before I selected the interviewees. I chose subjects who seemed to represent different gender constructions within the larger class group. I chose one female and one male student who appeared to represent a non-traditional view and one female and one male who seemed to espouse a more traditional view. Some of the participants came from very different communities of practice and some had experienced similar or, like the community of practice of the preservice teachers' cohort, the same communities.

I opted to work with preservice and practicing teachers because there has been very little research done on teachers and response to literature or on teachers and gender. Nearly all of the research on reader response and gender has been on adolescent or child populations. In addition, these participants grew up during the time when much of the early research on gender and literacy was completed and they would have been affected by the socialization and gender beliefs that were documented in those studies.

Data sources. The primary method of data collection for this investigation was through direct observation of whole class and small group literature discussions. That data was triangulated with analysis of the participants' written responses to the literature that was read in class, and in-depth interviews of selected participants (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000).

Direct observation. I attended fourteen class sessions. During one class session, the group met at a presentation on new children's and adolescent books held at another location on campus. In the thirteen in-class sessions I was a nonparticipating observer and took field notes on the student discussions, both whole class and small group. Because I received immediate responses on the permission forms from the majority of the class, I was able to record and take field notes on the whole class discussions during the first class session.

The discussions were also recorded via digital audio recorders as back up to my field notes. Since I was not able to sit in on more than one small group discussion at a time, the audio recordings provided access to the discussions in more of the groups. The

audio recordings were transcribed by a professional transcription service. I verified and corrected the transcriptions by comparing them to the audio recordings and my field notes.

In-depth interviews. I focused on a case group of four students and followed up with them in semi-structured interviews. The interviews allowed me to ask more in-depth questions about the gendered assumptions they held, as well as their communities of practice, and enabled me to make connections between those assumptions and prior experience and their responses in class and in writing. I scheduled the interview sessions based on the texts that were discussed, as well as the substance of the class and group discussions. The interviews provided an arena for the students to share ideas that they may not have felt comfortable elaborating on in a classroom situation, or on a graded paper, and they allowed me to ask questions to expand on their in-class responses. I began with a set of interview questions (See Appendix A), but added to the questions as I followed up on statements made by the participants or on ideas that came up in our discussion.

Written responses. As part of their assigned work, students wrote a personal and critical response to texts that were read by the whole class and to texts that were selected from a list created by the instructor. The personal responses were designed to allow the students to share any connections they made with their own experiences and to let them express their feelings about the reading experience and/or the text. The critical responses

were intended to encourage the students to think about the literary aspects of the text and to provide a forum for the reader to evaluate the work as a piece of literature.

In addition, the students periodically responded to each other on a blog that all class members had public access to through the course Moodle page. I collected and analyzed their written and blog assignments in order to tease out any gendered responses to the texts, to discover affiliations with the characters in the books that were read, and to look at ways dominant gender norms were maintained and resisted by the students. This data helped to corroborate or contradict the responses that were presented in class and in the interviews.

Data Analysis

During my initial analysis of the whole class and discussion group interactions, I removed all identifiers and indicators of gender from the transcriptions. The participants were labeled Speaker 1, Speaker 2, and so on. This allowed me to analyze the data without preconceptions based on gender or any prior knowledge that I had about the individual participants. After the initial stage of analysis, I inserted the correct pseudonyms for each participant and reanalyzed the data. I could then look at the data using gender as a factor and connect each individual with the data. At that point in the analysis, I was able to note any patterns in the actions and responses of males and females in the groups.

Analytic instruments. Since I was attentive to gendered responses in the data, I needed to understand what research had to say about socially constructed gender traits. I culled the most commonly mentioned traits from what I had read and developed a list of gender characteristics from the work of several scholars in the fields of gender theory and literacy (Bleich, D., 1986; Flynn, E., 1983; Gilligan, C., 1982/1993; Holland, N., 1977; Linkin, H.K., 1993; Tannen, D., 1990). This includes Linkin's (1993) analysis of male and female modes of reading. I named this the Measures of Gendered Reading (See Figure 2 or Appendix B).

Figure 2. Measures of Gendered Reading

<i>Measures of Gendered Reading (Appendix B)</i>		
GENDER	MODE OF READING	SOURCE
Female	Connections to community, emphasizes community relations	Linkin 1993
Female	Tries to understand characters	Linkin 1993
Female	Ethic of care	Gilligan 1982/1993
Female	Requires personal context for moral decision making	Linkin 1993
Female	Invokes the personal to understand the public	Linkin 1993
Female	Cooperative	Linkin 1993
Female	Forms an emotional connection with the text	Bleich 1986
Female	Introduces their own experiences to the reading (interactive)	Linkin 1993
Female	Attempts to accommodate the text	Flynn, 1983
Female	Focus on relationships	Cherland 1992
Female	More likely to break free of the submissive entanglements in a text and evaluate the characters and event with critical detachment	Flynn 1983
Female	Attempts to understand a text before making a judgment about it	Flynn 1983
Female	Enters into the fictive world without focusing on the voice that narrated the world into being	Bleich 1986
Female	Interested in feelings, associations, persons	Holland 1977
Male	Focus on hierarchical relations	Linkin 1993
Male	More apt to accept or reject a text outright	Linkin 1993
Male	Engages in confrontational reading strategies that entail resisting or submitting to the text	Linkin 1993
Male	Ethic of justice – based on conflicting rights	Gilligan 1982/1993

Male	Works well with hypothetical or public situations	Linkin 1993
Male	Needs to feel powerfully in control of events	Linkin 1993
Male	Empowered through competition	Linkin 1993
Male	Engages in power relations – situates reading in a power struggle	Linkin 1993
Male	Comments on whether the text is difficult to understand or accessible	Linkin 1993
Male	Less need to accommodate the text	Linkin 1993
Male	Maintains distance between themselves and the literary world	Flynn 1983
Male	Reacts to disturbing stories by rejecting them or dominating them	Flynn 1983
Male	Focus on a strong narrative voice	Bleich 1986
Male	Intellectual, analytical response	Holland 1977
Male	Experiences text worlds in a more objective manner	Bleich 1986
Male	Interested in plot and character's actions	Cherland 1992

I questioned whether my notions of gendered traits and actions were biased, so I used the Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974) to provide a list of words and phrases that have been traditionally used to describe males or females (See Appendix C). This offered me a method of noting ways that the participants were gendered or gendered others without relying entirely on my own view of the construct of gender. I used these words and phrases as a frame of reference, rather than a determination of what were true masculine or feminine traits. I did not want to rely on my own construction of gender to ascertain what was considered masculine or feminine in my participants' actions or responses. The Bem Sex Role Inventory (see Figure 3) is one of the most commonly utilized measures of masculine, feminine, and androgynous traits (Ballard-Reisch & Elton, 1992; Smiler, 2004) and has been used, and validated as recently as 2009, in several studies of sex role traits (Auster & Ohm, 2000; Ballard-Reisch & Elton, 1992; Holt & Ellis, 1998; Li, DiGiuseppe, & Froh, 2006; Snellman, Ekehammar, & Akrami, 2009). These are personality traits, such as ambition, gentleness, and sincerity. Bem

(1974) did not intend these traits to be considered biological determinants; they are used to indicate societal behavior expectations. I utilized these two lists to determine what types of responses could be characterized as feminine, masculine, or neutral in my data.

Figure 3. Bem Sex Role Inventory

<i>Bem Sex Role Inventory Traits (Bem, 1974) (Appendix C)</i>		
MASCULINE TRAITS	FEMININE TRAITS	NEUTRAL TRAITS
Acts as a leader	Affectionate	Adaptable
Aggressive	Cheerful	Conceited
Ambitious	Childlike	Conscientious
Analytical	Compassionate	Conventional
Assertive	Does not use harsh language	Friendly
Athletic	Eager to soothe hurt feelings	Happy
Competitive	Feminine	Helpful
Defends own beliefs	Flatterable	Inefficient
Dominant	Gentle	Jealous
Forceful	Gullible	Likable
Independent	Loves children	Moody
Individualistic	Loyal	Reliable
Leadership ability	Sensitive to other's needs	Secretive
Makes decisions easily	Shy	Sincere
Masculine	Soft spoken	Solemn
Self-reliant	Sympathetic	Tactful
Self-sufficient	Tender	Theatrical
Strong personality	Understanding	Truthful
Willing to take a stand	Warm	Unpredictable
Willing to take risks	Yielding	Unsystematic

I designated what kinds of conversational traits I would use in my evaluation by looking at research on gender and classroom interactions (Alvermann, Commeyras, et al., 1997; Moore, 1997; O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky, 1999) and gendered talk (Fishman, 1978; Haas, 1979; Tannen, 1990). I created a list of characteristics that are related to male and female conversational interactions that I named the Measures of Gendered Talk (See Figure 4 or Appendix D).

Figure 4. Measures of Gendered Talk

<i>Measures of Gendered Talk (Appendix D)</i> (In classroom discussions in comparison to the other gender)		
GENDER	TRAIT	SOURCE
Female	Rarely nominated to talk	LaFrance, 1991
Female	Talks less when they have the floor	LaFrance, 1991
Female	Are more likely to be interrupted	LaFrance, 1991
Female	Less likely to call out answers	Jones, 1989
Female	Less likely to initiate questions	Jones, 1989
Female	Less direct and aggressive, require more inference from listeners	Noddings, 1992
Female	Doubts the ideas they share	Lakoff, 1975
Female	Affiliates with others in the group	O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
Female	Attempts to cooperate and mutually interpret text	Moore, 1997
Female	Uses "sorry talk"	Alvermann, Commeyras, Young, Randall, & Hinson, 1997
Female	More tentative, hesitant, more false starts	O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
Female	Uses more qualifiers, repetition, and intensifiers	O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
Female	Makes more deferential remarks	O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
Female	Has a slower rate of speech	O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
Female	Encourages contributions from others in the group	O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
Female	Less likely to engage in conflict	O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
Female	More comfortable speaking in private	O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
Female	Uses other people as the characters in stories they tell	Tannen, 1990
Female	When telling stories about themselves, tend to be self-deprecating (seek acceptance from the listener)	Tannen, 1990
Female	Active listeners, nod and talk back while others are speaking	Tannen, 1990
Female	Asks questions to show interest and agreement	Tannen, 1990
Male	More likely to take the floor	LaFrance, 1991
Male	Hold the floor for longer periods of time	LaFrance, 1991
Male	More likely to debate about the text	Moore, 1997
Male	Directs the conversation	Fishman, 1978
Male	More confidence in their ideas	Lakoff, 1975
Male	Initiates more questions	Jones, 1989
Male	Calls out answers	Jones, 1989
Male	More direct in their speech	Noddings, 1992

Male	Uses a reporting style	Tannen, 1990
Male	More comfortable speaking in public	Tannen, 1990
Male	Tells stories about themselves	Tannen, 1990
Male	Tends to tell humorous stories (to hold the attention of the listener)	Tannen, 1990
Male	Asks questions to determine if the other person knows what they are talking about	Tannen, 1990

After my initial coding, I constructed a list of 36 analytic factors (See Appendix E), taken from the Measures of Gendered Reading (See Appendix B) and the Measures of Gendered Talk (See Appendix D) that were evident in the data. I systematically used the analytic factors on the transcripts and written responses.

Analytic strategies. As shown in Figure 5, data analysis was a four-stage process incorporating ethnographic methodology and critical discourse analysis techniques. I began with open and axial coding to understand what happened in this classroom, with this group of participants, during one semester. From there, I contextualized the data by connecting it to specific settings, such as a small group discussion, a whole group discussion, or a blog post, and looked at who was involved in the interpretation of the text, as well as which text was being discussed. After that, using critical discourse analysis techniques, I went back to the discussions of a single text, *Luna*, and looked at the power relations that might have affected those discussions. In the final phase of analysis, I organized the personal information each participant had provided in discussions or on their blogs and looked at their personal communities of practice and how they might have affected their literature responses. I also studied the role the community that was created in the classroom may have played in the participants' responses to the texts.

Figure 5. Analytic Strategies

Analytic Strategies			
STAGE OF ANALYSIS	TYPE OF ANALYSIS	ANALYTIC INSTRUMENTS	DATA ANALYZED
Stage I	Open & Axial Coding	Measures of Gendered Reading, Measures of Gendered Talk, Analysis Chart, Coding Chart	Transcriptions of whole and small groups, Written responses, Field notes
Stage II	Context		Transcriptions of whole and small groups, Written responses
Stage III	Discourse Analysis	Analysis Chart, Coding Chart	Transcriptions of small groups discussing <i>Luna</i>
Stage IV	Communities of Practice		Transcriptions of whole and small groups, Written responses, Interview transcripts

While I focused on the small group discussions of *Luna*, I also analyzed the participants' responses to the other books read in the course, particularly the four whole class realistic fiction novels, to determine if some actions were unique instances or were commonly found in a specific individual's way of reading or talking. I looked more closely at realistic fiction (see Figure 6), rather than fantasy or science fiction because the events in the text would more closely resemble real life. I selected the whole class books over the selected or choice books listed in the course syllabus (See Appendix F) so the basis for response would be uniform for all participants.

Figure 6. Class texts used in the analysis for this study

Texts Used in Analysis		
TITLE	AUTHOR	GENRE
<i>The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian</i>	Sherman Alexie	Contemporary Realistic Fiction

<i>How I live Now</i>	Meg Rosoff	Contemporary Realistic Fiction
<i>A Northern Light</i>	Jennifer Donnelly	Historical Fiction
<i>Luna</i>	Julie Anne Peters	Contemporary Realistic Fiction

Stage I - open and axial coding. I examined the data using open and axial coding to generate themes and categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). I also used constant comparative analysis of the categories I found within the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I began by transcribing my observation and interview field notes and then supplementing the written field notes with the audio transcripts. I compared my notes with the professional transcriptions of the audiotapes and added information where it was missing or incorrect.

The first level of analysis was open coding of the whole and small group discussion transcripts and the written response data to determine patterns of interactions and language and to develop categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). To accomplish this I read the audio transcripts and written responses, highlighting words, phrases, patterns, and events that were prominent, repeated, or striking in some way (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). I paid attention to the types of responses that I had read about in earlier studies of gender and reading (Bleich, 1986; Cherland, 1992; Flynn, 1983; Holland, 1977; Moore, 1997). These were modes of reading like “focus on relationships,” “intellectual, analytical response,” and “focus on narrative voice.” Then I sorted the data into broad categories (see Figure 2) based on the Measures of Gendered Reading instrument (See Appendix B), such as “emotional connections,” “focus on analysis of plot,” or “tries to understand characters.” I began with thirty categories, but discovered that some were

more prominent than others. Eventually, I eliminated some of the less common categories, like “focus on hierarchical relations” and “invokes the personal to understand the public” that I could fold into other categories. I gave each measure a color code and used highlighters to denote them. When I ran out of different colors, I began to use other forms of demarcation, such as underlining in a particular color versus highlighting in that color.

As I noted interruptions and turn taking, I began to question how the dynamics of the discussion groups might have influenced individual responses. I realized that I needed to look at the ways the group members interacted in those groups. I knew there had been a great deal of research done on gender and talk (Fishman, 1978; La France, 1991; Lakoff, 1975; Moore, 1997; Noddings, 1992; O’Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky, 1999; Tannen, 1990), so I culled a list of the traits of female talk and the traits of male talk (see Appendix D) from the writings of those researchers to build a list of measures of gendered talk.

After initial open coding, I moved into axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). I continued to go through the data using codes that could be combined with other codes into more comprehensive categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Throughout this process, I wrote theoretical and analytical memos (See Appendix G) on patterns I discovered, questions I had, actions I wanted to take, connections I made between data sources, and associations I made between the data and relevant literature on my topic.

I created a coding sheet of analytic factors (See Appendix E), combining items from the Measures of Gendered Reading instrument (See Appendix B) and the Measures of Gendered Talk instrument (See Appendix D). I also created categories based on what I found within the data, such as laughter, positioning, and stating value judgments about groups.

I began counting the occurrences of the categories in the analysis table for each data source. At this point, I was not concerned with whether the responses matched the gender of the participant. I simply noted the occurrence of the items. In small and whole group discussion transcripts, I counted who spoke the most, who spoke the least, and turn taking, and I categorized what was said. I also noted instances of participants influencing the direction of the conversation through topic control or leading questions.

Once this analysis was done anonymously, I went back and added in the pseudonyms of the participants. For the written and interview data I noted the occurrences of the characteristics in the analytic factors chart (Appendix E). For the small and whole group data, I created a table (see Figure 7) of the occurrences of the analytic items for each small group (See Appendix H for the full table for Luna Group One).

Figure 7. Luna small group coding chart

Luna Small Group One Coding Chart			
ACTIVE LISTENING:			
Paul	11 instances	Jan	4 instances
Jim	6 instances	Julia	8 instances
MALES	17	FEMALES	12

Luna Small Group One Coding Chart			
AFFILIATIONS:			
Paul	6 instances	Jan	3 instances
Jim	6 instances	Julia	1 instances
MALES	12 (75%)	FEMALES	4

Luna Small Group One Coding Chart			
AGREEMENT:			
Paul	16 instances	Jan	3 instances
Jim	8 instances	Julia	4 instances
MALES	24 (77%)	FEMALES	7

This allowed me to note if there was any link between the gender of the participants and the analytic item. I also looked to see if any one individual was skewing the data. There were cases where the occurrence of a certain trait was markedly higher or lower for a specific individual and that changed the overall percentages of occurrence of that trait for the gender within that group. For example, as shown in Figure 8, in *Luna Small Group One*, Paul repeated himself 13 times. Jan repeated herself 4 times, Julia 5 times, and Jim 3 times.

Figure 8. Luna Group One discussion - repetitions

Luna Small Group One Coding Chart			
REPETITIONS:			
Paul	13 instances	Jan	4 instances
Jim	3 instances	Julia	5 instances
MALES	16 (64%)	FEMALES	9

O'Donnell-Allen and Smagorinsky (1999) viewed the repetition of words and phrases as an indication of tentative speaking, a trait they attributed to females because “girls’ voices are typically suppressed, downplayed, or overridden by those of louder, more competitive, more certain, and usually masculine students” (p. 36). Paul was an exception to that attribution. Jim was not. However, Paul’s repetitions raised the occurrence of male repetitions in their small group to 16, or 64%. This demonstrates how

problematic it can be to generalize characteristics by gender. I also looked at all the discussion groups as an aggregate to determine if some of the small group findings were anomalies or if they were present across all the groups.

I compared the whole class and small group discussions to the written responses and comments to see if there were any differences in the ideas presented by the participants because of the more immediate social nature of the discussions. I wrote notes on the margins of the transcripts and the written responses. I wrote analytic memos (see Appendix G) to remind myself of questions that arose or ideas that came up during my analysis. I noted if any of the participants appeared to be influenced by the other group members. I noted whose voices were marginalized in any way. In addition, I examined the ways in which a group identity was created and maintained and what influence the group identity had on the participants. The purpose of this was to understand the dynamics of the group and to note any gendered talk (regardless of the gender of the speaker). I noted if the group discussions were socially policed by members positioning themselves or others as more or less knowledgeable or through the use of humor or laughter to demean or privilege certain ideas. I used this process for all the classroom data, the whole group transcripts, small group transcripts, interview transcripts, and written artifacts. The written artifacts included biographical information posted on the students' blog sites, the blogs themselves, and the typed response journals.

In order to triangulate the data, I used the written information to corroborate or refute the observational and spoken data (Begley, 1996). I achieved this by comparing

the ideas expressed in each participant's written responses to the comments they made in whole and small group discussions. Since the written responses were created before the classroom discussions, I used them as a baseline for the subject's views on the text. Then I noted any changes in the student's position during discussion. I explored what might have caused the differences and considered whether they were due to factors such as mutual interpretation, affiliation with other group members, or social policing. I used the content of the group discussion and the context of the ways the members spoke to each other as evidence for any inferences I made. If the participant was one of the case group, I followed up in the in-depth interviews to see why their ideas might or might not have changed.

Stage II – context. Once I had a basic idea of the kinds of responses that were in my data, I contextualized them. I looked at the text that was being discussed, including the gender of the author and the protagonist. I particularly focused on the text, *Luna*. I reread the text and examined the ways gender was performed within the story. I did this using the descriptors listed in the Bem Sex Role Inventory (See Appendix D) and examining the characters that those traits modified. For example, Luna/Liam's father wanted him to be athletic because that denoted masculinity to him. Luna/Liam's mother was not portrayed as compassionate or sensitive to other's needs, which are listed as feminine traits in the Bem Sex Role Inventory. These characteristics were discussed in several of the small groups.

In addition to the gender performances within the text, I noted the gender of the author, and investigated biographical information about her, and read about her own views of the text. The purpose of this was to help provide context for the participant readings of the texts.

I observed whether the responses were in a journal entry, a blog, a small group discussion, or a whole class discussion, because the context could influence the response. The journal entries were the most private medium for response, in terms of the number of people who would access the data, while the whole class discussions were the most public. However, none of the responses were completely private because at least two other people, the instructor and myself, read them. In addition, when the responses were posted on the participant's blog, their blog partner and other class members were able to read them. It is valuable to note, however, that written information is more permanent than verbal comments and, therefore, can be more intimidating to the author. So all the forms of data collected in this study imposed a degree of self-disclosure, which could have been viewed as a potential vulnerability by the speaker/writer.

Stage III – discourse analysis. While inductive analysis helped me note the patterns of gendered traits and ways of responding to literature that were in my data, discourse analysis allowed me to examine ways the written and verbal interactions maintained or resisted sociocultural beliefs and expectations. “(D)iscourse analysis often yields powerful exemplars of the various ‘macro’ patterns found in any study. Conversely, these ‘macro’ patterns can be used to understand and explain the ‘micro’

patterns found within and across individual interactions” (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2005, p. 19). Adding discourse analysis also allowed me to triangulate methodologically (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000).

Language is a social practice and critical discourse analysis (CDA) is used to explore the constantly shifting power relations that exist in interactions with language and ideology (Fairclough, 2001). I employed CDA techniques because this study examined beliefs about gender and the preconceptions the participants brought to what they read. It is important to look at the common-sense assumptions that people are often unaware of because “they are a means of legitimizing existing social relations and differences of power, simply through the recurrence of ordinary, familiar ways of behaving which take these relations and power differences for granted” (Fairclough, 2001, p. 2). Power relationships create discourses and those discourses have an effect on society. In Fairclough’s model (2001), the determinants of discourse and its effects should be analyzed within societal, institutional, and situational frameworks. My observations were done in the classroom, which incorporates the societal expectations of community and gender within the institutional structure of education. In addition, each interaction was situational and contextualized.

I incorporated Fairclough’s (2001) CDA strategies that investigate vocabulary, grammar, and structure. Because CDA is a time consuming and intensive analytic methodology, I selected one novel, *Luna* by Julie Anne Peters, for this examination. *Luna* was discussed during a single class session in four small groups. I analyzed the

transcripts of the small group discussions of the novel using Fairclough's (2001) idea of "power in discourse."

Fairclough's (2001) method of analysis includes three stages; description, interpretation, and explanation (see Appendix I). In the description phase, I explored the types of values that the language connoted, as well as interactional conventions like turn-taking, interruption, and topic control. I noticed who spoke the most and the least, who controlled the conversation topically and ideologically, who interrupted and who was interrupted. I noted silences, both in terms of participants who chose not to speak and in terms of topics that were not broached or that were brushed aside. I noted both dominance and submission in conversation.

I also examined ways that the discourse may have been affected by gendered styles of communication. I looked at the traits, not the gender of the speaker. This allowed me to analyze the data with fewer preconceptions. Since we all use masculine, feminine, and neutral styles of communication depending on the context, communication style was helpful in my consideration of language interaction because certain styles appeared to provide the user with more or less power within the context of discussion.

In the interpretation phase (see Appendix I), I looked at the purpose of the conversation and how the discussion was constrained or directed by the setting and the context. I also noted which participants were involved in the interaction and how the language and conversational practices helped position the group members. This included

the ways the context influenced their performance of gender as well as their identity within the community of practice of the classroom.

In the explanation stage (see Appendix I), I examined the ideologies that may have been a factor in what was said and how it was said. I also looked at the ways the participants' membership in the classroom community of practice, and the other communities of practice that influenced their beliefs on gender, played a role in the group discussion. This included how discourses were accepted or rejected, where there were sites of struggle against specific expectations and presuppositions, and how power relations were resisted or maintained.

Stage IV – analysis of the influence of communities of practice. This group of preservice and practicing teachers, including the course instructor, constituted a community of practice. The class members shared the common goal of learning about adolescent literature and they were presented with, or developed, specific practices to facilitate the achievement of that goal. One of those practices was literature discussion, in both oral and written formats. My analysis focused on this practice.

One facet of communities of practice is that specific members are viewed as masters within the community, some are moving toward mastery, and certain members are on the periphery observing and replicating the traits and practices of those closer to mastery. There are also those who choose to resist the practices of the community of practice or who are positioned as outsiders by other members of the community of practice. The most obvious master of the classroom community of practice was the

instructor; however, some students were positioned or positioned themselves as closer to mastery than others. The practicing teachers saw themselves as closer to the mastery of teaching than the preservice teachers; however, some of the preservice teachers resisted that positioning.

In addition to the effect of the classroom community of practice, each participant had member resources that were influenced by the other communities of practice in which they were or had been members. Member resources are common sense assumptions “which people have in their heads and draw upon when they produce or interpret texts - including their knowledge of language, representations of the natural and social worlds they inhabit, values, beliefs, assumptions, and so on” (Fairclough, 2001, p. 20). In order to discover information about their communities of practice, I attended to statements in the data that gave me insight into their biographies. Some participants included biographical data on their blog sites, some discussed their prior experiences in the written response journals, and some mentioned background information in discussion. In addition, I specifically asked the four case participants about their communities of practice during the interviews. However, even when directly questioned about their communities of practice, the students could not relate all of the influences in their lives because that would require a great deal of self-examination.

While I was not able to explore each participant’s communities of practice comprehensively, the experiences they brought up or chose to write about were important enough to them to warrant public disclosure. Through this understanding of some of their

prior experiences and influences, I examined whether there appeared to be a connection between the participants' communities of practice and their gender beliefs, expectations, or the performance of gender they gave in the classroom contexts. I also used the community of practice data to help explain differences I found within genders.

Validity. In qualitative research, validity is concerned with the credibility of the researcher's construction of meaning from the data that was collected. Qualitative methodology does not attempt to create causal relationships or to be generalizable, as quantitative methodology does, but tries to describe and interpret the participants' construction of reality within the context of a specific time and in their natural settings. Because this is described through the eyes of the researcher, it is essential to try to reduce bias as much as possible. This is achieved using techniques such as triangulation, member checking, bracketing, and searching for negative or discrepant data. These techniques allow the researcher to look at the scene from a variety of angles, using different kinds of data, and with feedback from the study participants or other researchers. It is important to look at discrepant cases so the researcher can avoid the issue of only seeing what they want to find in data collection and analysis or what corroborates their hypotheses.

In this study, there were several possible validity concerns. The written responses may have been affected by the participants' desire to meet the perceived expectations of the instructor. Part of the consent to participate gave me permission to read the students' written responses on their blogs. The instructor required the students to post their

responses on their blogs and to hand in paper copies for feedback. I asked the students if they would allow me to make copies of their responses. All of the students agreed to let me do so. This, however, increased the social impact of the responses because an additional person would be able to view the work. The fact that the other viewer was a researcher, who would be carefully analyzing their papers, could have had a large impact on the participants' sense of having their ideas valued and scrutinized.

The discussion and interview data may have been affected by the subjects' desire to project a particular persona or to affect the study outcome in a specific way. Since the written responses were posted online, they were also social, and therefore socially policed. This most likely affected the freedom of ideas in the responses and comments. Given the contextual and performative nature of gender (as well as other sociocultural variables), it is impossible to say that they authentically revealed the writer/speaker's viewpoint and it is likely that all of the data sources were affected by the social context (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000).

Human Subject Issues. The study may have benefits for the participants because it illuminates the way gender influences reading and response to literature and potentially affects best practice. It also provides insight into the ways speakers can influence others within discussion groups. There was very little risk to the subjects because the research did not influence any evaluation of their education or suitability to teach. The course instructor was not involved in the consent process and the subjects were told that their participation would not influence their course grade. They were not identified in the

write up, and even the name of the institution and city was not identified in the write up. No one, including the course instructor, other than my advisor, the transcribers, and me saw the interview or transcript data that was collected.

I approached the subjects to take part in the study at the beginning of the first session of class and gave them a copy of the consent form (See Appendix J). The students were given a week to decide if they wanted to participate, however most of them consented immediately. The interviews were done either before or after class. The four interviewees were compensated for their time with a \$25 gift certificate to the bookstore of their choice.

The subjects' privacy was protected by the use of pseudonyms in all write ups. The recordings were transcribed by two outside transcribers, but they did not have any knowledge of location of the research, the purpose, or the participants' full names.

The research included members of minority populations, however they were candidates for a Masters degree in Education, and they were conversant enough in the English language to participate in master's level coursework.

The data is in paper, audio, and electronic formats. It includes written assignments, classroom activities, course handouts, blogs, field notes, audio recordings, and transcripts of the audio recordings. I copied the written assignments with the name blocked and entered the pseudonym on the document. I replaced the name with the pseudonym on the blog and transcripts. The real name/pseudonym list was destroyed

once all the data was copied and transcribed. The paper and electronic data are kept in a locked file cabinet in my home office. All electronic data is password protected. I will keep the data for five years so I can properly analyze it and write additional academic works using the data. I destroyed the audio recordings once analysis was complete.

Role of Researcher

I took *Literature for Adolescents* in my first semester of graduate school, was a teaching assistant for the course, and taught it twice before observing this class. This gave me a combination of insider's (emic) and outsider's (etic) perspectives (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000). I was able to understand the students' and the instructor's perspectives, and yet I could still distance myself enough to observe the social constructions in the classroom as an outsider would.

While I attempted to remain somewhat invisible in the class, the instructor would occasionally ask my opinion on a topic, both in class and outside of class, because this was her first time teaching the course. This presented a dilemma for me. I wanted to influence the class dynamics as little as possible, but it seemed more awkward and noticeable if I refused to respond to questions posed directly to me. Therefore, I chose to reply to those questions with short, generic responses.

Because of my background knowledge on the topic of gender studies, I am predisposed to noticing and evaluating gendered language and gender role expectations that may have been invisible to the participants of the study. Being a woman, I am aware

of characteristics and language that I view as hegemonic, and this might have led to some bias in my analysis. Because I am a White, middle class female, I had to look carefully to see the invisible ways that the performance of gender, and the practice of whiteness influenced my analysis. My background could have caused me to make value judgments about the actions of the participants. I had to detach myself, as much as possible, from my personal identity and presuppositions so I could see what was strange in a familiar scene (Spindler & Spindler, 1982). However, my life experiences helped create my identity and I am always viewing the world through the reality that I have constructed. In order to make my research process more reflexive, I include here information on some of my communities of practice and the discourses that have affected me.

My Story. When I reflect on the power strategies women experienced during the 1950's, 60's and early 1970's, when I was growing up, I remember television series like *I Love Lucy* and *Bewitched*, movies like *Sunday in New York* (1963), *That Touch of Mink* (1962), and *Pillow Talk* (1959), and series books like *Nancy Drew*. These were the vehicles that taught me the dominant societal discourse on women and power. Women were powerful as long as they were "good girls," let men believe they had control, and used manipulation to get what they wanted. In all of that media, the dominant male treated the woman like a child. However, the woman consistently got what she wanted through deception and manipulation. Therefore, the woman was powerful, as long as the men were too egocentric to see the "truth."

As a child, my perception of the dominant narrative was that women were more powerful than men were, and that women were smarter than men were because they knew how to take the power from men. Yet, women were dependent on men to provide them with power. My family community of practice reinforced that discourse. My mother was very well read and much more intellectual than my father. She ran the house, paid the bills, dispensed the discipline, and helped define our ethical sense. My father provided the power. He made the money. She had the brains and the underlying control. It was not until much later that I realized my mother viewed herself, and perhaps all women, as victims of male domination.

My father viewed my mother as beautiful and I got the sense that he loved her more than she loved him. In that, I saw the power she held over him. That dynamic helped me define a male/female relationship as one where the woman is beautiful and desirable and she dominates the power balance in the relationship. My parents also helped create my discourse on what a “good man” should be. My mother subscribed to the old adage, “It is just as easy to marry a rich man as a poor one.” Therefore, women should look primarily for a good provider and they should mute their own intellectual attributes in order to “catch” a good man. My mother taught me that, in order to be a “good girl,” you have to “keep your legs and your mouth shut.” At that time I was a strong believer in the male/female binary, the dominant discourse on beauty, and the discourse that said women were only successful if they were married. I was aware that I was intelligent and as capable as any of the men I knew, but my expectation was that I would get my power through men.

When I was in college, in the 1970's, I was influenced by Betty Friedan's (1963), *The Feminine Mystique*, and the feminist movement of that time. I believed in the narrative of women as victims of male oppression. As in all my previous discourses, my identity was the result of someone else's actions. In order to have power, I had to take it away from a man. The way to a more "enlightened" world was by changing the thinking of other people. I thought that once the majority of people and institutions in society reflected feminist thinking, the world would be better. So, my strategy was to replace one dominant discourse with another.

Although the feminist community of practice I belonged to influenced me in college and graduate school, I was resistant to it enough to continue to maintain an underlying view of women as only successful if they were married. In order to get married and stay married I fell back into the discourse of an earlier community of practice that said I had to be a "good girl." I had to let the man be more dominant and seem more intelligent than I was. When I got married, I chose to maintain the category of the "good girl," yet I also resisted it by opting to keep my own name. I risked maintaining my position within my social group by refusing to be "named" by a man.

In my community of practice of young mothers, my career was viewed as less important than my husband's and I chose to stay at home with my daughter, which is a decision I do not regret. I chose to accept the dominant discourse of my mother and my peer group. I reverted to the role that I thought I had been resisting in college. In order to move toward mastery within my motherhood community of practice, I had to resist

feminism. Still, I had rewritten my narrative enough to know that women should consider themselves equal to men and that it is demeaning to have to resort to deception and manipulation to maintain relationships. It was this new narrative that I spoke to my daughter. I told her that women were as smart, capable, and athletic as men and that she could do anything she wanted to in life. I praised her for her abilities, as well as her beauty. However, I was living a conflicting discourse. What she saw was my attempt to maintain my category of “good girl/good wife/good mother.” I constantly dieted and exercised. I spent quite a bit of time and money on my clothing, make up and hair. I avoided conflict in all my relationships, even those with other females. I was kind, giving, and conciliatory. I acquiesced and subverted my needs to meet the needs of others. In short, my actions spoke of a discourse very different from the discourse my words spoke.

I started my doctoral program with a set of assumptions, some that I was aware of, and some that were revealed to me as I read books and articles. It was important to interrogate these notions because some changed and some were affirmed by what I read. This is a journey of ideas that I have travelled since well before starting my doctoral program. Each step I take forces me to look beyond the simplistic notions that I had in the beginning of the journey.

Once I began my graduate program I started to develop a notion of gender that was essentialist, much like the mindset of the authors of many of my readings. I saw boys as more aggressive and active than girls. I thought they needed more activity than is

provided in the typical school. I thought that the majority of books used in schools had female protagonists and viewpoints (an assumption that I now know is inaccurate). I believed that most boys did not like to read and they did not like to read in school because they were asked to read books chosen for them by women (teachers) and about girls. I thought boys saw reading as feminized because the people they most often saw modeling reading were women. They saw themselves as nonreaders or they hid their identity as readers so they would not be perceived as rejecting the heteronorm of society. Then, as my studies progressed, I began to understand that boys do read, but they often do not read the kinds of things that are counted as reading, like books. Teachers and researchers often do not value what boys read, so the boys do not self-identify as readers. Then, I noticed that many boys did read the things that are privileged in schools. So I began to ask where the notion of a “boy crisis” in reading came from. As I did more research, I started to wonder if gender was really the most important factor in solving the problem of why Johnny will not read. I also wondered why we were only concerned about Johnny. Why were we not worried about engaging all students in reading? What made us think that all Johnnys (or Janies, for that matter) responded the same way or had the same gender role expectations?

This is the mindset I had when I began the preparation for my dissertation. I realized that my readings were often contradictory and I found that I could not take any of the information at face value. My reading became almost web like. Each article or book I read made me ask questions such as, “Where did these ideas come from?”, “What research is the author using to back up their comments?”, “What is missing from this

picture?”, and “How could these statistics be viewed differently?” In order to answer those questions I ended up following a trail of articles and books listed in the bibliographies at the end of each reading. My view of gender and literacy has changed quite a bit. I now understand that nothing is uncomplicated or obvious.

I can see how all these moments in my life built layers of contradictory meanings. All of my communities of practice interacted to create my conflicting, situational performance of gender. What I knew intellectually was not reflected in my inner discourse. This is how my narrative, my identity, has been created and recreated over time. I continue to rewrite my discourse, now with the influences of every book I read, class I take, discussion I have, and community in which I participate. Over time, I have learned the value of examining my gender beliefs and how I locate myself in those categories.

Conclusion

While my investigation of the responses to *Luna* in this classroom began as a study of the views and attitudes held by the participants, I also needed to examine the ways the students talked as much as I explored what they said. This is a study of response to literature, gender, communities of practice, and the function of group discussion in those responses. In Chapter Four, I describe the classroom community of practice. This includes a delineation of the information I gathered about each participant and the instructor. The data was gathered from transcripts of classroom talk, interviews with members of the case group, written responses, and the students’ blog sites. I also

describe the classroom practices and expectations. In Chapter Five, I describe interactions in the small group discussions of *Luna*, by Julie Anne Peters. I analyze the responses of each group member to the text and look at the power relations evident in the discussions, using critical discourse analysis techniques.

Chapter 4: The Classroom Community of Practice

“I was enamored of the love story in this book. The sense that Edward somehow interpreted and filled her needs is so appealing to the female rescue fantasy. They were like two puzzle pieces who finally found the one they fit with. And I also liked this part of the story because Daisy, through her own words, seems wildly imperfect. Yet Edmond loves her wholly and intensely and patiently. When “Things Happen” between them it is a teen love story wrapped up in a bizarre setting of war sprinkled with a suspension of reality.” (Bridget, 2009, *How I Live Now* blog response)

“I am just not okay with the cousin sex relationship aspect of this book. It happens pretty near the beginning of the book, and it threw me off right away. I know they don’t know each other so it’s like meeting someone new, but still, they are cousins, so stuff like that shouldn’t go on. And it makes me wonder again what the author’s intent is. Am I supposed to be okay with this type of relationship? Is it supposed to make me view Daisy and/or Edmund in a certain light? Is it supposed to tug at my heartstrings? Because it doesn’t, it just grosses me out.” (Matt, 2009, *How I Live Now* blog response)

In this chapter, I present data on the classroom community of practice, the participants in this study, and their gender beliefs and expectations. This data illuminates the role of the participants’ background and identity in their gender beliefs and expectations and how those beliefs and expectations affect their responses to texts. It also explicates whether there was a diversity of response to literature within gender, and how the norms and expectations of this classroom community of practice influenced the participants’ reading and discussions.

I begin by describing the *Literature for Adolescents* course structure, the space, and the instructor. Then, I discuss the data I collected about each student, dividing them into practicing and preservice teachers. I look at their personal histories, favorite books, beliefs, and their responses to some of the texts in the course. Following that, I describe the classroom community of practice.

The Course

Literature for Adolescents is a graduate level course, most often populated with students working toward a Master's degree in secondary education. This includes preservice initial licensure students within an English Education cohort and practicing teachers who are returning to school to obtain their Masters of Education (M. Ed.) in English Education. Occasionally, M.A. and Ph.D. students from the Literacy program and other disciplines enroll. Doctoral students in the Children's and Adolescent Literature program usually teach the 16-week course.

Instructors are given wide latitude in the design of the course, as long as the basic principles of adolescent literature are incorporated. The basic elements include the study of literature from various genres, "the characteristics of literature for adolescents; the rationale for using adolescent literature; adolescents' reading interests and attitudes; analysis of quality and appeal; methods of promoting engagement with adolescent literature; and multicultural literature" (Literature for Adolescents course syllabus, Fall 2009).

The *Literature for Adolescents* course studied here focused on aesthetic and critical reading, interpretation, and analysis. Students were required to read 25 adolescent level books over the course of the semester. This included twelve books, from various genres, that were read by the whole class. In addition, the students chose six more books, one from each of six genres, from a pre-selected list. Then students were asked to select one book, of their own choosing, from each of seven genres.

After reading, students wrote a response to eighteen of the books, in blog and/or paper format, and a review or annotation of the seven self-selected books, in either podcast or paper format. The responses began with the reader's personal connections and emotional reactions to a text. Next, students reflected critically on the text in terms of ideas, characterization, structure, plot, any literary connections they were able to make, or any other comments they might have had on the merit of the book. The writing assignments required the student to take the time to reflect on the text, try to see its critical merit, and speak articulately about literature. In addition, the task helped prepare them for an in-depth discussion of the text in class.

The written assignments required students to analyze and evaluate texts, while discussions helped them explore diverse responses and viewpoints. The book discussions were designed to accommodate a variety of learning and social styles. Whole class discussion appealed to auditory learners and vocal students, while the small group discussion and written reflections allowed students, who were not vocal participants, more comfortable avenues of expression.

However, none of these methods were entirely safe for the participant. The blogs were posted on an Internet site with limited access to the class members, the instructor, and me. This meant that blog postings of the text responses were potentially available to all class members. The written responses that were in paper format only were the most private forms of communication because only the instructor and I saw them.

The Space

The course met in a science classroom (see Appendix K). Students sat at multi-person lab tables that had been pushed together in a large U-shape. While the students were not required to take the same seat for each class meeting, most of them did. The practicing teachers sat on the north side of the classroom and the preservice teachers sat on the south side of the room. This arrangement changed during small group discussions, but it was a fairly rigid division if the students were given choice in seating. The one exception to this was Paul, a preservice teacher, who chose to sit with the practicing teachers on four occasions early in the semester. However, beginning in November the division of students became standard.

The Instructor

Cathy used a student-centered approach to teaching. She began each class with an opening meeting that allowed the students to share experiences, questions, and information with their colleagues, regardless of its pertinence to the day's agenda. She also listed an agenda on the white board, however, it seemed that the agenda was somewhat flexible and based on the trajectory of the class that session. Although she usually taught from the front of the room, Cathy did not take up the role of keeper of the knowledge. Her style was more collaborative and she often posed open-ended questions to introduce ideas that were absent from the discussions.

Cathy grew up in the Midwest in a working class family. She and her sister were the first members of her extended family to go to college. She felt that shaped her views on teaching. She identified herself as politically liberal but said her father was not liberal. Her mother and father took up traditional gender roles, but they did not have an expectation that their three daughters would take up the same roles. Her communities of practice “included powerful women who I admire, women more defined by career and intelligence than by more traditional domestic roles” and that affected her views on gender (Cathy, 2009, Interview).

Her favorite text from this course was *A Northern Light*, by Jennifer Donnelly, and her favorite character was Mattie from *A Northern Light*. She identified with that character wanting to put her education first, but still desiring a happy romantic life. She also connected to Regan, from *Luna* by Julie Anne Peters, because “I’m a younger sister who feels ‘outshined’ sometimes” (Cathy, 2009, Interview).

The Students

The student group consisted of eleven members of the English Education cohort of preservice teachers and eight practicing teachers. Two of the participants in the practicing teachers group were not teaching at the time of the study, however they had taught previously and held their teaching licenses. All of the participants taught or planned to teach Language Arts at the middle or high school level.

Individual identities. The purpose of this section is to provide some insight into the background and beliefs of the participants in this study. This is information that affected my analysis just by my awareness of it. It reveals what I knew about the participants and what I included in my field notes. In addition, this data demonstrates what the students were willing to share about themselves to the instructor, to a researcher, and to their peers. In this section, I did not limit my analysis to the novel, *Luna*, which I have focused on elsewhere, because I want to provide the readers of this paper with the same general information I had about the participants.

Some of the personal information about the students that is presented below was provided by the participants during the first class in response to the instructor's request that each student share their name, program at the university, whether they were preservice or practicing teachers, their goals for the course, and their literary heritage or a defining book moment. Other information came from the whole class and small group discussions, the course blogs, and the case group interviews.

Eighteen of the students were working toward their Master's degree in education (M.Ed.) and one was a doctoral student in Literacy Education. Nearly every participant stated that their goals for the course were to learn about engaging literature for adolescents and new ways to teach adolescent literature to their students. Several of the practicing teachers mentioned that they wanted to find books that would appeal to struggling readers.

The practicing teachers. This group was split evenly in terms of gender, four males, and four females. While they did not all know one another at the start of the course, they appeared to have more of a connection with the other practicing teachers than with any of the preservice teachers. This may have been influenced by the cohesiveness of the preservice teachers, who had taken several courses together previously.

Bridget had earned her teaching license in 2003. She taught high school English for 2 years and said she “really liked a lot of it and I really didn't like anything that happened outside of the classroom so it turned out I was a statistic and I quit teaching” (Bridget, 2009, Introductory discussion). She was not teaching during the study. She was a website editor for a healthcare system. I categorized her as a practicing teacher because she had been a teacher at one time and had experienced a teaching community of practice.

Her family of origin was liberal. She was raised Catholic, but at the time of the study her father was the only family member still practicing. Early on her parents held traditional roles, but later her mother got her college degree and her father had to take on more of a household role. Her parents are now divorced. She openly stated that her mother was a lesbian in small group discussions and in her blog.

My mother is a lesbian. My uncle is gay, as well. It is something I had to deal with growing up, which should have been hard, but for some reason – perhaps my mom's positive handling of the situation – it was not. In fact, I feel that being

given a view into a world that is so outside the norm was a gift. I was able to question my own sexuality and never fear the acceptance of my family (Bridget, 2009, *Luna* blog response).

Her gender beliefs were influenced by attending a women's college, and by her mother and her mother's partner. When she was in college, Bridget viewed women as powerful and men as oppressors. At the time of the study, she saw that view as extreme. She had children and said that motherhood was a "significant part" of her life.

Bridget felt that texts were often gendered and mentioned *The House of the Scorpion*, by Nancy Farmer, as an example of a book that would appeal more to boys than girls. Her favorite books from the course were *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*, by Sherman Alexie, and *Luna*, although she also liked *The First Part Last* by Angela Johnson, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry, *Maus* by Art Spiegelman, and *Skellig* by David Almond. This spanned most of the genres covered in the course. Her favorite character was Mattie Gokey, from *A Northern Light*.

Literature for Adolescents was one of the three classes she needed to finish her M.Ed. degree. She said that, as a teen, she usually read age inappropriate books so she skipped over adolescent novels. Most often, she read within the romance, horror, and fantasy genres. She did not enjoy reading poetry or nonfiction before this class. She had been a big reader throughout her life. She talked about spending nights reading the dictionary when she was an adolescent and having a "love of language that has informed every career decision I have made" (Bridget, 2009, *A Northern Light* blog response). She

stated that she did not like feeling manipulated by books, and she did not care for flowery language. “I like when someone uses plain language so artfully to convey emotions in a way that makes them boom boom pow! Hit me in my stomach” (Bridget, 2009, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* blog response).

She frequently responded viscerally and emotionally to the literature read in the class. She wrote about her throat tightening, aching with loneliness, cringing with embarrassment for a character, her heart being captured, being enamored of the story, and feeling sick at a set of events. When writing about *The First Part Last*, she mentioned a quote “that stole into my soul and made me wish I could crawl into my mother’s arms while grasping my own children to my chest” (Bridget, 2009, *The First Part Last* blog response). If she did not like a piece of literature she would write of being disengaged, unaffected, or not caring about what happened to the characters.

She used humor often and she spoke up frequently. She tended to interject affirming comments into the discussions and to finish other students’ sentences. She had a prior connection to Matt, usually sat next to him, and often had side dialogs with him.

Carla had been teaching high school Language Arts for four years. At the time of the study, she taught four sections of ninth graders that she identified as struggling readers. As a child, she read often and began reading early. She named *The Babysitters Club* by Ann M. Martin, *The Boxcar Children* by Gertrude Chandler Warner, and *The Little House on the Prairie* by Laura Ingalls Wilder, as series she had enjoyed. She noted that her defining book was *The Long Winter* by Laura Ingalls Wilder because she read it

six times. She liked it because she learned about the 1880's and felt "lucky that I did not have to live that way" (Carla, 2009, Introductory discussion). She also mentioned that she liked the fact that it was the longest book in the series.

Carla's responses to the texts she read for this course were mostly analytical, focusing on the author's intentions, writing style, strategies, and characterizations. The exceptions were with *The First Part Last* by Angela Johnson, *A Northern Light* by Jennifer Donnelly, and *Luna* by Julie Anne Peters. She wrote about her emotional responses as a reader, saying Bobby's situation "pulled at my heartstrings," that she "felt his loneliness," (Carla, 2009, *The First Part Last* blog response), that it was "painful to read" about Regan and Chris (Carla, 2009, *Luna* blog response), and that she "felt like cheering at the end" of *A Northern Light* because Mattie did not marry Royal and give up her dreams (Carla, 2009, *A Northern Light* blog response). However, even those blogs were more about authorial choices and larger social expectations than her emotional reactions to the books.

Carla mentioned that she felt excitement and pride for the protagonist in *The Circuit*, by Francisco Jimenez, when he was in school, but it was telling that she referred to him as Jimenez rather than Panchito. Even though she felt an emotional response for the character, Carla was outside of the story world enough to link him to the author rather than use the character's name. *The Circuit* is a memoir, but most readers in the class referred to the character using the name from the story rather than the author's name.

Jim volunteered to speak first in the opening class. His defining book memory was about *Hatchet*, by Gary Paulsen. He called himself a striving reader as a child, who hated reading. He connected with *Hatchet* and “(t)hat’s really what sealed it for me. I realized there is a book out there that even I liked to read. It just picked up from there and I’ve been reading ever since” (Jim, 2009, Introductory discussion). He had been a substitute teacher for three years and this was his first semester teaching 10th and 11th grade English full time at a high school in a somewhat affluent suburb. He noted that the school, in which he currently taught, had a large number of striving readers. His students were mostly from upper middle class families, but a few were low income. He said that some of the students at the school drove BMW’s and Expeditions, while others were worried about how they would be able to afford to go to the homecoming dance. He felt that it would be very difficult for a GLBT student to come out of the closet at the school because of a fear of peer responses. He made a point of noting that he had his “share of gay friends.”

Jim was married and had no children. He self-identified as a Christian and volunteered at his church, where they provided free food to local low-income families, including 200 children. He minored in Psychology and Human Sexuality as an undergraduate, and had discussed gender expectations in those classes. His gender expectations showed when, while discussing *A Northern Light*, he wondered “wow, do I have a chick book on my hands?” (Jim, 2009, *A Northern Light* blog response). Jim had an emotional response to *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* and said there were times he wanted to give the protagonist a hug.

He mentioned that he really disliked post-apocalyptic novels and he thought *How I Live Now*, by Meg Rosoff, fit that category. He felt that Rosoff wanted the reader to believe that terrorism and war could occur at any time and he did not think that was realistic. He said, “I truly don’t believe that, in the western world right now, that that could happen” (Jim, 2009, *How I Live Now* blog response).

John was a full-time substitute middle school teacher at a charter school for immigrant children. He mentioned that his students were struggling. His defining moment in relation to books occurred in high school. His strongest memories were of African-American novels, like *Kindred*, by Octavia Butler, or *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, by Zora Neale Hurston.

He was Somali and the only student of color in the class. His mother fled Somalia when she was 17 and John was raised in Uganda. He did not mention when he moved to the United States. In one of his literature responses he wrote, “The ability to read is a privilege” (John, 2009, *A Northern Light* blog response). He frequently mentioned that he saw literature as a voice for those who do not have voices, and spoke of freedom and oppression on multiple occasions. He emphasized the words ‘speak’ and ‘freedom’ with capital letters in some of his responses. He called literature “a powerful non-violent revolutionary weapon” (John, 2009, Introductory discussion). John was a writer of short stories, an unfinished “silly” novel, and poetry. He belonged to a poetry group that hoped to continue the oral tradition of their African ancestors. In his written

responses, he mentioned that the Somali people are known for their poetry and their oral tradition.

John rarely spoke, and his comments were often very serious and philosophical. On a few occasions, he questioned whether the topics in the books that were read for class were appropriate for adolescents, in particular *Looking for Alaska* by John Green, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* by Sherman Alexie, and *The House of the Scorpion* by Nancy Farmer. He was concerned about creating uncomfortable situations for his students. However, he also mentioned that the issues discussed in the books might spark interesting discussions if they were well moderated by a teacher.

On multiple occasions, John stated that he did not like fantasy or science fiction. He felt that “most of the themes and topics clash with my beliefs” (John, 2009, *House of the Scorpion* blog response). Somali tales of “ghosts, witches, cannibals, and devils” frightened him when he was a child and now he did not like any stories about magic, miracles, or the supernatural (John, 2009, *Skellig* blog response). He preferred realism and writing about “ordinary lives.” He also felt that stories by western authors reflect their culture and religious beliefs and that conflicted with his own cultural and religious beliefs. He felt he was not included in the intended audience for western literature.

He saw *How I Live Now* and *Looking for Alaska* as male oriented books, the first because, “Boys/Males would relate to novels that was/is based on war/actions” (John, 2009, *How I Live Now* blog response); the second, because of the male protagonist, the first person viewpoint, and because it was about social status and adventure. He spoke

about gender and said that he felt that women lived in a patriarchal society where they were seen as sex objects and that their voices should not be limited because of their gender.

Judy was a quiet child and loved to read. Her defining moment with literature occurred when she read *Ethan Frome*, by Edith Wharton, and some Greek tragedy. She said she “loved getting emotional about the books” (Judy, 2009, Introductory discussion). The amount of emotion she felt was the major factor in her determination of the quality of the book. She particularly enjoyed reading tragedies.

She had been teaching in a small town high school for 9 years. She taught 8th through 11th grade English, Speech, Journalism, and the Yearbook. She was in her 4th year of a Ph.D. program in Literacy Education.

In the biography on her blog, she said, “Being a wife and mom are the most important part of who I am” (Judy, 2009, Blog biography). She had four children, aged 2 through 11. She described her husband by saying, “he's the hunter, he's the, oh my gosh, he's in the military, he's a tank commander, you know, grrr” (Judy, 2009, *Luna* small group discussion).

Julia had attended a private high school and got her teaching license at a public university. She was in the English Education M.Ed. cohort in 2007-2008 and had not been able to find a full-time job teaching. She had been substitute teaching for the previous three years, including a period of time in Fairbanks, Alaska.

She came from “kind of a distressed home,” and mentioned that she was an adult child of an alcoholic. She had insomnia as a child and her mother suggested that she read to fall asleep (Julia, 2009, Introductory discussion). That was her defining literary moment because she found an escape in reading. She described herself as “a read for pleasure escape kind of reader, I kind of read at the surface and don't really want to read any more than that” (Julia, 2009, Introductory discussion). She felt that she was not very good at reading below the surface and said one of her goals was to be a more conscious reader.

Matt taught sports literature to juniors and seniors in a public high school. He had considered teaching at a Christian high school, but he thought he would have more freedom to select books at a public school. He felt that “with everything you teach you are promoting something” (Matt, 2009, *Luna* small group discussion).

Matt had openly stated that he was conservative and he self-identified as an Evangelical Christian. He said some of the topics in the course readings did not “fit into” his beliefs. Those beliefs caused him to have difficulty accepting some of the relationships and characterizations in the course texts. He often rejected behaviors that he did not approve of. In his blog about *Looking for Alaska*, he wrote

It glorifies smoking, drinking, casual sex, and foul language, and I'm not on board with those things. And so it brings to the question of, how could I give this to a student and feel good about it? I know the point of this class is not to be thinking about how we would teach it but rather the book itself, but I couldn't help coming

back to that question as I read. I don't want my students doing any of those things, but that's what the book is about and it makes it seem totally normal and acceptable (Matt, 2009, *Looking for Alaska* blog response).

In his response to *Luna*, he wrote,

I am not okay with the topic of this book. I don't want to make anyone angry, but my belief system does not allow for the GLBT philosophy to be okay. I believe saying it is okay for someone to be transgendered implies that God made a mistake when he created them, and I don't believe in a God who can make mistakes (Matt, 2009, *Luna* blog response).

In spite of this statement, he noted that he had a bigger problem with the protagonist's parents than with the protagonist. In addition, Matt was one of several participants who took issue with a part of *How I Live Now*, saying "I am just not okay with the cousin sex relationship in the book...stuff like that shouldn't go on...it just grosses me out" (Matt, 2009, *How I Live Now* blog response). Regardless of the strength of his remarks, he did not appear to promote his ethical and religious views to his classmates.

Matt was married, with a three year-old son. He mentioned his son on a few occasions and he wrote, "I believe the culture of the home and family start [*sic*] with the husband/father" (Matt, 2009, *Luna* blog response). He stated that he did not watch television. He called himself "a geek." He had a prior relationship with Bridget and they

usually sat next to each other. He was outspoken and frequently used humor in his discussions of literature.

Max's family of origin was lower middle class and politically moderate. He was raised Catholic. His parents divorced when he was four years old, and he had five siblings.

He had been teaching high school Language Arts for three years. At the time of the study, he was teaching English 11 and one section of English 10, that he labeled a "reading course for struggling readers" (Max, 2009, Introductory discussion). He remarked that he was a big reader as a child. He mentioned *Calvin & Hobbs* by Bill Watterson, *Watership Down* by Richard Adams, and *Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien. He considered himself a surface reader when he was young. He had strong memories of reading *Lord of the Flies*, by William Golding, in 10th grade. His teacher suggested that the students read beyond the surface of the novel. That was a defining moment for him.

That was the first time that it occurred to me that I could read for something more than just what is happening on the surface level and that there were things to pull apart. From there, it just opened up a whole new dimension for me (Max, 2009, Introductory discussion).

Max's written responses were very analytical, with virtually no emotional comments or connections. He wrote only about authorial choices, writing style, structure, theme, and characterization. The only character relationship he mentioned was Rowdy

and Junior's friendship in *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*, saying he had relationships with similar elements. Even in *Luna*, Max focused on the protagonist as a "catalyst hero" archetype rather than on the relationship between Luna and Regan (Max, 2009, *Luna* blog response).

He believed that texts are gendered, and gave *A Northern Light* and *How I Live Now* as examples of girl books. He thought *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* was a male oriented book. His favorite whole class book was *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* and, of all the books he read for the course, his favorite was *Ender's Game*, by Orson Scott Card. He chose that as his favorite because he felt he might be able to teach it.

The preservice teachers – English cohort members. *Ann*'s family of origin was middle class and politically liberal. Both parents worked and they shared household chores. She did not feel that they strictly adhered to traditional gender roles. She had always enjoyed reading and liked *The Babysitters Club* series in elementary school. In high school, *The Things They Carried*, by Tim O'Brien, had the largest impact on her. She said, "I think that book kind of helped me take perspective and realize how to place yourself in someone else's shoes. It just really spoke to me" (Ann, 2009, Introductory discussion). Another of her favorites was *The Great Gatsby*, by F. Scott Fitzgerald.

She was somewhat quiet in whole class discussions, and spoke more in the small groups. In her responses, she often mentioned the ending of the book and usually

preferred happy endings or books where everything came together at the end. When a good book had a sad ending, she said it broke her heart or that the ending “killed me.”

Ann felt that texts are gendered, but that most (other than “chick lit”) can be enjoyed by either males or females. She gave *A Northern Light* as an example of a female oriented book because it has a female protagonist. Her favorite whole class book was *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* because she connected to the main character, she enjoyed the humor, and she liked realistic fiction. The book she like best for the whole course was *Sold*, by Patricia McCormick. Ann said she normally did not care for novels in verse, but she made a strong connection with Lakshmi, the protagonist of *Sold*. Her favorite characters were Mattie, from *A Northern Light*, and Jonas, from *The Giver*. She liked Mattie because of her gender and her relatable problems. She liked Jonas because she connected with him, and his story caused her to examine her own life.

Ben grew up in a single parent family that included his mother and sister. His mother was a political moderate and his sister was conservative. He identified himself as very liberal. He felt that there were no defined gender roles in his family, and that growing up in a single parent family may have affected his view on gender roles. Although his mother was a permissive parent, he and his sister were “goodie two-shoes.”

As an adolescent, he chose to belong to a conservative Baptist church and a religion based youth group because it gave him “some grounding.” In college, he joined a community of faith, but he did not mention which faith. At the time of this study, he was married and politically active in the Democratic Party.

He thought that some books appealed more to one gender than another. He mentioned *A Northern Light* as an example of a book that would appeal to girls. His favorite books from this course were *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* and *American Born Chinese*, by Gene Luen Yang, because they were good stories. He did not identify with any character, but connected most with Junior from *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*. He also liked Mattie Gokey's character, because she was "smart and strong, but immensely real and vulnerable at the same time" (Ben, 2009, *A Northern Light* blog response).

Ben's responses were either very analytical or he showed a visceral connection to the text. He was always analytical and distant when he disliked a text, yet he did not always show an emotional connection to texts he liked. When he wrote about *Luna*, he discussed author choices, narration, and gender expectations and did not refer to any emotional or personal reactions. However, in his responses to *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*, *A Step from Heaven* by An Na, and *Feed* by M.T. Anderson, he spoke of personal connections and being moved by the texts. He wrote about being genuinely sad, worried, angry, and fearful when he responded to those texts. He connected to Junior's family losses because he had experienced the loss of his grandmother when he was in sixth grade and a close cousin when he was a sophomore in high school. He also had emotional responses to the text.

I had goose bumps when I read the passage about his triumph on the basketball court, and was almost as heartbroken as he was when he realized that his team

was not David, and was instead Goliath. I was overjoyed when he and Rowdy were reconciled, but a little sad knowing that Rowdy was fully resigned to a far lesser fate than Junior (Ben, 2009, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* print response).

In addition, in response to *Feed*, he spoke of “reacting more viscerally to this book than to anything else we’ve read this semester” (Ben, 2009, *Feed* print response).

He characterized his childhood reading choices as “typical little boy nerd lit”, with a focus on science fiction and fantasy (Ben, 2009, Introductory discussion). He referred to the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy as akin to a bible to him when he was younger. His defining book memory was with *Cats Cradle*, by Kurt Vonnegut, because that was the first time “I realized a book could be serious and funny and wondrous and just full of power and everything all at once” (Ben, 2009, Introductory discussion). He called it his “go to” book and reread it often. He identified himself as an advanced reader who skipped adolescent literature and went straight to adult books.

Bill grew up in a socially and politically conservative family, with traditional gender role expectations. Bill seemed to be something of a leader in the English cohort group. He said he was passionate about reading and hoped he could “find a way to flip that switch for every kid” (Bill, 2009, Introductory discussion). He said he had always read a lot and was a good reader. He often participated in the book reading contests in elementary school because he could win the most pages read, however he did not always enjoy reading. He said that he read because he liked science fiction and fantasy and his

mother “really hated” his genre choices. His defining literary moment was with the *Animorphs* series, by Katherine A. Applegate. His mother approved of the series because it was available at the school. He still owned all fifty of the books in the series and had read each book multiple times.

Bill’s written responses were extremely analytical and very driven by author choices and style, discussions of plot lines, and format. He showed the most emotional connection with *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* when he said, “I may have been a little misty-eyed at certain points” (Bill, 2009, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* blog response). It was his favorite book of the semester and Junior was his favorite character. He definitely felt that texts could be gendered and gave *A Northern Light* as an example of a female oriented text. He also mentioned the *Nancy Drew* and the *Hardy Boys* series to illustrate girl books and boy books.

Dave was soft spoken and rarely talked in either whole class or small group discussion. He indicated that the first book he really enjoyed reading was the abridged version of *Frankenstein*, by Mary Shelley. He read the entire book in one night. Later, in middle school, the unabridged version of *Frankenstein* was required reading. In high school, he became interested in social issues after reading *Brave New World*, by Aldous Huxley.

In his blog biography, Dave said his favorite books were *The Brothers Karamazov* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky, and *Narcissus and Goldmund* by Hermann Hesse. He mentioned that he grew up on a farm and enjoyed hunting, fishing, golfing, hiking,

boating, grilling, and reading. He had studied abroad in Spain and Argentina. He also said he had just gotten a small dog. He listed his favorite movies as *Legends of the Fall*, *A River Runs Through It*, *Forest Gump*, and *What Dreams May Come*.

Dave's responses to the texts he read in the course were entirely analytical and focused on elements of the author's style. The one exception to this was his reaction to the death of Mattie's mother, "(w)henever Mattie talks about her mother, the reader can feel the immense pain she feels at her loss" (Dave, 2009, *A Northern Light* blog response). In an earlier blog, Dave stated that his father had died when he was 10-years-old.

Ellen grew up in a middle class family. Her father was an engineer and her mother was a teacher. She described her family as open minded and liberal. They were Catholic, but did not agree with many of the actions of the Catholic Church, so they did not practice their religion. Her parents shared the household chores and did not divide the labor according to traditional gender beliefs. She said that she was always taught that women could do anything men could do, and vice versa, so she never felt she had to prove herself.

As a child, she was a big reader. In 7th grade, she saw a movie based on *Jane Eyre*, by Charlotte Bronte, and decided to read the book. At first, she was intimidated by it, but ended up loving the book. "I did a project on it at school and I made this really big diorama and I used my Barbies and it was one of my favorite projects that I did that year" (Ellen, 2009, Introductory discussion). She was a new student in both middle and high

school, and mentioned not knowing any other students and struggling to fit in. She was on the swimming and diving team in both high school and college. In high school, she transferred to a school that was in athletic competition with her previous school, “many former teammates and friends labeled me as a traitor and worked hard to ensure that I was ineligible to compete my freshman year” (Ellen, 2009, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* blog response).

In her blog responses, Ellen usually remained analytical and often mentioned the author’s techniques. She rarely spoke emotionally about the texts, however she did mention making connections to characters. The one exception was her blog response to *Looking for Alaska*, by John Green. She clearly fell into the story and experienced an aesthetic response,

I felt myself sitting alongside the Colonel, Pudge, and Alaska as they sat in the Smoking Hole puffing away on cigarette’s [sic], I was there running alongside Pudge and Takumi as they lit firecrackers and ran through the dark woods surrounding the school, and I was there when Pudge walked away from the Sunny Konvenience Kiosk feeling selfish, hateful, sad, and confused” (Ellen, 2009, *Looking for Alaska* blog response).

The philosophical questions about death and the “labyrinth of suffering” (Green, 2005, p. 215) that were posed in *Looking for Alaska* affected her as a reader. Ellen had to temporarily leave the world of the text to evaluate her response to the book, “as a reader I too stepped back in order to try and analyze my own reactions to such a question. How

do I define the labyrinth and how can I continue living within its confusion and complexity” (Ellen, 2009, *Looking for Alaska* blog response).

Ellen felt that some topics interest one gender more than another, but that there are exceptions to that. She thought that girls would relate to *A Northern Light* more than boys would. Her favorite whole class books from the course were *A Northern Light* and *Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World*, by Jennifer Armstrong. Her favorite book overall was *Looking for Alaska* because she liked the characters. She related most to Mattie Gokey’s character, from *A Northern Light*, because she was smart and struggled to be herself. Ellen felt that she dealt with similar problems in her life. She also related to the way Mattie always tried to please everyone but could not succeed.

Emily described herself as “24-years-old, level-headed, realistic, mostly practical” (Emily, 2009, *The Golden Compass* blog response). One of her favorite books, read in middle school, was *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, by Scott O’Dell.

I loved that book because it had just this like lone young female character in it and none of the other books we were reading in school had that. So, it was different and I could connect to it in a different way than books with a male character that we were reading (Emily, 2009, Introductory discussion).

Another one of her favorite novels was *The Awakening*, by Kate Chopin. She made an intertextual connection between *The Awakening* and *A Northern Light* and she mentioned that *A Northern Light* was “exactly the kind of book for which I stayed up late reading in

junior high and high school” (Emily, 2009, *A Northern Light* blog response). Emily spoke emotionally about *A Northern Light*, saying she was “exasperated by Mattie’s relationship (or infatuation) with Royal Loomis” (Emily, 2009, *A Northern Light* blog response), and on several occasions she had to remind herself of the time period and setting of the book so she could overcome her frustration with the events in the story.

She also wrote emotionally about other texts assigned in the course. She said that the events in *The Circuit* left her “feeling frustrated and heartbroken” and that the ending was “soul crushing” (Emily, 2009, *The Circuit* blog response). She mentioned that she had to repeatedly put down *A Long Way Gone*, by Ishmael Beah, because she was so affected by the content. At one point, she wrote that she “felt utterly shattered” by events in the book (Emily, 2009, *A Long Way Gone* blog response). She stated that she “cared deeply about the outcome” of *The Golden Compass*, by Philip Pullman (Emily, 2009, *The Golden Compass* blog response). She wrote that she was “on edge” reading *How I live Now* and was “fearing the worst, holding onto tiny shreds of disappearing hope” (Emily, 2009, *How I Live Now* blog response).

Emily had never been interested in reading nonfiction, “and even if the story is intriguing, I am easily overwhelmed and bored by the amount of specific factual information delivered in many nonfiction texts” (Emily, 2009, *Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World* blog response). However, she did like *Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World* because the images broke up all the information.

She had limited experience with science fiction, having only read *The Giver* by Lois Lowry, *Nineteen Eighty-four* by George Orwell, and *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley prior to this class. She felt that they presented the world as “grim, cold, creepy” (Emily, 2009, *Feed* blog response). Yet she liked both *Feed*, by M.T. Anderson, and *House of the Scorpion*, by Nancy Farmer, saying the characters in *House of the Scorpion* touched her heart deeply.

Emily often had a visceral response to the texts she read, however, she distanced herself and wrote analytically about *Luna* and *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*, speaking about author intention, characterization, narration, and literary devices. She liked *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* and did not seem to care for *Luna*, so her analytical stance was not due to her personal feelings about the book.

Jan’s defining literature moment was when her mother got *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales*, by Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith, from the library and she read one of the stories from that book to Jan each night. “I remember just loving it and, from then, I just sort of had this infectious love for literature, which is why I want to be an English teacher” (Jan, 2009, Introductory discussion). She mentioned that she liked the science fiction and fantasy genres.

All of her blogs were analytical, more so if she disliked the text. She often mentioned whether or not she felt the book was teachable. She mentioned emotional responses only if she really enjoyed a text. When discussing *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*, she wrote, “a rolling dread filled my stomach and I wanted to stop

reading to prevent the inevitable” (Jan, 2009, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* blog response). Regarding Mattie Gokey, she wrote, “I feel like I’ve known her for years, and love her” (Jan, 2009, *A Northern Light*). When reading about the relationship between Mattie and Royal she was “practically pulling my hair out” (Jan, 2009, *A Northern Light*).

At times, she mixed emotional and analytical reactions, saying that the characterization in *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* made her fall in love. In her discussion of *Luna*, she talked about emotion, but in a removed way, “Whether you want to hug them, hate them or throw your hands in the air and scream at them they are real, they are engaging and they get a reaction out of the reader” (Jan, 2009, *Luna*)

Kate was influenced by the *Babysitters Club* series and began a children’s camp based on the books. As an adolescent, her favorite books were from the *Alice* series, by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor. “Actually, I’m kind of mad at myself because I wrote a gender analysis paper of that book and I got mad because I realized it was really saying the wrong thing about woman. But I still really like it” (Kate, 2009, Introductory discussion). In a middle school book club, she read *Patty Jane’s House of Curl*, by Lorna Landvik. She read it multiple times and thought it was exciting because it was an adult book.

Her favorite genre was contemporary realistic fiction. She also enjoyed science fiction. She said she usually did not like historical fiction because, “I cannot stand the ways in which people (particularly women and people of color) have been historically

marginalized” (Kate, 2009, *A Northern Light* blog response). However, she liked *A Northern Light* and *The Book Thief*, by Marcus Zusak, even though both dealt with marginalized people.

She liked to read about relationships, in a broad way, such as family relationships and friendships. She defined herself as “a character development kind of person. I really like first person narratives, because I like to know what is going on in people’s heads” (Kate, 2009, *Interview 12-14-09*).

Kate was a self-identified lesbian and grew up in a very liberal, progressive, and feminist family. She was raised Catholic, but her family became disenchanted with the church when she was 16. She attended a progressive, all-female, Catholic university. She enjoyed debate and the exchange of ideas and was very outspoken in the class.

One of the reasons she took *Literature for Adolescents* was that she thought the course would help further her goal of becoming an author of adolescent books. Her favorite book from the course was *Luna*, but she also liked *Looking for Alaska*, by John Green, and *Persepolis*, by Marjane Satrapi. She related most to Luna and Regan as characters because she could identify with the coming out process. She also connected to Mattie Gokey because she was strong, loved books, and was a writer. Her favorite author at the time of the study was Virginia Woolf and her favorite book was *The Waves*, by Virginia Woolf.

Kate's written responses were very analytical, yet her responses in discussion were often filled with emotion. In her blogs, she showed an emphasis on certain words and phrases with the use of italics. In one case, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*, she anthropomorphized the book saying it was "open minded" and that "(t)he book brings up issues," rather than the author brings up issues (Kate, 2009, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* blog response).

Linda said the books she read as an adolescent had the largest impression on her. She still thought about those books. She felt it was important to provide children with good books when they were at an "impressionable age." The young adult novel that stood out for her was *The Giver*, by Lois Lowry.

I just thought wow, this was such a deep and philosophical book and I just thought it was so cool that somebody would think that young adults would understand something like that. I saw that it was written extremely classically but the concepts were really deep and I thought that was really interesting that somebody would take that on for young adults (Linda, 2009, Introductory discussion).

Linda's written responses were very analytical, focused on the authors' literary choices and the social and historical events in the texts. The one emotional note was her statement that "(i)t was heartbreaking to read that Liam idolized his father" (Linda, 2009, *Luna* blog response). She did say that Daisy and Edmond's incestuous relationship was "troubling to read," but more because it was normalized than because it occurred (Linda,

2009, *How I Live Now* blog response). Linda also talked about the “feelings of white guilt” she had when she read *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* (Linda, 2009, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* blog response).

Paul said that, as a child, he always wanted to order as many books as possible from the school book clubs. His defining book was *Walk Two Moons*, by Sharon Creech.

I'm going to get a little sappy right here. It was the first time that I ever actually cried at a book, and that was in 7th grade, and I didn't really understand this concept in my head as to where that emotion was coming from. If you read it, you'll understand. What was interesting about it was that I completely missed the Native American element, which is what this whole story is about, but I was so focused on the story itself, not necessarily all the little intricacies and details, of the girl traveling across the country with her grandparents telling her about her heritage (Paul, 2009, Introductory discussion).

Paul was very congenial, often affirming other's comments, and spoke up frequently. While he made analytical comments in both his written and verbal responses, he often discussed his emotional connections and the feelings that his transaction with the text produced. He wrote,

while one could begin to dissect the voice of Junior as he tells his story, it feels much more important to tell you that I laughed out loud, that I felt my heart break a few times, that I was rejoicing alongside him as he played basketball, and

empathizing with him as his moments of victory came in the midst of moments of sorrow (Paul, 2009, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* blog response).

Airborn, by Kenneth Oppel, was one of his favorite books from the course. He said he rooted for Matt, the protagonist, and empathized with him. In his blog, he wrote that one of the reasons he enjoyed *Airborn* was that the narrator was a boy “which is an uncommon trend in my young adult literature experience thus far” (Paul, 2009, *Airborn* blog response). This was an interesting comment because the book list for this course contained 70% more books with male protagonists (17) than female protagonists (10). At the point in the course when Paul read *Airborn*, he had read three books with male protagonists, three with female protagonists, and one with both a male and a female protagonist. Over the entire course, he read twelve books with male protagonists, three with female protagonists, and two with both male and female protagonists. Of the books he selected from the list on the syllabus (see Appendix F), all but one had male protagonists. The one book he selected with a female protagonist was *Chains*, historical fiction, and all of the historical fiction options had female protagonists. Paul’s two “choice” books, selected without a list, also had male protagonists.

He connected most to Regan in *Luna*, Matt in *Airborn*, and Junior in *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*. He felt that some books were marketed more to one gender over another, such as *A Northern Light*. He said he would

recommend *A Northern Light* more to girls because it had a heavy focus on relationships and a strong female protagonist.

Paul said he did not have much of a male influence when he was growing up. His parents got a divorce when he was 5-years-old and he was raised in a primarily female household. He lived with his mother and older sister, and his grandmother babysat for him. He only saw his father on alternate weekends and his mother did not remarry until he was in fourth grade. Perhaps this female influence helped him easily connect to Daisy's character in *How I Live Now*, and he related to the love story saying,

(t)he hopeless romantic 15-year-old boy in me jumped at the chance to remember similar memories from when I was that age, and how finding someone that you connected with mentally as Edmond and Daisy do is breathtaking and frightening at the same time. You never want to let that feeling go (Paul, 2009, *How I Live Now* blog response).

Rose grew up in a very strict, conservative, Catholic family and she attended a conservative Catholic college. Her parents maintained traditional gender roles, and both were highly educated. Her mother had a master's degree. Her father grew up in poverty and had "more of a capitalist viewpoint" (Rose, 2009, Interview 11/30/2009).

Since leaving home, her views had become more moderate. She attributed that to liberal friends, professors, and the English cohort. She felt that the English cohort was mostly liberal and concerned with social justice, which had a large impact on her.

I think I'm a lot more open to the idea of people taking on non-traditional gender roles, or even homosexual couples where they split the stuff because there isn't a male or there isn't a female. So I think I'm more open to it. But I think I'm not the kind of person that feels like I need to bust out of my traditional gender roles. I don't feel like I have to do some sort of super manly thing. I like cooking and I actually enjoy cleaning. I knit in my free time. I personally like a lot of the more traditionally female roles. But at the same time I don't see a problem breaking out of those if that's not where you want to be (Rose, 2009, Interview 11/30/2009).

At the time of the study, she was living with eleven other college students, seven girls and four boys. Several of them were international students. She said she had frequent discussions with students from Spain, France, and Argentina who had differing views.

Her defining literary moment was reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*, by Harper Lee, in middle school. Before that, she did not like English classes.

I dreaded going. I was always in remedial classes and, for some reason, whatever year this was, I signed up for enriched English because it was the cool thing to do, and all my friends were doing it, and on day one, the lady teacher walked in and, even though she was 5'3", she was the most intimidating lady ever, and she made us go way beyond just surface level reading which was what I'd always done before. The first month I was completely scared and, after that, I really started to

like the book. I think that really kicked in this idea that I actually could like literature (Rose, 2009, Introductory discussion).

She believed books were gendered by genre, characters, cover art, and topic. She felt that she would be more likely to give *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* to a boy than a girl. This was an interesting comment because her favorite book in the course was *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*, and her favorite character was Junior. Her other favorite was Panchito in *The Circuit*. She said she did not know why she connected with those characters, since they were both male and racially diverse. It occurred to her that it was because they were underdogs. She said she loved underdog stories because her father was an underdog when he started out. “My dad grew up on a farm, thirteen kids. Literally, had no money. They had two bedrooms in their house for fifteen people” (Rose, 2009, Interview 11/30/2009).

Community of Practice

Cathy had a basic course structure, consisting of the opening meeting, whole or small group discussion of the whole class text, small group discussion of the texts selected from the list for that genre on the syllabus, and a short lecture on the genre to be discussed the following week. On occasion, to provide additional background to the text, she would include a PowerPoint presentation about the whole class book. In some sessions, the students discussed their choice books in small groups. This general structure created a set of shared literary practices for the course.

Literacy practices. Cathy's course design created practices that became routine in the class. Classes began with an opening meeting, where students could share information that might be of interest to others in the course, regardless of its applicability to the topic of the day. Next, Cathy often gave a short PowerPoint lecture on the genre being discussed that day or on another related topic, such as reader response theory. Sometimes, when she had given the genre lecture the at the end of the preceding class, the group moved right into discussions of the texts that were assigned for that day. Cathy offered her students multiple ways to dialogue about literature. Students had a chance to communicate in the way that was safest or most effective for them. They had opportunities to participate in large group and small group discussion, and create written responses and blog responses, and blog or podcast book reviews.

Written practices. Regardless of the method of dialogue, the students learned what was expected in terms of a literary response. The syllabus had clear instructions (see Appendix F) on the format of the response.

Guidelines and Grading Criteria for Response Journals (Blog): You are free to respond before (prediction), during, and/or after your reading, whatever you choose. Please don't, however, make the mistake of finishing a book and then waiting to respond to it. The immediacy of your response is lost when you wait. Respond in the following manner.

Respond personally.

Select, combine, or ignore the following general prompts:

- Write anything you'd like to say about your reading experience.
- What was the book about? What did it remind you of? How did it make you feel?
- Is there anything in your life that helped you to connect (or not connect) with the book?
- Is there anything in the book that helped you to think about your own life?
- Does the book reflect the world as you know it or something different?

Respond critically.

Use criteria (for example, those in chapters 1-11 of *Literature and the Child*) to guide you.

Remember to begin with something positive (the book wouldn't be on the reading list if it wasn't judged to be a good book!) and be sure to judge the book for what it is, rather than for what it is not.

- What makes the book memorable as a piece of literature?
- How does it exemplify qualities that define the genre?

(*Literature for Adolescents course syllabus, Fall 2009*)

The students wrote a personal and critical response to texts that were read by the whole class and to the texts that were selected from a list chosen by the instructor (see Appendices F or M). In addition, the students periodically responded to each other on a blog that all class members could access through the course Moodle page.

These literacy practices were designed to allow the students to share connections they made with their own experiences, to express their feelings about the reading experience and/or the text, and to discuss and evaluate the literary aspects of the text. They also taught the students how they were expected to read the texts, partly for pleasure and partly for critical review. This was an unusual reading stance for many of these students because most had been English majors, who had been trained to read course related literature solely for critical evaluation. Writing the responses gave the class members time to think about what was read so they could discuss the books in light of the guidelines listed in the syllabus.

Cathy also gave the students a handout on reading critically to make the ideologies in the texts more visible (see Appendix N). That handout and the lecture on

reader response gave the class more insight into how they were expected to read and respond in this classroom community of practice.

Discussion. On occasion, Cathy gave the group specific questions to address (see Appendices O and P). These were open ended and intended to generate discussion. For example, when the class had read historical fiction, one of the questions posed was, “How does the history parallel the characters' inner struggles? Or how do the themes echo larger historical concerns?” (Historical fiction activity, 10/26/09). At other times, the students would discuss whatever they felt was important, interesting, or puzzling about the book. On one occasion, the students in each group wrote questions that they wanted to pose to the other members of the class. Twice during the semester, the student groups were each stationed at a different location in the room where a question was written on the whiteboard or on a large pad of paper. The groups wrote their answer to the question at their station and then rotated to another station and another question. The next group would either add to the first group’s answer or create their own answer.

Large group discussions were about books that were assigned to the whole class, such as *A Northern Light*. However, some of the whole class books, like *Luna*, were discussed in small groups. There were positive and negative factors about using large group discussion. On the plus side, the students were able to hear the viewpoints of a larger number of their classmates. On the minus side, some students did not say much in large groups and may have felt intimidated or that they could not speak up fast enough to avoid having another speaker talk over them.

Certain students seemed to feel safe speaking, and spoke often in both large and small groups. Many of them were dominant enough that they were comfortable with calling out their responses rather than waiting to be recognized. Deborah Tannen (2000) calls this a “high involvement style.” These speakers are enthusiastic and enjoy the give and take of a debate. However, this can cause some angst among other students. “Those who speak freely may assume that less talkative students have nothing to say, and those who rein themselves in may assume that the talkative students are taking more than their share of class time” (Tannen, Kendall, & Adger, 1997, p. 79). Ben, Bridget, Jim, Judy, Linda, Matt, Max, and Paul were high involvement speakers. They spoke most often in the large group discussions.

Males were both the most dominant speakers in the class and the least dominant. John and Dave were very quiet and rarely spoke in whole class or small group discussions. John was Somali, and culture plays a role in what is seen as acceptable in conversational dynamics. He made an effort to speak at least once each time he was in a small group, but Dave was often completely silent.

Most of the other class members did speak in large group discussion, but they were more vocal in small groups. Bill, Carla, Emily, Jan, Julia, and Kate would speak in whole class discussions if they felt strongly about a topic. They were all fairly talkative in small groups. Ann, Ellen, and Rose spoke less frequently, but they talked more in small groups than in whole class discussion. They were very soft spoken and perhaps they felt they could be heard better in a small group. Much of what Ann and Rose said

was active listening.

Often, the small group discussions were on the selected books for the genre being discussed. In that case, the book that each student had selected, from the three options listed in the syllabus, determined the composition of the groups. For example, the “selected” contemporary realistic fiction texts were *The First Part Last*, by Angela Johnson, *Looking for Alaska*, by John Green, and *A Step from Heaven*, by An Na. The students were divided into a *Looking for Alaska* group, a *The First Part Last* group, and an *A Step from Heaven* group. If more than five or six students had read the same book, they were separated into two groups.

There were a few occasions during the semester when the students discussed their “choice” books, texts they had selected without the aid of a list, for a specific genre. In those discussions, each participant gave the other group members a synopsis of their chosen text and spoke a bit about the book. This gave the students an opportunity to hear about books they might not otherwise have discovered.

Background knowledge. Cathy occasionally provided background knowledge about the author or topic of the texts that were read. For example, she showed the class a website on the real trial of Chester Gillette for the murder Grace Brown, which was the story behind one of the plot lines in *A Northern Light*. The students also brought their own knowledge and experiences to the class. Dave grew up in a rural, farming area and he spoke about how realistically Donnelly portrayed farm life. When the class discussed *Luna*, Kate talked about her experiences as a lesbian and Bridget discussed her childhood

with a lesbian mother. These bits of knowledge increased the other class members' understanding of the texts they had read and provided them with further awareness that they could pass on to the students in their own classroom communities of practice.

While pedagogical methods were not the focus of this course, the students often discussed if and how they might teach a particular text. In that case, the practicing teachers and Cathy were masters (or on their way to mastery) in their teaching communities of practice. They introduced practical knowledge and expectations, learned in their other communities of practice, into this classroom community.

Teaching. This group of students and the instructor were all members of a teaching community of practice. They had all been trained in methodologies intended to provide an innovative, transformational, and inclusive education in the area of English at the middle and high school level. The students in the English cohort were working toward their initial licensure for teaching. The practicing teachers were already licensed and had returned for their M.Ed. to increase their knowledge base and/or to improve their salaries. The preservice and practicing teachers enrolled in many of the same courses, however the practicing teachers took fewer courses each semester because they usually were teaching while they worked on their degree.

Because they all took teaching methods courses, they shared a common vocabulary and theoretical understanding of pedagogy. They had similar goals, which was demonstrated by their responses to Cathy's query on why they took *Literature for*

Adolescents. All the class members responded that they wanted to learn more about adolescent literature so they could promote reading in their classrooms.

Power relations. The class members had a shared perspective on social justice issues. This could be seen in the overt attitudes of the members of the preservice teacher's English cohort. This group of students took most of their graduate level courses together so they developed a sense of camaraderie and cohesion. The constant exposure they had to one another's ideas created a strong sense of what was acceptable within their cohort community of practice. In that group, it was much more acceptable to be inclusive than to display traditional hegemonic beliefs. Inclusiveness, a component of feminist pedagogical practices (Kenway & Modra, 1992), is common in the university discourse. The cohort students had often been shown the value of student-centered teaching and the importance of Freire's (1970/2006) notion of *concientización* in their previous classes. *Concientización* asks educators to look beyond their own world-view and learn about the worlds of their students. It also asks educators to look at the ways they are complicit in the oppression of others through their use of power and their influence on what kinds of knowledge are valued in the classroom and society.

The practicing teachers were somewhat less likely to take up more feminist views, but they still maintained socially acceptable attitudes. This may be related to the expectation that teachers will at least appear to be unbiased. This attitude is part of their school/teacher community of practice, so it was maintained in their university class community of practice. Participation in inclusive thinking provided cultural and social

capital (Bourdieu, 1993) in the communities of practice of these university students and educators.

This created several different kinds of power relations. The peer-to-peer relationship included the demands of the cohort community of practice or the professional community of practice. It also brought into play a ‘who is more knowledgeable’ dynamic between the practicing and preservice teachers. At times the preservice teachers appeared to view themselves as less jaded, and more open to new ideas than the practicing teachers and the practicing teachers seemed to view the preservice teachers as idealistic and unaware of the demands of the classroom.

For example, during the discussion of *Luna*, one of the small groups consisting of two preservice and two practicing teachers, was talking about whether they would be comfortable teaching the book or giving it to a student. Kate, a preservice teacher, said she would like to be able to hand *Luna* to a student, especially a GLBT student. She said, “it just needs to be like the focus is that you are respecting people whether or not, I mean, whether or not you agree with their personal life...just because we are teaching this doesn’t mean we promote it” (Kate, 2009, *Luna* small group discussion). Matt, a practicing teacher, replied with, “I think with everything you teach, you are promoting something” (Matt, 2009, *Luna* small group discussion). Max, a practicing teacher, responded, “I wouldn’t touch it with a ten foot pole. I’m not tenured...just for the simple fact that, without question, there would be some parents that would be gunning for my job if I made this required reading” (Max, 2009, *Luna* small group discussion). This

exchange depicts the more experienced teachers educating the neophyte on the realities of the classroom.

Regardless of the efficacy of the advice given to Kate, or whether she accepted it, she dropped her discussion on giving *Luna* to her future students and began making comments of acquiescence. Kate may not have agreed with the practicing teachers in her group, but she did not attempt to sway them to her thinking. In terms of communities of practice theory and legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991/2007), Kate was on the periphery, while Max and Matt were moving toward mastery.

Other communities of practice. It was more common for the practicing teachers to mention outside influences, like family or religion, than in the cohort group. In discussion, Judy, Bridget, and Matt spoke about their children. John and Matt mentioned their religious beliefs in their blogs and Matt spoke of them in discussion. None of the preservice teachers talked of family or religion in discussion. Sexual orientation was another matter. In both discussion and their blogs, Bridget mentioned that her mother was a lesbian and Kate spoke of her own sexual orientation.

Gender and texts. All of the class members believed that certain texts were gendered. Because they belonged to a teaching community of practice, focused on literacy, it is likely that they were familiar with earlier research that found a difference in boys' and girls' reading interests (Cherland, 1994a; Finders, 1997; Millard, 1997; Newkirk, 2002). A few of the participants mentioned their expectations that males preferred action oriented texts and females preferred relationship oriented texts.

The most common title mentioned was *A Northern Light*. Four of the males and two of the females felt that they would be more likely to give that book to a female than a male. It is interesting that two males felt that *How I Live Now* was gendered, but one felt it was more male oriented because of the topic of war, while the other thought it was more female oriented because of the female narrator. Several participants mentioned liking *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*, and two felt it was a book more suited to boys. However, three of the females named it as their favorite book in the course.

In terms of connections to characters, two male participants related best to Junior and one female participant did. Five of the female participants mentioned their deepest connection to a character was with Mattie, from *A Northern Light*. Only one male mentioned relating to a female character, while two females (both preservice teachers) said they connected most with male characters.

Over the course of the semester (see Appendix M), five of the nine required texts (excluding poetry and folklore) had male protagonists (56%), while two had female protagonists (22%), and two had both a male and a female protagonist (22%). Eleven of the options on the selected book list had male protagonists (61%) and seven had female protagonists (39%). On the list of selected books, two of the genres, science fiction and biography, offered only books with male protagonists, and one genre, historical fiction, offered only female protagonists.

Summary

The data in this chapter presented the participants in this study using the information I collected through observation, discussion, interviews, written responses, and their blogs. The participants came from a variety of different, sometimes conflicting, communities of practice. Each student provided insight into why they read a book in a specific way or through a certain lens and what facets of the texts stood out to them. This data illustrates the role of the participants' background in their gender beliefs and expectations. The social expectations of this classroom community also influenced what they said and how it was said.

In the next chapter, I focus on the small group discussions of one text, *Luna*. I examine each of the four groups looking at the discourses used in the discussions, as well as the conversational strategies used by the participants. Then, I consider the data across all of the *Luna* discussion groups. Finally, I contextualize the data on *Luna* with the discussions of three other whole class realistic fiction texts.

Chapter 5: Small Group Discussions of *Luna*

*“Like me, I know that Luna felt different from others. It wasn’t until she discovered Terri Lynn that she felt hope. I’ve had a similar experience in *Adult Children of Alcoholics*. It’s the power of connecting with people who have had a similar experience that allows one to change, embrace that transformation, and find serenity within. While I have learned a lot about myself in the last 6 years, I continue to unlock pieces of myself every day. I still don’t know exactly who I am, but I long to fly freely like a butterfly, like Luna”. (Julia, 2009, *Luna* blog response)*

In this chapter, I present data gathered to discover if the participants in the *Luna* discussion groups showed a diversity of response to the text within gender. I also describe how the norms and expectations of this classroom community of practice, as well as the students’ other communities of practice, were evident in the participants’ reading and discussions of *Luna*. The data also illustrates the role of group configurations and interactional practices in the participants’ discussions of *Luna*.

I discuss my analytic process, give a brief synopsis of the text, and frame the discussions of *Luna* within the course. I examine each of the four small group discussions of *Luna* individually, and also analyze the data across the four discussion groups, using critical discourse analysis techniques. I contextualize the findings on *Luna* within the discussions of the other three realistic fiction texts read by the whole class, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, *How I Live Now*, and *A Northern Light*.

Analytic Process

I employed Fairclough’s (2001) critical discourse analysis strategies that investigate vocabulary, grammar, and structure to analyze the transcripts of the small group discussions. This method of analysis includes three stages; description,

interpretation, and explanation. In the description phase (see Appendix I), I explored the types of values that the language connoted, as well as interactional conventions like turn-taking, interruption, and topic control. I noticed who spoke the most and the least, who controlled the conversation topically and ideologically, agreement and disagreement, what kinds of questions were asked and who asked them. I also examined the ways that the discourse was affected by styles of communication. In the interpretation phase (see Appendix I), I looked at how the discussion was constrained or directed by the setting, participants, and context. I also noted how the language and conversational practices helped position the group members and influence their performance of gender. In the explanation stage (see Appendix I), I examined the ideologies that may have been present in what was said and how it was said. I also looked at the ways the participants' membership in the classroom community of practice, and the other communities of practice that influenced their beliefs on gender, played a role in the group discussion.

Transcription Conventions

The transcripts of the small and whole group discussions were transcribed using transcription conventions (also in Appendix L) that were adapted from a system developed by Gail Jefferson (1984).

- [] brackets indicate overlapping utterances
- = equal marks indicate contiguous utterances, or continuation of the same utterance to the next line
- (.) period within parentheses indicates micropause

(2.0)	number within parentheses indicates pause of length in approximate seconds
ye:s	colon indicates stretching of sound it follows
<u>yes</u>	underlining indicates emphasis
YES	capital letters indicate increased volume
°yes°	degree marks indicate decreased volume of materials between
hhh	h's indicate audible aspiration, possibly laughter
·hhh	raised, large period indicates inbreath audible aspiration, possibly laughter
ye(hh)s	h's within parentheses indicate within-speech aspiration, possibly laughter
((cough))	items within double parentheses indicate some sound or feature of the talk which is not easily transcribable, e.g. “((in falsetto))”
(yes)	parentheses indicate transcriber doubt about hearing of passage
↑yes, ↓yes	arrows indicate upward or downward intonation of sound they precede

The Text

The book that I chose for this analysis was selected based on the responses it evoked from the participants, the composition of the discussion groups, and the book's relevance to this study. That text, *Luna* (2004), by Julie Anne Peters, is about a transgendered teen, Liam, also known as Luna, told from his sister, Regan's, perspective. From the beginning of the text, Peters portrays a dysfunctional family dynamic.

Liam's childhood struggle with his gender is demonstrated to the reader through Regan's flashback memories. In one memory, she recalled the time Liam was upset when he did not receive the bra and Prom Barbie he wanted for his ninth birthday. In

another flashback, she remembered an incident that occurred during one of her slumber parties. Liam let the girls paint his nails and he started singing and dancing to Madonna. Regan's best friend began to question Liam's normalcy and from that point on Regan avoided close friendships. Liam and Regan's parents responded with anger, disbelief, or denial. In this way, the reader is able to see how the family relationships damage everyone involved.

Throughout the story, the characters' gender expectations were presented. Jack, the father, refused to allow Liam to help with the cooking and forced him to play sports. He was dealing with being downsized from his job at Sears and he undervalued his wife, Patrice's, job. When Regan's chemistry teacher told the class they had to wear goggles, he said, "Sorry girls. It's a state law. Chemistry is not a beauty contest" (Peters, 2004, p. 28).

Peters' text reflects underlying gender beliefs. While Jack is shown as sexist, oblivious to his children's needs, and unable to understand Liam, the reader also learns that he was physically abused by his father. This provides insight into Jack's character and creates sympathy for him. His insensitivity is portrayed as ignorance, rather than intentional abuse. Patrice and Jack's mother are depicted in a much harsher light. Jack's mother did not come to her children's aid even though she knew they were being severely beaten. She did not even discuss the problem until Jack's father died. Patrice is shown in an even more unforgiving light. Regan viewed her mother as a "junkie," whose "medicine cabinet was crammed with uppers and downers and equalizers and mood

stabilizers” (Peters, 2004, p.11), which gives the reader a sense of the mother’s state of mind. As the reader navigates the story, Regan and Liam’s mother is repeatedly depicted as self absorbed, uncaring, and “a monster.”

The reader begins to understand Liam’s experiences as Regan remembers episode after episode, clue after clue. Toward the end of the book, Regan recalled a scene from their early childhood when Liam discovered he was different from girls anatomically and he tried to pull his penis off. When their mother sent Liam to his room, as a punishment for playing with his penis, he tried to cut it off. Patrice told everyone, including Jack, that Liam just cut his leg and obscured what really happened. Regan also remembered intervening when Liam attempted suicide with his mother’s pills. As she reflected back on the event, she wondered why her mother had never asked where the pills had gone. That was when Regan realized that their mother left the pills for Liam to find.

In an interesting juxtaposition, Liam’s mother is depicted as trapped in her gender by the cultural expectations of women, just as Liam is trapped in his gender by his physical body. At one point, Patrice is so unhappy with her life that she says, “I’ve had it with you and these kids and my life. It *isn’t* enough. I keep telling you that, but you won’t listen. I’m dying inside. I just want *out!*” (Peters, 2004, p. 137). It becomes clear that she left her pills out for Liam because she saw suicide as the only way out for him, and perhaps for herself. Regardless of this parallel construction, the author does not present the mother with the same amount of sympathy as the father. She is the one who knew all along that Liam was suffering. She chose to deny it.

In the end, it was Luna who had the courage to crawl out of the dysfunction. Peters leaves the reader with hope that Regan will now begin her life anew. There is hope that Luna and Regan will not become victims, like their parents.

Luna contained characters and subject matter that appeared to elicit more carefully worded responses than other texts. Since the participants in this study were trained in the importance of maintaining an inclusive attitude toward cultural differences, they were unlikely to express overt discomfort with the topic of transgenderism. Many of the participants had raised awareness about diversity due to their experiences in graduate school. In addition, open rejection of any culture was likely to evoke censure by the other members of the class.

Small Group Discussions

Luna was discussed on November 30, 2009, near the end of the course. Before reading *Luna*, the students had read texts in the contemporary realistic fiction, poetry, folklore, historical fiction, fantasy, science fiction, nonfiction, and biography/memoir genres (see Appendix M). Two of the students were absent for the discussion of *Luna*, *Bill and Dave*. They were both preservice teachers, which made the ratio between practicing (8) and preservice (9) teachers nearly equal. However, it widened the gender gap by reducing the student group to six males and eleven females.

Near the end of the course, from November 17-21, the preservice teachers spent one week student teaching at a local middle school and they developed a small knowledge base about the profession, which somewhat mitigated the difference in the preservice and practicing teachers' member resources regarding the daily experience of teaching. The discussion of *Luna* took place after the participants finished their student teaching.

Discussion Group One findings. This discussion group included Paul, Jan, Julia, and Jim. Julia and Jim were practicing teachers, while Paul and Jan were preservice teachers. This provided a perspective on a group with one male and one female in the position of being more knowledgeable, in terms of teaching experience, and one male and one female with little pedagogical experience.

Looking at the questions asked in these discussions is important because previous research has shown that women are less likely than men to initiate questions (Jones, 1989). When women do ask questions, some research indicates they are more likely to ask queries to show interest and agreement (Tannen, 1990). Men are more likely to ask questions to determine whether a group member or the author knows what they are talking about or understands the reality of a certain situation, such as "No parent would ever do that" or "Well, you haven't actually taught in a classroom yet"(Tannen, 1990). In addition, studies show that women ask more leading questions, with an implied answer, such as "Do you think Regan was too whiney?" (O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky,

1999). This may be a way to manipulate the direction of the conversation or to avoid taking direct responsibility for one's own thoughts.

The questions posed in this session were grammatical (1), asking who, what, when, where, why, how, or which; leading (8), meaning the inquirer already had an answer and was hoping to engender discussion of the question; or rhetorical (2), with no answer necessary. One grammatical question was asked by a male. Males asked six of the eight leading questions, and both a male and a female asked one rhetorical question. Of the eleven questions asked in Group One, eight were asked by males.

The dialogue was informal and persuasive, inquisitive, or informative in nature. The participants frequently used *we* when referring to the members of the discussion group, which indicated a sense of community or belonging. The exception to this was when a group member questioned if their own ideas aligned with the rest of the group's thinking. In those situations, the speaker would use terms like *you* or *you guys*, or even switch back and forth, as in Jim's remark, "I mean, (3.0) yes, it made you, well it made you, it made me pissed off at the end that she just walks out when Regan says 'you need to deal with it'" (Jim, 2009, *Luna* discussion). This can be viewed as a way of distancing himself from his comments or simply as a way to designate people generically.

When referring to people outside of the classroom community of practice, such as their students or the characters in *Luna*, the participants often used the word *they*. This may have indicated a division between the world outside of the classroom and the world of *Literature for Adolescents*.

The group used some ideologically contested words and phrases, such as *crazy*, *dysfunctional*, *family*, *mother*, *father*, *hope*, *boy-whatever*. These are terms that can mean different things to different listeners depending on their ideological beliefs. A good example of this was the group's negative response to the mother character in *Luna*. They were referring back to their own expectations of motherhood and making value judgments about the mother in the story. Although both parents in *Luna* were negatively portrayed, this group condemned the mother most. At one point, Jan said, "I hate the mother, I hate her" (Jan, 2009, *Luna* discussion). However, earlier Jan discussed the father saying,

JAN: we see Jack as a guy who is a pretty broken man. His marriage is falling apart, he (.), um (.), lost his job and really the strong thing in his life is how much he loves his kids. And, like, he wants Liam to be something he's not but I think eventually like he loves his kids enough that (3.0) he is going to understand that (Jan, 2009, *Luna* discussion).

The group members all expressed some sympathy for the father character. Perhaps this reflects the double standard that still exists in our social expectations of motherhood. It is more understandable for fathers to be distant or removed from their children and to be unaware of their needs, however it is considered inappropriate for mothers to act in a similar fashion.

Power relations. Many early researchers in gender and discussion viewed turn taking, topic control, and length of turn as a measure of power relations in conversation (Jones, 1989; LaFrance, 1991, Lakoff, 1975; Tannen, 1990). In Group One, (see Figure 9) males took 63% (83 of 130) of the turns to speak, they held the floor 66% of the time,

and they controlled the topic 82% (9 of 11) of the time (see Figure 10). This aligns with the previous research on gender and conversation that found that males are more likely to speak up and that they speak for longer periods of time than females (Fishman, 1978; LaFrance, 1991).

Figure 9. Luna Group One - number of turns taken and number of lines spoken by gender

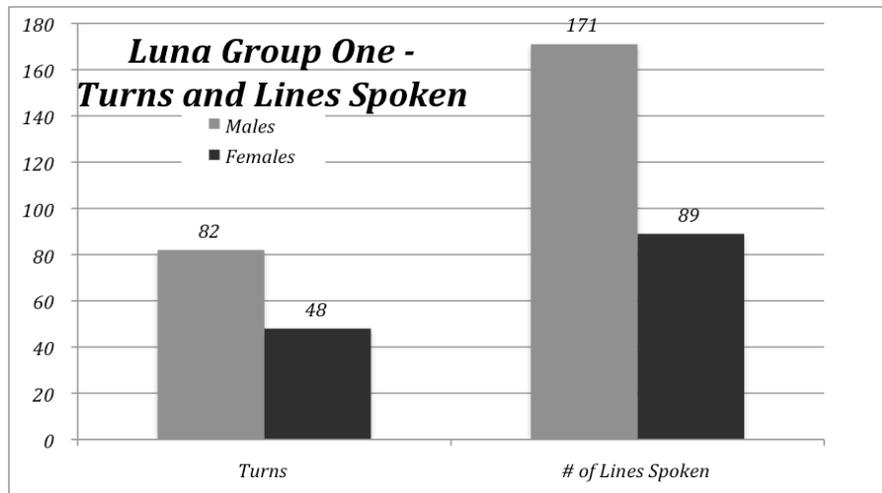
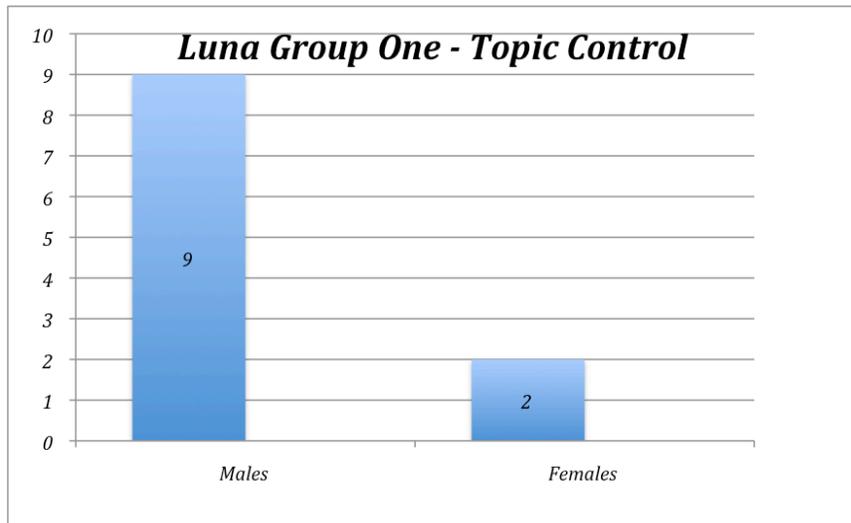


Figure 10. Luna Group One - topic control by gender



The turn taking, time spent speaking, and topic control data might appear to indicate that the males in the group dominated the exchange of ideas, however other data shows that at least one male in this group was more tentative than the females about what he said. Paul (43 occurrences) was twice as likely to use qualifiers, listener checks, or express uncertainty about his statements than Julia (21 occurrences), and 45% more likely than Jan (24 occurrences). On the other hand, Jim (10 occurrences) was much less likely to use such language. Qualifiers include phrases, such as ‘I guess’, ‘kind of’, ‘sort of’, ‘I think’, ‘I don’t know’, ‘I feel’, and listener checks are phrases that question whether the listener understands the speaker’s ideas, such as ‘I mean’ and ‘you know?’

PAUL: Yeah, and (3.0) I think that was one of the other things I was thinking about too. When (.), when (3.0), it is, (1.0) as horrible as it sounds (.), the same idea of the sympathetic narrator (.) versus the (.), um, what did you say, the unreliable (.) narrator. I don't want to say that (.), you know, Luna would be (.) an unreliable narrator but (.), to put (3.0) you know everything in her perspective, you don't get, you don't get the juxtaposi, juxtaposition that you would (.) from (.), from Regan (Paul, 2009, *Luna* small group discussion).

O'Donnell-Allen and Smagorinsky (1999) found that hesitations in speech, a slow rate of speech, and the use of qualifiers was more common in females, and while this could be interpreted as an indication of powerlessness and less certainty about their ideas, it is also contextual.

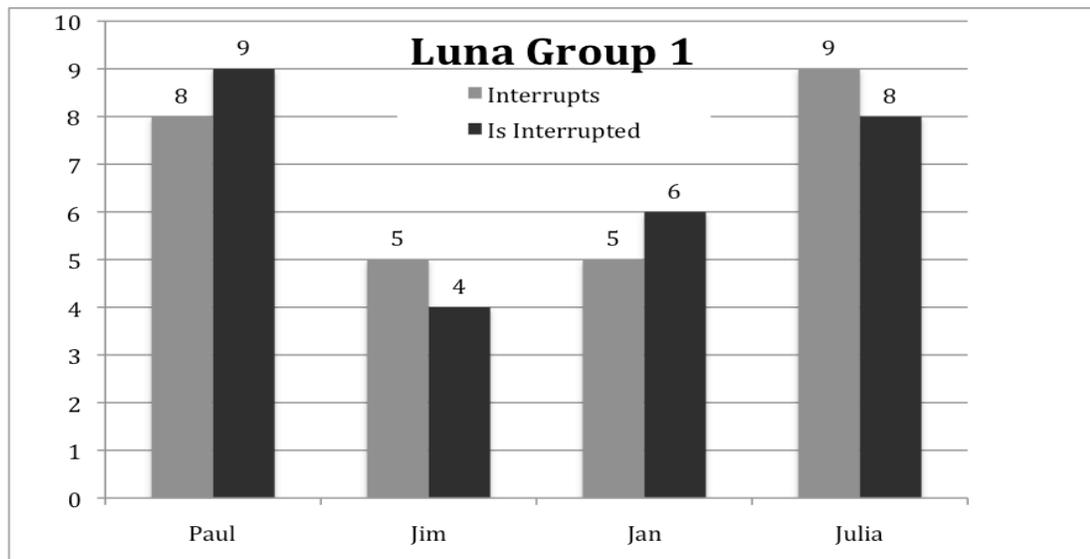
(W)e see the final trait, powerlessness, as situational-that is, that schools disadvantage girls (or anyone who acts in connected rather than competitive ways) primarily when schools view knowledge as fixed and discussions are conducted to reward those who can argue their positions with the greatest certainty. Classrooms that allow multiple ways of knowing, foster an ethic of

care and connection, and allow for speech that is collaborative can allow other types of power to flourish (O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky, 1999, p.36).

Cathy's classroom was very open and inclusive, and certainly valued "multiple ways of knowing." This may have contributed to the gender variations seen in Group One.

Another measure of power in discussions involves the number of times one interrupts or is interrupted (LaFrance, 1991). In Group One, as shown in Figure 11, the number of times females interrupted another speaker was just slightly more than the number of male interruptions. Paul (8 times) and Julia (9 times) were more likely to interrupt than the others in the group were, and they were also more likely to be interrupted (Paul 9 times, Julia 8 times).

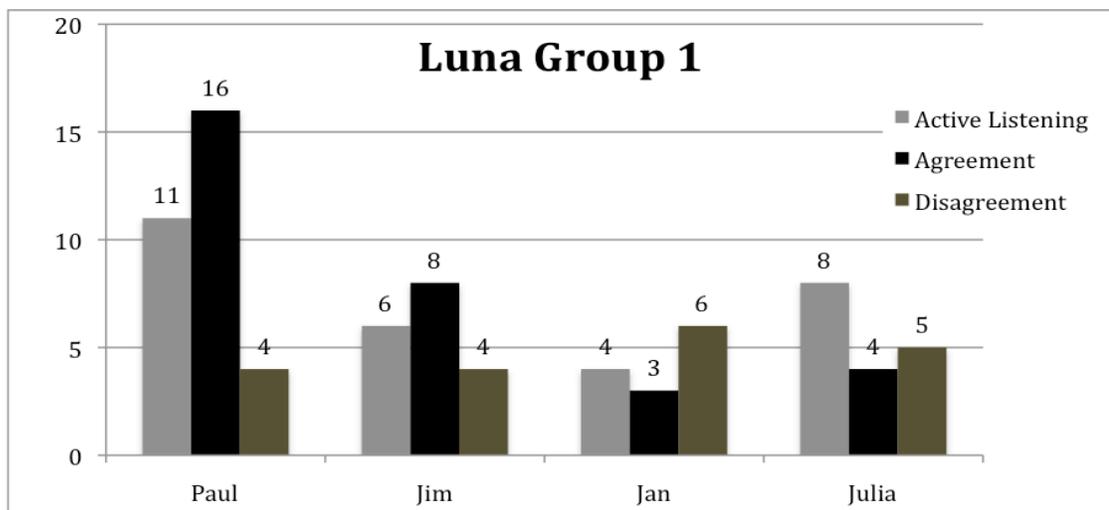
Figure 11. Luna Group One - number of times interrupting and number of times interrupted, by individual



Active listening has been seen as a female trait that is a response to the sociocultural expectation that females are collaborative, nurturing, and attentive listeners (LaFrance, 1991; O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky, 1999; Tannen, 1990). I defined active listening as clarifying or expressing agreement or disagreement, but not intending to begin one's own turn at the conversation. Often, it is a single word such as 'right' or 'yeah' or providing a word that the speaker appears to have forgotten. In addition, it is agreement or listener acknowledgement in the form of 'uh huh' during someone else's turn. This is also known as minimal response (Zimmerman & West, 1975) and backchanneling (Yngve, 1970).

Paul was much more likely to perform active listening than the other members of his discussion group (see Figure 12) and twice as likely to actively listen than the other males in the class. In addition, the males in Group One were more likely to express agreement with other group members' ideas (see Figure 12), a cooperative and affiliative

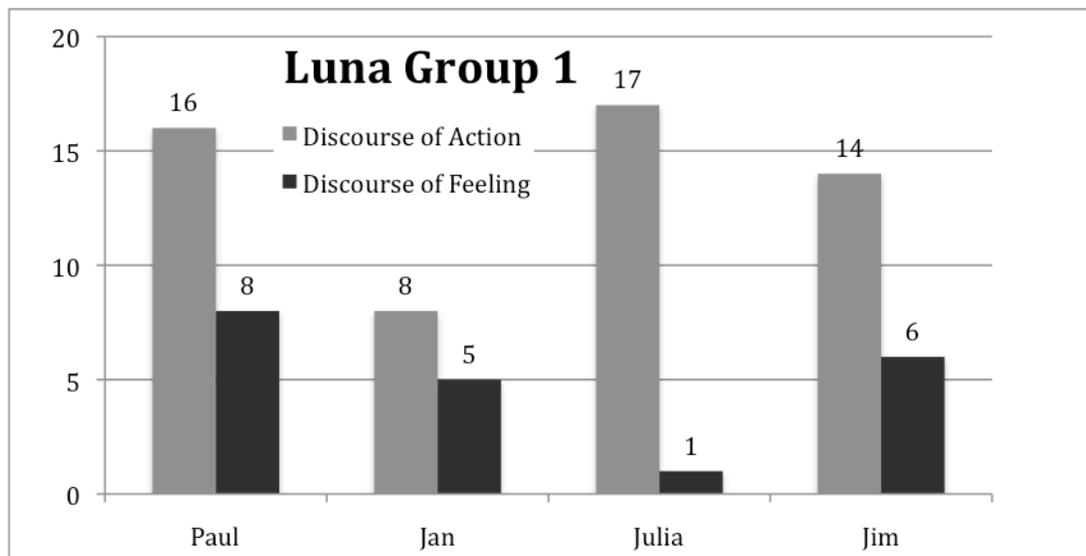
Figure 12. Luna Group One - number of occurrences of active listening, agreement with group mates, and disagreement with group mates, by individual



trait often attributed to females (O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky, 1999). The females in Group One were more likely to disagree with others' statements than the males were (see Figure 12). Disagreement or debate about ideas has been associated with males (O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky, 1999).

As depicted in Figure 13, a diversity of response could be seen within gender in what Cherland (1992) termed discourses of action and feeling. A discourse of action refers to the perceived tendency for males to emphasize events or plot in a text. A discourse of feeling is seen as a female emphasis on relationships in a text. In Group One, the males (30 occurrences) were just slightly more likely to refer to events and plot than the females (25 occurrences) as an aggregate. Individually, Julia (17 occurrences) was the most likely to express a discourse of action and Jan (8 occurrences) was the least

Figure 13. Luna Group One - number of occurrences of discourse of action and discourse of feeling, by individual



likely. The males were more likely to express a discourse of feeling, individually and as an aggregate.

Communities of practice. Most of the members of this group identified themselves as more liberal in point of view, except Jim, who stated that he was more conservative. Jim felt *Luna* would be very difficult to teach at his school. Jim and Julia, both practicing teachers, felt the book was “preachy” and that the author had an agenda. Paul and Jan, the preservice teachers, both wanted to teach the book and Jan specifically stated that, “we’re not getting the bias and we’re not getting a, its not getting into a preachy (1.0) sort of thing either” (Jan, 2009, *Luna* small group discussion).

Jan and Paul were single and Jim and Julia were married. None of the group members had children. In the introductory discussion for the course, Julia mentioned that she came from “kind of a distressed home” (Julia, 2009, Introductory discussion). This most likely affected her reading of the text, because *Luna* is about a very dysfunctional family. Regardless of her personal experiences, Julia maintained high expectations for parent behavior in the book and in life. Jim made it clear that he had few illusions about parenting. When Julia had trouble suspending disbelief that the parents in the novel would be unaware of their children’s actions, Jim twice stated, “you’d be surprised” and then remarked,

JIM: If you don't want to know what's going on in your child's life, not because you don't love them but because you are afraid of what you might find out. It's shocking what parents don't know about their kids (Jim, 2009, *Luna* discussion).

In this instance, Jim positioned himself as more knowledgeable regarding disinterested parents. This may have been due to his teaching experiences, or because he volunteered at his church, where they provided food to low-income families. Regardless of the reason, no one in the group disputed his expertise.

Although the larger classroom community seemed to privilege inclusive sociocultural views, Paul apologized for his perspective on sexual orientation. He used the terms *bubble* and *shelter* to describe his views. This implied that he saw those opinions as naïve after reading *Luna*, or perhaps after this discussion of it. Alvermann, Commeyras, Young, Randall, & Hinson (1997) dubbed this *sorry talk*, which is qualifying or apologizing for what one says, therefore reducing the impact of the statement. In the excerpt below, he was talking about his beliefs and his fear that *Luna* would end in a violent altercation.

PAUL: Which is weird because I don't come from that perspective at all. I'm one of the people, I, I, maybe it's because of the community I grew up in but like (.), I've always been of the mindset, you could call it a bubble, that more (1.0), more people are accepting of it than aren't, and that's not the case though. You look at national polls and they said that the acceptance of gay marriage in the past six years (.) has gone ↑up (.), but it's gone from 28% to 34%.

JULIA: Yeah [in any urban classroom. I, I]

PAUL: [And consider all the people that are dying] (.), I mean that's, (4.0) but yes, I mean I, I come from that shelter and like to think that I can push it away (.) but then this book reminds me that, (2.0) you know, I, I don't (.) think I can push that part of my multiculturalist, -ism back. (4.0) Not that I wanted a violent ending. I [just]

JIM: [Curious] (*laughs*).

Since Jim was the only group member who espoused more conservative views and Paul did not apologize for his opinions in other discussions, it appeared that Paul was affected by his interactions with the group in this context. A few lines before this exchange, Jim had responded to Paul's concern that the book might have had an unhappy ending with a joking remark.

PAUL: Um, I don't know why, I just kind of felt *((Slower rate of speech))* like (.) this (.) book (.) was not going to end on the happy note that it ended on. You know.

JIM: Well, it didn't end happy for Ali. Hhhh *((laugh))*

PAUL: It didn't end happy, well yeah. *((Jan and Julia laugh))*

JIM: Who else felt bad?*((More female laughter))*

PAUL: Well, I didn't feel *((laughs))* bad 'till she said, "Gay people can change" right? When she said that, you're like, ↑oh that's how you've been thinking this whole time.

When Jim joked about Paul's remarks, it positioned his concerns less important, or less valid. Jim's emphasis on the word *else* implied that Paul was worried about things that might not affect other readers. This could be interpreted as gender policing, because Jim was comparing Paul's emotions to the emotions of the two females in the group, and noting that Paul was the only one who felt bad. The group laughter reified the impression that Paul's comments were not taken seriously. Paul attempted to regain his status within the group by laughing and explaining his earlier statements.

Discussion Group Two findings. This discussion group included Kate, Matt, Max, and Ellen. Matt and Max were practicing teachers, while Ellen and Kate were

preservice teachers. This provided a perspective on a group with males in the position of being more knowledgeable, in terms of teaching experience, and females with little pedagogical experience.

Group Two's dialogue was informal and narrative, inquisitive, or informative in nature. The questions posed in this session were grammatical (1), asking who, what, when, where, why, how, or which; clarifying (8), meaning the inquirer wanted additional information about the speaker's comments; or rhetorical (3), with no answer necessary. No one in this group asked leading questions. A male asked the one grammatical question. Males asked seven of the eight clarifying questions, and males asked all three rhetorical questions. Of the twelve questions asked in Group Two, eleven were asked by males.

This group told more personal stories than Group One, and spent very little time discussing the events or the characters in the book. They spent a large portion of the discussion talking about the author's writing choices and how they felt about teaching the text. They also mentioned ways that readers might respond to the novel. In fact, the only discussion on the book's contents was about the characterization of the father.

The most ideologically contested word used by this group was *beliefs*. Matt openly stated that *Luna* did not "fit into" his beliefs. He mentioned that he was not comfortable using the term *religious beliefs*, because it has a "negative connotation these days" (Matt, 2009, *Luna* discussion).

Power relations. In Group Two, males took 59% (62 of 105) of the turns to speak, they held the floor 66% of the time (see Figure 14). Many of the females' turns were due to active listening, so they consisted of one word. In addition, as seen in Figure 15, the males controlled the discussion topics 73% of the time.

Figure 14. Luna Group Two - number of turns taken and number of lines spoken, by individual

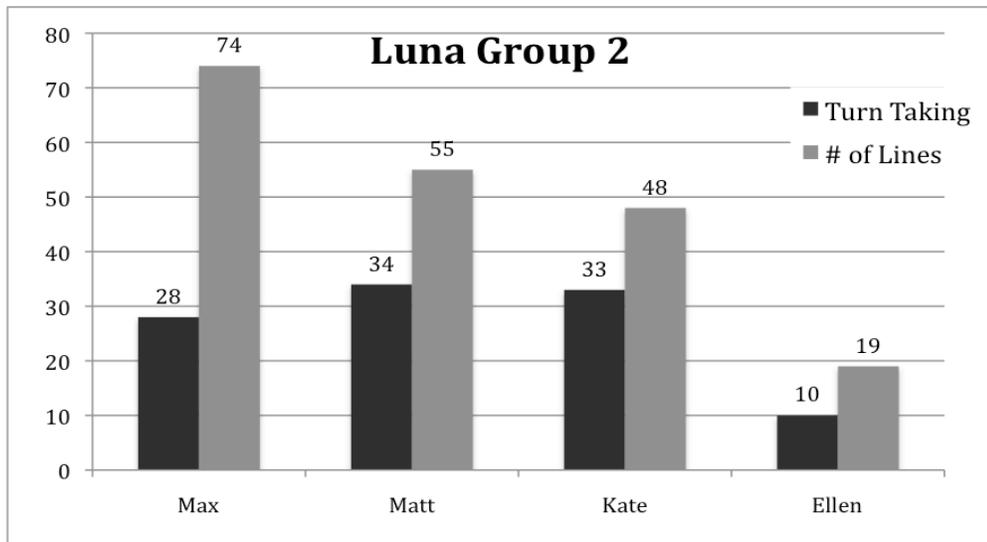
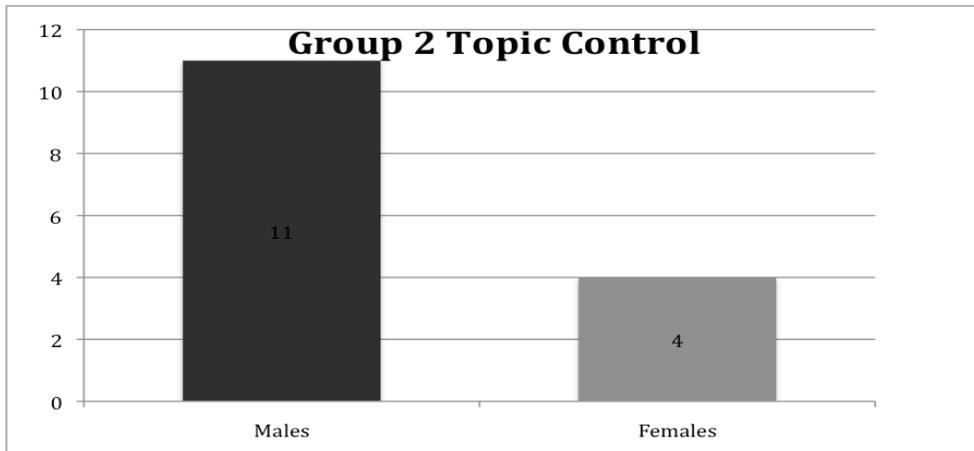
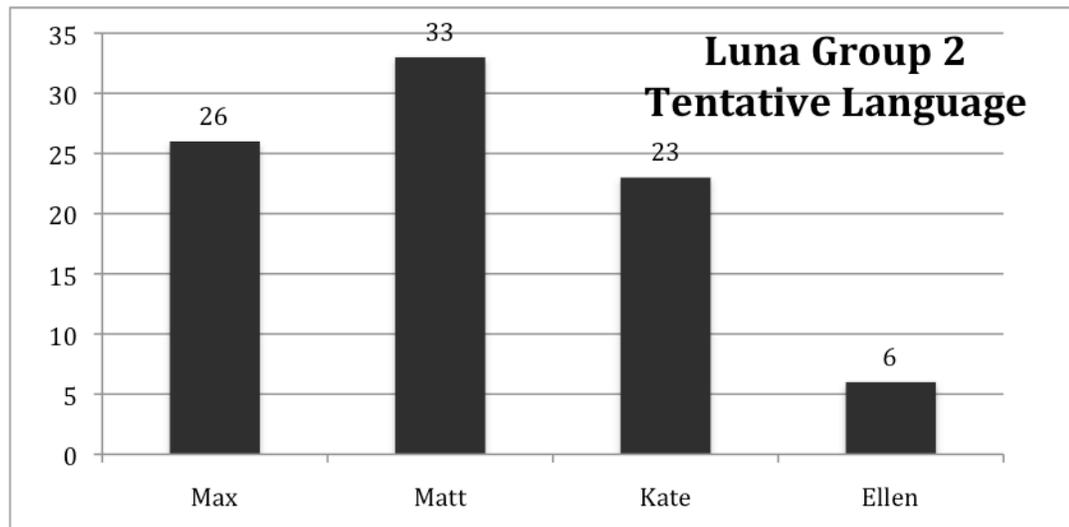


Figure 15. Luna Group Two - topic control by gender



However, like Paul in Group One, Matt (33 occurrences) and Max (26 occurrences) were more likely to use tentative phrases and listener checks than either of the females in the group (see Figure 16).

Figure 16. Luna Group Two - number of occurrences of tentative language, by individual



One example of tentative speaking was a dialogue between Matt and Kate. Kate, a lesbian, had written a very positive opinion of *Luna* in her blog response and she was usually forthright and gregarious in group discussions. However, after Matt said the book did not fit into his beliefs, she became very quiet. Her comments were often “uh huh” and other forms of active listening. When she did speak, she discussed the difference between tolerance and respect. She was very tentative in expressing her disagreement.

KATE: Yeah (.), yeah and (1.0) whether, I think (.), like(.), it just need:s (1.0) to b:e (.) like the focus is that (2.0) you are respecting people and not, I mean (.), whether or not you agree with (.) their (.) personal (.) life and the way they live

(3.0) is (.) really not a reason to (.) be (.) yeah, and like you, like you say (4.0), I mean no one (.) I don't think (2.0), is asking students to (.) sign something that says that (.) they think that (.), you know, being gay or being trans is okay (Kate, 2009, *Luna* small group discussion).

At the same time, Matt was not as strong in his verbal opinions as he was in his blog response. He tempered his comments by saying that he had more of a problem with Luna's father than with Luna. He also began his statement with sorry talk by saying,

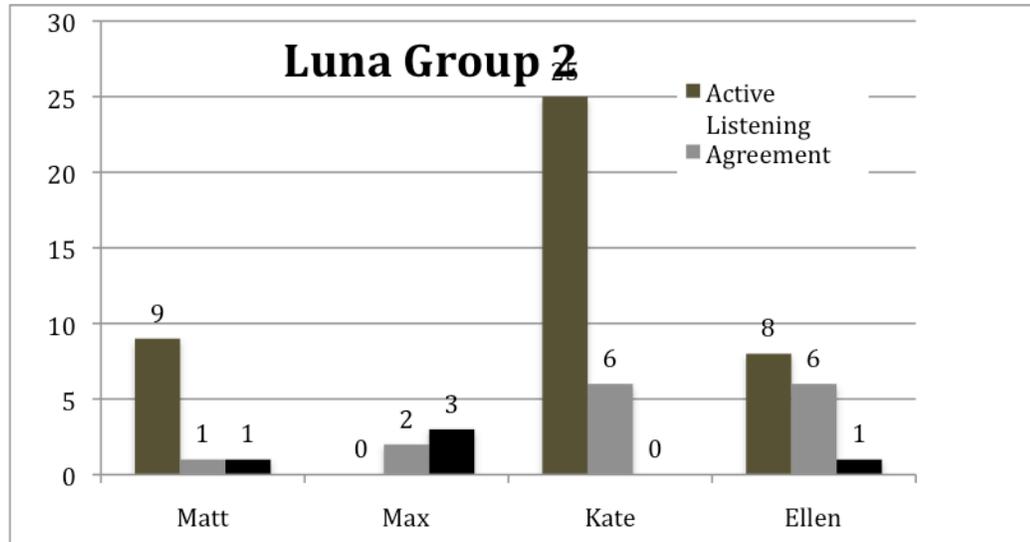
MATT: Um, (.) I'll be that guy. Um (.), I loved this book and I thought it was really well written (.), but (.) it doesn't fit into my beliefs. And um, I hate using the term religious beliefs (*Uses air quotes for religious beliefs*) because it has such a like a negative connotation these days (1.0), but it doesn't. I mean its (.), that's just my beliefs (Matt, 2009, *Luna* small group discussion).

It is likely that both Kate and Matt altered the strength of their responses because of their perceptions about the other members of the group.

There were very few interruptions in this group's discussion of *Luna*. Kate interrupted Max once and Matt interrupted Kate twice. Most talk during another group member's turn was active listening or a clarifying query. Interruptions were not a significant factor in this group's discussion.

Group Two conformed to the expectations set by older research (Tannen, 1990). As shown in Figure 17, the females in the group were much more likely to use active listening (79% of the active listening) and to agree (80% of the occurrences of agreement) with their discussion mates. The males (4 occurrences or 80% of the total) disagreed with other speakers' ideas more than the females (1 occurrence) did.

Figure 17. Luna Group Two - number of occurrences of active listening, agreement with group mates, and disagreement with group mates, by individual



Communities of practice. The larger classroom community of practice, which privileged inclusive ideas, would have influenced this group as well as the other *Luna* discussion groups. In this group, Matt self identified as a Christian and Kate self identified as a lesbian. When Matt was discussing his beliefs and how he felt about *Luna*, his rate of speech and the number of hesitations he had reflected the dissonance between his beliefs and Kate's beliefs. During that portion of his discussion, Kate frequently said *yeah* or *um hmm*, but her vocal tenor was lower and more flat than usual. That exchange is listed below:

MATT: Um, (.) I'll be that guy. Um (.), I loved this book and I thought it was really well written (.), but (.) it doesn't fit into my beliefs. And um, I hate using the term religious beliefs ((Uses air quotes for religious beliefs)) because it has such a like a negative connotation these days (1.0), but it doesn't. I mean its (.), that's just my beliefs. And (.), ↑interestingly, I wrote about this in my blog. I didn't have a problem with Liam (1.0), like as a person or as a character (2.0). He seemed like kind of a likeable guy (1.0), maybe took Regan for granted a little bit or not for granted but, um (2.0), what did I say in my blog? You read it?

ELLEN: I did read it.

KATE: You [have a copy of your blog?]

MATT: [Took advantage]. I don't *((small laugh))* I forgot it. He took advantage of her a little bit maybe but, overall, I thought he was a likeable guy, nice guy (.). His dad, like I wanted to punch him in the face (3.0)

KATE: um hmm

MATT: and cuz kind of, where I come from is, I believe this, you are this way (1.0), you never, ever have a reason to treat someone poorly. I just, I couldn't believe he would treat his son that way.

KATE: um hmm

MATT: And that just drove me up the [wall].

ELLEN: [Yeah]

MATT: I mean, I have a son who is 3 years old (3.0). I'd like to believe that (2.0), when, you know, that whenever he wanted to talk about issues of sexuality, whatever they might be (1.0),

KATE: Yeah.

MATT: that he would feel like he could come talk to me (.) and we would have an intelligent conversation about it, you know. And that, that we would be like even keel, you know, and I wouldn't kick him out of my house.

KATE: Um hmm.

MATT: Um, and so (4.0), I mean, *((Rate of speech speeds up))* like that's just where I was coming from on this book. And I liked the book

KATE: Yeah

MATT: and thought it was well written (1.0) um, and it was difficult to read (1.0). But not because of (1.0) the character who was going against my beliefs

KATE: Yeah.

MATT: but it was because of (2.0) the character who kind of ↑does hold my beliefs

KATE: Okay.

MATT: but (2.0) clearly like

KATE: Yeah.

MATT: is not what I, you know, like, ((*speaking to the father character*)) oh my gosh,

KATE: Yeah.

MATT: what are you doing? Um, so that was really interesting to me (.) to read it that way. Um, so.

Matt began his discussion with sorry talk, by saying “I’ll be that guy,” implying that he was different or problematic. All of the instances of sorry talk (Alvermann, Commeyras, Young, Randall, & Hinson, 1997) were from the males. Max used sorry talk eleven times, while Matt used it once. In addition, Matt and Max each apologized twice for interrupting each other. Max began the discussion by apologizing for being the first to speak. “ Well, this may be cheap for me to do, but this first question is something that I wrote about in my response” (Max, 2009, *Luna* discussion).

The practicing teachers positioned themselves as more experienced and more aware of the realities of teaching.

MAX: I wouldn't touch it with a (.) 10 foot pole. I'm not tenured (1.0). I'm, I'm in a public school, too. I'm in (*unintelligible*) with very similar demographic to yours, but I [wouldn't touch it].

MATT: [Which one is that]?

MAX: Uh, Middletown. And then just for the [simple fact that]

MATT: [Yeah, I don't blame you for that.]

MAX: there would, without question, there would be some parents that would be gunning for my job if I introduced this as part of the [required reading].

MATT: [Oh yeah, f:or s:ure.]

MAX: I just don't need, (laughs), I don't need, um (3.0) eh, you know other adults with too much time on their hands (.) purposefully trying to get me fired at every corner.

MATT: (*laughs*) Yep.

MAX: That's not a conflict that (*Unintelligible*).

MATT: That's an unfortunate but true point.

MAX: So often it comes down to practical choices. I mean, we talk about theory and philosophy so much but, this is my third year so, first day at school next year I'll be tenured and have a little bit more liberty. But, um, (.) I don't know that it will change a whole lot of what I do, I guess.

The preservice teachers accepted the positioning of Matt and Max as more experienced teachers. At one point in the discussion, in reference to whether teaching a book like *Luna* could be seen by parents as an endorsement of transsexualism, Kate said, "I think, like you guys know more, obviously know more than us about what that conversation might look like" (Kate, 2009, *Luna* discussion).

Discussion Group Three findings. This was the only *Luna* discussion group with five members, including Ann, Ben, Carla, Emily, and John. Carla and John were practicing teachers, while Ann, Ben, and Emily were preservice teachers. The dialogue in this group was informal and persuasive or informative in nature. The questions posed in this session were grammatical (5), asking who, what, when, where, why, how, or which; clarifying (6), meaning the inquirer wanted additional information about the speaker's comments; or leading (3), meaning the inquirer had an answer and was hoping

to engender discussion of the question. No one in this group asked rhetorical questions. According to Jones' (1989) research, males are more likely to initiate questions. Group Three varied from that expectation. Males asked two and females asked three grammatical questions. A male asked three of the six clarifying questions, and Emily asked all three leading questions. Of the fourteen questions posed in Group Three, nine were asked by females. This differs from the first two groups because males asked the majority of the questions in those discussions.

The participants in Group Three did not tell any personal stories, and spent the entire time discussing the events and the characters in the book, and the author's writing choices. There was a great deal of talk about gender expectations and the characterization of the parents in the story.

The group used several ideologically contested words and phrases, such as *average, normal, traditional male role, mother, father, gender expectations, chauvinist, prisoner, gender identity, disturbing, and social construction*. This group spent time discussing the ideas of gender expectations, gender identity, and traditional gender roles. They tried to understand the father character's actions.

ANN: Well, the father definitely had the gender role. I mean, he definitely thought that (1.0) Liam or Luna should be playing sports and (1.0), you know, all this other stuff was nonsense, and (1.0), [um]

BEN: [Well, he definitely] was struggling with the traditional [male]

ANN: [Right].

BEN: role of [provider]

ANN: [Yes].

BEN: because he'd been, he'd lost [his]

ANN: [Lost job].

BEN: good job and was doing a crappy job and his wife was providing. And ((hhhh *aspiration*)) so he felt (.) that he wasn't meeting (1.0) his own gender [expectations]

ANN: [Yeah].

BEN: (.) and that, you know, sort of seemed to be doubled up by taking that out on Liam by saying well, you know, I'm not meeting mine so you have to meet (2.0) my expectations and then some. You know, try out for baseball and (.)

ANN: Yeah.

BEN: we need to get you in the gym and we'll go to the Y and work out together. ((*laughs*))

ANN: ((*laughs*)) Yeah.

BEN: It was like a (.) giant testosterone fest

ANN: Yeah.

BEN: just constantly flowing out from the dad. ((*laughs*))

ANN: Yeah.

BEN: I mean [and]

CARLA: And it was Regan's (.) job to come [home]

BEN: [cook]. ((*laughs*))

CARLA: [and cook]

ANN: Yeah.

CARLA: and clean and he like did not allow Liam [to do it].

ANN: [No].

CARLA: He was like no, absolutely not.

EMILY: Did you guys find that realistic? I found that aspect kind of alienating that the dad was so, like, (.) hard core with that kind of stuff. I'm like, okay I can understand a little bit but part of it I'm like, really, is he that (1.0) [harsh]?

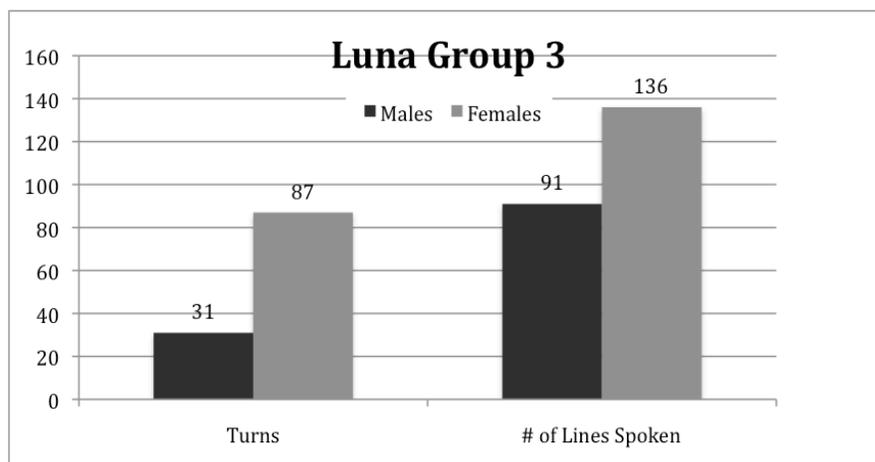
BEN: [Well, to me] it was partly sort of just a, you know, generational gender expectation but it was also partly that somewhere in the back of his mind he knew. He, he asks (.) um Regan somewhere in the middle to just tell him flat out (.)

EMILY: Yeah.

BEN: is he gay? Like he knows that there is something going on there. So I think he's trying to (1.0), I don't know, almost cor:rect his son's behavior. Like, well no I'm not going to let you cook. Not because (.) that's just (.) a girl's job but because I don't want you doing anything feminine, anything that might (.) encourage you in that direction. So, I mean (.), I don't know if it was entirely just that he was that (2.0) chauvinist. I mean, there was part of him that certainly was (1.0) but it was also partly like he, he knew (1.0) that Liam (.) was not what he expected a boy should be and so he was trying to (.) force him into that mold.

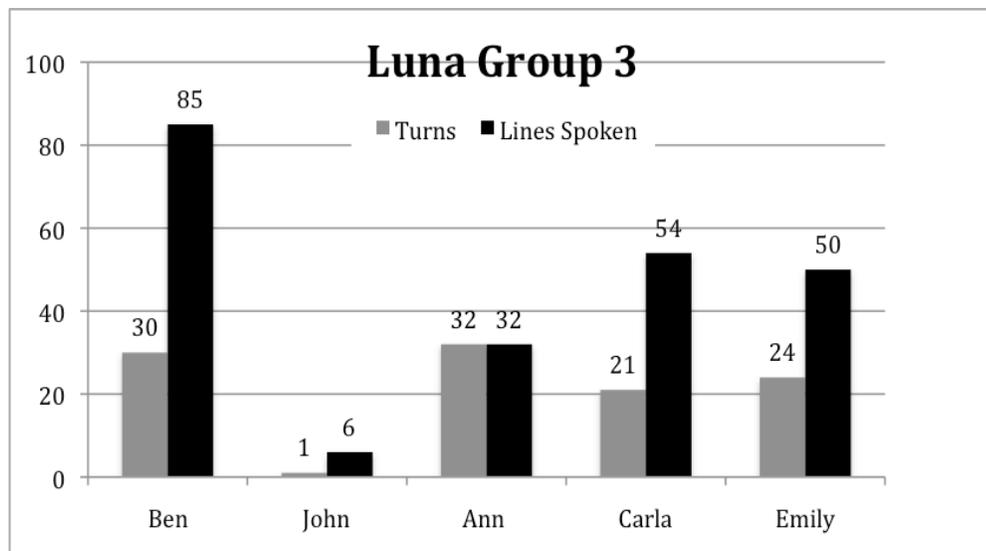
Power relations. In Group Three, females took 74% (87 of 118) of the turns to speak, and they held the floor 60% of the time (see Figure 18). In addition, the females controlled the discussion topics 67% of the time.

Figure 18. Luna Group Three - number of turns taken and number of lines spoken, by gender



This could be explained by the fact that there were three females and two males in the group, so it makes sense to evaluate this group individually (see Figure 19), rather than as an aggregate. In individual turns, Ben (30) and Ann (32) were very close, with Emily and Carla fairly close behind. John, however, was an anomaly in this group and in the class as a whole. He spoke English well, but it was not his first language. He was Somali, and tended to speak very little, which may have been due to culture or to unfamiliarity with the language.

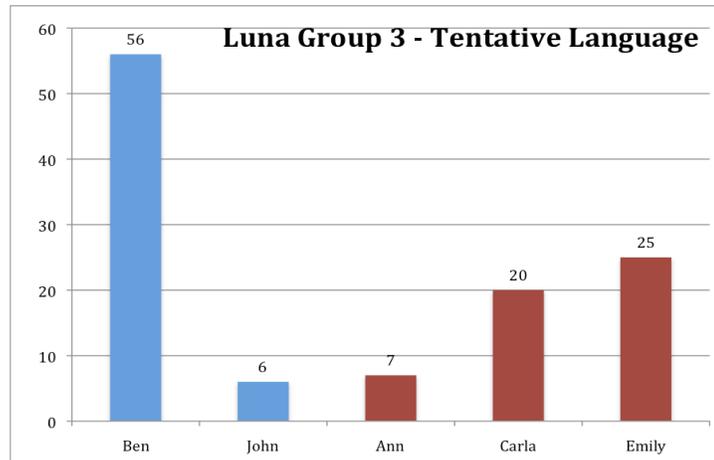
Figure 19. Luna Group Three - number of turns taken and number of lines spoken, by individual



Ben spoke for much longer over the course of the discussion than any of the females (see Figure 19). Ann took 32 turns and spoke 32 lines of dialogue. This indicates that most of her comments (24 of the 32 lines) were some form of active listening, rather than contributory to the concepts in the discussion. It appears that Ben controlled the conversation more than the aggregate numbers would indicate. Yet, like

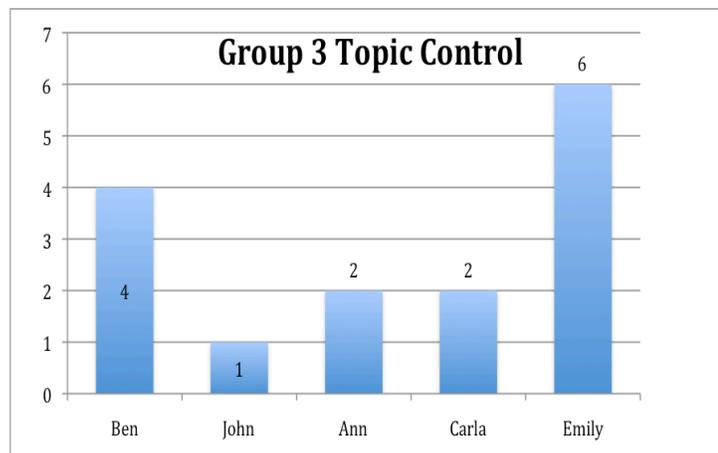
most of the males in the other groups, Ben used more tentative phrases and listener checks than all of the females in Group Three combined (see Figure 20).

Figure 20. Luna Group Three - number of occurrences of tentative language, by individual



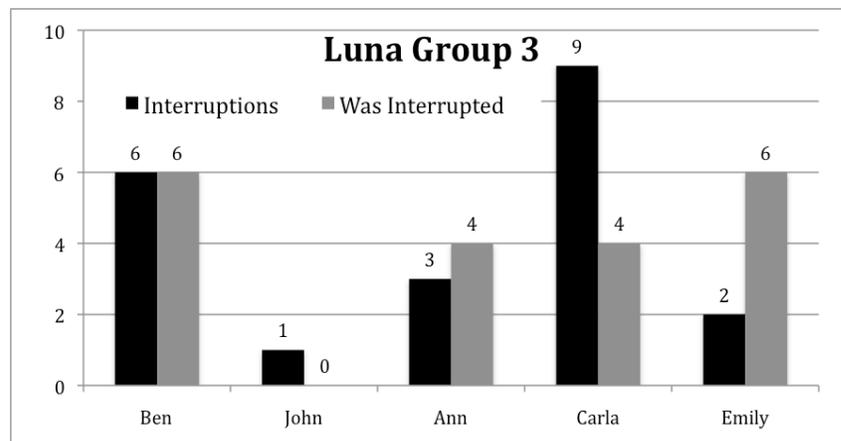
Emily (6 occurrences/40%) controlled the topic the most, with Ben changing the topic four times (27%). Ann and Carla each chose the topic twice and John once (see Figure 21). This indicates that, in Group Three, the females were more in control of the discussion.

Figure 21. Luna Group Three - topic control, by individual



The females (14 occurrences) also interrupted more than the males (see Figure 22). Carla (9 occurrences) interrupted the most and John (1), Emily (2), and Ann (3) interrupted the least. Emily (6) and Ben (6) were interrupted the most, however Ann (4) and Carla (4) were interrupted nearly as much. The largest imbalances were with Carla, who interrupted others nine times but was only interrupted four times, and Ann, who only interrupted others twice but was interrupted six times. It appears that the interruptions were not gender related.

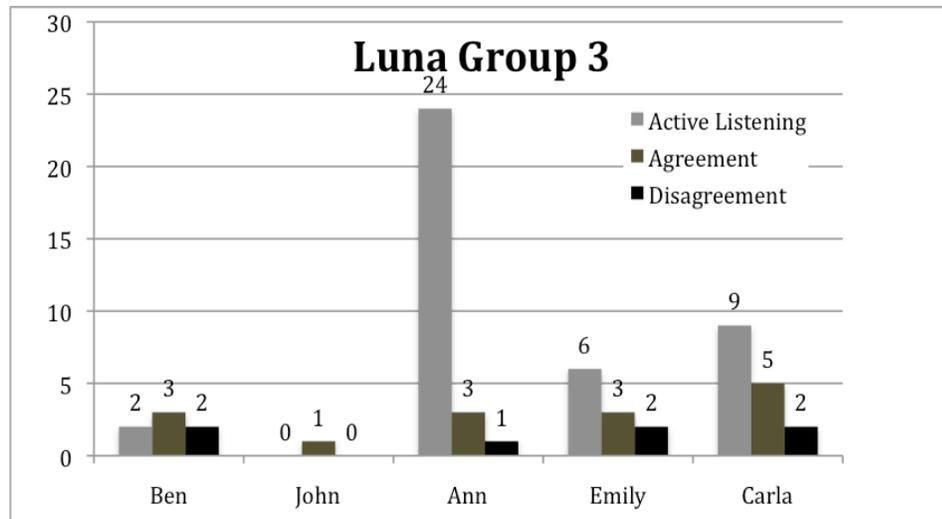
Figure 22. Luna Group Three - number of times interrupting and number of times interrupted, by individual



Group Three conformed to the expectations set by other research (Tannen, 1990). As seen in Figure 23, the females in the group were much more likely to use active listening (95% of the active listening). As an aggregate, females agreed (73%) more with their discussion mates than males did. However, individually, Ben, Ann, and Emily had the same number of agreement occurrences. Carla (5) had the most occurrences of agreement, but it is not a significant increase over others in the group. Ben, Emily, and Carla had an equal number of disagreeing comments (see Figure 23). John and Ann had

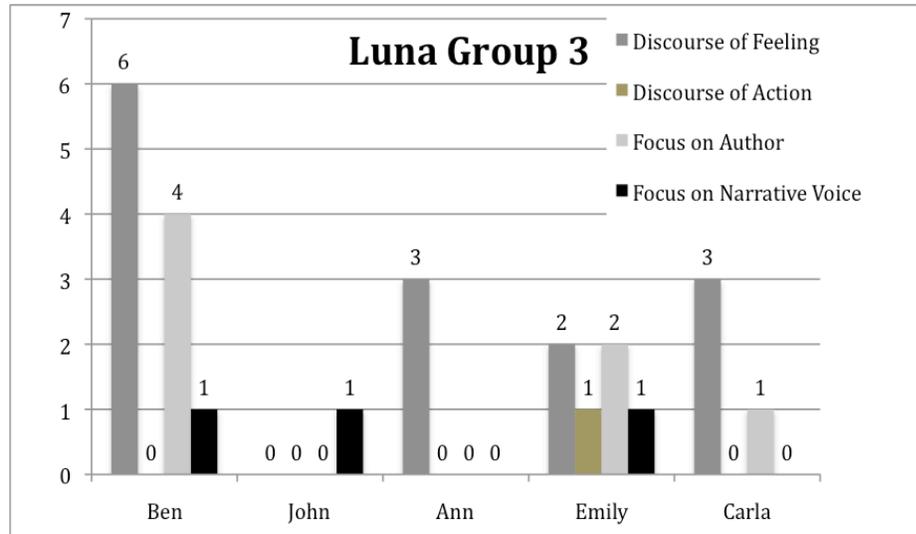
less. This indicates that, while active listening seems to be gender related in Group Three, agreement and disagreement are not.

Figure 23. Luna Group Three - number of occurrences of active listening, agreement with group mates, and disagreement with group mates, by individual



Within Group Three, Figure 24 depicts that a diversity of response within gender could be seen in the discourses of action and feeling. The only group member, who discussed the events or action in the text, was Emily. David Bleich (1986) found that the males in his participant group focused on the author and authorial intent, while females focused on the narrative voice. Emily spoke about authorial intent and characterization twice. In addition, she used a discourse of feelings twice. Ben discussed relationships on six occasions, authorial intent and characterization on four occasions, and did not use a discourse of action. Both Ann and Carla used a discourse of feeling on three occasions and Carla talked about authorial intent once. John did not use a discourse of feelings or a discourse of action. He only spoke about the narrative voice in the text.

Figure 24. Luna Group Three - number of occurrences of discourse of feeling, discourse of action, focus on author, and focus on narrative voice, by individual



Communities of practice. The members of Group Three positioned themselves as unfamiliar and somewhat uncomfortable with transgenderism, making comments like, “this kind of topic is very taboo” (John, 2009, *Luna* discussion), and “I’m reading about this totally foreign experience to me” (Ben, 2009, *Luna* discussion). Emily started out saying,

EMILY: I appreciated reading a book about this topic because I have not read (.) anything about transgender (.) anyone. Um (.), and I don't know if I liked the fact that it was written from the perspective of um (.), Luna's sister or if I would have preferred it to be Luna's perspective. I don't know (.) if it would have been more alienating or too strange for me to get into the story if it had been Luna (Emily, 2009, *Luna* discussion).

However, later in the discussion, she positioned herself as somewhat knowledgeable by mentioning an article she had read on the GLBT experience in another course. She also brought up the topic of gender construction, which is a more academic way to look at gender. At the end of the discussion, the group was still struggling to develop an

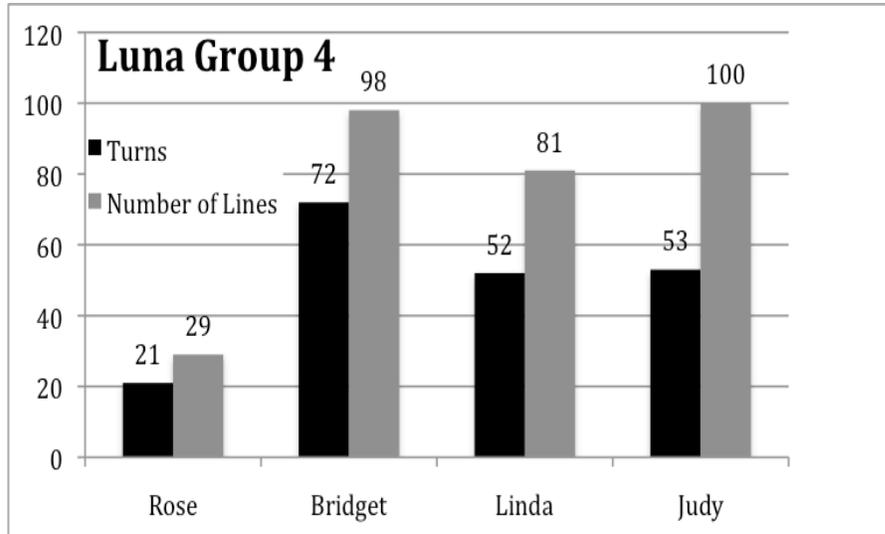
understanding of the transsexual experience. This was evident because they were questioning why Luna might have wanted to cut off her penis at a very young age.

Discussion Group Four findings. This discussion group included Bridget, Judy, Linda, and Rose. Bridget and Judy were practicing teachers, while Linda and Rose were preservice teachers. This was the only single gender discussion group over the entire semester. It was unfortunate that more single gender groups could not be studied, because that might have provided a corroborating or contradictory perspective on the practices of this group.

Most of the speech used in this group could be classified as informal and narrative, inquisitive, or informative in nature. The questions posed in this session were grammatical (7); clarifying (8), or leading (3). No one in this group asked any rhetorical questions.

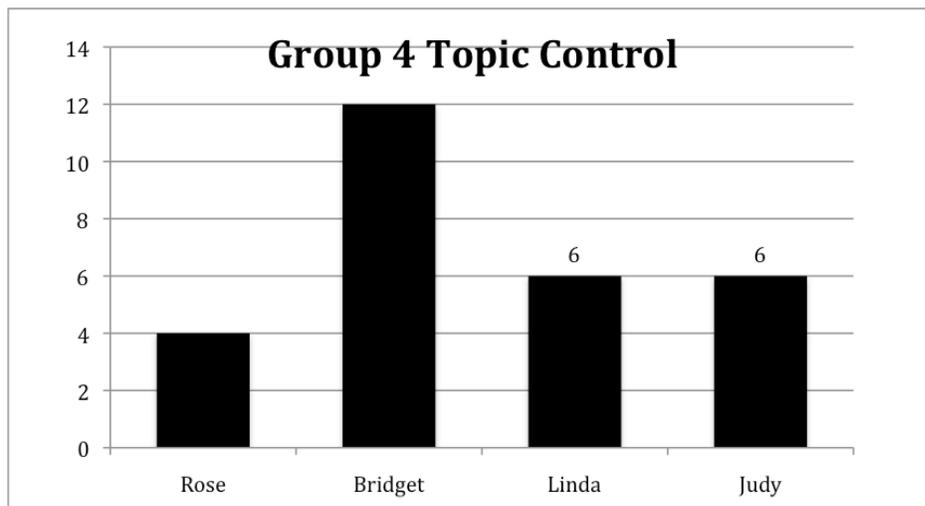
Power relations. Because this was an all female group, there were no gender related power issues. Bridget, Linda, and Judy all spoke for a similar length of time (see Figure 25). Rose tended to speak less in all of her discussion groups, so it was not unusual that she had fewer turns and spoke for a shorter length of time than the others. Bridget took the most turns, but she also did the most active listening, so many of her turns were very short.

Figure 25. Luna Group Four - number of turns taken and number of lines spoken, by individual



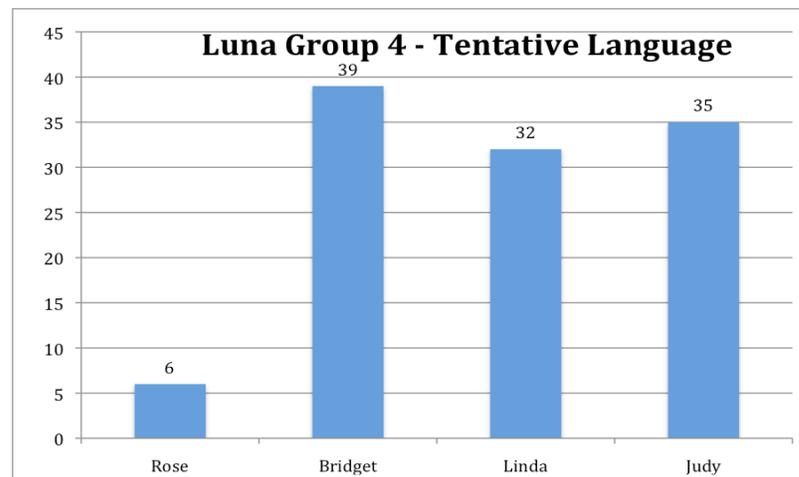
As shown in Figure 26, Bridget controlled the topic twice as much as any other speaker. This may be related to the number of turns she took (72), but about half of her turns were active listening and therefore not topic changing.

Figure 26. Luna Group Four - topic control, by individual



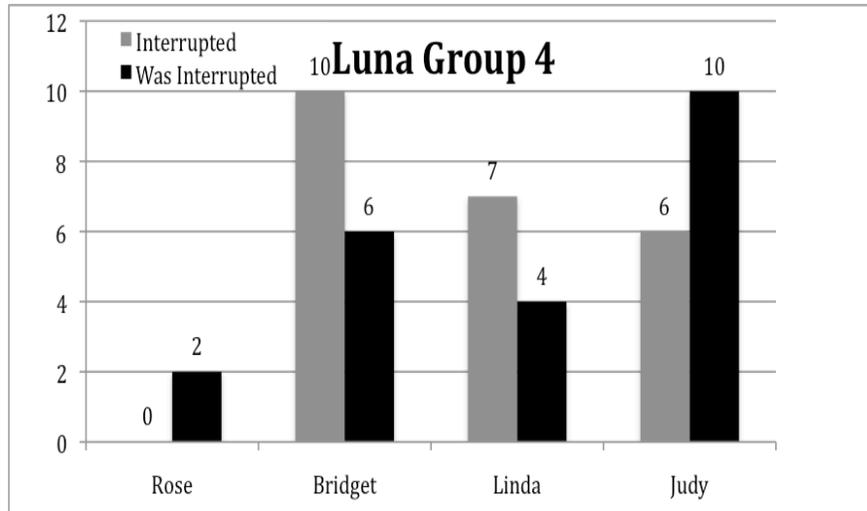
Bridget (39), Linda (32), and Judy (35) used nearly the same number of tentative phrases and listener checks (see Figure 27). Rose used very little tentative language (6 occurrences) so, although she spoke less than the other group members, she appeared to be more confident in what she said. Another explanation is that Rose's turns were quite short in comparison to her discussion mates. She seemed interested in the discussion, so the infrequency and brevity of her remarks may indicate that she was very thoughtful and deliberate about her contributions to the discussion.

Figure 27. Luna Group Four - number of occurrences of tentative language, by individual



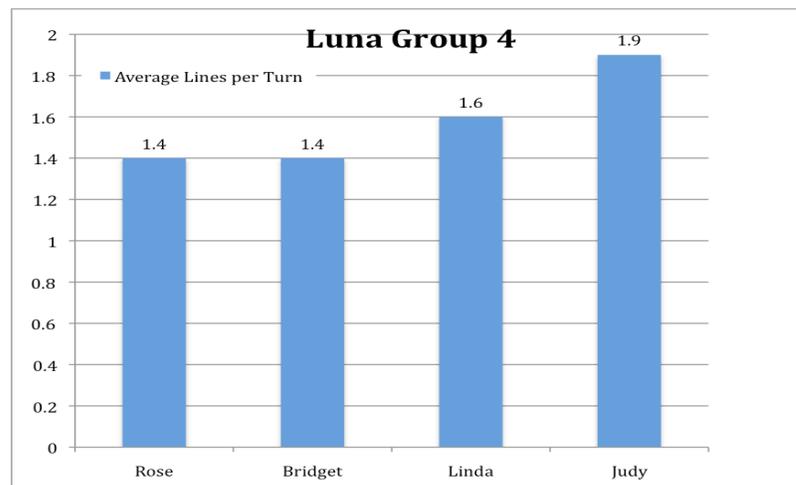
It appeared that interruptions were not a significant factor in this group's discussion (see Figure 28). Bridget, Linda, and Judy interrupted each other a similar number of times. Bridget interrupted (10 occurrences) more than she was interrupted (6 occurrences) and Judy was interrupted (10 occurrences) more than she interrupted others (6 occurrences).

Figure 28. Luna Group Four - number of times interrupting and number of times interrupted, by individual



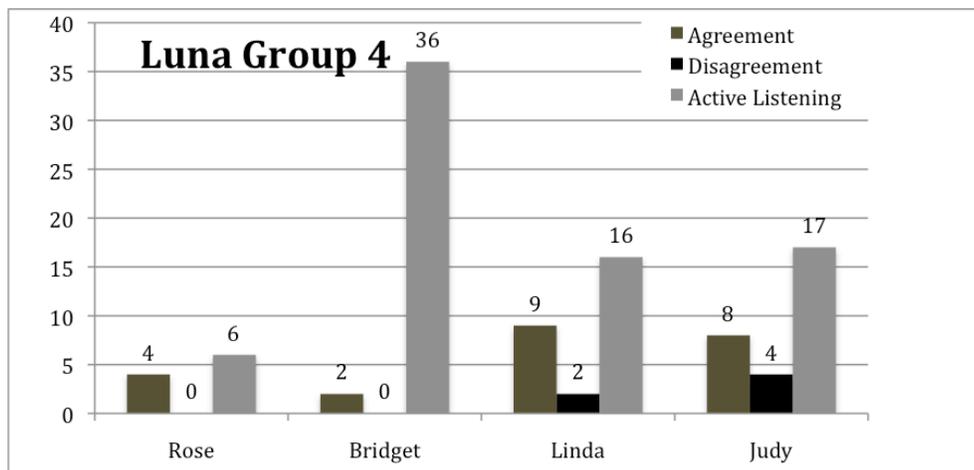
Bridget and Judy spoke about the same number of lines, but Judy averaged more lines per turn (see Figure 29). This may have provided more opportunities to interrupt her. Bridget averaged the same number of lines per turn as Rose (1.4), whereas Judy averaged 1.9 lines per turn.

Figure 29. Luna Group Four - average lines per turn, by individual



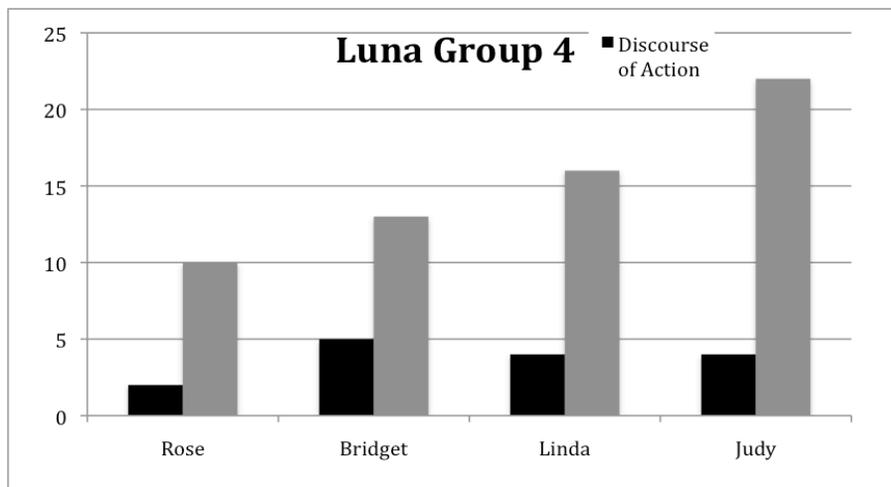
As seen in Figure 30, Bridget (36), Linda (16), and Judy (17) were much more likely to use active listening than Rose (6), and Bridget was the least likely to disagree with other group members. Judy was the most likely to disagree with her discussion mates.

Figure 30. Luna Group Four - number of occurrences of active listening, agreement with group mates, and disagreement with group mates, by individual



All the members of Group Four used discourses of action, however they were much more likely to use discourses of feeling (see Figure 31). The results on discourses of feelings in this group aligns with Cherland's (1992) results that females are more likely to focus on relationships than action. However, *Luna* was focused on relationships so that is most likely a factor.

Figure 31. Luna Group Four - number of occurrences of a discourse of action or a discourse of feeling, by individual



Communities of practice. The group used several ideologically contested words and phrases, such as *taboo*, *authentic*, *acceptance*, *mother*, *father*, *gender roles*, *assumptions*, and *checked out*. Group Four had two members who were mothers (Bridget and Judy) and, where Group Three attempted to understand the father's actions, this group's discussion focused on Luna's mother's choices and actions. They kept using the term *checked out* when referring to the mother's character, however they never really defined what they meant by *checked out*.

BRIDGET: Oh, I was so angry with his mother. I was so angry when I [found that out].

JUDY: [But you], yeah, I was too but then you kind of think okay (1.0), she (2.0) escaped because [she couldn't handle it].

BRIDGET: [She just checked out]

JUDY: [Yeah, she checked out].

LINDA: [Oh yeah, she totally checked out].

JUDY: but what was her other choice because she certainly wasn't going to bring the father around.

BRIDGET: Yeah, except you know [you have an obligation to your children, you know]

JUDY: [The choice could maybe share. Right, and that's where she], that's where I was mad is, she (.), as a wife, she was pretty caught but she could of as a mom.

BRIDGET: Yeah

JUDY: Because, and I did, I sort of put my kids in there and I said, oh, my gosh, my husband would flip out. He's such (.), you know, he's the hunter, he's the (.),

BRIDGET: hhhh ((Laughs))

JUDY: oh my gosh, he's in the military, he's a tank (1.0) commander,

BRIDGET: Yeah

JUDY: you know, ↓grr (1.0). He would freak out, b:ut I still think that if I supported my child and if I slowly and tried to, it, it, there would be such a different outcome.

BRIDGET: Uhhmm

JUDY: I don't know, because the mom can be a bridge between them.

BRIDGET: Right.

LINDA: [Yeah].

BRIDGET: [Instead] she ended up losing both her children basically.

JUDY: Right.

BRIDGET: One (.) in essence and one (.) in reality.

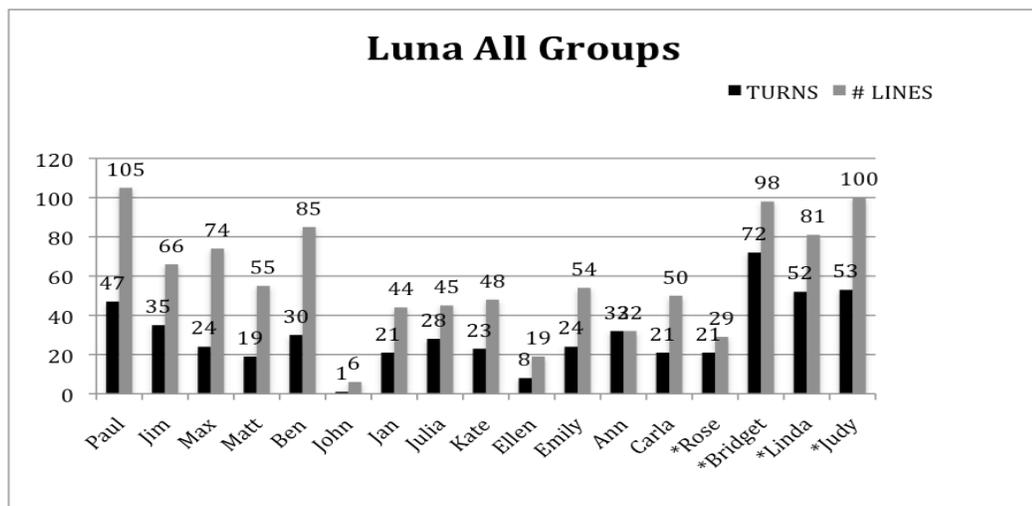
JUDY: Yeah.

BRIDGET: Um, made me mad. Especially when we found out. You know, like you're going through the whole thing and you're like (.), man, she's really checked out. Why is she so checked out?

This all female group showed only one substantial difference from the mixed gender groups. Bridget (72 turns,98 lines), Linda (52 turns, 81 lines), and Judy (53 turns, 100 lines) took more turns than any other speakers did in the other Luna discussion groups (see Figure 32) and spoke nearly twice as long as the females who spoke the longest in the mixed gender groups. They rivaled the males who had the most lines in the mixed gender groups, Paul (105 lines) and Ben (85 lines).

Like the all female discussion group in Evans’ (1997) research, this group was cooperative and affiliative. This can be seen in the nearly equal number of lines spoken and similar number of turns each participant took, other than Rose, who tended to be quiet in all her discussion groups (see Figure 32). No speaker appeared to dominate the discussion. This was the only group that displayed such even conversational patterns. In addition, there was a fairly high incidence of active listening (see Figure 38).

Figure 32. Luna all groups - number of turns taken and number of lines spoken, by individual Note: * indicates members of all-female Group Four



All discussion groups findings. Overall, there were more pauses in the discussions of *Luna* than in discussions of other texts. This may have been due to the topic of the text, transsexualism. On many occasions, the pauses appeared to occur when the speaker was searching for a word or phrase. This led me to postulate that the speakers were being more careful about their phraseology during these discussions than in prior discussions. This excerpt from Group One's discussion demonstrates the increased number of pauses,

PAUL: =Yeah, I mean safer, in the sense that (2.0), you know (.), odds say, based on how many people are transgender (.) that are going to read this book, I mean (.) most of her readers are going to align themselves with (3.0) you know (.), with REGAN moreover than someone (2.0) like Luna, (1.0) you know? (Paul, 2009, *Luna* small group discussion).

The participants also changed their rate of speech more often in the *Luna* discussions. A speaker would speak quite slowly at certain points and then they would begin to speak very rapidly in the same turn. When speaking slowly, the speaker seemed more deliberate in their word choices, or perhaps less confident in the group response to their comments.

JIM: ((*Very slow and deliberate speech*)) And (.), in so doing (.), she (.) definitely, I think, has an agenda. (*Speech rate speeds up*) And that's why I was saying that I, if the school I teach ↑at, (.) I wouldn't be able to teach this as a text. I could do it as an optional text where kids can choose to do it but I couldn't do this, because (2.0) the way they would read it is (.), this is telling me I have to accept people who [are (2.0) GLBT] (Jim, 2009, *Luna* small group discussion).

The rapid speech may have been due to the speaker wanting to finish commenting before another speaker interrupted. However, in some cases, the rapid speech occurred at the

beginning or middle of the turn and it is possible that the speaker wanted to rush through the content of their turn, perhaps because of discomfort with the topic.

The participants' communities of practice gave them background knowledge and expectations that affected their reading of *Luna*. Bridget's relationship with her lesbian mother and Kate's sexual orientation gave them a perspective on *Luna* that can be seen in their responses. Kate's choice of writing her response as a letter to the author demonstrates the personal nature of her reaction. She wrote,

you gave your characters honest, realistic thoughts and feelings. You did not sugarcoat the incredibly challenging and heartbreaking discussion or experiences that accompany coming out as a trans individual and I think this truly made your book incredible...I have had so many similar conversations with my trans friends who have said those very same words and each and every time it breaks my heart. You have crafted this experience with precision and truth...Your mention of sexuality as a spectrum is also very enlightened; a bold yet important choice for a young adult novel (Kate, 2009, *Luna* blog response).

Bridget also had a very personal response to *Luna*. Her past experiences and her family community of practice are apparent in the comments she wrote.

The idea of otherness, especially related to sexuality, is not entirely foreign to me. My mother is a lesbian. My uncle is gay as well. It is something I had to deal with growing up, which should have been hard, but for some reason—perhaps my

mom's positive handling of the situation—it was not. In fact, I feel that being given a view into a world that is so outside the norm was a gift. I was able to question my own sexuality and never fear the acceptance of my family. It was this luxury that threw Luna's struggles with her family into even deeper relief. Each of the family's relationships had its pitfalls, but I found it especially sad that Luna never had a safe place to openly be herself (Bridget, 2009, *Luna* blog response).

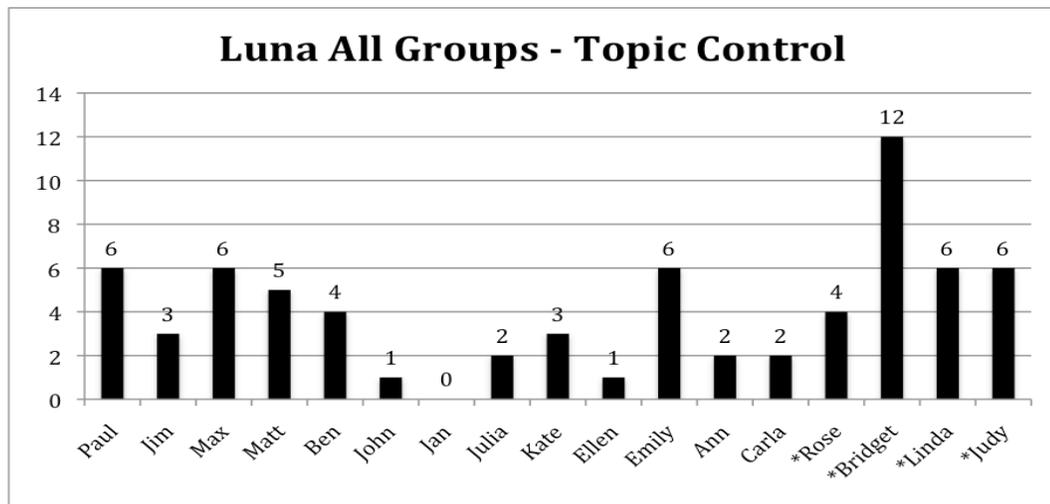
Julia's life in her family of origin played a role in her connection to the character of Luna/Liam. During discussion, she expressed anger at the parents' obliviousness and in her blog response she wrote,

I don't care about gender identity or lifestyle choices. A person is a person and should be treated as such regardless...As an adult child of an alcoholic, I find myself identifying with the typical characteristics of others like me – being super responsible, guessing at what normal is, judging myself without mercy, seeking approval/acceptance, taking myself too seriously, and most of all, feeling different from others. Like me, I know that Luna felt different from others. It wasn't until she discovered Terri Lynn that she felt hope. I've had a similar experience in Adult Children of Alcoholics. It's the power of connecting with people who have had a similar experience that allows one to change, embrace that transformation, and find serenity within. While I have learned a lot about myself in the last 6 years, I continue to unlock pieces of myself every day. I still don't know exactly

who I am, but I long to fly freely like a butterfly, like Luna (Julia, 2009, *Luna* blog response).

Power relations. Figure 32 (above) shows that, in all of the mixed gender *Luna* discussion groups in this study, males spoke longer than females. In terms of number of lines spoken (also calculated as number of words spoken with the same results), many males spoke nearly twice as long as their female counterparts did. However, in the all-female group (*Luna* Group Four, identified with asterisks), three of the participants rivaled the males in the other groups in number of lines spoken. In Figure 32, note Paul and Ben compared to Bridget, Linda, and Judy.

Figure 33. *Luna* all groups - topic control, by individual Note: * indicates Group Four



The results on topic control (see Figure 33) were mixed. In *Luna* Groups One and Two, the males did control the topic a large percentage of the time, 82% and 73% respectively. However, in *Luna* Group Three, Emily controlled the topic most often (40%). In *Luna* Group Four, Bridget controlled the topic 43% of the time, which was not

surprising because she also took the majority of the turns in the group (36%). This was not the explanation for topic control in general, because neither the number of turns nor the number of lines seemed to correlate to control of the topic for the aggregate (see Figures 34 and 35).

Figure 34. Luna all groups - number of turns and topic control, by individual Note: * indicates Group Four

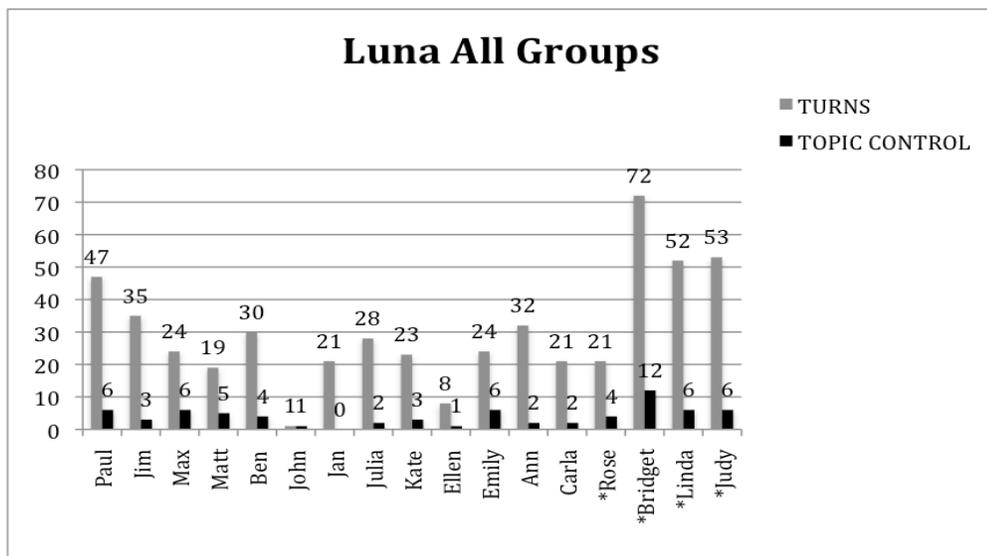
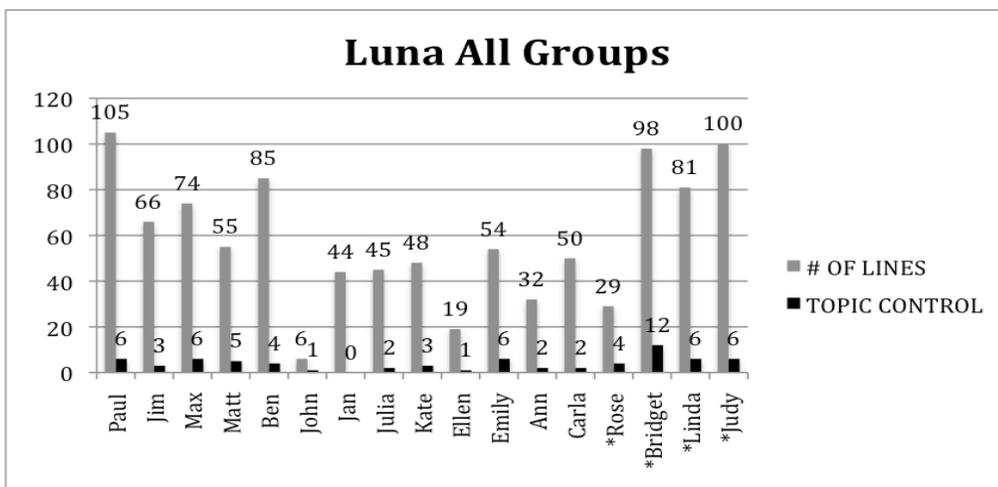


Figure 35. Luna all groups - number of lines and topic control, by individual Note: * indicates Group Four



The results found in this study on questions can be deceiving because males made up 35% of the total *Luna* participant group, however they asked 44% of the total questions and 43% of the leading questions. If the all-female Group Four is removed from the results (see Figure 36), males asked 65% of the questions in the mixed gender discussion groups. Males also asked 55% of the leading questions in the mixed gender groups.

Figure 36. *Luna* all groups - types of questions, by gender

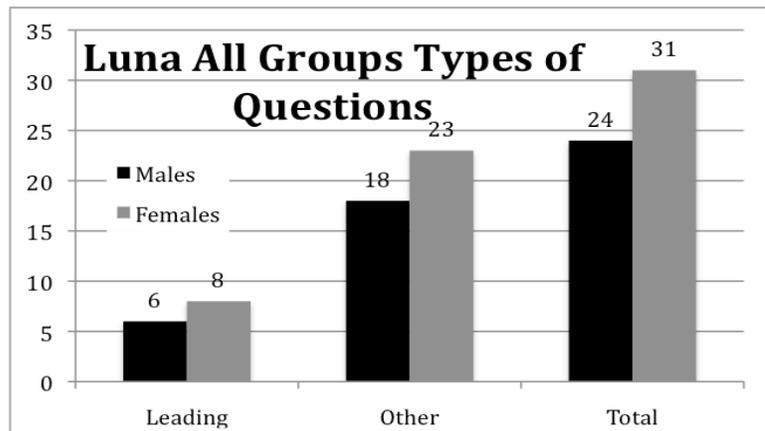
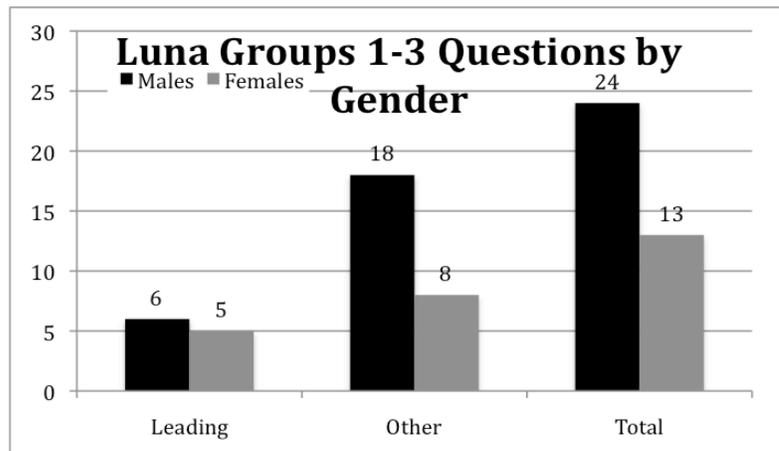
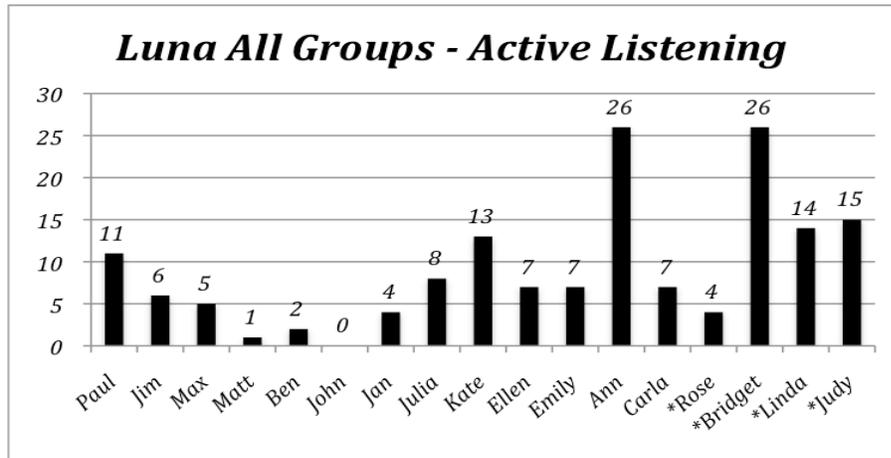


Figure 37. *Luna* Groups 1-3, types of questions, by gender



The females exceeded the males in occurrences of active listening (see Figure 38). The females with the highest incidence of active listening, Ann and Bridget, had more than twice as many occurrences as the male with the highest incidence, Paul. This corroborates Tannen's (1990) and Zimmerman and West's (1975) research that indicated that women are more likely than men to nod and make comments showing interest and agreement.

Figure 38. Luna all groups - number of occurrences of active listening, by individual
Note: * indicates members of Group Four



Across all the *Luna* discussions, males (Paul and Ben) had the highest incidence of tentative language (see Figure 39). When the amount of tentative language used is combined with the number of lines spoken (see Figure 40) the picture changes slightly. A male, John, still had the highest ratio of tentative language to lines spoken (100%), but Paul's ratio is smaller than Figure 39 would suggest. He spoke 105 lines of dialogue, but only used tentative language 43 times (or 41% of the time). The females with the highest incidence of tentative language, Bridget and Judy, also had lower ratios of tentative

language to lines spoken (Bridget 39/98 or 38% and Judy 35/100 or 35%). It appears that number of lines spoken is a factor in the number of occurrences of tentative language. John and Ann had the highest ratio of tentative language to lines spoken (John 6/6 or 100% and Ann 25/32 or 78%). Emily and Jim had the lowest ratios (Emily 7/54 or 13% and Jim 10/66 or 15%). This indicates that, while a male used tentative language the most and a female used it the least, gender was not an important factor in the use of tentative language in this group of participants.

Figure 39. Luna all groups - number of occurrences of tentative language, by individual Note: * indicates members of Group Four

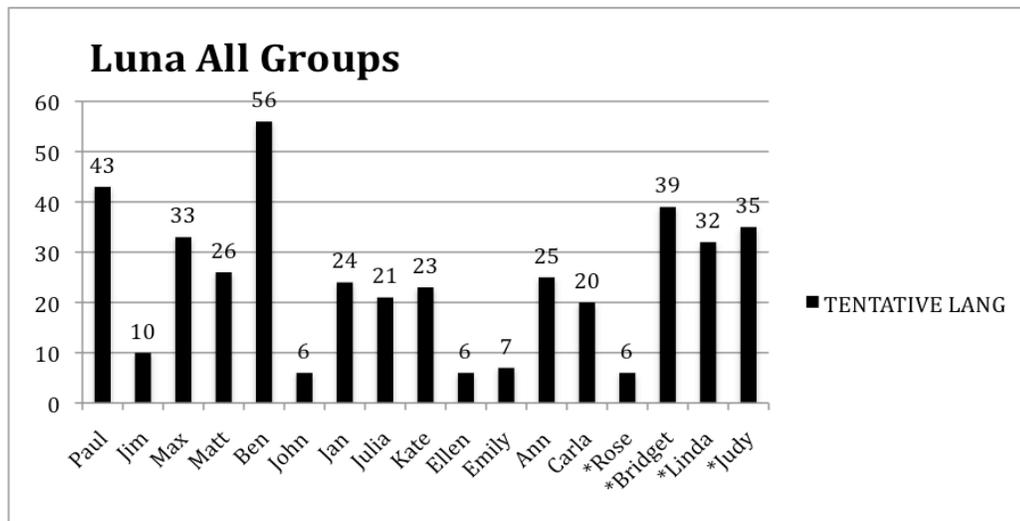
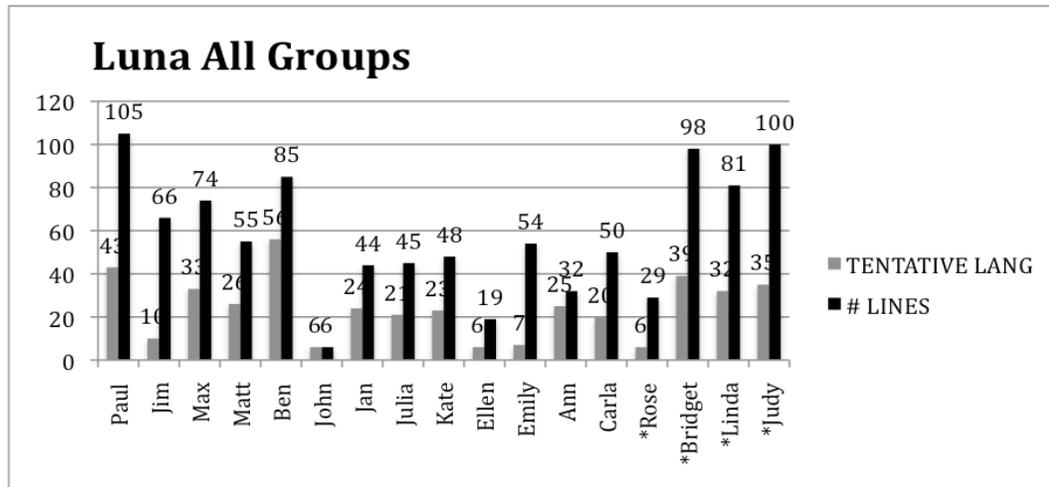
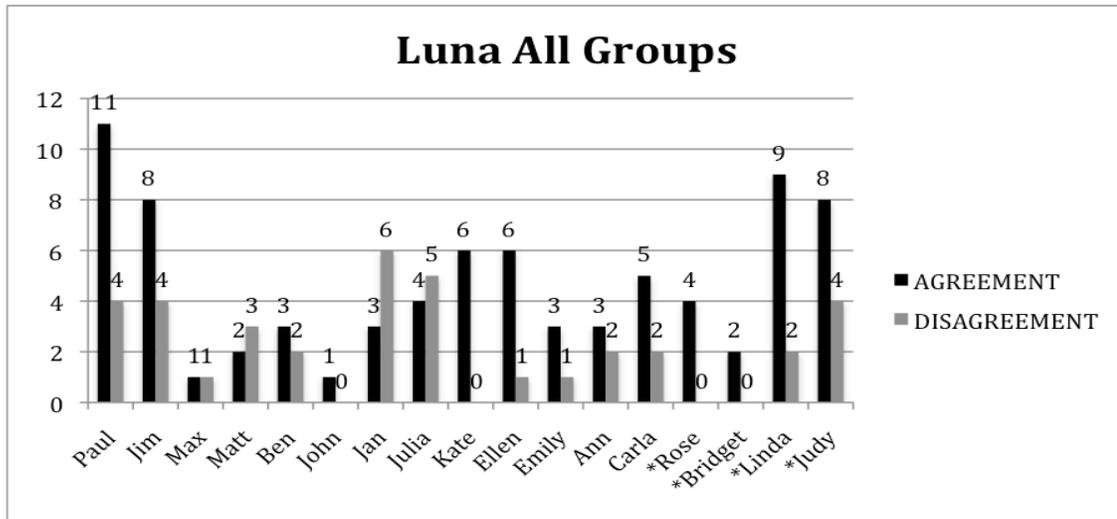


Figure 40. Luna all groups - number of occurrences of tentative language and number of lines spoken, by individual Note: * indicates members of Group Four (all female)



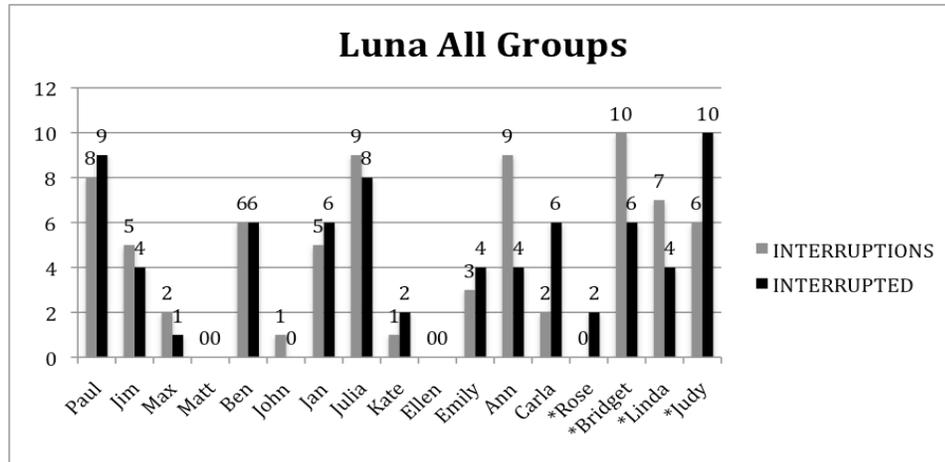
As evidenced by Figure 41, over all the Luna groups, females both agreed with others the most and disagreed with others the most. John, Kate, Rose, and Bridget did not disagree with anyone during discussion. Matt, Jan, and Julia disagreed with group members more than they agreed with others in the discussions of *Luna*, and Jan had the highest percentage of disagreements (67%) over agreements (33%). The Bem Sex Role Inventory (see Appendix C) indicates that assertiveness, willingness to take a stand, and defending their own beliefs are perceived as male traits. In this group of participants, the females exhibited those traits more than the males. One interesting side note is that Jan disagreed most often with Julia, rather than either of the males in her group. It is difficult to attribute that to any gendered response, such as a female being less willing to disagree with a male, because there is no other evidence to support that notion. Julia disagreed as often with males as females.

Figure 41. Luna all groups - number of occurrences of agreement with group mates and disagreement with group mates, by individual Note: * indicates members of Group Four (all female)



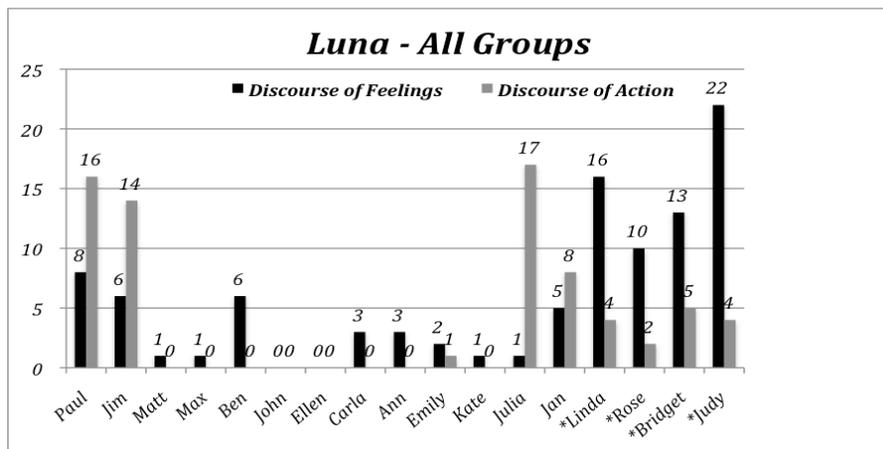
Over all the *Luna* discussion groups, the women interrupted others more than the men did (see Figure 42). In *Luna* Group One, Julia interrupted the most with nine occurrences, and Paul was second with eight occurrences. Paul and Julia were also the most interrupted in the group. In *Luna* Group Three, Carla interrupted the group members the most. Ben and Emily were interrupted most often. The largest number of interruptions was in the all female *Luna* Group Four. Bridget interrupted others ten times and Judy was interrupted ten times.

Figure 42. Luna all groups - number of interruptions and times interrupted, by individual Note: * indicates members of Group Four (all female)



In *Luna* Group One, Julia was more focused on a discourse of action than any one else in the class. The other members of *Luna* Group One were also more focused on action than any of the other class members (see Figure 43). In *Luna* Groups Two and Three, the males spoke about feelings and relationships and did not focus on a discourse of action at all. In *Luna* Group Two, the discussion was rarely about the text, but when the group did talk about the book they spoke entirely about the parent/child relationships.

Figure 43. Luna all groups number of occurrences of discourses of action or discourses of feeling, by individual Note: * indicates members of Group Four (all female).



Contextualizing Luna – Data Across Four Texts

It is important to look at the discussions of *Luna* in the context of the discussions of other texts. The four whole class realistic fiction texts that were discussed in the course were *Luna*, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, *How I Live Now*, and *A Northern Light*. Each of these texts were discussed in a different context, in terms of group dynamics and the participants' places within the classroom community of practice. *Luna* and *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* were discussed in small groups. *How I Live Now* and *A Northern Light* were discussed by the class as a large group.

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian was the first book discussed by the class, during the second meeting of the course (September 21, 2009). At that point in the semester, the participants were still new to the practices of the class. They had written their first response blog, which was a new practice for many of them. While they were experienced in writing critically about literature, many were new to the format of responses for this course. The response papers for *Literature for Adolescents* had a component that required the students to discuss their personal and emotional reaction to the text before writing about it critically. The syllabus gave prompts for the personal response practice including,

What did it remind you of? How did it make you feel? Is there anything in your life that helped you to connect (or not connect) with the book? Is there anything in the book that helped you to think about your own life? Does the book reflect

the world as you know it or something different? (Literature for Adolescents course syllabus, Fall 2009).

Because they had been trained to write academically, without personal feelings, the personal response required many of the students to step outside of their comfort zone. Therefore, their responses to the first text were written with some uncertainty about how to properly perform the response practice. In addition, since this was the first small group discussion I was using all my audio recorders for the first time and one of the recorders failed. Because of that, I was not able to document the conversations of Bill, Ellen, Ann, Kate, and Jan during the discussion. John was absent for that discussion. This leaves a gap in my data.

How I Live Now was discussed in a large group during the third class meeting (September 28, 2009). Judy and Dave were absent and Max and Ellen did not speak at all during discussion. The large group discussion had a different dynamic from the small group discussion because each speaker was competing for time on the floor with more people. Even students who appeared to be comfortable speaking in large groups, had fewer opportunities to contribute and they were less likely to hold the floor for very long because of interruptions from other speakers. In addition, Cathy contributed more to the large group discussions. In small groups, she would drop in on each group for a few minutes and often only affirmed a group member's remark or asked the group a follow up question. In large groups, she was more likely to respond to multiple comments.

How I Live Now provided a glimpse into ways that the participants' communities of practice affected their reading of a text. Nearly half of the students disapproved of the relationship between Daisy and Edmond, who were first cousins. Two of the most vehement responses were by Judy and Matt. Judy wrote,

Another area I had issues with was the relationship between Daisy and Edmund. Perhaps it is that our time period and culture (in most areas in the US) are not in favor of cousins becoming romantic. More than likely it is because I have grown up with over 30 cousins and have NEVER thought of any of them in a way other than family. I realize she had not grown up with them and they were all strangers until they met - but still - they are cousins and I struggle with that...but when you combine their age with the fact they are cousins...couldn't get past it (Judy, 2009, *How I Live Now* blog response).

She was relating back to her extended family, a community of practice, and talking about a practice that was unacceptable in that community, romantic relationships between first cousins. It is legal in twenty-two states in the U.S., including California, New York, and Florida. According to Wikipedia, first cousin relationships are legal in most places in the world (Retrieved from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cousin_marriage), so Judy was viewing Daisy and Edmund's relationship through the lens of her own socialization. As Fish (1980) theorized, Judy was reading with the lens of her own interpretive community.

Matt had a similar response,

I am just not okay with the cousin sex relationship aspect of this book. It happens pretty near the beginning of the book, and it threw me off right away. I know they don't know each other so it's like meeting someone new, but still, they are cousins, so stuff like that shouldn't go on. And it makes me wonder again what the author's intent is. Am I supposed to be okay with this type of relationship? Is it supposed to make me view Daisy and/or Edmund in a certain light? Is it supposed to tug at my heartstrings? Because it doesn't, it just grosses me out (Matt, 2009, *How I Live Now* blog response).

Matt and Judy's responses to the love relationship in the book portrays the socialization they received in their communities of practice regarding acceptable sexual relationships.

Two of the students did not mention the relationship at all and six of the participants either approved of Daisy and Edmund's love or they overcame their discomfort because of the author's portrayal of the relationship. Paul responded with,

I will admit that I was a tiny bit conflicted by the cousin/cousin love story presented in the novel. However, the emphasis to be taken from that sentence is "tiny bit." Granted, there are things for people to discuss about the moral rights and wrongs about such a relationship, and what it says to teenagers, but I was able to look past it because it was so beautifully constructed. The hopeless romantic 15-year-old boy in me jumped at the chance to remember similar memories from when I was that age, and how finding someone that you connected with mentally as Edmond and Daisy do is breathtaking and frightening at the same time. You

never want to let that feeling go, and I could tell that Daisy was feeling the exact same thing (Paul, 2009, *How I Live Now* blog response).

Paul connected with the characters in the text by remembering his own feelings of love when he was an adolescent.

Rose brought out a sense of the romantic nature of love, by distinguishing between “puppy dog love” and true love, which may be related to her gender socialization. She wrote,

I initially felt uncomfortable reading about her romantic relationship with Edmond and knowing that first-cousins were having underage sex. However, somehow I was able to rather quickly overlook their blood-relationship and instead focus on their romantic relationship. At most points in the book, I found myself approving of their relationship instead of frowning upon it. Perhaps it is because Daisy does such an effective job of convincing me of her love for Edmond. I never got the sense that this was “puppy dog” love; rather, I could tell that Daisy and Edmond were twin souls that collided quickly and forcefully (Rose, 2009, *How I Live Now* blog response).

The communities of practice that helped form Rose and Paul’s gender beliefs and expectations instilled a sense of romance that allowed them to justify the incest because the characters were truly in love.

A Northern Light, historical fiction, was discussed during the sixth class meeting

(October 26, 2009) in a large group format. All the participants were present, however, Ann, Emily, and Rose did not comment during the discussion. By that time most of the students had written at least six literature responses and were moving away from the periphery of the classroom community, toward mastery of the literacy practices.

Two factors in the *Luna* discussion groups that appeared to be connected to gender were the number of turns and the length of time speaking. Both of those factors were dominated by males in the *Luna* discussions, with the exception of *Luna* Group Four (all female). To see the number of turns and length of time speaking across more than one text, note Figures 44, 45 and 46. Figure 44 represents the number of turns and lines spoken by each class member in the whole class discussion of *How I Live Now*, by Meg Rosoff. For comparison purposes, the members of *Luna* discussion Group Four (single gender) are indicated with an asterisk. Judy (a member of *Luna* Group Four) was absent for the discussion of *How I Live Now*. This data contradicted the *Luna* small group data. Although Paul spoke for the longest time, the females, over all, spoke longer and took as many turns as the males. Bridget took the most turns (17).

Figure 44. How I Live Now large group - number of lines and number of turns, by individual Note: * indicates members of Group Four (all female)

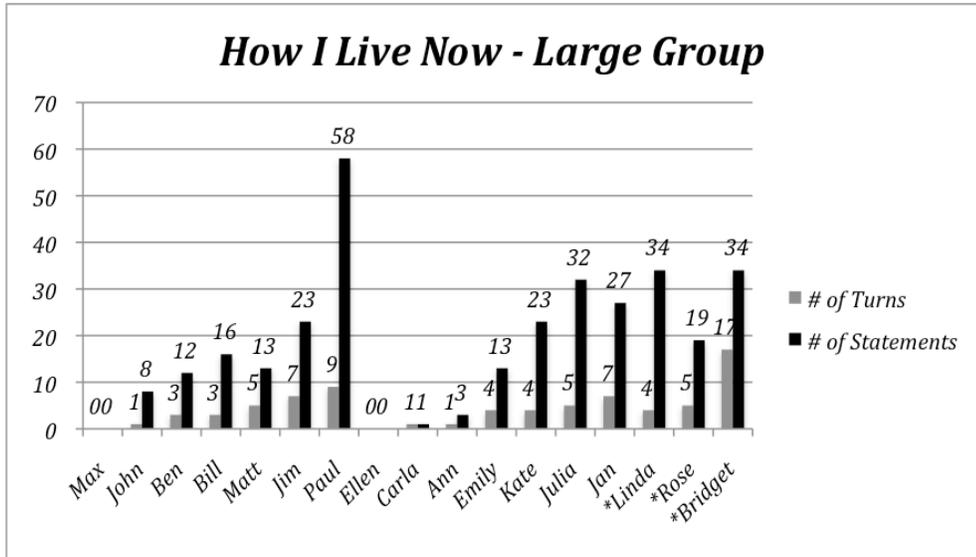


Figure 45. The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian small groups - number of lines and number of turns, by individual Note: * indicates members of Group Four

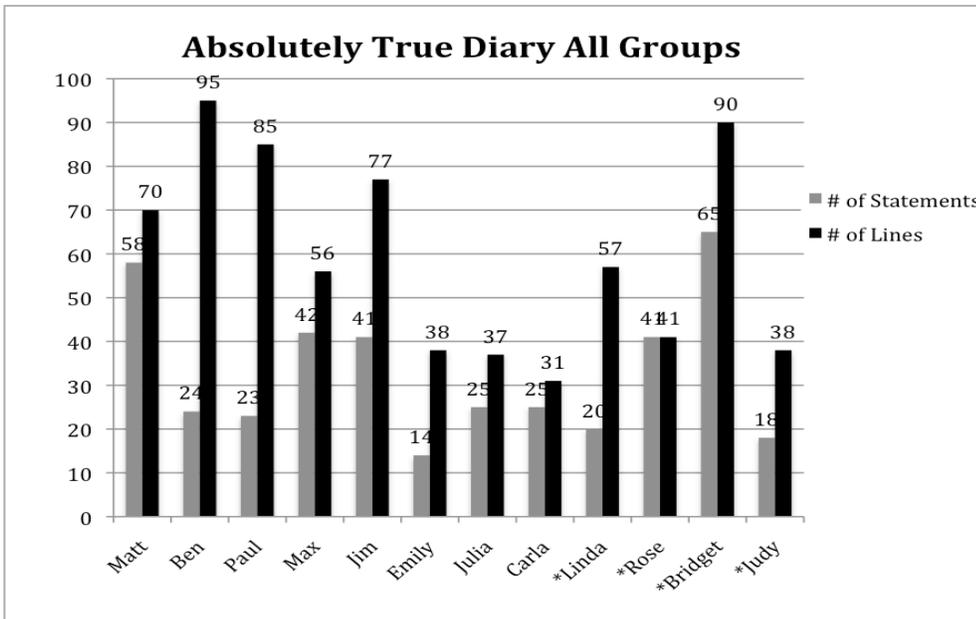
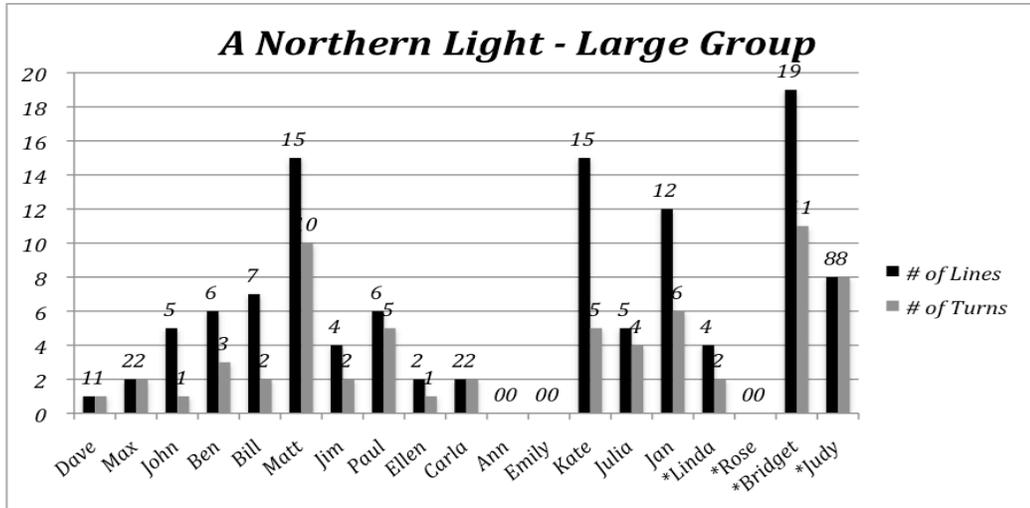


Figure 46. A Northern Light large group - number of lines spoken and number of turns taken, by individual Note: * indicates members of Group Four (all female)



Across the four texts, males spoke more in small group discussions than females, but females spoke more and took more turns in whole class discussions than males (with the exception of Paul), as evidenced in Figures 47 and 48.

Figure 47. All females in the class, across four texts - number of lines spoken, by individual Note: * indicates members of Group Four

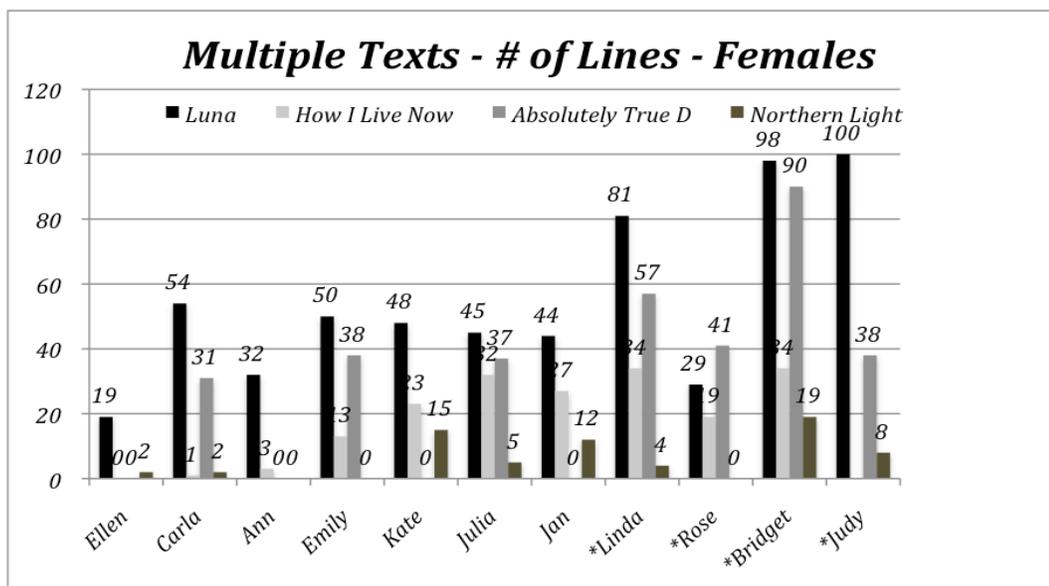
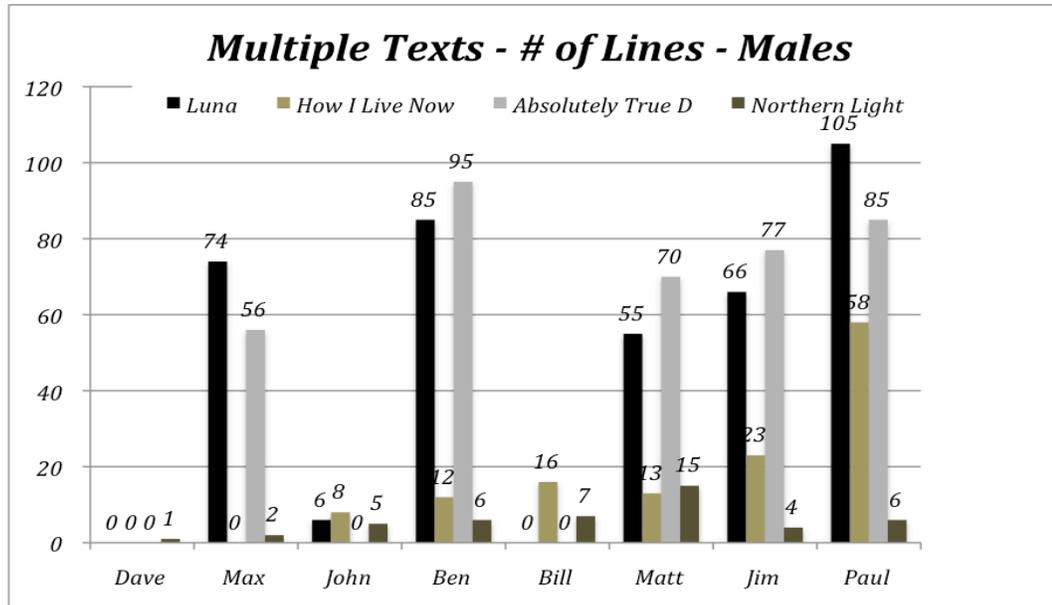


Figure 48. All males in the class, across four texts - number of lines spoken, by individual



The results of the discussion group analysis demonstrate that, in this participant pool, neither modes of reading nor interactional practices were related to gender. The data on active listening pointed to a connection to gender, but it would be difficult to say that the two factors were related without additional research. In the next chapter I will answer my research questions, discuss the implications of my findings, and evaluate my study.

Chapter 6: Discussion, Implications, and Recommendations

“I would say that, over all, that the girls were really open to reading anything, and that might be because historically through all their schooling they had to read a lot of male characters and male authors and all, though that’s changed probably since we were both in school. Um, I think that classrooms are more inclusive of different authors. So I think, in general, they just, I didn’t get the sense that they had any reservations each week about what was coming up the next week. Although you could look at some of their responses, in science fiction for example, that start with “ I was not looking forward to reading science fiction.” It didn’t play out in conversation, but in their responses, I think of like Carla, who really liked House of the Scorpion and said that at the end, to have read that. And her response started with ‘I never thought I’d read science fiction’. Um, but I think for the guys maybe they were more vocal about their resistance to it. Bill, again, comes to mind just because he’s vocal when he doesn’t like something. You know and they all laugh at him when he does that because they are so used to it. At least the post grads are. Um, but he’s the only one I guess that really...well maybe Max too. He had kind of an edge not wanting to read this or do this” (Cathy, 2009, post course interview).

Summary of the Study

Drawing on and reexamining theories on gender and literacy, derived from research performed between 1974 and 2002, this qualitative study explored the gender assumptions and expectations of 19 preservice and practicing secondary language arts teachers in a graduate level adolescent literature course. The theoretical framework was structured around a social constructionist lens, including transactional theory from reader response, gender theory, and community of practice theory. The methodology employed

ethnographic methods, as well as critical discourse analysis and conversational analysis techniques.

This four-month study examined the ways the participants learned in a classroom community of practice and how that functioned. It also explored the ways class members identified with or resisted gender expectations in their literature discussion groups and how their individual communities of practice may have influenced those expectations. It looked at the kind of discourses that were maintained and disrupted in the discussion groups, as well as the participants' responses to literature within the classroom community, and, as discussed in Chapter Four, within their personal blogs and written responses.

The data also provided insight into the affiliations each subject made with the characters in the texts, which illuminated personal gender beliefs that supported or conflicted with other data collected. The group conversational dynamics provided an additional lens on gender beliefs and power relations. The participants showed diversity within gender that suggested that their varied communities of practice, including this classroom community of practice, most likely influenced their gender beliefs and their response to literature.

It is important to note that the studies used to determine gender traits, gendered modes of reading, and gendered ways of talking are all more than ten years old. These studies were selected because they have often been used, and still are, to make pedagogical decisions about literacy and gender. In addition, there have not been many

recent studies on those topics. There has been recent work on gender and reading scores, the achievement gap, and the ‘boy crisis’; however, these studies did not look at modes of reading or conversational traits. Newer studies continue to reference work from the 1970’s through the 1990’s (Hartman, 2006; McCabe, Fairchild, Grauerholz, Pescosolido, & Tope, 2011; Millard, 2005; Rice, 2005). Sandra Bem’s (1974) investigation of perceived gender traits is still referenced in research (Athenstaedt, 2003; Basow & Rubenfeld, 2003; Karniol & Gal-Disegni, 2009; Li, DiGiuseppe, & Froh, 2006; Smiler & Gelman, 2008), as is Deborah Tannen’s (1990) work on gender and conversation, *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation* (Basow & Rubenfeld, 2003; Ehrlich & Blum-Kulka, 2010; Gosselin, 2007; Hannah & Murachver, 2007; Swann & Allington, 2009). These theories on gender are not entirely validated by the data in this study.

Discussion

This section considers the results of the study in relation to the original research questions and looks at whether the resultant data answered those queries. Those questions were:

1. Was there a diversity of response to literature within gender?
2. What was the role of the participants’ background and identity in their gender beliefs and expectations and how did those beliefs and expectations affect their responses to texts?

3. In what ways did the norms and expectations of this classroom community of practice influence the participants' reading and discussions?
4. What was the role of group configurations in the participants' discussions of literary texts?
5. Was there a diversity of interactional practices within gender?

Was there a diversity of response to literature within gender? In many ways, these participants showed a diversity within gender that raises questions about the current applicability of the results of earlier studies by Holland (1977) and Cherland (1992) that found that females focus on relationships in the text, while males emphasize plot and action. The findings of this study also question research on gender and reading preference (Love & Hamston, 2003; Millard, 1997), which posited that males prefer nonfiction to fiction, science fiction, and fantasy over contemporary realistic fiction or historical fiction, and male protagonists over female protagonists.

Gender preferences in reading. As the data presented in Chapter Four show, several of the female participants expressed a preference for fantasy and science fiction, often considered male genres. Even the females who usually did not care for science fiction or nonfiction books, said they were surprised how much they enjoyed *The House of the Scorpion* (science fiction), *Feed* (science fiction), and *Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World* (nonfiction). In addition, the books that the majority of male participants liked most were contemporary realistic fiction, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time*

Indian, Luna, and Looking for Alaska, which is usually considered a “female genre”.

These were also books that were very relationship oriented, rather than action oriented.

It was interesting that some of the male participants commented on the lack of male protagonists in the books selected for this course. That is a common misconception. While there appears to be a perception that female characters dominate in school reading, evidence shows otherwise. Male characters appear in children’s literature about twice as often as female characters (Bleakley, Westerberg, & Hopkins, 1988; Davis & McDaniel, 1999; Hamilton, Anderson, Broaddus, & Young, 2006; McCabe, Fairchild, Grauerholz, Pescosolido, & Tope, 2011). Previous studies have indicated that the majority of award winning children’s books, those often used in the classroom, have male protagonists (Davis & McDaniel, 1999), yet students frequently say that the books they read in school had more female main characters. In this course, of the 27 books listed on the syllabus, 17 had male protagonists (see Appendix M).

Research has also shown that females are more open to reading books with male protagonists than males are to reading books with female protagonists (Gabriel & Smithson, 1990; Millard, 1997). As the data presented in Chapter Four demonstrates, none of the females in this study ever mentioned an issue with the gender of the protagonist. In fact, many of them named texts with male protagonists as their favorites. All of Bridget’s favorite books had male protagonists. Rose said the characters she connected with the most were Junior from *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* and Panchito from *The Circuit*. However, she said she related to them because

she liked to root for the underdog, which could reflect compassion, one of the traditional female traits on Bem's (1974) list.

Three of the male participants, Jim, John, and Paul, mentioned the gender of the protagonist. Jim used the term "chick book" to describe *A Northern Light* and Paul said he was glad to read a book with a male protagonist. His perception was that there had been predominantly female protagonists in the adolescent literature books he had read. He selected texts with male protagonists whenever it was possible in the course. This may have been due to a male preference for books with male protagonists, as seen in Millard's (1997) study, or it may have been a way for Paul to expand his knowledge of adolescent literature, since he had a perception that the adolescent literature he had read prior to this course was dominated by female protagonists.

As seen in Chapter Four, the students were more likely to read a book with a male protagonist than a female protagonist (see Appendix M), yet three males were affected enough by reading a text with a female protagonist that they mentioned it in their responses. This may reify Millard's (1997) findings, and perhaps this was related to lifelong gender policing, as seen in Elizabeth Dutton's (2001/2002) study of children and book selection. However, it could also have been the result of male teachers wanting to connect more with male students by providing more "boy books."

Although males were the only participants to mention an issue with the gender of the protagonist, many of them gave excellent reviews to the books with female

characters. The gender of the protagonist seemed to be irrelevant to the female participants of this study.

Discourse of feelings and discourse of action. Both Holland (1977) and Cherland (1992) posited that females are more focused on relationships and feelings in a text, and that males are more interested in the plot and action in a story. Cherland (1992) named these the *discourse of feelings* and the *discourse of action*. As presented in Chapter Five and depicted in Figure 42, the females in *Luna* Group Four, the all female discussion, seemed to be the group most focused on a discourse of feelings. However, in *Luna* Group One, Julia was much more focused on action than feelings. In fact, contrary to Cherland (1992) and Holland's (1977) findings, Julia was more focused on a discourse of action than any other participant. The other three members of *Luna* Group One (Paul, Jan, and Jim) also focused on action more than on feelings. This could have been due to a group discussion emphasis on plot over characters, rather than a gendered predisposition. These results indicate that there was a diversity within gender when it came to the kinds of discourses taken up by these readers.

What was the role of the participants' background and identity in their gender beliefs and expectations and how did those beliefs and expectations affect their responses to texts? Communities of practice are sites of meaning making. We construct meaning within the communities in which we participate and we learn how to navigate our social worlds through those groups. We use the beliefs and expectations we learn in our communities of practice when we attempt to make meaning in the world

(Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2007; Paechter, 2003b; and Wenger, 1998). This influence is demonstrated by the split in responses to *How I Live Now*, presented in Chapter Five. Several of the students were offended by the relationship between Daisy and Edmond, who were first cousins. Others either had no overt issue with the romance, or they found redeeming value in the way the author handled it. Matt mentioned religious beliefs when he discussed why the relationship “grosses me out.” Judy talked about her extended family and her expectation that relationships between cousins were aberrant. Paul reflected back on his prior experiences and they were strong enough to overcome his socialization that Daisy and Edmund’s relationship was incest, and, therefore, wrong. He also was willing to compare his feelings to the feelings of the female protagonist. This was unusual among the males in this class. In Rose’s case, the communities of practice that helped form her gender beliefs and expectations instilled a sense of romantic love that allowed her to justify the incest because the characters had true love and a deep connection.

Matt openly stated that he was conservative and an Evangelical Christian. Those beliefs caused him to have difficulty accepting some of the relationships and characterizations in the course texts. He often rejected behaviors that he did not approve of in the texts he read. Bridget’s relationship with her lesbian mother and Kate’s sexual orientation also gave them a perspective on *Luna* that affected their responses. They both expressed an ability to connect with Regan and Luna because of their experiences with lesbianism. Julia’s family community of practice also affected her reading of *Luna*. She said she connected to Luna because she understood what it felt like to be different. She

wrote that she identified with that character because she, as a child of an alcoholic, spent so much time “guessing at what normal is, judging myself without mercy, seeking approval/acceptance, taking myself too seriously, and most of all, feeling different from others” (Julia, 2009, *Luna* blog response).

In addition, the participants’ differing expectations of the ‘good mother’ and ‘good father’ construct affected their responses and discussion of the mother and father in *Luna*. Matt seemed to have the strongest response to the father’s actions. He spoke of wanting to “punch him in the face.” On several occasions, Matt talked about being a father and he had a vision of the way fatherhood should look. The father in *Luna* did not meet his expectations. Other participants defended or attempted to understand Luna’s father. Jan justified Jack’s actions, calling him a “broken man” who had lost his job and now only had his love for his children to keep him going. She saw the loss of his job as very demoralizing and emasculating. However, Jan had no sympathy for the mother in *Luna*, although Patrice had stated how unhappy she was being a mother and wife, with no career. She clearly was more satisfied when she worked outside the home. As the tension in the story increased, so did her focus on her work. The participants did not appear to connect Patrice’s happiness to her career the way they connected Jack’s well being with his job.

Both parents chose to avoid the issue of Luna’s struggle, Patrice by ignoring everything that happened and Jack by maintaining a stance of ignorance. However, Patrice was much more vilified. Only one participant, Judy, tried to understand Patrice’s

actions. Judy was a wife and mother, who stated that those were her most important roles, and through those subject positions she seemed to understand Patrice's unhappiness.

These are just a few examples of the ways that the participants' communities of practice affected their gender beliefs and the responses they had to the texts they read. Matt, Jan, and Judy were bringing their own expectations of the role of males and females in parenting to the reading of the text. Regardless of the participants' views on feminism or women's roles, the portrayal of the mother in *Luna* was seen as more abhorrent. This may reflect the strength of their gender socialization. Just as my students (as seen in Chapter One) repeatedly chose the soft, round object as a depiction of motherhood, regardless of their personal experiences, many of the participants in this study had an expectation that Luna's mother should have been more understanding of Luna's problems than her father was.

In what ways did the norms and expectations of this classroom community of practice influence the participants' reading and discussions? Wenger's (1998) theory, discussed in Chapter Four, posits that communities of practice are not just social groups, but groups with common goals and shared practices that they use to achieve those goals. These practices are both explicit and tacit, including procedures, defined roles, language, "specific perceptions, well-tuned sensitivities, embodied understandings, underlying assumptions, and shared world views" (Wenger, 1998, p. 47).

Although there were very clear divisions between the practicing and preservice teachers in this class, there were common practices that developed so they could achieve their collective goal of learning more about adolescent literature. These practices gave the students an understanding of what was expected of them in the class, including accepted ways of talking about books and people. The syllabus stated,

EVERYONE has good ideas. Each person's response enriches the group's understanding of the books, insight into how they work as literary objects, and possibilities for connecting reading, living, and learning. There are many ways to respond to and interpret any text. We will be, I hope, quite varied in our responses...Indeed, I hope we all respectfully challenge one another as that makes for lively discussions (Literature for Adolescents course syllabus, Fall 2009).

This was an explicit practice that became more tacit as the semester progressed. There was a shared understanding that the classroom was intended to be a place for open discussion. Still, some points of view were less acceptable than others. For example, the majority of the class members would reject an openly racist or sexist statement and a person who made such a statement would be perceived as outside the classroom norm. An example of this was Matt's comment on the transgendered character in *Luna*, discussed in Chapter Five. He felt strongly about his opinion, but he prefaced it with a concern that he might offend someone.

I don't want to make anyone angry, but my belief system does not allow for the GLBT philosophy to be okay. I believe saying it is okay for someone to be

transgender implies that God made a mistake when he created them, and I don't believe in a God who can make mistakes (Matt, 2009, *Luna* blog response).

As noted earlier, communities of practice help us negotiate meaning (Wenger, 1998) and this classroom was a community of practice. Therefore, there were expectations of how this group would interact with each other and the class texts. These educators had been trained to be inclusive and open to many viewpoints. The class itself was student centered with a reader response orientation. The classroom dialogue practices, both written and in discussion, taught the participants to read in the expected way and to take from their reading what was necessary to respond in the customary manner.

The preservice teachers had already taken several courses together in the licensure program, which placed a strong emphasis on social justice. They already knew what kinds of discourse would be considered acceptable in this community of practice and what would be seen as a rejection of inclusive thinking. A rejection of inclusive thinking would have placed any of them on the periphery of this community of practice. That would have been risky. The practicing teachers also had a sense of acceptable educator discourse. At times, they appeared to be more jaded and less optimistic about the efficacy of certain beliefs and techniques, which was mitigated by their level of experience and their understanding of the realities of classroom teaching.

While some of the students may have had more traditional gender beliefs, the majority of the class would have viewed an overt rejection of feminist or inclusive

discourse negatively. This may have affected the honesty of some responses. Even Matt's blog response, that rejected a GLBT sexual orientation, was prefaced by sorry talk. After he said that his "belief system does not allow for the GLBT philosophy to be okay," he continued saying, "I really don't believe it's appropriate to get into all that in depth in my book response, so I'll try to stick with this book" (Matt, 2009, *Luna* blog response). He usually appeared to be comfortable discussing his religious beliefs because he spoke of them on several occasions; however, in this case he silenced himself.

What was the role of group configurations in the participants' discussions of literary texts? A few studies have looked at gender and book discussions (Cherland, 1992; Davies, 2003; Evans, Alvermann, and Anders, 1998). The research, in all three studies, was done with fifth grade children. They have all noted that students responded differently when in mixed versus single gender groupings. In this study, there were differences in the responses within the discussion groups; nevertheless, it is not clear that the differences were due to gender.

Each *Luna* discussion group had a different configuration, either in terms of gender composition or in teaching experience, which could be seen as a power differential. The all female group (Four) showed similar conversational patterns to the males in other groups. Yet, when the speaking patterns of the members of *Luna* Group Four are compared to their conversational patterns in discussions of other texts (see Figure 36 at the end of Chapter Five), they do not appear to be unusual for those participants.

In comparing the written or blog responses to the discussions, it was evident that the participants in this study often tailored their comments to the other members of the group. If a group was dominated by members who focused on the authorial choices or the literary merit of a book, the other group members would follow suit. If a group contained dominant members who were interested in the relationships in the book, that became the main topic of conversation. This was not due to the gender of the group members. *Luna* discussion Group One had two males and two females, yet they spent about half of the discussion talking about the relationships between characters. While some members talked more than others did, none of the participants in Group One was reticent about speaking. They all held strong opinions.

As depicted in Chapter Five, the impact of group composition was apparent in *Luna* discussion Group Two. Kate and Matt, both dominant speakers, had diametrically opposed views on sexual orientation. Kate had written a very positive opinion of *Luna* in her blog response and she was usually forthright and gregarious in group discussions. However, after Matt said the book did not fit into his beliefs, she became very quiet. After that, her comments in the discussion were often just forms of active listening. When she did speak, she was very tentative in expressing her disagreement. Matt was also more tentative in expressing his opinions verbally than he was in his written response. He tempered his comments by saying that he had more of a problem with Luna's father than with Luna. It is likely that both Kate and Matt altered the strength of their responses because of who was in the discussion and, perhaps, because of a sense of causing discomfort in the group.

Was there a diversity of interactional practices within gender? The conversational dynamics in the discussion groups did show a range of characteristics within gender. In some cases, such as time spent speaking, prior research held true, but it was difficult to determine whether the actions were due to gender or a myriad of other possibilities.

Turns and lines. Other research has indicated that men often speak more than women do and they speak for longer periods of time (Aries, 1982; LaFrance, 1991, Tannen, 1990). In all of the mixed gender *Luna* discussion groups in this study, males spoke longer than females. However, in the all-female group, three of the participants rivaled the males in the other groups in number of lines spoken.

These results could be due to the speaking styles of the females in *Luna* Group Four, because Bridget, Linda, and Judy had a “high involvement style” (Tannen, 2000). It is also possible that the speakers felt evenly matched or, perhaps, less dominated by male speakers. The topic of the text does not appear to be relevant because the females in the mixed gender *Luna* discussion groups did not speak as much as the males, even when they had strong written responses to the book (such as Kate and Julia).

Topic control. Pamela Fishman (1978) found that males tended to control the topic in mixed group discussions. According to her study, this was because the topics introduced by men were more likely to be taken up than the topics introduced by women.

In *Luna* Groups One and Two, the males did control the topic a large percentage of the time. However, in *Luna* Groups Three and Four, females controlled the topic more often. The results of Group Four are not surprising since it was an all-female group, however that does not alter the finding that, in this study, topic control cannot be explained by gender, time speaking, or number of turns taken. There was a diversity of results within gender.

Questions. Previous research has shown that males tend to initiate more questions than females (Jones, 1989) and that females ask more leading or tag questions (Lakoff, 1975). Females were also found to be more likely to ask questions that show interest and agreement (Tannen, 1990).

The results in this study can be deceiving because males made up 35% of the total *Luna* participant group, however they asked nearly half of the leading questions and almost half of the total number of questions. When *Luna* Group Four is removed from the results (see Figure 37 in Chapter Five), males asked more than half of the questions in the mixed gender discussion groups. Males also asked over half of the leading questions in the mixed gender groups. This affirms Jones (1989) research, but not Lakoff's (1975) results.

Active listening. When the class was viewed as an aggregate, females were more likely to exhibit active listening. This trait gives the speaker verbal feedback indicating that the listener is paying attention and understanding what is being said. It is a way of providing encouragement to the speaker. Previous research (LaFrance, 1991; O'Donnell-

Allen & Smagorinsky, 1999; Tannen, 1990; Zimmerman & West, 1975) has related active listening to the nurturing and conciliatory characteristics that have been socially prized in women.

Tentative language. O'Donnell-Allen and Smagorinsky (1999) and Lakoff (1975) found that women were more likely to be unsure of their statements. Their research showed that females used more qualifiers and hesitated more often. Over all the *Luna* discussion groups, males were more likely to use tentative language and listener checks when speaking.

Because there might have been a connection between the number of lines spoken and the amount of tentative language used, I compared the two factors and found that there is a connection (see Figure 40 in Chapter Five). Still, it does not change the overall result, because of the eight participants who used tentative language the least, only one was male. Of the nine participants who used tentative language most, five were males.

This does not imply that lack of confidence in one's ideas is the only possible explanation for the use of tentative language. Certainly, John's use of tentative language could have been cultural or it could have been due to English being his second language. It does, however, refute the results of earlier studies that indicated that females were more likely to use tentative language and hesitations because they were insecure in their beliefs or unsure of their comments in discussions (O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky, 1999). The results of this study may be due to social changes over the last decade, or it may simply indicate that there was diversity within gender in this participant group.

Agreement and disagreement. In O'Donnell-Allen and Smagorinsky's (1999) study, females showed more agreement with others in discussion and males were more likely to debate and made more oppositional comments than females. In this study, the females were more likely to disagree with their group mates than the males. Males were as likely to agree with other discussion members as females and they were less likely to disagree with other speakers.

Interruptions. Zimmerman and West (1975) and LaFrance (1991) postulated that women are discouraged from talking by a variety of conversational tactics, including interruptions. They saw interruption as a power tactic designed to send the message that women's ideas are less worthy. Their research showed that women were interrupted more frequently than men were and that men interrupted women more than they did other men.

In this study, the women interrupted others more than the men did. The largest number of interruptions was in the all female *Luna* Group Four. These results may contradict the research by Zimmerman and West (1975) and LaFrance (1991) or it may indicate that the women in *Luna* Group Four had a give and take conversational style that encouraged interruptions. It may have been a way for the group to jointly create meaning from the text.

Sorry talk. In this study, the only participants who used sorry talk were Paul, Matt, and Max. They apologized for comments that they made but that might have been perceived to be outside of the expectations of either their discussion group or the

classroom community of practice. Paul used sorry talk when he disagreed with the other group members and Jim began to make jokes about his statements. Matt used sorry talk when he was discussing his negative feelings about the topic of *Luna*. His reaction was oppositional to the inclusive nature of the classroom community, and he was speaking in a group that included Kate, a lesbian. Max used sorry talk when he chose to go first in the discussion, apologizing for usurping the control of the floor. The participants in this study refuted the notion that sorry talk is something women do because of diminished status.

Summary of Results

Other than active listening, the number of turns taken, and the length of time on the floor, there were no indications of gender specific traits in the *Luna* small group discussions. Specific individuals either may have reified or refuted research on gender and discussion, but there were no actions or traits that could be considered indicative of one gender over another. The data on turn taking and length of time speaking was only contextually gendered. It was not that the females always spoke less than the males; they spoke less in the *Luna* mixed small groups. Even dominant female speakers spoke less in the *Luna* mixed gender small groups. This could have been due to the group composition, it could have been the result of gender power differentials, or it could have been related to the text that was discussed, but it is difficult to attribute the results to gender in the context of one text.

When viewed across discussions of four texts (see Figures 47 and 48 at the end of Chapter Five), the males appeared to dominate the small group conversations of *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* and *Luna* in terms of time spent speaking. The small groups that discussed *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* were mostly comprised of one male and two females. The three gregarious females from Luna Group Four spoke more than the other females in the class when they discussed *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. This leads me to posit that the differences in time spent speaking may be due more to personality than gender. The all female group equaled the males in the small group discussions of *Luna*, and the females in the course spoke as much or more than the males in the whole class discussions of *How I Live Now* and *A Northern Light*.

This is an interesting finding because previous research (O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky, 1999; Tannen, 1990) indicated that males were more comfortable than females speaking in public. In this group of participants, females spoke more in public (whole class) discussions, while males spoke more in private (small group) discussions (see Figures 47 and 48 in Chapter Five). Still, there were participants who did not follow the trend. For example, Paul spoke the most in the whole class discussion of *How I Live Now*, but the other males spoke less than the females in the class (see Figure 44 in Chapter Five). Bridget talked nearly as much as the male who spoke the longest (Ben) in the small group discussion of *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* (see Figure 45 in Chapter Five). Matt spoke almost as long as Bridget, who talked the longest, in the whole group discussion of *A Northern Light* (see Figure 46 in Chapter

Five). This data indicates that there is diversity within gender in terms of how long and in what context the participants spoke.

As evidenced in Chapters Four and Five, the participants in this study did not read in a gendered way, either. Both males and females made emotional connections (Bleich, 1986), focused on relationships as well as on action (Cherland, 1992), and read in both analytical and interpersonal modes (Holland, 1977). Both genders concentrated on the narrative voice, feelings and associations, characterization (Holland, 1977), and on authorial intent (Bleich, 1986). Both genders also told personal stories in order to show a connection to the text (Tannen, 1990) and attempted to jointly construct meaning in discussions (Moore, 1997). For example, Paul, who enjoyed the action and adventure in *Airborn*, spoke of remembering what it was like to be a 15 year old in love when he discussed *How I Live Now*. Linda, whose written responses were very analytical and focused outside of the story world, spoke with a strong discourse of feelings in her small group discussion of *Luna*. Ben, who often talked about authorial intent, plot, and characterization, wrote with great emotion about Junior in *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. Bridget, Paul, Judy, Julia, John, Kate, and Matt all told personal stories to demonstrate a connection to the characters in the texts. Paul often collaborated with the others in his groups to construct meaning from the books they discussed, as did Linda, Ben, Kate, Rose, Emily, and Ellen.

The mode of reading seemed to be more a factor of the text that was read than the gender of the reader. For example, it is not surprising that several participants wrote and

spoke about relationships when they read *Luna* because that text was centered on dysfunctional familial relationships. It is also not surprising that other participants were focused on the narrative voice, because the story was told from the perspective of Luna's sister, Regan, rather than the transgendered character, an authorial decision that was discussed in several groups. Peters, the author, is not transgendered and, therefore, would have had a more difficult time seeing through Luna's eyes. It was a significant authorial choice because it added authenticity to the story and made it easier for readers who were not transgendered to relate to the novel.

The text that was read shaped the responses of the participants because the characters and story created a transaction between the reader and their beliefs and values, which were a reflection of their communities of practice. The different texts positioned the reader in varied ways. For example, while *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time Indian*, had a protagonist (Junior) who felt like an outsider, and it portrayed social justice, and family dysfunction, it did not cause the participants to respond in the same ways as they did to *Luna*. Many of the participants had a very emotional, nurturing response to Junior. Even a reader, like Jim, who often responded in an analytical way with a focus outside of the story world, said he wanted to "reach out and give Junior a hug." The participants also responded to the injustice in Junior's world with much more empathy than they did to Luna's problems. It is difficult to define why the participants responded so differently to the two books. Perhaps they felt more of a culture gap with *Luna*, or they may have felt White guilt because Junior was Native American. The idea of White guilt was discussed in some of the small groups. In addition, the participants seemed to

have a different expectation of parenting in their responses to *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time Indian*. Their responses to the father's alcoholism in *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time Indian* was less judgmental than their reactions to Jack and Patrice in *Luna*. That may have been because they felt an inadequate understanding of Native American culture, or they may have felt that Junior's father was responding to social injustices, or perhaps it was because Sherman Alexie portrayed the father as flawed but loving.

Many characteristics that have been attributed to gender can also explained by other factors. To really understand the nuances of gender, one must take into consideration culture, socioeconomic status, religion, conflicting communities of practice, educational level, and other aspects of any individual's identity. It is important to keep in mind that the authors of some of these early studies did not conclude that all members of a gender would respond in the same way. Several of them made statements about essentializing gender. One researcher, David Moore (1997) wrote

Thinking about gendered classroom interactions is problematic if it fosters a stereotyped dichotomous view of male and female actions. Such a view is at risk of oversimplifying situations, obscuring complexities, and promoting oppositional perspectives. It can lead to demeaning and disenfranchising people who do not display expected characteristics. With the expanded notions of gender-appropriate communication patterns and readings presented here, one could

contest stereotypes that constrain group members' expectations and opportunities (p. 525).

We may have perceptions of gender that override empirical evidence. When I began my analysis, I had a sense of which students were dominant speakers because I had observed the classroom interactions for months. However, examination of the transcripts proved some of my expectations to be inaccurate. For example, I thought Bill was one of the most outspoken participants in the whole group discussions, yet the evidence presents another picture. He had a loud, strong voice, which may have played into my gender expectations and made me view him as dominant, but he did not speak very often in large groups. I wonder how often teachers make decisions based on perception because they do not have evidence, as I did, to provide a more realistic picture of student interactions. Our gender socialization is so powerful and so invisible that it can rewrite reality.

Limitations of the Study

Some factors could not be controlled in the context of a single classroom setting. This was a study of a single group at a single point in time. With one exception, the participants were all White, but they were diverse in sexual orientation, religion, marital status, and worldview. The participant group did not disclose much information about their socioeconomic status either at the time of the study or in their families of origin. However, they did appear to be somewhat homogeneous in socioeconomic status. Like culture, socioeconomic status plays a role in the practices, including gender practices, of

any group. This was seen in Bronwyn Davies (2003) work with fifth grade girls from differing economic backgrounds, discussed in Chapter Two.

Because the small groups were most often determined by book choice and/or proximity, it was not possible to guarantee group composition. In terms of power relations, the small group discussion of *Luna* provided the most variation in groups of any of the class texts. Unfortunately, the opportunities to observe single gender groups were limited by the ways that the small groups were organized.

It was difficult to get a clear picture of each individual's gender beliefs because the participants had been socialized to understand that certain kinds of discourse were expected in the classroom. However, gender is performative (Butler, 1990/2006) and this research was intended to observe the performance of gender in that classroom, by those participants, at that time.

Implications for Research

It would be interesting to look at cultural practices as well as gender practices because gender is a social and cultural construct. Certainly, culture plays a role in communities of practice. Studying the practices of a culturally diverse group would provide insight into the ways nondominant groups perform gender and practice literacy. Socioeconomic status would be another worthwhile aspect to study in relation to gender and communities of practice. It makes sense that one's socioeconomic status would be an important factor in the goals of a community and its practices.

It would be valuable to look more at single gender group interactions in comparison to mixed gender groups. It is difficult to tell if the all female group in this study exhibited actions that were related to group composition, personality types, or if they were just responding to speaking styles or to the text. Are differences in group responses related to individual personalities and speaking styles, to gender and issues of power, or both?

I selected four participants as a case group, however I did not elaborate on that data because there was so much data on the class as a whole. In the future, I would like to examine the case group in more depth. I also did not focus on the data I collected on the course instructor and her role in the class's literature responses. That important factor might be useful in a second look.

During data collection, I had a sense that females asked most of the leading questions and I wondered if it was another, less obvious, way to direct the conversation. I questioned whether it was a female response to male domination of the topic. After analyzing the data, I discovered that, indeed, leading questions were an effective way to change the flow of the discussion. However, males asked most of the leading questions in this group of participants. It would be interesting to examine the use of questions in literature discussions to see if they are used as a tactic to control the conversation. If so, who uses them and in what context?

The extension of this work on preservice and practicing teachers to their own classroom communities of practice could provide valuable insights into gender

socialization. Do teachers, like Paul, who make emotional connections to the text and who are interested in relationships as well as action, transmit their modes of reading and talking about texts to their students and show them that literacy is not as gendered as we might think?

Implications for Pedagogy

The purpose of this study was to provide a better understanding of gendered response to literature and to shed some light on the complexity of readers. The data demonstrate some of the ways that literature discussions can be affected by group composition, the classroom community of practice, and sociocultural expectations. Certainly, in many aspects, the study demonstrated a diversity of response within gender. This indicates that there are other contributing factors to literary practices beyond gender, which calls into question the use of gender as a major consideration for making pedagogical decisions.

Teachers, parents, and librarians often select books based on gendered assumptions. This study suggests that many males prefer genres that have traditionally been considered to be of more interest to females, such as contemporary and historical fiction, and many females enjoy genres that have been considered the male domain, like nonfiction and science fiction.

The results of this study suggest that varied ways to talk about books in the classroom provides avenues for students to express themselves in ways that are most

comfortable for them. It is important to make sure that teachers are aware of the significance of group composition in discussion of texts, and to help them see how power relations operate in the classroom. Experiencing varied options for distancing themselves might provide a powerful impetus for considering the implications of ideology in their own classrooms.

It would also be efficacious to provide teachers with methods that help make gendered assumptions visible to them and to their students. In this way, teachers could then help their students look beyond gender to see the complexity of the characters in the texts they read. Ultimately, we all must make our ideological assumptions visible so we can understand their influence on our literacy and our life practices.

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Card, O. S. (1991). *Ender's game*. New York, NY: Tor.

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- Creech, S. (1994). *Walk two moons*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- Dixon, F. W. (1927-2005). *The Hardy boys series*. New York, NY: Grosset and Dunlap.
- Donnelly, J. (2003). *A northern light*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt.
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- Farmer, N. (2002). *The house of the scorpion*. New York, NY: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.
- Fitzgerald, F. S. (1925). *The great Gatsby*. New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons.
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- Green, J. (2005). *Looking for Alaska*. New York, NY: Dutton Books.
- Hesse, H. (1968). *Narcissus and Goldmund*. New York, NY: Noonday Press.
- Hurston, Z. N. (1937). *Their eyes were watching God*. Philadelphia, PA: J.B. Lippincott.
- Huxley, A. (1932). *Brave new world*. London: Chatto and Windus.
- Jimenez, F. (1997). *The circuit: Stories from the life of a migrant child*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press.

Johnson, A. (2003). *The first part last*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.

Keene, C. (1930-2003). *Nancy Drew series*. New York, NY: Grosset and Dunlap.

Landvik, L. (1995). *Patty Jane's house of curl*. Bridgehampton, NY: Bridge Works.

Lee, H. (1960). *To kill a mockingbird*. Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott and Company.

Lowry, L. (1993). *The giver*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Books for Children.

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McCormick, P. (2006). *Sold*. New York, NY: Hyperion.

Na, A. (2001). *A step from heaven*. Asheville, NC: Front Street.

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- Paulsen, G. (1987). *Hatchet*. New York, NY: Bradbury Press.
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- Satrapi, M. (2003). *Persepolis: The story of a childhood*. New York, NY: Pantheon.
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- Spiegelman, A. (1986). *Maus: A survivor's tale*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books.
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- Vonnegut, K. (1963). *Cat's cradle*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Warner, G. C. (1924). *The boxcar children*. Chicago: Rand McNally.

Watterson, B. (1987). *Calvin and Hobbes*. Kansas City, MO : Andrews, McMeel & Parker.

Wharton, E. (1911). *Ethan Frome*. New York, NY: Scribners.

Wilder, L. I. (1932-1943). *The little house on the prairie series*. New York, NY: Harper & Brothers.

Wilder, L. I. (1940). *The long winter*. New York, NY: Harper & Brothers.

Woolf, V. (1931). *The waves*. London: Hogarth Press.

Yang, G. L. (2006). *American born Chinese*. New York, NY: First Second.

Zusak, M. (2005). *The book thief*. New York, NY: Knopf.

Appendix A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The Influence of Gender on Readers' Responses to Literature

The interviews that will be conducted with the case study participants will be semi-structured. The questions asked will depend on the responses each participant gives. The list of questions in this document are a guide, but I would like to follow up when a participant gives an interesting answer.

1. Would you give me a synopsis of the book you read?
2. Did you make any connections with the book? (i.e. with situations, experiences, or characters)
3. Why do you think you did (or didn't)?
4. Did you like or identify with any of the characters?
 - a. Why? (Why not?)
5. Did the book portray the characters authentically?
 - a. Why? (Why not?)
 - b. If not, how could they have been more authentic?
6. Do you think the experiences of the characters were realistic or believable?
 - a. Why? (Why not?)
 - b. If not, how could they have been more believable?
7. Do you think the characters portrayed their gender in a traditional way?
 - a. Why? (Why not?)
 - b. If not, how did the character resist traditional gender norms?
 - c. Did the portrayal of gender cause you to have any dissonance? (Did it make you feel uncomfortable in any way?)
8. Tell me about your communities of practice.
 - a. What was your family like?
 - b. Did your parents follow traditional gender role patterns?

- c. Did your communities of practice change any of your gender expectations and beliefs?

Appendix B

MEASURES OF GENDERED READING

<i>Measures of Gendered Reading</i>		
GENDER	MODE OF READING	SOURCE
Female	Connections to community, emphasizes community relations	Linkin 1993
Female	Tries to understand characters	Linkin 1993
Female	Ethic of care	Gilligan 1982/1993
Female	Requires personal context for moral decision making	Linkin 1993
Female	Invokes the personal to understand the public	Linkin 1993
Female	Cooperative	Linkin 1993
Female	Forms an emotional connection with the text	Bleich 1986
Female	Introduces their own experiences to the reading (interactive)	Linkin 1993
Female	Attempts to accommodate the text	Flynn 1983
Female	Focus on relationships	Cherland 1992
Female	More likely to break free of the submissive entanglements in a text and evaluate the characters and event with critical detachment	Flynn 1983
Female	Attempts to understand a text before making a judgment about it	Flynn 1983
Female	Enters into the fictive world without focusing on the voice that narrated the world into being	Bleich 1986
Female	Interested in feelings, associations, persons	Holland 1977
Male	Focus on hierarchical relations	Linkin 1993
Male	More apt to accept or reject a text outright	Linkin 1993
Male	Engages in confrontational reading strategies that entail resisting or submitting to the text	Linkin 1993
Male	Ethic of justice – based on conflicting rights	Gilligan 1982/1993
Male	Works well with hypothetical or public situations	Linkin 1993
Male	Needs to feel powerfully in control of events	Linkin 1993
Male	Empowered through competition	Linkin 1993
Male	Engages in power relations – situates reading in a power struggle	Linkin 1993
Male	Comments on whether the text is difficult to understand or accessible	Linkin 1993
Male	Less need to accommodate the text	Linkin 1993
Male	Maintains distance between themselves and the literary world	Flynn 1983
Male	Reacts to disturbing stories by rejecting them or dominating them	Flynn 1983
Male	Focus on a strong narrative voice	Bleich 1986
Male	Intellectual, analytical response	Holland 1977
Male	Experiences text worlds in a more objective manner	Bleich 1986
Male	Interested in plot and character's actions	Cherland 1992

Appendix C

BEM SEX ROLE INVENTORY

<i>Bem Sex Role Inventory Traits (Bem, 1974)</i>		
MASCULINE TRAITS	FEMININE TRAITS	NEUTRAL TRAITS
Acts as a leader	Affectionate	Adaptable
Aggressive	Cheerful	Conceited
Ambitious	Childlike	Conscientious
Analytical	Compassionate	Conventional
Assertive	Does not use harsh language	Friendly
Athletic	Eager to soothe hurt feelings	Happy
Competitive	Feminine	Helpful
Defends own beliefs	Flatterable	Inefficient
Dominant	Gentle	Jealous
Forceful	Gullible	Likable
Independent	Loves children	Moody
Individualistic	Loyal	Reliable
Leadership ability	Sensitive to other's needs	Secretive
Makes decisions easily	Shy	Sincere
Masculine	Soft spoken	Solemn
Self-reliant	Sympathetic	Tactful
Self-sufficient	Tender	Theatrical
Strong personality	Understanding	Truthful
Willing to take a stand	Warm	Unpredictable
Willing to take risks	Yielding	Unsystematic

Appendix D
MEASURES OF GENDERED TALK

<i>Measures of Gendered Talk</i> (In classroom discussions in comparison to the other gender)		
GENDER	TRAIT	SOURCE
Female	Rarely nominated to talk	LaFrance, 1991
Female	Talks less when they have the floor	LaFrance, 1991
Female	Are more likely to be interrupted	LaFrance, 1991
Female	Less likely to call out answers	Jones, 1989
Female	Less likely to initiate questions	Jones, 1989
Female	Less direct and aggressive, require more inference from listeners	Noddings, 1992
Female	Doubts the ideas they share	Lakoff, 1975
Female	Affiliates with others in the group	O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
Female	Attempts to cooperate and mutually interpret text	Linkin 1993
Female	Uses "sorry talk"	Alvermann, Commeyras, Young, Randall, & Hinson, 1997
Female	More tentative, hesitant, more false starts	O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
Female	Uses more qualifiers, repetition, and intensifiers	O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
Female	Makes more deferential remarks	O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
Female	Has a slower rate of speech	O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
Female	Encourages contributions from others in the group	O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
Female	Less likely to engage in conflict	O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
Female	More comfortable speaking in private	O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
Female	Uses other people as the characters in stories they tell	Tannen, 1990
Female	When telling stories about themselves, tend to be self-depreciating (seek acceptance from the listener)	Tannen, 1990
Female	Active listeners, nod and talk back while others are speaking	Tannen, 1990

Female	Asks questions to show interest and agreement	Tannen, 1990
Male	More likely to take the floor	LaFrance, 1991
Male	Holds the floor for longer periods of time	LaFrance, 1991
GENDER	TRAIT	SOURCE
Male	More likely to debate about the text	Moore, 1997
Male	Directs the conversation	Fishman, 1978
Male	More confidence in their ideas	Lakoff, 1975
Male	Initiates more questions	Jones, 1989
Male	Calls out answers	Jones, 1989
Male	More direct in their speech	Noddings, 1992
Male	Uses a reporting style	Tannen, 1990
Male	More comfortable speaking in public	Tannen, 1990
Male	Tells stories about themselves	Tannen, 1990
Male	Tends to tell humorous stories	Tannen, 1990
Male	Asks questions to determine if the other person knows what they are talking about	Tannen, 1990

Appendix E
ANALYTIC FACTORS

Analytic Factors			
	TYPE OF ANALYSIS	DEFINITION	SOURCE
1	Active Listening	Also known as <i>minimal response</i> (Zimmerman & West, 1975) or <i>backchanneling</i> (Yngve, 1970). Jumping into the conversation, before another speaker has finished their turn, to clarify or express agreement or disagreement, but not intending to begin one's own turn at the conversation. Usually, it is a single word such as 'right' or 'yeah' or to provide a word that the speaker appears to have forgotten.	Tannen 1990
2	Affiliation	Showing agreement or shared understanding with another group member by making comments that are in agreement with what another group member says, such as "right," "I thought so, too."	O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
3	Attempts to Understand the Characters	Trying to understand the motivations behind a character's actions or beliefs, rather than just being critical of them.	Linkin 1993
4	Compares Self to Character	Connecting one's own life experiences or attributes to those of a character.	Linkin 1993
5	Disagreement	Showing disagreement with another group member by making comments that are in opposition with what that group member says, such as "I don't think so," "My response was totally opposite of yours."	O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
6	Discourse of Action	An emphasis on the plot or events in a text.	Cherland 1992 Holland 1977
7	Discourse of Feeling	An emphasis on relationships in a text.	Cherland 1992 Holland 1977

	TYPE OF ANALYSIS	DEFINITION	SOURCE
8	Emotional Connection to Text	Having an emotional response to the text, such as “I felt so bad when Luna left.” or to a character, such as “The mother made me so mad!”	Bleich 1986
9	Ethic of Care	Morality is contextual and should be based on relationships and human interdependence.	Gilligan 1982/1993
10	Ethic of Justice	Morality is rational, impartial, and a function of rule or law. It is based on the spirit of individualism.	Gilligan 1982/1993
11	Focus on Author	Focusing on the author’s intentions or choices in writing.	Bleich 1986
12	Focus on Narrative Voice	Focusing on what is happening in the story or on the narrator’s point of view.	Bleich 1986
13	Focus on Plot/Analysis	Analyzing the narrative or focusing on the elements of fiction rather than on the story itself.	Cherland 1992
14	Hesitations	Pauses in the normal flow of speech.	O’Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
15	Intensifiers	Increases or reduces the intensity of the meaning of a word or phrase, such as ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’.	O’Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
16	Interruptions	Jumping into the conversation, before another speaker has finished their turn, with the intention of beginning one’s own turn at the conversation.	LaFrance 1991
17	Laughter	Laughing or chuckling at what a group member, character, or the author does or says.	
18	Leading or Tag Questions	Asking a question with an implied answer, such as “Do you think Regan was too whiney?” This may be done to manipulate the direction of the conversation or to avoid taking direct responsibility for one’s own thoughts.	Lakoff 1973

	TYPE OF ANALYSIS	DEFINITION	SOURCE
19	Length of Time Speaking	In order to determine the length of time one group member spoke, I counted the words in each turn using the word count feature on Microsoft Word. Then I added all the word counts up for each participant.	LaFrance 1991
20	Mutual Interpretation	Creating an understanding of a text that incorporates ideas from multiple members of a group.	Moore 1997
21	Personal Stories	Telling anecdotes about one's own experiences in order to reinforce one's comments.	Tannen 1990
22	Positioning Others in Group	Portraying another group member as a certain kind of person or as having particular characteristics.	
23	Positioning Self	Portraying one's self as a certain kind of person or as having particular characteristics.	
24	Qualifiers	"I think," "I feel like," "I don't know," "kind of" or "sort of," "I guess", "maybe", "probably", "it seems", or a high-rise intonation (a raised pitch, as if a question is being asked.).	O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
25	Questioning Others' Knowledge or Understanding	Making comments that question whether a group member or the author knows what they are talking about or understands the reality of a certain situation, such as "No parent would ever do that" or "Well, you haven't actually taught in a classroom yet".	Tannen 1990
26	Questions Asked	Straight questions, such as "What did you think of the ending?", clarification questions, such as "Are you talking about Regan?", or rhetorical questions, such as "What was he thinking?"	Tannen 1990 Jones 1989

	TYPE OF ANALYSIS	DEFINITION	SOURCE
27	Reading is Distanced	Looking at the text from outside of the narrative. Discussing characterization rather than commenting on the actions of a character. Looking at the text critically rather than discussing how they felt as a reader.	Flynn
28	Repetitions	Repeating words or phrases when speaking, such as "I think, I think, Regan was wrong." Some scholars, including O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky, view this as tentative or as a sign of insecurity in one's beliefs.	O'Donnell-Allen & Smagorinsky 1999
29	Resistant Reading	Reading with an alternative or challenging lens toward the social and/or cultural viewpoints of the text.	Linkin 1993
30	Sorry Talk	Qualifying or apologizing for what one says, which reduces the impact of the statement.	Alvermann, Commeyras, Young, Randall, & Hinson, 1997
31	Stories About Other People	Telling anecdotes about another person in order to reinforce one's comments.	Tannen 1990
32	Topic Control	Deciding on or changing the topic that is under discussion.	Fishman 1978
33	Turn Taking	The number of separate turns at speaking each group member took. I define a turn as an utterance, which may be a single word, bounded by another person's utterance.	LaFrance 1991
34	Use of Humor	Joking or making comments that might make group members laugh.	Tannen 1990
35	Value Judgments	Judging a character or other person by one's own value system, such as "I think she wasn't a very good mother because she wasn't very comforting to her son."	
36	Was Interrupted	During one's turn, another group member begins speaking with the intention of taking over the floor.	LaFrance 1991

Appendix F**COURSE SYLLABUS****Literature for Adolescents**

Fall 2009

3 credits

September 14 – December 14

Monday 4:40 – 7:20 p.m.

Course Goals: The first goal for this course is to familiarize you with some of the outstanding books written for young adults, focusing on those written in the past 25 years, with an emphasis on the past 10 years. The books I have selected for you are a good beginning, but only a beginning. You will find other, equally wonderful books on your own. I am also asking you to read varied types of books; the titles span genres and often vary as to type within the genre. This fulfills the second goal, which is to demonstrate the breadth and richness of young adult literature in terms of form, style, and cultural diversity. Most important is the third goal, which is to have you fall in love with young adult literature so that you won't want to stop reading, even when the course is over. If I succeed in this, then you'll pass on your love of reading to your students each year that you teach. We will attain these goals only if you read thoughtfully, explore your thinking in your written responses, share that thinking in class, and expand your ideas through conversation.

Course Description: This course will cover the characteristics of literature for adolescents; the rationale for using adolescent literature; adolescents' reading interests and attitudes; analysis of quality and appeal; methods of promoting engagement with adolescent literature; and culturally diverse literature.

Most classes will be a combination of discussion, both whole class and small group, and interactive lecture. On days that we discuss books, we will usually begin with small group discussions that will last for 30 minutes to an hour. We'll then have a short break and come back together and move into a whole class discussion of the books we've read for that day. At the end of many sessions, I will give a brief lecture on the next genre we will study.

To prepare for most discussions you will need to read/skim the textbook chapter (if you feel like you need the preparation) and the assigned and/or selected books, write a thoughtful response to the literature selection, and **come to class with book and response in hand**, prepared to talk. EVERYONE has good ideas. Each person's response enriches the group's understanding of the books, insight into how they work as literary objects, and possibilities for connecting reading, living, and learning. There are many

ways to respond to and interpret any text. We will be, I hope, quite varied in our responses. Don't look to me for right answers, only for information and possibilities! I will challenge your ideas in order to help you expand them. Indeed, I hope we all respectfully challenge one another as that makes for lively discussions.

Diversity: As part of this course we will discuss diversity as presented in literature for adolescents, with diversity defined as being related to but not limited to: age, creed, disability, ethnicity, gender, global perspectives, international background, language background, learning differences, marital status, multicultural perspectives, national origin, public assistance status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and veteran status.

Technology: From the first to final class, you are encouraged to consider the applications of technology as another way to meet the needs of your students and to enhance your teaching. This course integrates technology primarily through use of free software sites for creating a course “book **blog**” and a book review **podcast** (see below). This requires that you have access to the internet and a computer to download and use free software. Internet can be accessed on campus in various sites including the Peik Hall computer labs and Curriculum Library. You are also encouraged to use technology to discover new books, information about authors, and issues in the field. Please contact me with any questions about this aspect of the course.

Your Book Blog: You are required to share your journals, annotations, and reviews with your classmates via your course blog. After creating the blog, weekly maintenance will involve posting your responses to each “required” and “selected” book (see below). You will also post your book reviews and book annotations to this site (see below). You will also be required to respond to your “blog partner” every other week – although you are welcome to respond more often and to blog postings from other classmates as well. See below for information on the content of your book responses.

Blogging resources

- <http://blog.lib.xxxxxxxx>
Sponsored by xxx library, this blog service has no advertisements and features Movable Type software. User guide for Movable Type
- <http://blog.lib.xxx>
- <http://edublogs.org/> blogs for teachers and students. I've read about many teachers using this service, but I've never used it myself.
- <http://www.blogger.com/start> Blogger start up page. This service offers many template/presentation options.

Book Blog Examples:

- <http://xxx>
This book blog belongs to xxxx, former media director at xxx and co-author of four books about using nonfiction to get kids excited about reading
- <http://xxx>

- Book blog from a reading teacher at xxxx
- http://kidlitosphere.org/KidLitosphere_Central/Welcome.html The Society of Bloggers in Children's and Young Adult Literature. Click on "members" to see examples. This one is particularly good: <http://jkrbooks.typepad.com/>

Book Review Podcast: You will be creating three book reviews in this course (more information below) and have the OPTION of producing one of those book reviews in podcast form. Podcasts have become a popular and innovative way to engage students in reviews of books they read with the potential for a broader audience than teacher and classmates. I encourage all of you to experiment with this format for one of your reviews, but it is not required. Creating a podcast requires access to iMovie or some other recording and editing software. Your blog will serve as a hosting site for the finished product. If you choose to create a podcast for one of your reviews, you need only write one other review to account for the extra time you'll take producing and editing the review. Choose between: **3 written reviews OR 1 written review and 1 podcast review**

Conceptual Framework for P-12 Professional Education Programs: The central themes of the Conceptual Framework are:

- Promoting inquiry, research, and reflection;
- Honoring the diversity of our communities and learners; and
- Fostering a commitment to lifelong learning and professional development.

In this course you have shared responsibility with your instructor to synthesize the intersections of class sessions, readings, and assignments. This course embraces high expectations and a commitment to your individual learning and the practices that will positively benefit your future students. The required readings have been carefully selected to present you with a diverse array of literature for adolescents, to cause you to question assumptions about literature and teaching, to broaden your concept of literature, and to instill in you a lifelong commitment to reading.

Textbooks and Materials

Some of the books that you are required to read are available in the xxxx Library and from public libraries. Also, paperback editions have been ordered through the bookstore for the convenience of those who want to purchase their own copies.

The **optional** textbook, **LITERATURE AND THE CHILD - 7TH EDITION** (noted as **LC** in the syllabus) is on reserve in the xxxx Library and is also for sale at the bookstore. If you have not had a recent course in children's or adolescent literature, have not taught literature, or feel a bit unprepared in terms of literary terms and genres, reading the chapters in this book before the appropriate class will help you.

Required “whole class books”:

Alexie, Sherman	THE ABSOLUTELY TRUE DIARY OF A PART TIME INDIAN (contemporary realism)
Rosoff, Meg	HOW I LIVE NOW (contemporary realism)
Fleischman, Paul	JOYFUL NOISE (poetry)
Nye, Naomi Shihab	19 VARIETIES OF GAZELLE (poetry)
Hamilton, Virginia	THE PEOPLE COULD FLY (folklore)
Donnelly, Jennifer	NORTHERN LIGHT (historical fiction)
Almond, David	SKELLIG (fantasy)
Farmer, Nancy	THE HOUSE OF THE SCORPION (science fiction)
Armstrong, Jennifer	SHIPWRECK AT THE BOTTOM OF THE WORLD (nonfiction)
Jimenez, Francisco	THE CIRCUIT (biography/memoir)
Peters, Julie Ann	LUNA (multicultural/LGBT lit)
Yang, Gene Luen	AMERICAN BORN CHINESE (graphic novel)

Selected books: SELECT ONE from EACH group of books below. To accommodate your interests, I have attempted to select at least one book appropriate for middle school and one for high school in most genres:

Realistic Fiction:	Green, John LOOKING FOR ALASKA (HS) Johnson, Angela THE FIRST PART LAST (HS) Na, An A STEP FROM HEAVEN (MS)
Historical Fiction:	Zusak, Marcus THE BOOK THIEF (MS/HS) Anderson, Laurie Halse CHAINS (MS) Kadohata, Cynthia KIRA-KIRA (HS)
Fantasy:	Pullman, Phillip THE GOLDEN COMPASS Geras, Adele TROY (HS) Oppel, Kenneth AIRBORN (MS)
Science Fiction:	Anderson, M.T. FEED (HS) Clements, Andrew THINGS NOT SEEN (MS) Lowry, Lois THE GIVER (MS) **
Biography/Memoir:	Beah, Ishmael A LONG WAY GONE (HS) Giblin, James Cross THE LIFE AND DEATH OF ADOLF HITLER (MS/HS) Myers, Walter Dean BAD BOY (MS)
Graphic Novel:	Tan, Shaun THE ARRIVAL (MS) Satrapi, Marjane PERSEPOLIS: THE STORY OF A CHILDHOOD (HS) Spiegelman, Art MAUS I: A SURVIVOR’S TALE (HS)

** This is a “classic” in the field. If you have not already read it, you should choose it now.

Choice books in addition to the required and selected books above, **select adolescent literature of your choice for each genre listed below:**

Poetry: 1 additional book of your choice.
 Folklore: 1 additional book of your choice.
 Historical Fiction: 1 additional book of your choice.
 Fantasy: 1 additional book of your choice.
 Science Fiction: 1 additional book of your choice.
 Nonfiction: 1 additional book of your choice.
 Multicultural Lit: 1 additional book of your choice

COURSE OUTLINE, TOPICS & ASSIGNMENTS

9/14 — Introductions, Syllabus, Assignments
 Young adult literature overview (LC 1).

9/21 — Response to literature (LC 2).
 Realistic fiction.
The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian

9/28 — Realistic fiction (LC 7).
How I Live Now and **SELECTED book**.
 Poetry introduction.

10/5 — Poetry (LC 4).
Joyful Noise,
19 Varieties of Gazelle and **CHOICE book**.
 *Respond to blog partner
 Folklore introduction.

***10/12** — **Class will be held on Tuesday this week.**

***10/13** — Children’s Book Week lecture – xxxxx

10/19 — Folklore (LC 5).
People Could Fly and **1 CHOICE book**
 Historical fiction introduction.

10/26 — Historical fiction (LC 8).

A Northern Light,
SELECTED book and CHOICE book.

*Respond to blog partner
Fantasy introduction.

11/2 — Fantasy (LC 6).

Skellig,
SELECTED book and CHOICE book.
Science fiction introduction.

11/9 — Science fiction (LC 6).

House of the Scorpion,
SELECTED book and CHOICE book.
*Respond to blog partner
Nonfiction introduction.

11/16 — Nonfiction (LC 10).

Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World and CHOICE book.
1ST TWO REVIEWS DUE – OR 1ST REVIEW IF CREATING PODCAST

11/23 — Biography/Memoir (LC 9).

The Circuit and SELECTED book.
*Respond to blog partner

11/30 — Multicultural literature.

Luna and CHOICE book.

12/7 — Graphic novels and picture books for older readers.

American Born Chinese and SELECTED book.
*Respond to blog partner
FINAL REVIEW OR PODCAST DUE

12/14 – Censorship and adolescent literature.

Sharing book review podcasts.
ANNOTATIONS and MA & PhD PAPERS DUE.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. **Read, read, read.** You must read each required (“whole class”) book AND the “selected” or “choice” books as they are assigned. In some cases I have assigned one book and given you a selection of others to choose from. In other cases you have an assigned book and an opportunity for individual choice. You will have a

total of 25 full-length books read by the end of class. You also will have the opportunity to read several picture books appropriate for older readers during the class.

2. **Respond.** During or after your reading of the 12 whole class and the 6 selected books, write a brief response on your BOOK RESPONSE BLOG to each book (for a total of **18 response entries**). **You do NOT have to respond to the “choice” books.** You are free to write whatever you are thinking or to use the framework that appears in the Response Journal Guidelines (below) to spur your writing. Try, however, to vary the ways that you approach texts, even within the general structure of “personal” and “critical” responses. Although teaching is not the primary focus in this course, one thing that you will want to do when you are teaching is to vary the ways that you ask students to respond. Doing so yourself, in this class, will be good practice. **Respond as a READER, not as a teacher.**

***Bring your written responses to class** to refer to during discussion. Even though you will post these responses on your book blog, you are also required to turn in a paper copy to me each week. These are **due at the end of every class in which we discuss assigned and selected books.** They will be graded according to criteria described on the Response Journal Guidelines. Each response will be worth up to 3 points. Reading and responding (requirements 1 and 2) constitute over half (**54 points**) of your grade.

Responding to blog partners: Approximately every other week you are required to respond to the postings of your blog partner in the comments area of their blog. This ensures that at least one other person besides me is reading and responding to your entries. These responses may be brief, but do make sure to respond to each of the postings from your blog partner that week. Respond as a reader with genuine curiosity, questioning, and insight. Responding to your blog partner is worth up to 2 points each week it is assigned for a total of 5 weeks (**10 points**). This will begin the week of October 5. Responses to classmates’ blog postings are due by midnight on the day they have been assigned.

Please note: Although I will collect blog posts, read your blog entries, and assign points weekly, I will only comment on your responses during the weeks when your blog partner does not.

3. **Participation.** It is important for your own learning and for the good of the class that you are in class every session, on time, and ready to go. Please be prepared to be an active voice in class. Absences are only excused for unavoidable reasons such as illness or family emergency and you must notify me before class time in writing (email is fine) and/or by phone. Any unexcused absences will result in a 5 point per absence deduction from your final grade. (**10 points**).

4. **Annotations and reviews.** As you are reading your individual choice books (a total of 7), create an **annotated bibliography of 4** of them. These annotations should be shared with others in the class via your blog. See the Annotated Bibliography and Reviews guidelines below for details.

Write a **1 ½ - 2 page book review for the other 3 books** or write **1 review and create 1 podcast**, which will also be shared with others in the class via your blog and during the last day of the course. See guidelines for details. Please email an electronic copy of the reviews and annotations to me on the day they are due.

The first 2 reviews or 1 review (if creating a podcast) are due on or before **Nov. 16th.**

The last review or podcast is due on or before **Dec. 7th.**

Complete annotations are due on or before **Dec. 14th.**

2 points for each annotation (**8 points**) (**1 point each** MA & PhD students)

6 points for each review & **12 points** for podcast (**18 points**) (**4 points each** MA & PhD students)

5. **MA and PhD students only:** In addition to the above requirements (except for responding to a blog partner), select an issue (such as cultural diversity in literature, the image of women in fiction, etc.) and read journals and books that comment on that particular issue. Present your findings in a paper of 10-12 pages in length. **Clear your ideas with me before you begin. Due December 14th. (20 points).**

Guidelines and Grading Criteria for Response Journals (Blog): You are free to respond before (prediction), during, and/or after your reading, whatever you choose. Please don't, however, make the mistake of finishing a book and then waiting to respond to it. The immediacy of your response is lost when you wait. Respond in the following manner.

Respond personally.

Select, combine, or ignore the following general prompts:

- Write anything you'd like to say about your reading experience.
- What was the book about? What did it remind you of? How did it make you feel?
- Is there anything in your life that helped you to connect (or not connect) with the book?
- Is there anything in the book that helped you to think about your own life?
- Does the book reflect the world as you know it or something different?

Respond critically.

Use criteria (for example, those in chapters 1-11 of *Literature and the Child*) to guide you.

Remember to begin with something positive (the book wouldn't be on the reading list if it wasn't judged to be a good book!) and be sure to judge the book for what it is, rather than for what it is not.

- What makes the book memorable as a piece of literature?
- How does it exemplify qualities that define the genre?

Your personal response should constitute at least half of your writing, which should be no less than 2 and no more than 3 pages typed, double spaced – (perhaps type your response in a document before posting to your blog). **This is not a formal paper** and will not be graded on the quality of the writing. It is meant to encourage you to think deeply about what you read and to explore interesting ideas.

Criteria for grading (3 points per response):

- Thoughtfulness of personal response. Interesting ideas, speculations, and questions. Connections to specific aspects of text. Clarity of ideas is key here. (1 point)
- Appropriate critical insight into the quality of the book. (1 point)
- Written responses show thorough reflection on and evaluation of the book - no less than 2 typed, double spaced pages. (1 point)

Guidelines and Grading Criteria for Annotated Bibliography and Reviews

A complete **annotation** consists of bibliographic information in the following format:

Last name, First name. (date). Title with only first word and proper nouns capitalized. Ill: First and last name if there is one and is different from author. City: Publisher. ISBN number.

And 3 – 6 lines of typed text that describe important aspects of the book such as gender and age of character, genre, theme, literary strengths. Please write in complete sentences.

Reviews are brief (**no more than 2 pages, no less than 1 ½ pages**) discussions of one book. They should include the content indicated under annotations, but with a more extended discussion of the content and quality of the book, mentioning particular strengths or concerns. We will read examples of reviews in the weeks before your first reviews are due. Podcast reviews should cover the same details about the book, but should also demonstrate a grasp of the technology through use of editing, music, and voice intonation. We will also listen to examples of literature podcasts in the weeks to come.

Evaluation of Student Performance:**Grading policy:**

All assignments will be graded based upon the degree to which the criteria described in each assignment are met. In addition, the following will be considered:

- Appropriateness: Does my work meet all the criteria given on the syllabus and in class?
- Evidence of knowledge: Is it clear from my work that I know and understand the relevant material?
- Completeness: Have I included all relevant information and ideas?
- Clarity: Is my work organized so that ideas and information are clear? Do the wording and phrasing of my sentences match the thoughts I'm trying to convey?
- Professional presentation: In assignments other than the response journal, do I communicate my ideas in a manner reflective of a professional educator? Do I follow formal conventions of spelling, punctuation and grammar? Have I included complete bibliographic information when necessary?

Grading scale (out of a total of 100 points):

100-93 A
 93-91 A-
 90-88 B+
 87-84 B
 83-81 B-
 80-78 C+
 77-74 C
 73-71 C-
 70-68 D+/etc.

The following grade definitions are University policy:

A -- achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.

B -- achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.

C -- achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.

D -- achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.

S -- achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better (achievement required for an S is at the discretion of the instructor but may be no lower than a C-).

F (or N) -- Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I (see also I)

I -- (Incomplete) Assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances, e.g., hospitalization, a student is prevented from completing the work of the course on time. Requires a written agreement between instructor and student.

xxxx Mission Statement:

The mission of the xxxx is to generate knowledge about teaching, learning, and human development, and to apply that knowledge to improve education for all individuals.

Course Modifications:

Please let me know the first week of class if you have a learning disability that may affect your performance in this class. I will work with you and Disability Services to make any necessary modifications possible to ensure your success. It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements.

Academic dishonesty policy:

Academic dishonesty in any portion of the academic work for a course shall be grounds for awarding a grade of F for the entire course. Plagiarism and other forms of misrepresentation of your work will not be tolerated. The instructor may request electronic copies of your work to ensure originality of thought and text.

Make-up policy:

You will not be able to make up activities related to class participation; there are no “extra credit” assignments. Assignments should be turned in at the end of the class period. Late assignments may be marked down one letter grade unless there is a reasonable explanation for their being late. The instructor must be notified if an assignment will be handed in, for any reason, later than the day the assignment is due. Under extreme circumstances, the instructor will grant the student an Incomplete for a course according to conditions outlined and agreed to by the student in a signed contract.

Returning Papers, Exams and Projects:

Unless otherwise stated in the description of your assignments, I will return your response journals at the beginning of the following class. **Assignments from the end of the course will be returned to you via email after course grades have been submitted to the registrar.**

How to Access Your Grades:

xxxxx

University Policies

Statement on classroom conduct: (<http://www.xxx>)

I expect you to be courteous and considerate in class discussions, arrive on time, and respect your peers by being fully engaged in the work of the class.

Statement on academic misconduct:

(<http://www.xxx>)

Scholastic misconduct is broadly defined as "any act that violates the rights of another student in academic work or that involves misrepresentation of your own work." Scholastic dishonesty includes, (but is not necessarily limited to): cheating on assignments or examinations; plagiarizing, which means misrepresenting as you own work any part of work done by another; submitting the same paper, or substantially similar papers, to meet the requirements of more than one course without the approval and consent of all instructors concerned; depriving another student of necessary course materials; or interfering with another student's work.

Statement regarding sexual harassment:

(<http://www.xxx>)

"Sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic advancement in any University activity or program; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis of employment or academic decisions affecting this individual in any University activity or program; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. University policy prohibits sexual harassment. Complaints about sexual harassment should be reported to the University Office of Equal Opportunity, xxxx.)

Support Services:

There are a number of support services that you can access as a student at the University. If you need anything, please come to see me and I will find appropriate help.

This publication/material is available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact your instructor. xxxx is an equal opportunity employer and educator.

Appendix G

ANALYTICAL MEMO

Agreement (Right, Yeah, Exactly) = active listening

Is agreement being cooperative, a sign of affiliation, mutual interpretation, and/or active listening?

QUESTION: Asking questions that imply an answer – a way to reject passively or without taking responsibility for beliefs?

i.e. “Do you think it was a little too tidy at the end?” Luna Group One line 118

QUESTION: Is discussion of characters and their relationships, but in an analytical way, more about analysis than relationships (Cherland – focus on relationships)?

i.e. lines 42-47 Luna Group One

QUESTION: Or a way to maintain distance between the reader and the literary world (Male mode of reading)?

Qualifiers = “I think,” “I feel like,” “I don’t know,” “kind of” or “sort of,” “I guess”, “maybe”, “probably,” “it seems”, raised pitch like a question

QUESTION: What about “um,” “you know,” “I’d say”, “I would say,” “like”, “I mean” used as filler?

QUESTION: When a participant interjects an explanatory word into another participant’s turn is it a way of controlling the interpretation?

i.e. “what I was saying too was...” “Safer” “Yeah, safer” – lines 65-67 Luna Group One

Interruption: Jumping into the conversation, before another speaker has finished their turn, with the intention of beginning one’s own turn at the conversation.

Interjection: Jumping into the conversation, before another speaker has finished their turn, to clarify or express agreement but not intending to begin one’s own turn at the conversation. Usually, it is a single word such as ‘right’ or ‘yeah’ or to provide a word that the speaker appears to have forgotten.

Turn: An utterance. This may be a single word.

Intensifier: Increases or reduces the intensity of the meaning of a word or phrase.

NOTE: In order to determine the length of a turn I was counting lines of transcription, however that seems inexact so I have begun counting the words in each turn (tedious, but more accurate). I am highlighting the area I want counted and using the word count feature on Microsoft Word. Then I add all the word counts up for each participant.

The result is interesting. The percentage of lines spoken and the percentage of words spoken are equal, so it doesn't appear to matter whether I count lines or words.

Once I have all the counts (Turns, Words, Interruptions, etc.) I chart them using the chart feature on Microsoft Excel.

Everyone was speaking more slowly and more tentatively than in other discussions. I attributed that to the subject matter of transsexualism.

In *Luna* Group One, Paul exhibits both male and female measures of gendered talk. (more female than male)

- Male measures:
 - Takes more turns (more likely to take the floor) and (shows more comfort speaking in public)
 - Speaks longer than any other member (hold the floor for longer periods of time) – longest turn 166 words
 - Controls the topic more often (directs the conversation)
 - Tells a story about himself
 - Used humor more than either female
 - He initiated the more questions than Jan(excluding clarification questions), and an equal number as Julia
- Female measures:
 - He is the only one who uses sorry talk (self depreciating), other than Jim who is qualifying his question
 - Has the most qualifiers, intensifiers, and repetitions
 - Has the most hesitations (more tentative, hesitant, more false starts)
 - Uses active listening more than any other group member (nods and talks back while others are speaking)
 - He is interrupted more than he interrupts (but by a VERY small margin)
 - He and Jim made the most attempts at affiliation
 - He made the most attempts at mutual interpretation

- He and Jim were the least likely to disagree with other group members

In *Luna* Group One, Julia exhibits both male and female measures of gendered talk (more male than female).

- Male measures:
 - Interrupts more than she is interrupted (but by a VERY small margin)
 - Interrupts more than any other member (but by a VERY small margin)
 - Has the fewest hesitations (the same number as Jim – 1)
 - Uses fewer intensifiers than either male in the group
 - She initiated the more questions than Jan (excluding clarification questions), and an equal number as Paul
 - She and Jim made the fewest attempts at mutual interpretation
 - She made the fewest attempts at affiliation
 - Was likely to disagree with other group members more than Paul and Jim
- Female measures:
 - Speaks for the shortest total amount of time of anyone in the group, but her longest turn was slightly (1 word) longer than Jim's longest turn – longest turn 74 words
 - Has more qualifiers and repetitions than Jim but less than Paul
 - Controls the topic less than the males in the group
 - Took fewer turns than the males in the group (less likely to take the floor)
 - Used active listening more than Jan and an equal amount as Jim

In *Luna* Group One, Jim exhibits exhibits both male and female measures of gendered talk (more male than female).

- Male measures:
 - Takes more turns (more likely to take the floor) and (shows more comfort speaking in public)
 - Speaks for a longer total time than female members (hold the floor for longer periods of time) –
 - * However he has the shortest number of words for his longest speech (73 words)
 - Controls the topic more often (directs the conversation)
 - Interrupts more than he is interrupted (but by a VERY small margin)
 - Uses the fewest qualifiers, hesitations, and repetitions

- Used humor more than either female
 - He initiated the most questions (excluding clarification questions)
 - He and Julia made the fewest attempts at mutual interpretation
- Female measures:
- He has the shortest number of words for his longest speech (73 words)
 - He uses more intensifiers than either female in the group
 - Uses active listening more than Jan and an equal amount as Julia
 - He and Paul made the most attempts at affiliation
 - He and Paul were the least likely to disagree with other group members

In *Luna* Group One, Jan exhibits both male and female measures of gendered talk (more male than female).

- Male measures:
- She uses the least amount of intensifiers of anyone in the group
 - Her longest speech was longer than Jim's longest speech (91 words)
 - Uses active listening less than any other group member
 - Tells a story about herself
 - Other than one clarification question, Jan did not initiate any questions
 - Made more attempts at affiliation than Julia, but fewer than Jim and Paul
 - Was the most likely to disagree with other group members
- Female measures:
- Takes the fewest turns (less likely to take the floor)
 - Speaks for shorter total amount of time than male members (talks less when they have the floor)
 - * However her longest speech was longer than Jim's longest speech (91 words)
 - Never controls the topic
 - Is Interrupted more than she interrupts (but by a VERY small margin)
 - Has more qualifiers, hesitations, and repetitions than Jim but less than Paul
 - Made more attempts at mutual interpretation than Julia or Jim

In *Luna* Group1, Paul, Julia, and Jim use questions and interjections to intimate what the acceptable response should be.

- Line 118: “Do you think it was a little too tidy at the end?” –
QUESTION: Is this a way to reject the text without taking responsibility for the rejection?
- Line 87: “And what does it say about parents?”
- Line 273: “was anybody else annoyed by Regan at times?”
- Lines 61-68: Julia’s interjection defines Jim and Paul’s points.

JIM: I have no idea why she chose to do that. It could also be the whole aspect of she has absolutely no idea what it's like to be transgender and so she didn't want to jump into that shoes but she might be able to at least see what it's like to be that way or at least see someone going through that.

PAUL: And that's what I was saying too was..

JULIA: (*Interrupting*) Safer..

PAUL: (*Continuing*) yeah safer, in the sense that, you know, odds say, based on how many people are transgender that are going to read this book, I mean most of her readers are going to align themselves with you know, with Regan moreover than someone like Luna, you know.

In *Luna* Group One, Paul exhibits both male and female measures of gendered reading. (equally male and female)

- Male measures:
 - He focused on character action more than any other group member
 - He and Jim were more concerned with author intent than the female members of the group
 - He was more concerned with narrative voice than the other group members (by a small margin)
 - He and Jim had more analytical responses to the text (discussion of plot) than Jan and less than Julia
- Equal measures:
 - He was equally as concerned with an ethic of care as an ethic of justice
- Female measures:
 - He and Julia read resistantly less than the other group members
 - He introduced his personal experience to his interpretation of the text
 - He focused on characterization and relationships more than Jim, the same amount as Julia, and less than Jan

- He made more emotional connections to the text than any other group members (by a small margin)

In *Luna* Group One, Jim exhibits both male and female measures of gendered reading. (more male than female)

- Male measures:
 - Read resistantly more than any other group member
 - He focused on character action as many times as Julia and more than Jan
 - He did not focus on relationships at all, but discussed characterization 3 times (less than anyone else in the group)
 - He only appeared to make one emotional connection to the text, and that was an expression of anger
 - He was more concerned with an ethic of justice than an ethic of care
 - He made less of an attempt to understand the characters than any other group member (by a small margin)
 - He and Paul were more concerned with author intent than the female members of the group
 - He was less concerned with narrative voice than Paul, as much as Julia, and more than Jan
 - He and Paul had more analytical responses to the text (discussion of plot) than Jan and less than Julia
- Female measures:
 - He introduced his personal experience to his interpretation of the text

In *Luna* Group One, Jan exhibits both male and female measures of gendered reading. (more female than male)

- Male measures:
 - Read resistantly more than Paul or Julia
- Female measures:
 - She introduced her personal experience to her interpretation of the text
 - She focused on character action less than any other group member
 - She focused on relationships and characterization more than any other group member
 - She was more concerned with an ethic of care than an ethic of justice

- She made more emotional connections to the text than Jim or Julia
- She was the group member least concerned with narrative voice
- She and Julia were the least concerned with author intent
- She was the least analytical in her responses to the text (discussion of plot)

In *Luna* Group One, Julia exhibits both male and female measures of gendered reading. (more male than female)

- Male measures:
 - She focused on character action as many times as Jim and more than Jan
 - She did not appear to make any emotional connections to the text
 - She was more concerned with an ethic of justice than an ethic of care
 - She was less concerned with narrative voice than Paul, as much as Jim, and more than Jan
 - She was the most analytical in her responses to the text (discussion of plot)
- Female measures:
 - She and Paul read resistantly less than the other group members
 - She focused on characterization and relationships more than Jim, the same amount as Paul, and less than Jan
 - She and Jan were the least concerned with author intent

Question: Will the members of the all female discussion group exhibit more male or more female traits or will it depend on the participant?

Appendix H

LUNA SMALL GROUP ONE - CODING CHARTS

ACTIVE LISTENING:			
Paul	11 instances	Jan	4 instances
Jim	6 instances	Julia	8 instances
MALES	17	FEMALES	12

AFFILIATIONS:			
Paul	6	Jan	3
Jim	6	Julia	1
MALES	12 (75%)	FEMALES	4

AGREEMENT:			
Paul	16	Jan	3
Jim	8	Julia	4
MALES	24 (77%)	FEMALES	7

ATTEMPTS TO UNDERSTAND THE CHARACTER:			
Paul	2	Jan	2
Jim	1	Julia	2
MALES	3	FEMALES	4 (57%)

COMPARES SELF TO CHARACTER:			
Paul	0	Jan	0
Jim	0	Julia	0
MALES	0	FEMALES	0

DISAGREEMENT:			
Paul	4	Jan	6
Jim	4	Julia	5
MALES	8	FEMALES	11 (58%)

DISCOURSE OF ACTION:			
Paul	16	Jan	8
Jim	14	Julia	17
MALES	30 (55%)	FEMALES	25

DISCOURSE OF FEELING:			
Paul	8	Jan	5
Jim	6	Julia	1
MALES	14 (56%)	FEMALES	11

EMOTIONAL CONNECTION TO TEXT:			
Paul	3	Jan	2
Jim	1	Julia	0
MALES	4 (67%)	FEMALES	2

ETHIC OF CARE:			
Paul	2	Jan	1
Jim	1	Julia	0
MALES	3 (75%)	FEMALES	1

ETHIC OF JUSTICE:			
Paul	2	Jan	0
Jim	2	Julia	1
MALES	4 (80%)	FEMALES	1

FOCUS ON AUTHOR:			
Paul	3	Jan	1
Jim	3	Julia	1
MALES	6 (75%)	FEMALES	2

FOCUS ON NARRATIVE VOICE:			
Paul	4	Jan	2
Jim	3	Julia	3
MALES	7 (58%)	FEMALES	5

FOCUS ON PLOT, ANALYSIS:			
Paul	8	Jan	1
Jim	8	Julia	10
MALES	16 (59%)	FEMALES	11

HESITATIONS:			
Paul	5 instances	Jan	3 instances
Jim	1 instance	Julia	1 instance
MALES	6 (60%)	FEMALES	4

HUMOR:			
Paul	3	Jan	1
Jim	3	Julia	0
MALES	6 (88%)	FEMALES	1

INTENSIFIERS:			
Paul	20 instances	Jan	10 instances
Jim	17 instances	Julia	13 instances
MALES	37 (61%)	FEMALES	23

INTERRUPTIONS:			
Paul	8 instances	Jan	5 instances
Jim	5 instances	Julia	9 instances
MALES	13	FEMALES	14 (52%)

IS INTERRUPTED:			
Paul	9 instances	Jan	6 instances
Jim	4 instances	Julia	8 instances
MALES	13	FEMALES	14 (52%)

LAUGHTER:			
Paul	2	Jan	5
Jim	4	Julia	4
MALES	6	FEMALES	9 (60%)

LEADING QUESTIONS:			
Paul	1	Jan	0
Jim	3	Julia	2
MALES	4 (67%)	FEMALES	2

MUTUAL INTERPRETATION:			
Paul	4	Jan	3
Jim	1	Julia	1
MALES	5 (55%)	FEMALES	4

POSITIONING OTHERS:			
Paul	0	Jan	0
Jim	0	Julia	0
MALES	0	FEMALES	0

POSITIONING SELF:			
Paul	2	Jan	1
Jim	2	Julia	0
MALES	9 (80%)	FEMALES	1

QUALIFIERS:			
Paul	27 instances	Jan	20 instances
Jim	8 instances	Julia	18 instances
MALES	35	FEMALES	38 (52%)

QUESTIONING OTHER'S KNOWLEDGE:			
Paul	0	Jan	1
Jim	4	Julia	1
MALES	4 (67%)	FEMALES	2

QUESTIONS ASKED:			
Paul	5	Jan	1

Jim	5	Julia	4
MALES	10 (67%)	FEMALES	5

READING IS DISTANCED:			
Paul	13	Jan	8
Jim	16	Julia	15
MALES	29 (56%)	FEMALES	23

REPETITIONS:			
Paul	13 instances	Jan	4 instances
Jim	3 instances	Julia	5 instances
MALES	16 (64%)	FEMALES	9

RESISTANT READING:			
Paul	2	Jan	3
Jim	5	Julia	2
MALES	7 (58%)	FEMALES	5

STORIES ABOUT SELF:			
Paul	2	Jan	1
Jim	1	Julia	0
MALES	3 (75%)	FEMALES	1

STORIES ABOUT OTHERS:			
Paul	0	Jan	0
Jim	0	Julia	0
MALES	0	FEMALES	0

VALUE JUDGEMENTS:			
Paul	1	Jan	2
Jim	6	Julia	3
MALES	7 (58%)	FEMALES	5

Appendix I

CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Taken from Fairclough, N. (2001). *Language and Power*.

DESCRIPTION PHASE

Vocabulary – Formal features have experiential, relational, and/or expressive values.

Experiential: a cue to the way in which the text producer's experience of the natural or social world is represented. Social relations.

Relational: a cue to the social relationships which are enacted via the text in the discourse.

Expressive: a cue to the producer's evaluation of the reality it relates to. Has to do with subjects and social identities.

Colocation: the way words co-occur. Behavior collocates with sick and healthy in a psychiatric text.

1. What experiential values do words have?
 - a. What classification schemes are drawn upon?
 - b. Are there words that are ideologically contested?
 - c. Is there rewording or overwording?
 - d. What ideologically significant meaning relations are there between words?
 - i. *Synonymy* – words have the same meaning
 - ii. *Hyponymy* – the meaning of one word is included within the meaning of another word
 - iii. *Antonymy* – the meaning of one word is incompatible with the meaning of another (woman and man; cat and dog)
2. What relational values do words have?

How do the choice of wordings depend on, and help create, social relationships between participants?

 - a. Are there euphemistic expressions?
 - b. Are there markedly formal or informal words?
3. What expressive values do words have?

The user's evaluation of practices is implicit in the vocabulary used.
4. What metaphors are used?

Grammar –

5. What experiential values do grammatical features have?
 - a. What types of process and participant predominate?
 - b. Is agency unclear?
 - c. Are processes what they seem?
 - i. Actions (subject – verb – object) – 2 participants
 - ii. Events (subject – verb) – 1 participant
 - iii. Attributions (subject – verb- compliment) – 1 participant
 - d. Are nominalizations used?
 - i. A process converted into a noun
 - e. Are sentences active or passive?
 - f. Are sentences positive or negative?

6. What relational values do grammatical features have?
 - a. What modes are used?
 - i. *Declarative* (subject – verb)
 - ii. *Grammatical question* (who, what, when, where, why, how, which or yes/no questions)
 - iii. *Imperative* (starts with a verb, i.e. Open, Come)
 - iv. The 3 modes position the speaker and addressee differently.
 - b. Are there important features of relational modality?
 - i. The authority of one participant in relation to the others.
 - c. Are the pronouns *we* and *you* used, and if so, how?

7. What expressive values do grammatical features have?
 - a. Are there important features of expressive modality?
 - i. The speaker/writer's authority with respect to the truth or a representation of reality.
 - ii. Modal auxiliaries
 1. *May/may not* – permission or possibility
 2. *Must* – obligation or certainty

8. How are (simple) sentences linked together?
 - a. What logical connectors are used?
 - i. Mark temporal, spatial, and logical relationships between sentences

- ii. Logical connectors cue ideological assumptions (i.e. *even though* or *as a result*)
- b. Are complex sentences characterized by coordination or subordination?
 - i. Coordination – component simple sentences have equal weight
 - ii. Subordination – there is a main clause and a subordinate clause
- c. What means are used for referring inside and outside the text?

Textual structures –

- 9. What interactional conventions are used?
 - a. Are there ways in which one participant controls the turns of others?
 - b. Turn taking
 - c. Interruption
 - d. Silence
 - e. Formulation - a rewording of what has been said to check understanding
- 10. What larger scale structures does the text have?
 - a. What is the order in which elements appear?
 - i. Cause and effect
 - ii. Chronological
 - iii. Compare and contrast
 - iv. Order of importance
 - v. Problem and solution
 - vi. Sequential

INTERPRETATION PHASE

The relationship between text and interaction.

1. **Context:** What interpretation(s) are participants giving to the situational and intertextual contexts?

2. **Discourse type(s):** What discourse type(s) are being drawn upon?
 - What rules, systems or principles of phonology
grammar, sentence cohesion, vocabulary
semantics and pragmatics?
 - What schemata, frames and scripts?

3. **Difference and change:** Are answers to questions 1 and 2 different for different participants?
And do they change during the course of the interaction?

EXPLANATION PHASE

The relationship between interaction and social context.

1. **Social determinants:** What power relations at situational, institutional and societal levels help shape this discourse?

2. **Ideologies:** What elements of members' resources, which are drawn upon, have an ideological character?

3. **Effects:** How is this discourse positioned in relation to struggles at the situational, institutional and societal levels?
 - Are these struggles overt or covert?
 - Is the discourse normative with respect to MR or creative?
 - Does it contribute to sustaining existing power relations, or transforming them?

Appendix J

CONSENT FORM

The Influence of Gender on Readers' Responses to Literature

You are invited to be in a research study of gender and response to literature. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a teacher and you are enrolled in a course that studies adolescent literature. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: Beth Brendler – a PhD candidate in Literacy Education
- XXXXXXXXXXXX.

Background Information

The purpose of this study is: To examine if and how gender influences response to reading.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

Fill out an initial questionnaire regarding your views on response to literacy and gender, allow me to read and analyze your written assignments, allow me to observe and record your whole class and small group discussions of literature, allow me to read your blogs, and (for those of you who will be selected for additional interviews) allow me to interview you periodically regarding your response to the texts that are read in this class.

This study will continue for the entire semester.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study

The study has few risks for you, as a participant, because the research will not influence your grade for this class or affect any other evaluation of your educational progress. You will not be identified in the write up, and even the name of the institution and city will not be identified in any written reports. Other than my advisor (XXXXX) and I (and possibly a transcriber), no one will see the questionnaire, interview data, or transcript data that is collected, including your teacher.

A benefit to participation is that the study will illuminate the way gender influences reading and response to literature and potentially affects best practice.

Compensation:

If you are selected as one of the participants to be interviewed outside of class, and you agree to participate in the interviews, you will be compensated for your time with a \$25 gift card to a local bookstore. The gift card will be given to interview participants, who complete the study, at the end of the semester (in December 2009).

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. Pseudonyms will replace your name on all data after it is collected. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only my advisor (XXXXX) and I will have access to the records. All audio tapes will be destroyed once they have been transcribed.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with XXXXXXXXXX. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time with out affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is Beth Brendler. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact me at my office at XXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXX. You may also contact my advisor at XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, XXX, XXXX, XXXX; (XXX) XXXXXX.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

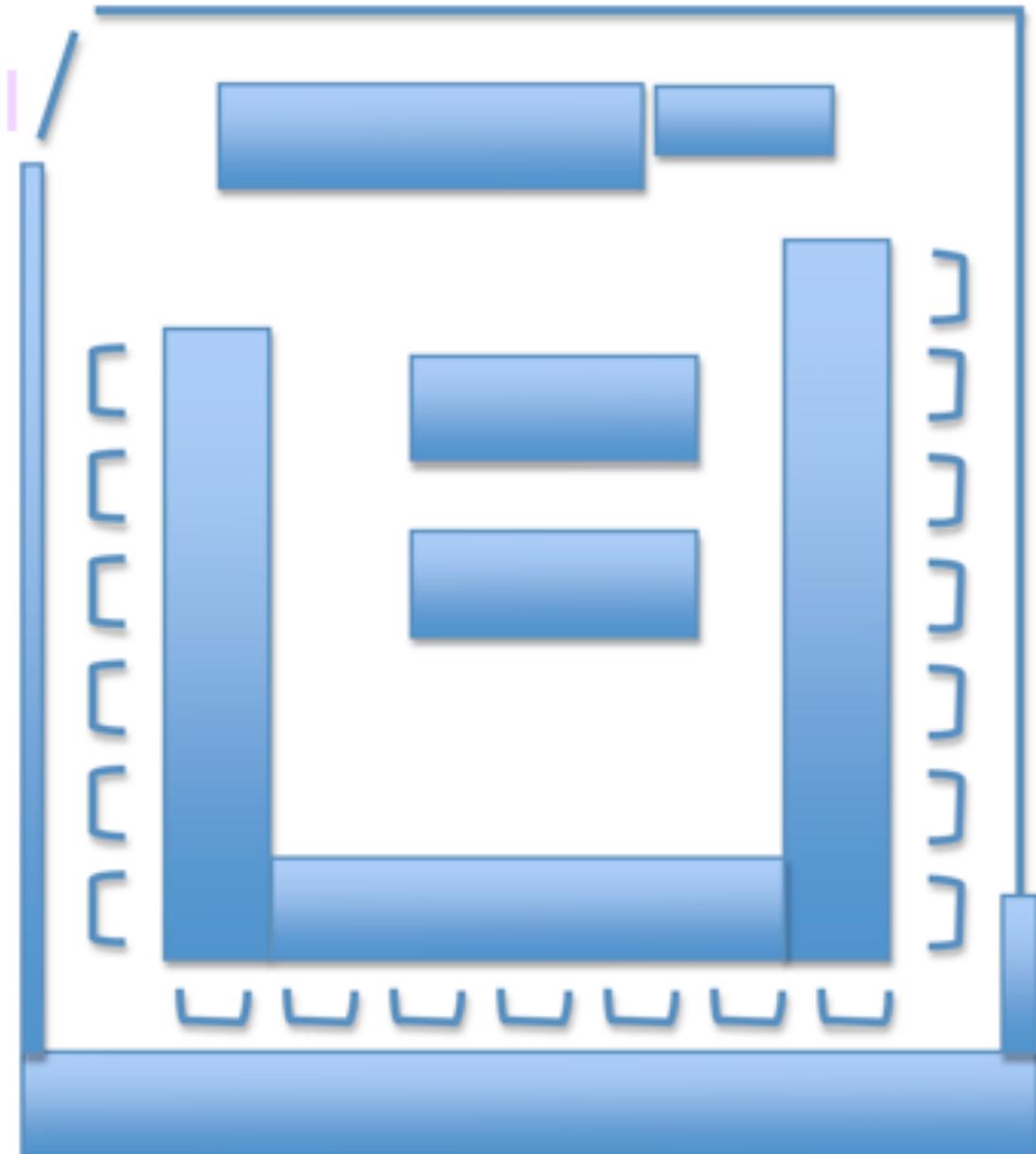
_____ I am interested in being interviewed.

Appendix K

CLASSROOM LAYOUT

North

South



Appendix L

TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

These transcription conventions were adapted from a system developed by Gail Jefferson and printed in Atkinson & Heritage (1984).

[]	brackets indicate overlapping utterances
=	equal marks indicate contiguous utterances, or continuation of the same utterance to the next line
(.)	period within parentheses indicates micropause
(2.0)	number within parentheses indicates pause of length in approximate seconds
ye:s	colon indicates stretching of sound it follows
<u>yes</u>	underlining indicates emphasis
YES	capital letters indicate increased volume
°yes°	degree marks indicate decreased volume of materials between
hhh	h's indicate audible aspiration, possibly laughter
·hhh	raised, large period indicates inbreath audible aspiration, possibly laughter
ye(hh)s	h's within parentheses indicate within-speech aspiration, possibly laughter
((cough))	items within double parentheses indicate some sound or feature of the talk which is not easily transcribable, e.g. “((in falsetto))”
(yes)	parentheses indicate transcriber doubt about hearing of passage
↑yes, ↓yes	arrows indicate upward or downward intonation of sound they precede

Appendix M

GENDER OF THE PROTAGONIST IN REQUIRED AND SELECTED TEXTS

TITLE	PROTAGONIST	R/S	GENRE
ABSOLUTELY TRUE DIARY OF A PART-TIME INDIAN	Male	R	CRF
HOW I LIVE NOW	Female	R	CRF
JOYFUL NOISE	N/A	R	Poetry
19 VARIETIES OF GAZELLE	N/A	R	Poetry
THE PEOPLE COULD FLY	N/A	R	Folklore
NORTHERN LIGHT	Female	R	HF
SKELLIG	Male/Female	R	Fantasy
THE HOUSE OF THE SCORPION	Male	R	SF
SHIPWRECK AT THE BOTTOM OF THE WORLD	Male	R	NF
THE CIRCUIT	Male	R	Memoir
LUNA	Female/Male	R	CRF
AMERICAN BORN CHINESE	Male	R	GN
LOOKING FOR ALASKA	Male	S	CRF
THE FIRST PART LAST	Male	S	CRF
A STEP FROM HEAVEN	Female	S	CRF
THE BOOK THIEF	Female	S	HF
CHAINS	Female	S	HF
KIRA-KIRA	Female	S	HF
THE GOLDEN COMPASS	Female	S	Fantasy
TROY	Female	S	Fantasy
AIRBORN	Male	S	Fantasy
FEED	Male	S	SF
THINGS NOT SEEN	Male	S	SF
THE GIVER	Male	S	SF
THE LIFE AND DEATH OF ADOLF HITLER	Male	S	BIO/Mem
A LONG WAY GONE	Male	S	BIO/Mem
BAD BOY	Male	S	BIO/Mem
THE ARRIVAL	Male	S	GN
MAUS I: A SURVIVOR'S TALE	Male	S	GN
PERSEPOLIS: THE STORY OF A CHILDHOOD	Female	S	GN

R = Required text for whole class

S = Students selected one from each genre

CRF = Contemporary Realistic Fiction

HF = Historical Fiction

SF = Science Fiction

BIO/Mem = Biography or Memoir

GN = Graphic Novel

R = 2 BOTH

R = 5 MALE

R = 2 FEMALE

S = 11 MALE

S = 7 FEMALE

Selected:

CRF = 2 M, 1 F

HF = 3 F

F = 1 M, 2 F

SF = 3 M

BIO = 3 M

GN = 2 M, 1 F

Appendix N

CRITICAL READING GUIDE

9/28/09

A Critical Reading

One way to recognize how your own ideologies shape you as a reader and how ideologies are encoded in the texts you read, view, and consume.

Apol, L. (1998). But what does this have to do with kids?: Literary theory and children's literature. *Journal of Children's Literature*, 24(2), 38-46.

1. What explicit messages does the text present? What are the implicit, or underlying, assumptions? How do they relate to each other?

2. What parts of the story are "obvious" or "natural" to you? Which assumptions do you disagree with? Consider why you feel this way.
3. What parts of the story do you find yourself resisting? What assumptions do you disagree with? Consider why you feel this way.
4. What are some possible ways to interpret this text? How do your own experiences and beliefs influence these interpretations?

Appendix O

LUNA CLASS ACTIVITY

11/30/09

Luna by Julie Anne Peters
November 21, 2009

How can we use *Luna* to foster critical literacy in the classroom? How can it be a tool to critique the self and develop awareness?

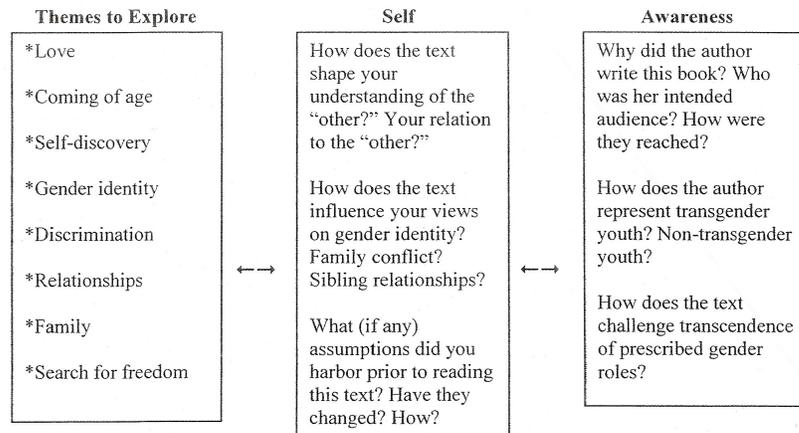
Critical literacy involves an attempt to understand deep meaning, think in depth about books, question official knowledge, exercise a curiosity to understand the root causes of events, use language so that worlds reveal the deep meaning of anything under discussion, apply that meaning to one's own context, and imagine how to act on that meaning to alter the condition it reflects.¹

Definitions to keep in mind...

Transgender: of, relating to, or being a person (as a transsexual or transvestite) who identifies with or expresses a gender identity that differs from the one which corresponds to the person's sex at birth.

Transsexual: a person who strongly identifies with the opposite sex and may seek to live as a member of this sex especially by undergoing surgery and hormone therapy to obtain the necessary physical appearance (as by changing the external sex organs).

Transvestite: a person and especially a male who adopts the dress and often behavior typical of the opposite especially for the purposes of emotional or sexual gratification
(Merriam-Webster)



Appendix P

HISTORICAL FICTION CLASS ACTIVITY

Questions to Consider: Historical Fiction

1. Does the text meet the criteria for good narrative fiction? Explain.
2. How are the social issues of the time period portrayed?
3. How does the history parallel the characters' inner struggles? Or how do the themes echo larger historical concerns?
4. Describe the language patterns in the text. How do they develop the mood and characterization?
5. How do the historical facts propel the narrative?
6. What did you learn about history through this text?

To share with the class: Explain how this text meets or does not meet the criteria for "good" historical fiction considering the questions above.