

Becoming a Teacher Educator: A Journey

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Dedication

To my children; Sam, Isabel and Will

Abstract

This dissertation is about a journey, a journey of becoming a teacher educator. Although, I argue that this journey is one that is never truly completed, I focus on the journey's beginning—a beginning that starts with enrolling in graduate school in pursuit of a doctoral degree in Curriculum and Instruction. It is a deeply personal journey and one that I began almost ten years ago. My journey as both the researcher and participant in this study are central components of this dissertation. The research questions I ask are tied to the personal and professional experiences of graduate students who are living the process of becoming a teacher educator and how they can be supported in a more intentional manner. This work takes a human sciences approach guided by a theoretical framework heavily influenced by Hans-Georg Gadamer's notion of shifting horizons. The work of Parker Palmer and Jennifer Crawford have also provided direction. Both Palmer and Crawford have helped me view the journey of becoming a teacher educator holistically, breaking down the arbitrary walls our culture has built to separate the personal and professional elements of our lives. I use constructivist grounded theory as described by Charmaz (2006) as my research method. My findings are tied to the different types of movement we experience as we live out the process of becoming a teacher educator and point to a need for great intentionality in the form of communal support to help make meaning of the different types of movement one makes as individuals and as a community as we live out the journey of becoming a teacher educators.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study and Researcher

Background: Let Me Introduce Myself and this Dissertation Study

The principal goal of the process of writing my dissertation is to reflect on the process of becoming a teacher educator, as several of my colleagues and I experienced it. I have, am, and will use the data and my constantly evolving reflection and analysis to move toward a constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) of this process of becoming. Such a theory seeks to inform the literature about the value placed on the process of becoming a teacher educator. As I explain in Chapter Three, to foreshadow what that theory might look like would taint and predestine the theory itself, robbing it of some of its potential insights. It is important to note that, in constructivist grounded theory, the role of the researcher is not to be a disinterested analytic observer. Rather, it is to be a part of all aspects of the research project and honor the worldview and experience that the researcher and the participants bring to the project.

It is hard to describe the feelings of anxiety and the thick tenseness, the almost giddy sense of excitement, and the sheer confidence accompanied by an overwhelming sense of insecurity and inadequacy that are competing for space in my mind and body at this moment. I have put off, found excuses to postpone, and dragged out the process of writing my dissertation for roughly five years. This paragraph alone contains sentences and edits written over dozens of sittings over those five years. The excuses are the easiest to point to; work, kids, divorce, starting a new business, bouts of clinical depression, and paralyzing anxiety.

It is extremely important for me to be dangerously candid as I introduce this side of myself to you, my dissertation committee. My goal is to bookend this work with a very personal and open voice. While reserving the interior of the work for a less personal discussion and exploration of the literature, methods, data and findings related to my topic, becoming a teacher educator. As for the audience, I write for you, my committee as the first of two primary audiences. The second, and most important, is me. I write for you, an extremely diverse group of thoughtful people, brought together by institutional and academic happenstance. I write for myself, with a hope that my dissertation will help me to understand and make sense of my experiences in a manner that leads to a deeper understanding of the influences that continually affect my journey of becoming a teacher educator and the journeys of those who participated in my work.

There is a part of me that always knew the journey of life was more important than the destination to which I aimed my energies. However, until recently, I have not been able grasp or actually live out this belief. Quite the opposite, I have been running toward a fictional and always moving finish line. By age 23, I had been to more than two dozen countries spread over three continents. I had lived in an old Hapsburg palace in Austria that had been converted into a dorm of sorts for international students, a trailer in a remote corner of the Navajo Nation, often identified on maps as the Navajo Indian Reservation, and a shantytown in Cross Roads, South Africa. A friend once told my mother that most people talk about doing this or that, but I simply did it.

In my memory, my earliest day dreams were about *being* something, which meant being a football player, a big kid, a more popular kid, or just a normal kid. I fooled

myself at a very early age into believing that I wanted to be successful and that *being successful* was tied to acquisition; be it experiences or assets. My acquisition-based view of success and purpose slowly unraveled after the birth of my second child, Isabel. I was traveling a great deal and had very little time to be with my growing family. The next promotion and raise no longer seemed worth it. Looking back, this was the moment in which I began to realize that *becoming* was more important than *being*. This worldview grounds the approach I take in this dissertation to explore the process of becoming a teacher educator.

Since that time, my thoughts of success have morphed into a much more abstract notion that is grounded in a calling to live in a continual state of *becoming*—a thoughtful, compassionate, humble, and purposeful person. A radical difference between tying success to an *act of acquiring* versus a *process of becoming* is that the latter can never truly be accomplished. I do not mean to imply that one can only accomplish success through acquisition. Rather, viewing success through the lens of becoming allows one to integrate the trail that lies directly before us with its continually changing vistas or horizon, as we will come to call them.

I will go into my philosophical views on becoming later. My goals at this point are merely to lay the foundation of the concepts upon which this dissertation relies, and to freely admit that although I paint a virtuous picture of my view on success and becoming, I by no means want to imply that I have mastered or even come close to living these out and have often failed miserably.

Intentionality, spirituality, and discipline are ideals that guide my life and are key to how I have and am trying to approach this work. *Intentionality* is a loaded term, it means different things to different people and can have different contextual interpretations. As I begin this work I am using intentionality in a very personal and simple context tied to how I am addressing my writing and this work on the whole. With this context in mind I am defining intentionality as trying, or at least thinking about writing and living humbly and thoughtfully while being disciplined and attentive to my work. I do not want to imply that this is something that I have had a good deal of success in living out. More times than not I am unsuccessful and fall into rut after rut of poor habits, procrastination, excuse, and so on. Intentionality as a concept is central to this work and will be used in a much larger context than the manner in which I am *approaching this work*. That said the notion of how we approach a given task, responsibility or action is key. If done with intentionality we think and reflect on what we are about to do. It is the foundation of how I believe the *becoming* process itself should be addressed, both my personal journey and the journey of becoming a teacher educator. It is tied to how we approach growth. I have and will use synonyms like purposeful and deliberate in an effort to broaden the concept beyond the word itself.

Spirituality is a difficult but crucial concept for me to define. *Spirituality* and spiritual growth are tied to what the Dalai Lama teaches and involves striving toward living in a disciplined and purposeful way, recognizing your shortcomings, and forgiving yourself in a manner that empowers rather than hinders growth and self-awareness. The word spiritual also speaks to the tone with which I write; it is one of my highest

aspirations to honor reality as others experience it. My personal experience in formal spirituality is Christianity, two of its tenets above all. The first is to do our best not to judge (King James Bible, Matthew 7:1). As we will see later we cannot know how situations, experience, mood, physical state and so on affect the way we view or react to a given stimuli so how can we hope to accurately judge the views or actions of another or group. The second is that we, as people, as individuals and groups should live to serve others and that this is an impossible thing to do with any true consistency. But we should try nonetheless. *Discipline* means the adherence to a sense of self-fortitude, a structure and plan to move forward purposefully. For example, discipline manifests in training for and running a marathon, playing catch with my children when I would rather be napping, or working on my dissertation instead of watching television. To me and for this work, discipline is trying to be totally truthful with myself and these pages. To be true to a sense of becoming and growth no matter how many distractions, and to return to this path that is my dissertation until it is complete.

How I Came to Study Teacher Education

The best place to begin is 1986. College was like no other schooling that I had experienced. I felt a sense of control that I had never known. I chose what classes to take, when to take them, and whether to attend class or to skip it. The days were not sectioned off into 50 minute chunks with 5 minutes to scurry from one class to the next. Some days I had three classes, other days I had two. Some classes were back-to-back and some had long breaks in between. By the end of my freshman year in college at Ball

State University I realized that I loved school. I loved college. This came as quite a shock to everyone, including me.

I had never liked school and I certainly was not good at it before entering college. As a matter of fact, I came very close to not graduating from high school. Put simply, I was a terrible student before going to college. I remember walking into Sister Margret's first grade class at Immaculate Heart of Mary Elementary School. I wore a pair of dark blue pants, a white shirt, brown leather shoes, a clip-on tie, and very thick glasses (everything but the glasses were hand-me-downs). I had very light blond hair, tinged with a tell-tale green glint of a child who had spent most of his summer in an over-chlorinated public pool. Within a week, my desk had been moved to the position closest to the teacher's, where it remained for much of the next eight years. The comparisons between Dennis the Menace and me lasted for much of my grade school years. I knew within a very short time that school was going to be tough, for me and the school.

This mutual dislike, me for school and school for me, changed both dramatically and suddenly when I began college at Ball State University in 1986. I loved the campus, the freedom to choose classes, to pick and set my own schedule. I felt like I was in my own element and I succeeded. So much so and so quickly that it led me to the life-changing daydream in front of an empty and dark college classroom. The dream of being a professor was alive and well during my undergraduate years. Yet I never came across a field to which I wanted to devote my life. I was majoring in political science and history, was fascinated with the world, and had seen a good deal of it for someone my age. As graduation drew closer, I was no clearer about the field of study I wanted to pursue.

I Guess I Will Become a Teacher

On a whim, I decided to add a secondary and junior high education major to my undergraduate program. I imagined teaching social studies overseas while trying to figure out what I wanted to study in graduate school.

With this in mind, I plotted the fastest possible course through Ball State's teacher education program. While strategizing, I stumbled across an Indiana University program that placed student teachers on American Indian Reservations in New Mexico and Arizona. Immediately, I decided that was where I would do my student teaching. My Ball State advisor said that they would accept this as my student teaching experience. Over the course of the next year I completed all the required course work. At no point did I consider, nor did the program present to me, a holistic view of teacher preparation that consisted of interconnected parts. I saw my education as a number of individual requirements that I needed to check off. The manner in which the program was designed promoted this view. The required social studies methods courses were housed in the history and economic departments. The educational psychology and school and society classes were housed in the general education department while still other courses were housed in the secondary and junior high education department. Ball State's program left me with the feeling that teaching was something you trained to do. I did not view teaching as something that you are or are continually in the process of becoming at this point in my life.

On the Road

After two very full semesters and a summer session, my undergraduate courses at Indiana were complete. My future wife and I set out for New Mexico on a beautiful August day in 1989. We spent two weeks working our way toward New Mexico. I dropped her off in Zuni, one of the most beautiful and sacred places I have ever been. It is impossible to explain the sense of reverence the landscape inspired in me. Let the following picture in Figure 1 suffice.

*Figure 1. Zuni, New Mexico*¹



I left for my student teaching placement, roughly one hundred and twenty miles due North with high hopes. As I drove through Gallop and onto the vast Navajo Reservation, I came across and decided to pick up an elderly hitchhiker. The events that followed were surreal. It was not long before I realized the elderly man I picked up was both much younger than I thought and very drunk. After a fifteen minute detour down a

¹ From personal archives, August, 1990.

gravel road, I dropped him off at a lonely broken down trailer. The scene was bleak and would take far too long to paint, but was a harsh baptism for what was to come.

As I drove further north my anxiety rose. The landscape I was plunging into was more than barren, and it was vast. The landscape seemed somehow out of time, like a living purgatory. I had never seen or experienced such starkness; I remember the physical feeling of loneliness growing in me as I traveled through this other worldly landscape.

Figure 2. Highway 666, north of Dallas, on the way to Tohatchi, New Mexico.²



It was not long after this realization hit me that I passed a sign indicating my destination was roughly 10 miles ahead. I spotted what looked like some kind of industrial complex that turned out to be where I would spend the next five months. I lived at the Chuska

² From personal archives, August 1990.

BIA boarding school in Tohatchi, New Mexico, and completed student teaching at Tohatchi Middle School, located a little less than a mile from the boarding school.

My journey, from the beautiful and sacred land of the Zuni Reservation to the barren outpost on the edge of the Navajo Nation took almost two hours. Yet it transported me from one world to another. It was a Saturday afternoon when I arrived and after looking for an authority figure of some type for a couple of hours, I found one of the dorm counselors. No one was expecting me; he did not know to which dorm I had been assigned, nor was he able to find anyone who did. At this point I was a little panicked. However, he did not appear to be concerned about the situation and simply said that the principal would be back on Monday. We would sort everything out then. For the time being, I could sleep in a room that was intended for sick students in the Middle School dormitory. Although a number of the students had gone home for the weekend, there were still about half of the two hundred plus students from kindergarten through eighth grade on campus. I was the only Anglo in sight.

In the Classroom

After a lonely weekend I met the principal of the boarding school who had been expecting me but had not conveyed this to anyone. She drove me over to the middle school, introduced me to the building principal and in a matter of minutes I was ushered to the classroom where I would do my student teaching. My cooperating teacher was Mr. Chato, one of only two Navajo teachers at the school. He taught New Mexico and United States History at Tohatchi Middle School. He taught straight from the textbook, having a succession of students, up one row then down the next, read a couple paragraphs from the

text. All the while he interjected historical and anecdotal tid-bits. This went on for about half an hour after which the students worked on handouts from the text. All of the class periods operated in similar fashion. It was excruciatingly boring.

After three weeks, Mr. Chato deemed that I had observed long enough and that it was my turn to teach. I did so by mimicking Mr. Ashkie. I did exactly the same thing he had done. At the time I thought nothing about it. As I look back now, it is hard not to be ashamed about the job I did. I had intended to be engaging and creative, to help my students question the history that was portrayed in standard textbooks because of my international travels and programs like the Model United Nations while I had been in college. I had wanted to use my well-worn copy of Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States*, that college professors has introduced to me to show my students the real history (as I saw it at the time). At the time, however, my intention was not accompanied by discipline or spirituality. Rather my ego, resignation, and belief, promoted by Ball State, that teaching was simply a series of tasks to be checked off, drove my actions, which resulted in what I now consider a failure.

After finishing my student teaching, I took a job at Pine Top, a remote BIA school in the Chuska Mountains of New Mexico. To this day, Chuska is the most remote place I have ever been. The nearest gas station was 45 miles from the Chuska BIA School and it took at least an hour and half to drive there by car. I taught a self-contained, high school special education class that consisted of 10 boys and two girls. The students spoke a combination of English and Navajo, but for most, English was not spoken at home. Many had not started school until they were 12 or 13 years old, so they were well behind

their peers. I had absolutely no idea what I was supposed to do. I was given an empty classroom and told I could use the school shop, the greenhouse, and the library. Someone was supposed to bring in desks, which never arrived. I eventually took some desks from the library and before I knew it, students quietly sauntered in, one by one with unreadable faces and down-cast eyes. I lasted about five months. My future wife at the time had stayed in Zuni, teaching second grade at the local public school and I had wanted to stay near her. It was all I could do to return to the classroom every day until finally I could do so no longer and I quit. I gave two weeks' notice and counted the moments until I would be done.

After this second failure, I took a sixth grade teaching job at St. Anthony's Mission School on the Zuni reservation. As much as I did not like teaching, this position allowed me to remain close to my significant other. I had never taken an elementary education class in my life and yet I found myself working with a 50-year-old Zuni woman who was my assistant and had been a teacher's aid for 20 years, and thus not recognized as a teacher. She would have undoubtedly done a much better job than I did. She knew and loved her students, spoke their languages, and understood their sacred stories and traditions. But she had not gone to college and did not have a teaching license. Consequently, the school district did not view her as a legitimate teacher. I felt ill-prepared and overwhelmed both as a teacher and a boss. By the end of my second year at St. Anthony's, I saw myself as a failed teacher and sank into my first episode of clinical depression. All I knew was that I had to do something different. And I forgot about my dream of being a professor.

My Early Experiences as a Teacher Educator

My future wife and I left the southwestern part of the United States on the last day of school at St. Anthony's. I had originally planned on looking for a teaching job once I left the reservation. When I moved back to Indiana, however, I told myself that I was getting back too late to look for a teaching position. The truth is I just could not bring myself to apply for a job that scared me. Yet I was not ready to admit that to myself at the time. I started looking for alternative jobs and found myself in the college textbook industry, where I stayed for the next 13 years, during which I got married and began a family. I moved quickly up the ranks from a sales representative, to a sales specialist, to marketing, and finally to managing a marketing team. I was lulled into a sense of accomplishment as my salary and responsibilities increased. I traveled almost constantly, stayed in high-end hotels, and ate at many of the best restaurants in the country. However, I was paying a very high price at home. My children were growing up with an absentee father and my dream of graduate school and being a professor was slowly fading away.

Before my marital grievances formalized, however, I was presented with a choice in 2002. Due to market demands in the college textbook industry, the company I worked for decided to dismantle my division. My supervisor gave me an option to relocate, for a fifth time, or be laid off with a generous severance. Without thinking, I decided to take the severance and go back to school. My kids were still young, I would be able to spend more time with them and rekindle my dream of being a college professor. It is important to note that this was my dream and not my wife's, although she agreed to the move and

change in income. I never asked her what she wanted to do nor did we discuss the financial ramifications or what it would be like for me to work at home. I mention this because my wife and I eventually divorced, which played a significant role in my identification of the journey of becoming a teacher educator as topic to research.

Although I had decided to go back to school, again I had not settled on an area of study. I was fascinated by the world and used this as a beginning point. I began to look into programs that specialized in global studies. I soon discovered that to get into a good program I was going to need to get a Master's degree first. This would buy me some time to decide on an area of study. My family and I returned to Ball State where I earned a Master's in social sciences, with a concentration on intellectual history and classical political theory. While working on my Master's, I decided to work toward a Ph.D. in international educational development. I had briefly considered a Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction but quickly and totally dismissed it. I thought of myself as a failed teacher so how could I pretend to teach others to teach?

My interest in international education led me to the Comparative and International Development and Education (CIDE) program at the University of Minnesota. I was accepted and began my studies in fall of 2004. After a short time I realized that the CIDE program was not for me. Its primary focus is to educate and train professionals to work for international aid agencies, non-governmental organizations that deal with educational development, ministries of education, and so on. Preparing future professors was important but a distant second to preparing professionals to work in the field. After realizing this I began to look for a different field of study. I applied to and was not

accepted to the geography program at the University of Minnesota. At the same time, I had formed a friendship with a doctoral student in Curriculum and Instruction (C&I) who suggested I consider a Ph.D. in that program. He said the job market was relatively good, the department was highly regarded, and assistantships, although not guaranteed, were available, which had not been the case in CIDE. He said I would also have more freedom to pursue my personal interests in C&I, so I pushed my misgivings about being a professor charged with teaching the next generation of teachers to the back of my mind and formally applied to the department. Unlike the geography department, C&I accepted me.

First Role as Teacher Educator: Practicum Supervisor

I began working, as a practicum and student teacher supervisor in the Master of Education/Initial Teaching Licensure Program at the University of Minnesota, a semester prior to transferring into the C&I program. I did not know it at the time, but that position would launch me on the path that brought me to the topic of this dissertation research. When I started working as a practicum supervisor of graduate education students, I had no idea about the eventual impact this experience would have on my life. My duties as a practicum supervisor were very straight forward: physically go to an elementary school on Tuesdays and Thursdays for a 10 week block of time and check the practicum student sign-in sheet to make sure all were at the school. My first supervisor told me that her expectations were minimal. She said that I had acquired an easy assistantship. I could leave a little early and show up a little late as long as I fulfilled my major responsibilities, which were putting together a micro-teaching schedule, providing a University presence

at the school for the practicum student and cooperating teachers, and making sure the cooperating teachers completed evaluations of the practicum teachers in a timely manner. I followed the guidance of my supervisor and viewed my position as a job and nothing more. The fact that I was playing the role of teacher educator did not cross my mind.

Second Role as Teacher Educator: Student Teaching Supervisor

In addition to my practicum duties, I supervised student teachers in middle and secondary social studies classrooms. My responsibilities for this assistantship were to grade a total of nine weeks of lesson plans, observe a student teacher teaching a lesson three times over the course of the student teaching placement, complete standardized evaluation forms, and write a letter of recommendation for my cadre of 12 student teachers. I viewed this assistantship in much the same way as the practicum assistantship—as a job that was totally separate from my formal doctoral program. I remember grading lesson plans in a cursory manner, with no consideration about the growth of the student teacher, writing the occasional “Good Job,” “Great Idea” or, “You might reconsider”

I also recall feeling very rushed as I graded those lesson plans. The student teachers were to submit their lesson plans to me for the following week by 5:00pm every Friday, and I was expected to get them back by Sunday mid-day so they could look over my comments and make any needed changes before the instructional week began. I quickly fell into the habit of going to my office at the University every Saturday morning when I would grade all of the lesson plans.

This was the first time I had ever been responsible for grading graduate level work. I was given no instructions or rubric. No one ever asked me if I had evaluated graduate level academic work. At the time this did not strike me as odd in any way. I just did it, in total isolation. We had met as a group of Social Studies student teacher supervisors once to assign the student teachers to supervisors. The geography of where the candidates were assigned to teach was the only criteria we considered when dividing the student teachers. We discussed nothing else. I later came to find out that what I looked for and the manner in which I graded lessons was totally different from what my colleagues were doing.

As I mentioned, one component of this student teaching supervision assistantship was to observe all 12 student teachers three times over a 10-week period. The logistics of scheduling 36 observations was a nightmare and will be covered in more depth in Chapter Five. As with the lesson plan grading, I had talked to no one about how I was supposed to observe the student teachers actually teaching. What kind of notes were I supposed to take? How was I supposed to evaluate the lessons I watched? I thought this was a little strange, but figured it was the norm, so I jumped in.

Although I was not journaling at the time, I remember clearly that I took chronological notes while observing a student teacher. They were typically broken up in 10-minute increments. I would briefly write down the flow of the lesson and make occasional comments about the student teacher's teaching. I would then use this outline in my post-observation conference with the student teacher. During the debriefings, I would generally go through my notes point-by-point with the student teacher and identify

things that had gone particularly well as well as things that did not. I stopped to offer advice or suggest a classroom management technique sporadically. I did the vast majority of the talking because I thought it was my responsibility to tell them what to do. They asked me questions about techniques and protocols, and I answered.

Rumblings of Change

As mentioned above, I did not see myself as, nor considered myself to be, a teacher educator. The thought just did not cross my mind. I was a graduate student with a job that allowed me to stay in graduate school. It simply turned out to be supervising practicum and student teachers and that is all it was. It was not until a confluence of events that I began to slowly see the nature of my position as practicum and student teacher supervisor in a new light. One of the events was extremely personal, another had to do with a practicum placement, and the final event was the course, CI 8151: Paradigms and Practices of Teacher Preparation, which explored a wide variety of research on teacher education.

As I think back, this was an incredibly anxious and painful time for me. It was fall of 2006 when the events in my life began to shake the foundation of my non-reflective self. I had failed as a teacher in New Mexico and now I was acting as a teacher educator. The cliché “those who can’t, teach” began to haunt me. My marriage was falling apart, and the money I had saved from my time in the textbook industry was almost gone. I had also turned 40 years old. The effect that these combination of these events had is more than profound, the metamorphosis was Kafkaesque.

A Confluence of Events

I realize that a dissertation is not necessarily a place to share one's personal life, but in this case it is relevant. The first event revolved around my failing marriage and culminated when my wife and I began the process of divorcing in the fall of 2006. It is impossible to convey the effect the breakup of my marriage had on every aspect of my life. It forced me to redefine how I viewed myself. I was no longer a husband and father in partnership with a spouse. I was a single father and I was financially challenged. It felt both natural and important to remake myself. It was also during this time that I began to see teacher education and the act of becoming a teacher educator as immensely important.

The second event involved my first extremely difficult situation as a practicum supervisor. I had two practicum students in a class in which the full-time teacher had been on sick leave for several weeks prior to the beginning of the placement. When the practicum students began their placements, they ended up working with several different substitute teachers for two-to-three weeks. The practicum students were rightfully frustrated because the practicum experience was supposed to give them the opportunity to observe an experienced teacher. We were all relieved when we learned that the full-time teacher would be returning from sick leave.

This sense of relief was short-lived, unfortunately. I began to receive reports that the teacher was abusive. My first thought was that the practicum students were over-reacting. But I did not think I could dismiss their claims either. So I went to the school the next day and lurked outside the classroom in an attempt to get a picture of what was

happening. I quickly came to realize the practicum students were not over-reacting. The teacher was verbally abusive in many ways, from my perspective. The story goes on and does not end well. But the point is that I had no idea what to do, and realized for the first time how incredibly complicated supervision could be.

The final event which helped change the trajectory of my life and launched this research study was the course I referred to above, CI 8151. Not surprisingly, when the course began I had not thought a good deal about the process of educating future teachers. Instead, I had been focused on my course work, which included classes on research devoted to teacher education, educational policy, organizational theory, and educational philosophy. Oddly enough, this was the first class to even consider the role teacher educators play in the formation of future teachers. CI 8151 not only introduced me to literature and research related to teacher education and teacher education programs, it also gave me the opportunity to reflect on my experiences as a practicum supervisor. I had to write a reflective essay on our practice as a doctoral student for one of the course requirements. I chose to reflect on my experience as practicum supervisor.

In so doing, I realized that my personal and professional journeys were in fact one and the same. The course work for CI 8151 enabled me to explore and construct my personal philosophy and vision about teacher education. It also provided a place for me to practice, reflect on, and hone my skills as a teacher educator in a thoughtful community. Through this process I became acutely aware of my lack of intentionality. As I mentioned above intentionality has different contextual meanings. In this case, it has little to do with how I address life or the spirit that I am trying live out in my writing.

Rather it is tied to how I approached my position as a teacher educator. I realized that I had fallen into a trap and fooled myself into believing that because I had identified an end goal, becoming a professor, and was working toward that end, that I was somehow intentional about the road I was traveling. Unfortunately, I had neglected the very pathway leading to my goal.

I had been viewing the path ahead as a series of tasks through which to work. Some of the tasks dealt with my graduate program such as taking all the required classes. Others dealt with accumulating marketable experiences like teaching several different courses, gaining experience as a student teacher supervisor, and presenting at professional conferences. But I had totally neglected my personal and professional journeys of becoming. Viewing my journey as a series of tasks meant I was always looking forward, like a horse with blinders, without considering what the present had to teach me and how reflecting on the past could dramatically influence the road forward.

It was during this period of reflection on my practice as a graduate student that I realized the importance of my role as a student teacher supervisor. I was not only preparing to be teacher educator; I *was* a teacher educator. This realization led me, or perhaps inspired me, to focus on the importance, multidimensionality, and complex realities involved in the formation of a teacher educator.

Narrowing the Scope of this Dissertation

It is difficult for me not to sound dramatic when discussing the importance of and process of becoming a teacher educator. My newfound premises about teaching and teacher education greatly impact this dissertation research. I now believe that there are

few occupations that have as much overt and covert influence as that of teaching, whether in primary, secondary, or higher education settings. Teachers have a profound effect on their students, regardless of the students' ages. Teachers are, whether they recognize it or not, examples of how to live, how to relate to others, and how to define success. I am somewhat embarrassed that I did not consider these when I was a classroom teacher. This realization crept into my worldview slowly as my course work progressed and as I gained more experience as a student and practicum teacher supervisor. I also began to recognize a disconnect between my course work and my work as a university supervisor. Much of my course work explored research on *teacher education* and practices, strategies and theories used in educational research. While as a university supervisor I was actually living in the topic of teacher education itself. But there was, for me no formal link between the two. Thus my study was born, and from this point on, virtually all my writing and research has dealt with some aspect of becoming a teacher educator.

I came to believe that teacher educators have a unique, sacred, and powerful role; a role that ripples throughout society. Teacher educators are teaching future teachers not just what and how to teach, but also how to approach the act of teaching. This influence exceeds far beyond college classrooms, extending to future elementary, middle, and high schools and beyond. The power exercised by teacher educators happens with or without their own knowledge or acceptance. As someone who has lived this process of becoming, sometimes deliberately other times less so, I have become intensely aware of the influence and responsibility bound up in the role into which I am trying to grow. It is my hope that this study honors that responsibility.

The Research Focus

This research will explore the nature of the personal and programmatic intentionality in the preparation of teacher educators. I do not see the use of intentionality in this context as a contradiction of how it has been used above. I am adding a new and less personal dimension tied contextually to the preparation of teacher educators. In their collaborative self-study, Dinkelman, Sikkenga, and Margolis (2006) specifically describe a lack of programmatic intentionality. They claim that both the literature and their personal experiences and observations have convinced them that many graduate students who accept assistantships as student teacher supervisors and educational methods class instructors are expected to jump into the role of teacher educators, yet few formal structures exist to aid them in their development as professionals. Zeichner (2005) simply states that teacher educators “receive no special preparation” for the role of teacher educator, while Guilfoyle et al. (1995) note that “I am teaching myself to be a teacher educator as I teach my students to teach themselves to be teachers” (p. 50). One reason for this lack of formal preparation for doctoral students whose goal it is become teacher educators is that there appears to be a wide spread assumption that those who have taught possess the expertise to teach others how to teach (Zeichner, 1995).

I have been a part of this problem myself and did not realize it until mid-way through my doctoral program. The fact that I did not recognize or question my preparedness to supervise student teachers provides a good example of this problem and is at the heart of my dissertation. To state it clearly, in my experience, the Department of

Curriculum and Instruction, most of the professors with whom I have worked, the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Minnesota, and, most importantly, I have not been intentional about my formation as a teacher educator. I write this with regret, not as an accusation. This also adds yet another component and contextual meaning to intentionality, that of personal responsibility for one's formation as a teacher educator (in this case, my own formation). I also believe that I am not an isolated case and the University of Minnesota is not alone in its lack of formal development of its doctoral students. In the coming pages I will support these beliefs with data, in the form of accounts from several of my colleagues, as well as me, and literature both directly and indirectly related to becoming a teacher educator.

The research questions that have guided me through this study are quite simple. What are the personal and professional experiences of graduate students who have goals that include becoming a teacher educator and who attend the same institution that I do? Assuming that the preparation of doctoral candidates is not intentional in their development as teacher educators, what can be done to make the journey of becoming a teacher educator more intentional? Before moving into an overview of what is to follow it is important to clearly identify exactly who I define as a teacher educator and clarify the group that this work is focused on. In short I consider anyone charged with the explicit formation of preservice teachers to be a teacher educator. This is a larger and diverse community that includes foundation and methods instructors, cooperating teachers, mentor teachers, student and practicum teacher supervisors and others. For the purpose of this dissertation I am focusing on a small subset, those who are beginning

their journey of becoming teacher educators, namely doctoral students who find themselves teaching and supervising teacher candidates as part of their doctoral work and in many cases will go on to work in teacher education programs in higher education settings.

Dissertation Outline

The purpose of this section is to share my reasoning for the structure as well as to give a glimpse of what is to come. Structurally, my dissertation moves from the broad to the narrow. I have used a wide brush to cover a great deal of canvas with few sweeping strokes in this first chapter. My goal is to use each subsequent chapter to fill in the picture with increasing detail.

In Chapter Two I expand on the epistemological and ontological worldview with which I address this research. The goal is to share the concepts and philosophies that have significantly influenced the manner in which I approach this work. I also review the available literature on becoming a teacher educator which, on the whole, is quite sparse. As such I have augmented the literature on becoming a teacher educator with literature that explores student teacher supervision with a special emphasis on literature that considers graduate students who are supervising student teachers as graduate student assistants.

In Chapter Three I explain the tenets of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) as I understand and apply them. I also explain the methods and practices I employed for gathering data as well as the techniques I used for analyzing and interpreting data.

I divide my findings into two chapters. Chapter Four reflects on the process of becoming a teacher educator as I, and those I interviewed, experienced it. Chapter Five focuses more narrowly on graduate student assistants acting as student teaching supervisors, which I see as a proxy for the larger process of becoming a teacher educator within institutions like the University of Minnesota.

Finally, Chapter Six is devoted to humbly putting forth a constructivist grounded theory that adds a new vista to the horizon of those who read and experience this process with me.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Introduction

I began Chapter One by sharing the four concepts that act as the foundation upon which I am building my dissertation: the process of *becoming* lives in me through my efforts to live and write in an *intentional, spiritual, and disciplined* life. Of these four foundational concepts, intentionality and becoming have a dual and expanding roles. As such I will do my best to qualify and operationalize these terms when appropriate. Both concepts speak to the personal nature of my work and journey as well as the broader aspect of becoming a teacher educator. One of the primary goals of this chapter is to continue that conversation by expanding on the theories and philosophies that have influenced the lenses and filters I have used to light the stage of my dissertation. Sharing the perspective with which I approach this work is a truly daunting task and one which I cannot possibly accomplish in its entirety. It is almost like describing the quality and hue of a cluster of stage lights. Their intensity, clarity, and color are affected by the inherent quality of the light, type of bulbs, and accompanying lenses and filters. But they are also affected by external variables: other clusters of lights and spotlights, the color of the costumes and props, the house lights, the position from which they are being viewed, and even then the description I would give would be vague at best; we all experience color differently.

I do not mean to imply that this task is a worthless exercise. Quite the opposite. Accepting that I will not be able to make my perspective totally understood is freeing. It allows me to replace the goal of generating a sense of *understanding* of my ideas and

logic with my readers with the aspiration of engendering empathy. This has two primary repercussions. First, it offers me the opportunity to write in a personal and passionate voice that attempts to explain rather than convince. Second, it gives me permission to grow and travel into my dissertation, rather than documenting and explaining a research project bounded by time and form.

I begin by sharing my passion for understanding the process of becoming a teacher educator. Following this, I discuss the major works, concepts, and philosophies that have influenced how I look and am looking at the world. Once I lay this groundwork, I then explain the theoretical foundation that has influenced my decision to consider the process of becoming a teacher educator and how I approach the topic. Finally, I review the literature that explores student teacher supervision. The supervision of student teachers provides an interesting lens to becoming a teacher educator. For many, myself included, the experience of supervising student teachers is the first time we act as teacher educators.

My Passion for Understanding the Process of Becoming a Teacher Educator

The influence teacher educators have is humbling. Our influence extends far beyond the classrooms and offices where we practice our crafts. I believe that we are charged with teaching future teachers to teach while also teaching them how to approach life in general. If we want teachers to nurture a sense of awareness for the impact they have on the world around them, teacher educators must own and act on this aim both in their personal lives and in the example they set through their positions. This awesome responsibility is the primary source of my passion and sense of mission with which I

come to explore the process of becoming a teacher educator. Put quite simply, teacher educators can take up this challenge to help future teachers learn to focus on what is *present*, to practice and live with empathy for their students, and live in a state of becoming. Meaning quite simply that as teacher educators we are on journey that we never truly complete.

However, merely identifying the incredible power inherent in the example wielded by teacher educators does little to hone the art and craft of teacher education itself. Loughran (2007) tells us that teaching about how to teach is an incredibly complex endeavor, “Teaching about teaching is complex work and demands a great deal from teacher educators. The complexity is embedded in the very nature of teaching itself, and thus when the focus is on teaching, even more sophisticated understandings of practice are essential” (p. 3). It is this combination, of influence and impossibility of truly mastering the craft of teaching future teachers how to teach, that has driven and sustained my passion for this mission and topic.

My passion also has idealistic and personal roots. As an individual, I believe that I can use this research to reflect on my journey of becoming a teacher educator and do my best to move forward in a personally intentional manner. Thus, in the end, my passion for the topic of becoming a teacher educator is grounded in my personal desire to grow as person, as teacher, and as scholar.

My Worldview

At the center of my worldview is the belief that it is my responsibility to strive for continued self and professional improvement. This is at the heart of both my personal

process of becoming and what I view as the process of becoming a teacher educator. This stems from a difference between *being* and *becoming* discussed in Chapter One. Augustine of Hippo's 5th Century work (1998), *The City of God*, taught me that one of the greatest and noblest struggles is to continually work toward perfection, in Christianity's terms, while living in the knowledge that we can never obtain it while we live. It is the act of *working toward* that I see as both the process of becoming as a person and as a teacher educator. By work I am referring to intentionally reflecting on ways to improve and to be more self-aware in a humble manner.

Regarding my citation of Augustine, I do not want to give the impression that this work is tied to Christian theological thought or religious in nature. However, I do hold that it is a deeply spiritual journey grounded in personal choice. The basic message of the Dali Lama's *The Art of Happiness* (1998) is the same. The Dali Lama even suggests that we should begin each day by telling ourselves and envisioning the perfect day and conclude our day by recognizing and forgiving ourselves for our many failures. This, he explains, calls one to the discipline that *is* the spiritual journey. He also espouses, throughout his work that our journey through life will be a gift to others if we live it with a sense of fascination and joy. He fully recognizes the difficulty of enacting his proposition. However, in the end, living with and in joy is a choice followed by a life time of commitment, recommitment, and acceptance of what is. I see this choice and the conscious act of recommitting and forgiving one's self for the shortcomings we are certain to encounter as central to both becoming in an intentional manner. Christianity and the Dali Lama impact my worldview with their message that it is our responsibility to

live with intentionality, spirituality, and discipline which should be grounded in service. I additionally focus on the power and importance of living in a state of becoming.

But what is becoming itself? What does it mean to become a teacher educator? Becoming as I see it is inevitable, we become older, some of us become parents, professionals, drug addicts, wealthy, homeless and on and on. We become tired, sad, happy. We are always in some state of becoming. At the same time it is much more than something that is happening to us. There is a finality to the events I have just discussed. Once we have a child or are actually sad the state of becoming is gone and we are parents, we are sad.

The type of becoming in which I am situating my work is not attainable in a real or concrete fashion. The becoming I am interested in, in terms of my own becoming and that of becoming a teacher educator is firmly tied to the state of “working toward” discussed above and is why I use Augustine. My hope is that this work will offer some insight as to why this is important and some possible steps that can be taken to bring a structure, spiritual discipline, and ongoing recommitment to my personal journey of becoming and describe the journey of becoming a teacher educator as I and those who took part in this study of lived it. I will attempt to qualify and position my views within the theoretical conversation to follow.

Theoretical Framework

A Human Science Perspective

At the highest level, this dissertation takes a *human science* perspective. Van Manen (1990) explains that the human science, “unlike research approaches in other

social sciences [or natural sciences], which may make use of experimental or artificially created test situations, human science wishes to meet human beings—men, women, and children... where they are naturally engaged in their world” (p. 18). Also from a human science perspective, Hans-Georg Gadamer (1975) claims that “the human sciences are connected to modes of experience that lie outside [natural] science: with the experiences of philosophy, art, and history itself. These are all modes in which a truth is communicated” (p. 3). He goes on to say that the “genius” of the human sciences lies in the credence it gives to “common sense for practical life . . . which avoids both the mistakes of the scientific dogmatists who are looking for social laws and those of the metaphysical utopians” (p. 23). Thus the experiences, common sense, and intuitions of the participants in this study, as well as my own, serve as data for this study.

Tearing Down Accepted Walls: A Spiritual Space

In addition to rooting my study in the human sciences, Parker Palmer (1993, 1998, 2000, 2004, 2008) and Jennifer Crawford (2005) have also deeply affected the lens I bring to this study. The combination of these scholars’ ideas profoundly blurs and breaks down arbitrary divisions between the personal and the professional. Palmer (1993, 1998, 2000, 2004, 2008) looks at the intersection of personal and professional growth and argues that educators cannot separate one from the other. To do so creates an artificial dichotomy. Although, there are times this barrier may be unavoidable. It is difficult to be personally or spiritually invested in mundane administrative tasks, grading papers, and other elements that are disassociated from the personal. Likewise, it would be inappropriate to allow personal matters like marital issues and personal conflicts to be

worked out with students or in the workplace. However, it is my belief that there are more significant areas in which we can work toward breaking down the walls. We can try to view ourselves and our practice through the eyes of others, we can seek out others and form community, and we can reflect on questions related to how can we grow and improve. Even then there are no guarantees that we will grow and improve. We have our egos and personal interpretation of what growth and improvement mean. But I do believe that we are much more likely to grow and improve if we act proactively in the manner discussed above than if we do nothing and just fall into the future without question or reflection.

I believe acting in a *proactive* manner is a crucial component to becoming. If we are able to form community and cultivate our ability to listen in community to what Palmer calls our *inner teacher* in a *Hidden Wholeness* (2004) we are much more likely to embark on a path of growth that honors an ongoing journey of becoming. He explains that our journey of growth is “too daunting to be achieved alone: we need community to find the courage to venture into the alien lands to which the inner teacher may call us” (p. 26). It is this communal support that has the power to help us make meaning of our journey and find the strength and humble insight to grow as individuals through and with others. It has the power to help us live in becoming.

Jennifer Crawford (2005), through her book *Spiritually Engaged Knowledge*, has helped me situate Palmer’s tandem approach of personal and professional growth. Crawford’s (2005) spiritually-engaged knowledge is a “genre of knowledge” (p. 4) that ignores the “modern split between philosophy and religion...reframes our understanding

of what it means to know...it collapses the subject/object duality inherent in all modern 'knowing'" (p. 4). Her theorizing eliminates the Western division between secular and non-secular discourse and knowing. The artificial separation of the secular and the sacred creates an either/or choice which unnecessarily stifles growth and knowing. Thus, Palmer and Crawford have given me permission to disregard the division between the secular and sacred and the personal and professional in a manner that speaks to becoming as both a person and professional. As I seek to understand what can be done to make the journey more personally and programmatically intentional for doctoral students who want to become teacher educators, I look at the journey through this holistic lens. It has helped me to understand that the process of becoming is bigger than the individual. It has ramifications beyond those with whom we interact. Although overly simplistic it is like the person that was yelled at by his or her boss because the boss was in a bad mood, so they went home and kicked the dog. The dog was affected by the boss's bad mood but was removed from the actual situation. I believe that as teacher educators we have an impact on those who are taught by the future teachers with whom we work. As a result, the care we give to the act of teaching about teaching and learning is bigger than our own practice. It is this reality that I believe spiritually engaged knowledge can help us attend to by honoring the gravity of our work in a manner that is not defined entirely by the secular or the sacred, but rather in a holistic combination of the two.

Palmer (1993, 1998, 2000, and 2008) and Crawford (2005) have also influenced my views on teaching itself. The deliberate tearing down of the wall between the secular and the sacred facilitates a more holistic manner in which to consider the act of

becoming. This destructive act has offered me a chance to build a new worldview, allowing me to view my process of becoming as a more personally intentional person and my role as a teacher educator in sacred terms. I believe that teaching is fundamentally a sacred act because teachers model for their students how to address life; the content is merely the conduit for doing so. I also believe that providing an example for addressing teaching as sacred is a teacher educator's primary responsibility.

I am sure there are those who vehemently disagree with the premise that teaching is a sacred act. A possible argument one might pose is that teaching is a professional act, much like that of a corporate trainer or any other professional that is charged with imparting knowledge. The argument might follow that there is a need to maintain the fissure between the personal and professional. Allowing the fissure to close will compromise professional objectivity and lead one's practice to becoming overly emotional. I do not accept this argument, however. Instead, I agree with Palmer (1998) who claims that teaching occupies the tense intersection of the personal and professional. Likewise, I believe that teachers, of all kinds, use the subject matter as a venue for displaying their personal beliefs and convictions. It is also my belief that thoughtfully considering the impact that our convictions (or lack of convictions) have on the way we address content, foster understanding, and nurture reflective thought in future teachers calls for more open and vulnerably honest research.

This framework has not only influenced the manner in which I approach this dissertation, it has also had a direct impact on the meaning and continual formation of the research questions that have guided and are guiding me. I am interested in more than the

professional and graduate school experience of the participants in this study. For example, I am not so interested in learning about their course work, graduate assistantships, research, and so on. Although these are certainly important components for understanding the process of becoming a teacher educator, I am also interested in the paths that led the participants to graduate school, their personal experiences, and their formation as teacher educators. I use the term formation to indicate that I consider teaching a vocation and a way of life, rather than a career or job.

Shifting Horizons: A Continual State of Becoming

In addition to his thoughts on human science, Gadamer (1975) helped me understand the notion and continual act of becoming, as individuals and as groups. In his seminal work, *Truth and Method* (1975), Gadamer puts forth his concept of horizons, which provides the theoretical foundation on which I have constructed the journey metaphor related to becoming that runs throughout this work. Gadamer defines horizons as “the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point” (p. 301). Gadamer’s horizons are not static but continually in motion and they are affected by and interact with the horizons of others. In addition to the interaction with the horizons of others, one’s horizon is also continually affected by our past and present experiences, emotions, prejudices, and the traditions of the societies, cultures, and communities in which we live. These interaction with others and the way in which we integrate our past with our present are the essences of how I believe we become. Gadamer (1975) explains a “process of fusion is continually going on, for the old and new are always combining into something of living value, without either being explicitly

foregrounded for the other” (p. 305). The process of fusion provides us the opportunity to make meaning and bring intentionality to our becoming. We can chose to do this consciously by weighing how and what is affecting our horizon or we can ignore the affects, but we cannot not be affected by them.

The closing three hundred pages of Tolstoy’s (1983) *War and Peace* offer a wonderful narrative to illustrate Gadamer’s (1975) phenomenon of horizons. In Tolstoy’s monologue on the nature of historical reality, he explains that the very reality of the past changes as we learn more about the interaction and relationship between and among people, communities, events, economics, weather, and countless other variables. Along with the ebb and flow of the value placed on a given or set of variables, our view of history itself is fluid and dependent upon events taking place in the here and now, and events yet to occur. We can see this in our own journey of becoming as past events take on new meaning as they are integrated and fused with new events.

Paolo Freire’s (1970) portrayal of the multiplicity and multidimensional nature of experienced realities offer yet another angle from which to consider the fluidity and personal and communal nature of how we experience the world around us. He explains that we experience and perceive our world and our experiences as a subjective and individual reality that is affected by our present state of mind, our surroundings, and a host of other variables. However, we live within a greater objective reality that can only be partially perceived due to the overpowering nature of our personal reality. John Searle discusses this observational handicap. Naming its cause as *external realism*, Searle (1995) asserts: “The world and universe exist independently of our representations of it”

(p. 112). As we can never truly understand the nature of another's representation of the world, we can only empathize with it.

Freire (1970) takes the concept of experiencing realities further, declaring that we have the power and responsibility to transform reality itself for ourselves and those we teach. He says, "Just as objective social reality exists not by chance, but as the product of human action, so it is not transformed by chance. If humankind produces social reality, then transforming that reality is an historical task, a task for humanity" (p. 26). As such, I view the process of becoming a teacher educator as a unique and shared journey in which we are not only continually becoming and transforming as individuals traveling together, but we are also continually creating communal realities in our socially constructed spaces: graduate school courses, schools, classrooms, peer groups, collegial groups, family, and religious organizations to name just a few.

In short, the theoretical framework that guides this study is tied to the belief that we are, as people and educators, in a continual state of becoming and formation that defines the way we experience reality. With reflection, passion, humility, and empathy, we can relate to others and come closer to understanding how they view and experience the world. By accepting our responsibility as educators, we can act as examples to others with a potential of having a transformative effect on the way they address the world. In the case of teacher educators, that effect has incalculable potential. It is my belief that I am exploring not only the becoming of teacher educators, but also the transformative potential that the unending journey of becoming a teacher educator has on us and on

those with whom we learn and teach, and doing so in a manner that blurs the line between the secular and the spiritual.

The notions of formation and vocation help to tie my theoretical framework together and points me onward to what is to follow. They speak to the journey of becoming I am trying to explore. As I discussed above, my personal journey of becoming and the journey of becoming a teacher educator is not journeys that we can qualify in the past tense. One may have “*became*” many things. Crawford, Palmer, Gadamer, Freire, Tolstoy and others have taught me that we are in a continual state of movement that is influenced by more variables than we can comprehend. Some that are known and reside in our conscious thought others that have a hidden effect. Many are tied to the time, society and culture in which we live. As such we are both forming and being formed. If we are able to look at this formation in terms of growing into our vocation as a teacher educator and do so within community I believe we can grow, we can become, we can be spiritually engaged. We can influence our growth in a proactive manner that is listens to our inner teacher.

Becoming a Student Teacher Supervisor: A Review of the Literature

I have chosen to review literature that explores student teaching supervision to inform my study because it provides a lens into world of graduate students acting as a teacher educator. The students being supervised look to their supervisor as a teacher educator, not as a graduate assistant who is trying to pay their bill and tuition. While for the graduate students themselves, they are (many for the first time) acting as teacher educator. They are guiding preservice teachers through what is widely recognized as the

most important portion of their preservice education. Some may argue that I should have included literature that explores teacher education program design, clinical learning, or other themes. I feel this would have drawn attention away from the journey of the nascent teacher educators for whom the act of supervision is an early step in their journey of becoming a teacher educator.

Another reason for using literature tied to student teaching supervision is that there is a lack of research exploring the formation and common experiences of teacher educators and professional development for teaching about teaching and learning. I will explore two primary themes in this literature: (a) the complexity of the position, which is viewed as being multi-faceted, multi-dimensional, and unpredictable and (b) the need to reform the manner in which student teachers are prepared by university representatives. Other topics in the literature that I weave throughout this review are teaching observation practices, post-observation conferences, challenges inherent to the traditional student teacher triad (student teacher, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor), and reflections on individual cases, which may be tied to the two major themes.

The Complex Nature of Supervising Student Teachers Leads to Calls for Reform

The most pervasive theme in this literature is that of complexity. For example, supervising student teachers requires a diverse skill set (for examples see: Anderson, Major, & Mitchell, 1992; Clark & Collins, 2007; Fulwiler, 1996; Ramanathan & Wilkins-Canter, 1997; Slick, 1997, 1998; Zimpher, 1974). Anderson et al.'s work, *Teacher Supervision that Works: A Guide for University Supervisors* (1992), one of the few books

devoted entirely to the university supervision of student teachers, stresses the complexities inherent in the position of the university supervisor. They note:

Student teachers must satisfy at least two strangers while on the voyage into the unknown, and they need more...support. University supervisors must be effective listeners and perceptive observers. They must be able to recognize and communicate the complex characteristics of learning and teaching. They must be able to give criticism and praise in ways that make a positive contribution. They must know when to stand firm and when to bend and tread lightly. They must recognize problems that need immediate attention and differentiate them from those that will take care of themselves. They must also be aware that attitudes not acted out are as important as behaviors expressed. (pp. 2-3)

Thus, according to Anderson et al. (1992), student teaching supervisors have to navigate multiple complex interactions and usually do so alone.

Montecinos, Cnudde, Ow, Solis, Suzuki, and Riveros (2002) examine their practice as student teacher supervisors in a collaborative self-study. They highlight the multifaceted demands that student teaching supervisors face:

The supervision of student teachers is a multidimensional task. It requires providing technical advice, evaluation, and emotional support to student teachers. The supervisor needs to mediate logistical, practical and social issues between the university/student teacher and the school, and between the student teacher and cooperating teacher. (p. 785)

Clark and Collins (2007) agree, using the lens of complexity science to consider the multidimensional nature of university supervision. In their view, complex systems “exhibit networks rather than hierarchical structures... (are comprised of multiple) feedback loops... (have a sense of) disequilibrium... (and have a) nested nature...” (pp. 163-164). Couching student teaching and student teaching supervision in terms of complexity science helps us to understand the chaotic nature of both student teaching and the act of supervising student teachers. I think it also provides a useful lens through which to consider the literature that address the realities a university supervisor must face in his/her work. Some may argue that organizing the literature around complexity science adds an unneeded distraction in this review. The intent is quite the opposite. I would like the concept of complexity science to simply offer an organizational structure on which to explore the notion of complexity in the literature about student teacher supervision. Using Clark and Collins (2007) definition of complex systems, I will explore the literature on student teaching supervision using their framework of (a) networks; (b) feedback loops; (c) disequilibrium; and (d) nested structures. Followed by a review complex nature of the post-observation supervisor student teacher conference.

Navigating networks. Much of the literature directly states or implies that university supervisors must navigate multiple loosely connected networks; multiple school and classroom networks, student teacher and cooperating teacher networks, and administrative and hierarchical university networks (Fulwiler, 1996; Pajak, 2001; Power & Perry, 2002; Slick, 1997). Further complicating the role of supervisor is the fact that they are themselves only loosely connected to or on the periphery of most of the

networks with which they interface. Their primary network tends to be the traditional triad comprising a student teacher, a cooperating teacher, and a university supervisor. Typically the cooperating teacher drives this triad network and often sees the supervisor as an interloper intent on evaluating both the cooperating teacher and student teacher (Slick, 1997). The supervisor must also interface with the administrative network of the University for which they work. Pajak (2001) notes that “communication among university faculty and coordination between university faculty and cooperating teachers during student teaching is often almost nonexistent” (p. 235). In fact, it is usually the university supervisor who creates the network ties between the schools and the university administration. In addition to the triad network and university network, the supervisor must also navigate various individual school networks, which may include a certain protocol at one school and a different protocol at another. One school may want the supervisor to sign in the office, while another school has the supervisor sign it at an attendance desk. The university supervisor is charged with navigating all of these networks with a great deal of independence and isolation, and often as an outsider (Clark & Collins, 2007; Fulwiler, 1996; Power & Perry, 2002; Slick, 1997, 1998; Stern, 1997; Zeichner & Liston, 1985; Zimpher, deVoss, & Nott, 1980).

Limitations of feedback loops in student teaching supervision. Feedback loops “provide for ‘learning’ at the local level, that is, new knowledge returning to and being taken up at the point of origin. This feedback process means that control and organization, order and direction, do not emanate from a single point or location” (Clark & Collins, 2007, pp. 163-164). University supervisors receive very little, if any, formal

training (Anderson, Major, & Mitchell, 1992; Oja, 1988; Slick, 1997, 1998; Zeichner & Liston 1985; Zeichner, 2006, 2007). Thus, the knowledge they accumulate is highly individualized and typically not relayed to or received from other supervisors.

Knowledge that is accumulated or constructed by the supervisor is usually cloistered within their personal practices and is regulated by their individual dedication to the position, commitment to reflection and professional growth, and skill sets and experience with which they enter the position. This gives rise to a high degree of personal agency, personal vision, and control as to how they carry out their position. Thus the feedback loops are isolated and do not extend to inform the practice of other supervisors but rather are confined to the individual. Looping from cooperating teacher to supervisor and from student teacher to supervisor. This in turn creates what Zeichner claims is an incredibly wide range in both quality and continuity (2006) of supervision received by student teachers within and among teacher education programs. This is perhaps the single most troubling state of student teacher supervision.

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) was a national accrediting body for schools, colleges, and departments of education³. In its 2007 version of *Professional Standards for the Accreditation of Teacher Preparation*, it puts a spotlight on student teaching. Standard 3: Field Experience and Clinical Practice states, “The unit and its school partners design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so that teacher candidates and other school professionals develop

³ The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) has transformed into Council for Accreditation of Educator Programs (CAEP)

and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn” (2007, p. 29). It goes on to clarify that:

The unit and school partners collaboratively design and implement field experiences and clinical practice, including the assessment of candidate performance. School and university faculty share the responsibility for candidate learning. The partners share and integrate resources and expertise to create roles and structures that support and create opportunities for candidates to learn. The partners select and prepare clinical faculty to mentor and supervise teacher candidates. (pp. 33 - 34)

One can easily infer from this standard that individuals responsible for the supervision of student teachers should not only be highly trained to carry out their roles but also fulfill their responsibilities with a great deal of continuity. I interpret this as calling for more inclusive and extensive feedback loops that inform and influence supervisory practice in general and seeks to avoid the cloistered nature that leads to inconsistency and a wide range of quality. As noted above, this is not always the case; rather the opposite is more often true. We will return to this fact when exploring a call in the literature for training of university supervisors. Before doing so, however, I turn to the fourth and fifth elements of the complex system (Clark & Collins, 2007) framework to further explore the challenging context in which student teaching supervisors work.

A state of the unknown. Disequilibrium is the third characteristic of complex systems and Clark and Collins (2007) point to this as a hallmark of university supervision. The sense of disequilibrium may be attributed to the unpredictable nature of

what awaits a student teacher supervisor when he or she arrives at a school to observe a student teacher. Anderson et al. (1992) note that supervisors may arrive at a pre-established time to observe a student teacher only to find that the cooperating teacher has rearranged the schedule or there is a fire alarm in progress. They may be met by an irate cooperating teacher who has lost all confidence in his or her student teacher or by frustrated student teachers who are feeling belittled or overly controlled by their cooperating teachers. Supervisors may be called out of the blue by a distraught and emotional student teacher who is questioning her career choice, or any number of unforeseeable circumstances. Although this is often not the case, and on most occasions, supervisors observe adequate lessons and work with supportive and competent cooperating teachers, the point is that it is very difficult to predict the situation that a supervisor will face when observing or working with student teachers (Cooper, 1996; Fulwiler, 1996; Pajak, 2002; Zeichner & Liston, 1985).

Beyond networks to varied systems. Finally, Clark and Collins (2007) claim that student teachers and those that supervise student teachers live in a series of nested systems in that the student teachers are embedded within a classroom that is itself embedded within a school. Thus the systems that university supervisors deal with are systems within systems and “do not get simpler as you zoom in or zoom out” (2007, p. 164). This last characteristic comes up repeatedly in the literature. Fulwiler (1996) and others (Anderson et al., 1992; Oja, 2003; Ramanathan & Wilkins-Canter, 1997; Stern, 1997; Veal & Rikard, 1998; Zeichner, 2006) note that student teacher supervisors face an incredibly wide range of realities from placement to placement. The number of variables

at play is virtually inconceivable: grade level, student teacher personality, work ethic, disposition, and relationship with their cooperating teacher, the cooperating teachers' teaching and planning styles, their relationship with the student teacher, and so on. This list is virtually endless. All the while, the student teacher supervisor is supposed to maintain a high degree of continuity, professionalism, and support for the student teachers with whom they work.

Observations and post-observation conferences. With the complexity of the student teacher supervisors' position clearly established, we may now turn our attention to what the literature suggests is the primary and most complicated responsibility that university supervisors are charged with: the observation of student teachers as they teach and the de-briefing conversations that follow (Anderson et al. 1992; Lopez-Real, Stimpson, & Burton, 2001, Tsui, Lopez-Real, Law, Tang, & Shum, 2001; Williams & Watson, 2004; Zeichner & Liston, 1985).

There appears to be an unspoken consensus that those who have been successful teachers can, by default, mentor those who are in the process of learning to teach (Anderson et al., 1992; Dinkelman et al., 2006; Fulwiler, 1996; Lopez-Real et al., 2001; Oja, 2003; Slick, 1997, 1998; Williams & Watson, 2004; Zeichner, 2005; Zeichner & Liston, 1985). My own research echoes this sentiment. I mention this because although a preponderance of the literature acknowledges the importance of the post-observation conference, there are relatively few works that take this topic up as a central theme (for an exception see Trout, 2010).

Many studies and practical guides agree that observing the teaching of student teachers and debriefing their lessons is a crucial, and perhaps the single most important aspect of preservice teachers' teacher education program. They also agree that the act of observation and post-observation conferencing is very complicated on a number of levels and requires a tremendous amount of skill, experience, reflection, education, and training to do well. For example, Lopez-Real et al. (2001) suggest that a supervisor should be able to gauge a student teacher's enthusiasm, commitment, general attitude, teaching practice, and content knowledge in a manner that considers growth and improvement as well as the incredible number of variables at play during any given isolated observation. Furthermore, Anderson et al. (1992) note:

Student teacher conferences present many challenges for university supervisors. Supervisors must frequently counsel student teachers who are threatened, ashamed, embarrassed, mentally and physically exhausted, stubborn, overconfident, or just plain ignorant. They must at times deal with tears, anger, guilt, and distorted views of reality. And they must always do this while operating on 'foreign turf,' without a classroom of their own, without the security of a personal office, without lesson plans, and without the opportunity to prepare in advance for problems that might occur. (p. 78)

Compounding matters is that they are charged with accomplishing this typically without formal training (Dinkelman et al., 2006; Zeichner, 1992, 2005; Zeichner & Liston, 1985).

Calls for Reform

Considering the lack of preparation for the complex work of student teaching supervision, it should come as no surprise that the second major theme in the literature to explore student teacher supervision and the position of the university supervisor is the need for major reform. There are two major sub-themes within the literature about reform related to university supervision. The first is the need for intentional and continual education, training, and professional development (Anderson et al., 1992; Oja, 1988, 2002; Ramanathan, 1997; Rodger & Keil, 2007; Slick, 1998). Contextually at this point I am using intentional in the programmatic sense. The second is the need to rethink the current paradigm used by the majority of universities to supervise student teachers. Thus, the reform movement regarding supervision of student teachers takes two very different but not necessarily adversarial tacks. The first concentrates on training and professional development and the second seeks to reengineer the entire process used to supervise student teachers. In sum, both camps concentrate on the need to bring a high degree of programmatic intentionality, training, and school-university partnerships to the process.

Reforming the preparation of student teaching supervisors. The most common call by those interested in the preparation of university supervisors to carry out their mission is to require all university supervisors to take a class devoted to preparing them for their roles as supervisors (Cavallo & Tice, 1997; Dinkelman et al., 2006; Oja, 1988, 2002, 2003; Ramanathan, 1997; Slick, 1998; Zeichner, 2005; Zeichner & Liston, 1985). Anderson et al. (1992) outline their logic regarding the importance of preparing university supervisors, “If teacher training institutions are going to prepare student

teachers effectively for the classroom, they must first thoroughly prepare their first line of defense—their university supervisors” (p. 20). Carrying the conversation further, what would be the scope of such a course or training protocol?

Various authors identify several areas on which training of university supervisors should concentrate. The two most common areas are evaluation (Anderson et al., 1992; Power & Perry, 2002; Ramanathan, 1997; Slick, 1998) and reflective practice (Anderson et al., 1992; Cooper, 1996; Fulwiler, 1996; Montecinos et al., 2002; Oja, 1988, 2003; Pavlovic, 1997; Stern, 1997; Zeichner, 2005; Zeichner & Liston, 1985). Anderson et al. (1992) also call for general logistical training that focuses on observation, evaluation forms, university requirements, working with new and experienced cooperating teachers, university policies for underperforming student teachers, and how to write letters of reference.

But why does this lack of attention to supervisor professional development seem to persist, given the overwhelming evidence of the importance of the student teaching experience and the well documented reality of a lack of preparation of those charged with overseeing this experience? Beck and Kosnik (2002) offer three compelling reasons:

The most obvious being time pressure... A second reason is that in most universities today, preservice work is not as highly regarded or rewarded as graduate work. As a result, faculty often give lower priority to preservice course instruction; and practicum supervision, the rationale and expectation for which are often vague... A third reason for the neglect of practicum supervision, in our view, is that many education professors

believe they can make a greater contribution to schooling through research and theorizing. (p. 8)

Oja (2002) addresses ways to address the issues that Beck and Kosnik (2002) identify in a descriptive article about the doctoral program at her own university. She describes two courses she established specifically for student teaching supervisors. Through these classes, Oja offered her graduate students an opportunity to study theory, put it into practice, while learning and applying research methods. One course is devoted to new supervisors and focuses on reflective practice through the use of self-study and action research techniques. The course also provides logistical training related to the supervisory position, responding to the need identified by Anderson et al. (1992). In Oja's second course, "supervisors and mentors learn about developmental theory, investigate alternative supervision strategies, and carry out self-study and action research" (p. 6). This course has a dual role as its audience comprises both supervisors and cooperating teachers. Likewise, it addresses the need for continual development of student teacher supervisors and cooperating teachers, as well as the need for stronger bonds and a collaborative relationships between universities, schools, and practicing teachers. Oja (2002) demonstrates that the supervision of student teachers can provide a wonderful but often overlooked opportunity to prepare graduate students to be both teacher educators and educational researchers, as well as provide faculty with opportunities to conduct meaningful theoretical and practical research.

The notion of collaboration and the deliberate forming and nurturing of relationships with and between individuals and institutions charged with overseeing and

guiding the growth of student teachers is by far the most prevalent theme in the literature that focuses on reform of student teaching supervision

Reforming programmatic structures of teacher education. Several scholars (Clarke & Collins, 2007; Melser, 2004; Montecinos et al., 2002; Oja, 1988, 2003; Poetter & Hammond, 2000; Ralph, 1994, 2003; Rodgers & Keil, 2007; Shiveley & Poetter, 2002; Slick, 1998; Wilson, 2006) have called for more collaborative models to guide the student teaching experience. Before jumping into the reform literature, however, it is important to note that there do not appear to be calls to start from scratch, but rather to take advantage of existing relationships, faculty and staff expertise, and institutional missions, with a considerable amount of effort to improve student teachers' clinical experiences. Cornbleth and Ellsworth (1994) voice this perspective:

Reforming teacher education from within cannot simply start from scratch. We inherit existing programs, faculty, and students within a school of education and university with their own traditions and standard operating procedures; and the teachers we prepare, and perhaps our programs as well, are expected to meet standards set by state education departments. (p. 50)

Thus, when considering reform or evolutionary efforts, it is important for administrators and faculty to ask: What existing relationships can support our work? How can we maximize our existing resources? How can we ensure reliability and quality in our student teacher placement, mentoring, and supervision? How can we foster educative and reflective practice so that everyone involved with student teaching, the students taught by the student teachers, the mentors or cooperating teachers, the supervisors, and

the schools and universities grow in reflective practice, professional devolvement, and commitment to the vocation of education?

Standards and enhanced structures. Accessing a starting point from which to build structural reform, Melser (2004) sums up the traditional approach used by most universities:

Many universities utilize the 'circuit rider' approach to supervise student teachers, where the university supervisor travels from school to school with minimal contact with the school classroom to which the student teacher has been assigned. With this approach, the university supervisor makes infrequent visits, and the universities spend a great deal of money on travel and mileage expenses for the supervisors assigned this duty. (p. 31)

Melser continues, in his argumentative piece, that there needs to be a concerted and wide spread effort to restructure the traditional triad system. His stated motivation is to bring about a more strategic and thoughtful relationship in Professional Development Schools (PDS) that they were already working with and guided by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards.

NCATE Standards for Professional Development Schools (2001) suggest that professional development schools must focus on five major standards. These include:

1. Developing a learning community that supports integrated learning and development of P–12 students, candidates, and PDS partnerships through inquiry-based practice.

2. Being accountable to PDS partners and the public for upholding the professional standards for teaching and learning.
 3. Collaborating with partner institutions to move from independent to interdependent partners by committing themselves and making a commitment to each other to joint work focusing on the PDS mission.
 4. Developing and demonstrating knowledge, skills, and dispositions resulting in learning for all P–12 students ensuring a diverse learning community for PDS work.
 5. Articulating resources and establishing governing structures that support learning and development of P–12 students, candidates and faculty and other professionals.
- (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2001, p. 9, 11, 13, 14, & 15)

Melser (2004) goes on to discuss how her institution modified the student teaching model to live out these standards:

Several areas were restructured, and the traditional roles of supervision were revamped in a number of ways. University supervisors, now called liaisons, work with a larger group of student teachers who are placed together in a PDS for their student teaching experience... While the liaison spends time in the school completing supervision activities, the supervising teachers in the PDS also serve in many roles doing more supervision of student teachers, sharing information at [on-site student teaching] seminars for pre-service teachers, and participating in activities related to teacher preparation at the university level. (p. 32)

A key element of all the reform literature on collaborative supervision insists that the cooperating teacher should be seen and treated as a teacher educator (for examples see Clarke & Collins, 2007; Gary, 1998; Melsler, 2004; Montecinos et al., 2002; Oja, 1988, 2003; Poetter & Hammond, 2000; Ralph, 1994, 2003; Rodger & Keil, 2007; Shiveley & Poetter, 2002; Wilson, 2006).

Enhanced relationships. The first step in the transformation process, according to the qualitative case study by Rodger and Keil (2007), is to clearly identify what a revised student teacher program would look like:

We decided we needed a new concept of how to supervise student teachers, so we worked to design a new approach that captured the qualities described in the literature in our effort to have more authentic discussion regarding supervising student teachers. We wanted an opportunity for cooperating teachers to talk to one another and we wanted the student teachers to be able to talk to each other. Additionally, we sought to provide new opportunities for classroom teachers to contribute to shaping their profession. We wanted student teachers to have more contact with faculty who had terminal degrees, and we wanted cooperating teachers to work with faculty for mutual benefit so that all participants could develop a richer and more robust understanding of teaching. (p. 66)

This quotation illustrates the programmatic intentionality with which Rodger and Keil approached the formation and nurturing of the relationships with and between institutions and individuals charged with the preparation of preservice teachers. It also suggests a

desire to transform the traditional triad model into a community of practice. They conducted their pilot at a mid-size high school in the Midwest.

Rodgers and Keil (2007) promote a “pair-dyad” model (p. 67). This model pairs two cooperating teachers with two student teachers. One student teacher works with a primary cooperating teacher but is observed by the partner cooperating teacher. The cooperating teachers meet regularly with each other while student teachers are teaching and with the university liaison to discuss the student teachers' growth. The pair-dyads also meet regularly with all cooperating teachers and the university liaison, again while the student teachers are teaching, to discuss the overall progress of the student teachers but also to review readings centered on their own growth as cooperating teachers and teacher educators. They claim to have had very positive outcomes in their experience piloting this model and advise: “Although collaborative restructuring is complex on multiple levels, it also can act as a powerful medium for change” (p. 79).

Enhanced status for cooperating teachers. Wilson (2006) calls for the use of “clinical master teachers (CMT)” (p. 23). The clinical master teacher acts as both cooperating teacher and college supervisor. University funding allows for release time for the CMT so they can observe student teachers, lead student teacher seminars, and work with and meet with cooperating teachers separately and together. Gary (1998) encourages another variation on the same theme, what he refers to as the Collaborative Model:

The collaborative practicum model establishes five-member student teaching teams and places them as a group in schools where they are supervised by a team

of teachers... The collaborative model changes the role of the cooperating teacher to that of a supervising teacher, with increased pay, prestige, program ownership, authority, and accountability. The supervising teachers work as partners with college staff designing the content and structure of the preservice clinical experience. (p. 4)

The common implied thread in the reform literature is to create community and foster interaction between the university, cooperating teacher/CMT, the university supervisor/liaison and the student teacher. The “circuit rider” model leads to isolation and inconsistency. It also foster logistical challenges that will be discussed in later chapters. In short a partnership model consolidates the total number of university school relationships in favor of deeper, more structured and communicative relationship that are easier to monitor and create intervention when needed.

Closing Personal Thoughts

It is my hope that I have not given the impression that my personal practices and the way I address life have allowed me to master these practices. Quite the opposite, I continually fall short. The very fact that it has taken me five years to write this dissertation shows a lack of discipline. I continually struggle to live with a sense of curiosity and joy. Two components of what the Dali Lama prescribes to live a spiritual life. I tend to react to situations and events rather than purposefully walk into them. That said, I do try to be a gift rather than a burden to the people around me. This may seem a bit random but I feel this admission ties my worldview and the review of the literature together nicely.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Methods

Introduction

The methodological framework and the methods with which one approaches a research project have a significant effect on the direction a project takes. But if they are not explained honestly and thoughtfully, both the project and its findings may be misunderstood, criticized, or written off as unimportant. But what exactly is the essence of the distinction between method and methodology? Van Manen (1990) describes it thusly:

We need to make a distinction between research *method* and research methodology... On the one hand, “methodology” refers to the philosophic framework, the fundamental assumptions and characteristics of a human science perspective. It includes the general orientation to life, the view of knowledge, and the sense of what it means to be human which is associated with or implied by a certain research method... In contrast, the notion of method is charged with methodological considerations and implications of a particular philosophical or epistemological perspective. For example, “the interview” for an ethnographer may mean something quite different than for a therapist, or for an investigative journalist. (Emphasis in original, p. 27–28)

Van Manen (1990) tells us that methodology and method, although related, are not synonymous. According to Van Manen, both are tangled with the researcher’s personal beliefs concerning human nature, the formation of knowledge, and the manner in which reality is experienced or formed. Although their meanings are different, they

are nonetheless spliced together. Such a conception provides the foundation for this dissertation.

Methodology

In this section I explain the epistemological and ontological views that shape the way in which I apply constructivist grounded theory to this research. I also outline basic tenets of the methodological approach of constructivist grounded theory.

Epistemological and Ontological Foundation

My personal belief about knowledge, or epistemology, as it relates to the realm of human science is that knowledge is neither strictly objective nor strictly constructive. I also believe there are a number of timeless universal truths that are larger than any single contextual situation.

For an example, I point to Dewey's (1933) concept of the act and power of reflection in his book, *How We Think*. Dewey describes reflective thought: "The ground or basis for the belief is deliberately sought and its adequacy to support the belief examined. This process is called reflective thought; it alone is truly educative in value" (p. 2). I believe that the idea that reflective thought has an impact on personal belief is a timeless truth. Similarly, I believe Searle's assertions regarding *external realism* that I discussed in Chapter Two. In a more recent article, Searle (2005) explains:

There exists a way that things are that is independent of our representation of how things are. This, I think is not a 'thesis' that one can argue for or against. Rather, it is a background presupposition of the intelligibility of large sections of discourse, whether in our form of life or in the most exotic. (p. 112)

Although Dewey articulates one timeless truth and Searle articulates another, neither philosopher discovered, nor constructed them. They are, from my perspective, part of the human experience.

For my ontological worldview, I see reality as incredibly complex and multidimensional. Any adherence to a strict subjectivist or objectivist view of reality is problematic. For instance, let us imagine that a man has been standing at a bus stop on a cloudy day with a temperature of thirty degrees, wearing a light jacket and a thin pair of trousers. While the man is standing there, a man out for a jog passes him, wearing a thin, long-sleeve running shirt and a pair of thin running pants. The objective reality is that it is below freezing; this complies with our normative view of a cold temperature. However, while the man waiting for the bus is cold to the point of discomfort, the runner is warm to the point of sweating. Thus, their subjective realities are quite different. A good deal more has been written about this, yet Tolstoy's (1997) closing monologue in *War and Peace* provides an apt description. In short he says that there is an overarching and objective historical reality. However, the far more important realities are those created by the reaction of individuals, communities, and nations to the overarching historical reality.

Constructivist Grounded Theory

I have worked hard to approach my dissertation and the methodology of constructivist grounded theory with an openness to uncover, identify, and draw attention to *truth* as I experience it, while constructing a relevant and useful theory built upon the various conjoined realities lived by me and my colleagues.

Grounded theory methodology tries to find out what is and then explains it in terms of a theory. Researchers using grounded theory ideally approach their work with a frame of reference that is open to all possible outcomes. Charmaz (2006), working to clarify grounded theory, disagrees with the notion that researchers are able to approach their projects with few preconceived notions. Charmaz understands “grounded theory methods and theorizing as *social actions* that researchers construct in concert with others in particular places and times ... We interact with data and create theories about it” (emphasis in the original, p. 128).

Charmaz’s (2006) perspective informs how I view my role as a researcher in this dissertation. Thus, I, as researcher, am more than a variable to be considered and controlled for. My experiences and reflection are about data and the lens through which all other data is filtered. The resulting theory comes out of the relationships between me, the researcher, and those with whom I interact throughout the course of the project, as well as all the preconceptions, knowledge, experiences, language, and passions with which we all bring to our interactions.

I would like to say that I was able to adhere to a tenant of being open and coming to the project with a fresh mind. However, this would be a lie. As much as I tried not to project a predetermined theory, I could not get away from the theoretical notion with which I approached the study. I had even given it a name before I began collecting my data and highlighted it in my original dissertation title: *Co-development: Moving toward a Constructivist Grounded Theory of Becoming a Teacher Educator*. I was fixated by the notion of co-development. My thought was that we, doctoral students working as student

teacher supervisors, and the students we supervised were both preparing for a future role and playing that role at the same time. We were acting as teacher educators in our teaching while mentoring the student teachers assigned to us. All of this occurred while the student teachers were acting as classroom teachers while learning to teach. Thus we both were in a state of simultaneous or co-development.

This seemed to be an interesting way to view the process and I spent a great deal of time thinking about what the final theory would look like. It would be based on bringing a sense of intentionality to the process and explicitly naming this dynamic. My point is that I did not enter this study with a total sense of openness for which all forms of grounded theory, including constructivist grounded theory call. I began this study thinking that I would come up with a grounded theory tied to the concept of *co-development*. I attend to this point with more depth in chapter six. The methodology of constructivist grounded theory, with its acceptance of returning to the data, renewing interpretations, and reworking theoretical ideas, enabled me to make the difficult decision to discard this original theoretical stance.

Method

My views on reality and knowledge, along with structure and logic, I draw primarily from Gadamer (1975), Van Manen (1990), Charmaz (2006), and Crawford (2005). These scholars have influenced the sequence of and every procedure employed in this project. I begin with May 27, 2008, the date my dissertation proposal was approved. This is a very superficial date. I had already written several papers on becoming a teacher educator, reviewed the literature on the subject, and co-designed and taught a

course inspired by the need to bring a higher degree of programmatic intentionality to the journey of becoming a teacher educator at the University of Minnesota. Once my proposal was approved, however, I began to work in earnest and, more importantly, I began to realize that the concept of *co-development* was bringing an unhealthy element to my research. With this in mind, I turn now to the methods I employed. I provide a description of my data, an explanation for why I chose this particular data set, the manner in which I gathered the data, and finally, the structure I used to organize and analyze my data.

It is important to note that data collection and data analysis are not intended to be distinctly different phases of a given research project. They are separate, yet intertwined and spiral together toward theory. As such, it is helpful to think of grounded theory as a nonlinear research method. The graph below helps to demonstrate the nonlinear quality of grounded theory. I do want to point out that the progression in this discussion gives the impression that first I collected data then I analyzed it. The data collection and a good deal of the data analysis took place concurrently. The analysis however, went on much longer and it is still happening during the writing process of this dissertation. This is an important procedural tenet for grounded theory research.

Data Sources

The data sources from which I draw fall into two distinct categories: primary and ancillary. My primary sources of data come from three sources: (1) my own personal reflections on becoming a teacher educator; (2) interviews with 13 fellow doctoral students in the department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Minnesota;

and (3) class recordings of a graduate level course devoted to exploring the theory and practice of student teacher supervision in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. These data account for the majority of the collected data. The ancillary sources of data include institutional documents such as the Student Teaching Handbook (University of Minnesota, 2007), various mission statements from the Department of Curriculum and Instruction in the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Minnesota, and informal conversations with staff and professors that I chronicled as journal entries after or during my conversations.

Personal reflections. I gathered my personal reflections by journaling. I kept two kinds of journals from November 2007 through May 2009. Initially my journaling was exclusively about my role as a student teacher and practicum supervisor in conjunction with a qualitative research course I was taking at the time (CI 8148 Conducting Qualitative Studies in Educational Contexts). It was not until August 2008 that I began systematically journaling with the intent to use my journals as data for my dissertation. At this point, as suggested by Loughran (2002), I began to keep two separate journals; a reflective journal and an activity journal. I maintained this habit throughout the academic year 2008–2009.

In my reflective journal, I attempted to pen entries immediately after my interactions with preservice teachers, whatever the occasion. At times our interactions consisted of observation/post-observation conferences, student teaching seminar class, or a phone call from a student teacher asking me for advice. Additionally, I wrote in my reflective journals on Friday afternoons to review my week's interactions with the

preservice teachers with whom I worked as well as to reflect on general issues or lessons I learned over the past week. These entries varied greatly in length, tenor, and topic, but generally related to my personal and professional development as a teacher educator.

My activity journal began as a simple chronicle of the tasks I had completed related to my assistantship as a teacher educator. I followed this simple notation method, post task, for the fall 2008 semester. However, I changed course for the spring semester, 2009. Instead of postmortem journaling, I began to spend more time laying out the tasks I wanted to accomplish and less time writing in my activity journal. In turn, I spent more time in my reflective journal pondering whether or not I accomplished my goals for a given week. Consequently, my reflective and activity journaling evolved and became more structured.

Interviews. Another major source of data comes from 13 fellow doctoral students in the C&I Department at the University of Minnesota. I scheduled and conducted semi-structured interviews with each one. All interviews were transcribed, roughly half by me and half by someone I hired. In keeping with the tenets of grounded theory, my goals for these interviews were to have a very general plan as to the type of questions I wanted to address, while at the same time I wanted to be open to let both the interviewee and me explore unforeseen areas of interest. I did, however, go into each interview with a hard copy of the questions I wanted to ask to use as a rough agenda and on which to take notes (see Appendix A for interview questions).

I chose the participants for the study by using purposeful sampling (Patton, 1990). I used the following criteria to identify the participants: (1) they had entered their

graduate programs with the goal of becoming a teacher educator; (2) they had completed at least two years of doctoral level course work; and (3) I had a pre-existing relationship with them, which was more personal with some than with others. I had specific reasons for using these criteria to choose my participants.

Table 1. *Study participants and dates*

Name	Practice Interview Date	Primary Interview Date	Follow-up Interview Date
Jill		10/17/2008	
Joan		10/23/2008	
Megan		09/22/1008	
Mike	06/13/2008	09/18/2008	
Sarah		09/24/2008	
Jessie		10/01/2008	
Ann	05/19/2008	10/02/2008	
Beth		10/02/2008	
Kate		10/15/1008	
Jolene		09/29/2008	
Jen		10/08/2008	11/20/2008
Bill		09/15/2008	
Michelle	03/10/2008	09/15/2008	

For the first criterion, I wanted participants who wanted to become teacher educators because this dissertation's central aim is to explore the personal and professional formation of teacher educators. The institution from which the sample comes is a large research institution. Thus, to identify, explore, reflect on, and compare experiences and reasons for pursuing advanced degrees, it is important that the participants shared the primary goal of wanting to become teacher educators. I do not mean to imply that the participants are not interested in pursuing educational research. Rather, becoming an educational researcher was not their primary goal.

My logic for the second criterion of having completed at least two years of doctoral coursework may seem a bit arbitrary. However my thought is that it takes time to accumulate and assimilate experiences. The two year mark is roughly the mid-point for many full time doctoral students at the University of Minnesota, based on the overall course of study. As such, it seemed to be a good benchmark for capturing the lived experience of the participants as they were in the process of becoming a teacher educator.

I decided that having a preexisting relationship with the participants was an important requirement for a number of reasons. I was asking them to share personal and intimate details about their experiences, identities, missions, and goals as regards becoming a teacher educator so I wanted them to feel comfortable sharing this information with me. I also wanted them to be assured of their confidentiality so that they would share both positive and negative experiences. Finally, I wanted to feel comfortable myself and be able to connect with the participants.

In addition to interviewing doctoral students, I draw on three practice interviews I had conducted for a previous course assignment with program and institutional administrators directly charged with overseeing and administering student teaching experiences at the University of Minnesota. I should note that I also interviewed these individuals as formal study participants. I draw on this data only when it helps to clarify or provide context to my primary sources of data.

Classroom recordings and transcripts. I gathered the third source of data from doctoral students enrolled in CI 5150 Theory and Practice of Pre-Service Teacher Mentoring and Supervision, over a two year period. CI 5150 is a three credit hour course

that met every other week for an entire academic year. I taught the course for the 2008 – 2009 academic year and co-taught it for the 2007–2008 academic year. The goals of the course were to prepare student teacher supervisors by offering them an opportunity to analyze their practices in a supportive community. The primary data I gathered from these classes came in the form of recorded and transcribed class discussions. I also gathered anecdotal data from two course assignments, bi-weekly electronic journal entries and self-studies about their student teaching supervision practices. In total, I recorded four class sessions from the 2007–2008 school year and three class sessions from the 2008–2009 school year.

Describing the data gathering process has been relatively straight forward. That is not to say it was easy to gather the data. In fact it was extremely difficult and rarely happened exactly according to plan. All of which I will expand on later in this chapter.

Deciding *what* to explore occurred in a process that presented itself in many ways. The combination of course work and assignments, my graduate assistantships, what I was reading on my own, who I was talking and listening to, and events in my personal life worked together to lead to my interest in a process of *becoming*. I began looking at my life in terms of becoming more as a survival mechanism than anything. As a result, I became increasingly methodical. I researched what others had shared about the process, wrote papers on my experiences and the experiences of others, and discussed with my colleagues, professors, and advisors. All of this worked together in a way that made continuing this work on my dissertation an easy choice.

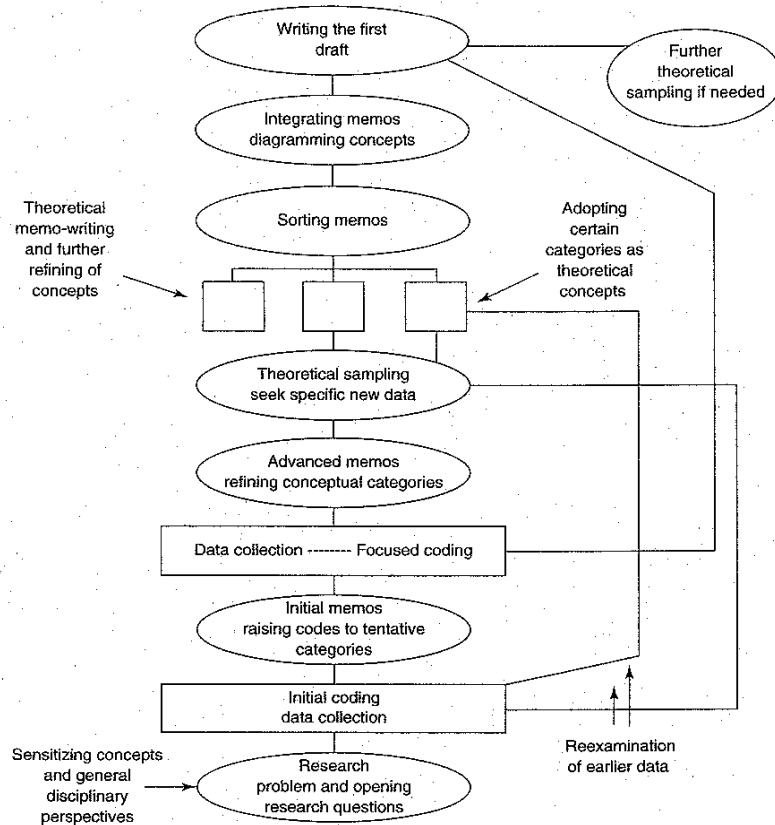
The *how* to explore, although not nearly as dramatic, followed a similar path. Grounded theory was at the core of CI 8148 Conducting Qualitative Studies in Educational Contexts. Early in that same semester, my advisor had also suggested I read Charmaz. In addition, I was discovering the paradigms of Action Research and Self-Study. I do not mean to imply that designing the procedures and practices and evolution of the topic of *becoming a teacher educator* materialized on its own. The tasks of identifying, vetting, rethinking, and finally laying out and gaining approval for my dissertation topic was tedious. However, I had all the resources I needed, making the process fairly straight forward. The same cannot be said about my analytical journey.

Data Analysis

Charmaz (2006) accounts for a dichotomy between the structured nature of data collection and the more nebulous and unending journey of interpretation, analysis, and reporting. Charmaz proposes that constructivist grounded theorists analyze data as it is collected and then collect more data while continuing to analyze existing data in a more focused manner, all while writing memos, generating conceptual categories, and building or identifying emergent theories (see figure 3). The emerging theories, in turn, offer a fresh lens through which to read and continue to analyze the data. This is an important procedural tenet of constructivist grounded theory research, data collection and data analysis are distinct from one another, yet happen in tandem, with the data collection informing the analysis and the analysis informing the data collection (Backman & Kyngas, 1999; Grasser, 2002; Mills, Bonner, & Francis, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). My initial process of analysis was an interpretive act (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin,

1990). At the highest level, the act of interpretation is an act of reconstructing and giving meaning to a lived reality. Gadamer explains that “when we interpret the meaning of something we actually interpret an interpretation” (1986, p. 26).

Figure 3: The Grounded Theory Process (Charmaz: 2006, p. 11)



In addition to accepting that analysis is really a form of interpretation and meaning, it is also important to keep in mind that although there are distinct procedures and techniques I followed, I never intended to follow them dogmatically. Instead, I used them as a set of guidelines to provide direction and a set of tools to employ as I worked toward the development of a grounded theory.

Creating a theoretical tapestry. In an effort to illustrate the practices I followed, I will interweave my discussion of the procedures themselves, and describe how they looked in practice. It is important to note that I stretched this process over a three year period.

A particular life event impacted the time frame within which I wrote this dissertation. Overall, my aspirations and realities changed significantly over the life of this project. When I began my dissertation I was focused on securing a job as a teacher educator. I spent countless hours searching and applying for jobs while taking on consulting projects for former colleagues in the publishing business. Then I began to realize that the salary range of assistant professorships would not fulfill my financial obligations. Consequently, today, roughly five after my dissertation proposal was approved, I have worked for a major company that develops curriculum and programs for private technical and trade schools and I have started my own business. It is not what I envisioned when I decided to explore the process of becoming a teacher educator for this dissertation research.

I would like to make another point regarding the way in which I describe the analytic procedures of this research. On paper, the work gives the impression of a logical flow that implies I knew what I was going to write about before I sat down to write. This was not the case. Rather, the process of writing served as part of the analytic and interpretive processes. This elongated process has led me to theoretical insights which I will speak to in detail in Chapter 6.

Analysis through shifting. Grounded theorists believe that once we have our first piece of data, or even as we are collecting our first pieces of data, we begin the analysis process. In my case, this was a combination of personal journals and pilot interviews that I collected in fall 2007 for a qualitative research methods course in my doctoral program. It is important to note that although the course was not devoted to grounded theory, the professor relied heavily on grounded theory methods of analysis. Three of the most important analytical tools in grounded theory are coding, memo-writing, and conceptual categorizing.

Coding is a progression that begins with initial or open coding and moves into focused coding, which consists of axial and theoretical coding (Backman & Kyngas, 1999; Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). “During open coding the data are broken down into discrete parts, closely examined, compared for similarities and differences, and questions are asked about the phenomena as reflected in the data” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 62). The purposes of coding and constant comparison work in tandem are to identify conceptual labels that help to break up individual pieces of data and link them to other related pieces of data from other data sources. In a sense, the main goal in the initial or opened coding stages is to fracture the data into many pieces and combine the pieces with other related data.

I began formally analyzing, or in this case reanalyzing, the data I collected for my qualitative research methods course in early May 2008. I did this to prepare for the interviews I planned to conduct after my dissertation proposal was approved. I still recall sitting in our communal graduate assistants’ office early one morning just after the

semester had ended in May. I simply sat there and looked at the printed transcripts and the cassette tapes. I thought to myself, “Well, what do I now?” After a few minutes, I decided I would simultaneously listen to the tapes and read the transcripts.

At this point I started highlighting what I thought was important and jotted down single words or short phrases in the margins. Some of which would become codes while others became categories. For instance, during that first day some of the words/phrases I wrote down were “tired, needing a break, no down time.” It was not long before the category “things that push teachers out of the classroom” came to the surface. I continued to follow this method of analysis throughout the period of time that I conducted interviews. I also began the practice of going back to my own journals to see how and if these categories and codes were present in my own journaling. I did not use my journals to generate codes or categories outright. To do so felt disingenuous, as if I would be building the codes artificially and looking to other data for validation of my own experiences.

My research over the summer of 2008 was fairly unstructured and consisted of transcribing and analyzing four class sessions from the supervision course I had co-taught the year before. I also conducted three informal practice interviews. This slow start gave me the opportunity to think about and move away from the co-development lens that was biasing my analysis. I slowly came to realize that although I thought the concept of co-development was important, it was both too grand and not necessarily supported by the data that I was collecting at that point in time.

This was no subtle realization, and it left me a bit lost, but not paralyzed. Half consciously and half subconsciously, I decided to work the process as Charmaz had laid it out, and to try not to think about what I would find. Thus, I went into the 2008-2009 academic year focused on collecting data. Over the course of the next three months I conducted interviews and one follow up interview. I fell into the practice of going to the graduate assistants' office two or three mornings a week to listen, re-listen, code, and categorize my data.

It was not long before I started to write memos and short sentences on paper. I did this sporadically and many were later discarded because I could not read them, they were repetitive, I lost them, or any number of other reasons. However, what struck me was I had been planning to begin the formal processes of memo-writing when I realized I had already started. By mid-October of 2008, I had completed and transcribed all recorded data: classroom discussions (four from the 2007 – 2008 course and three from 2008 – 2009 course) and interviews. I had listened and re-listened to the bulk of my initial one-on-one interviews, coded them, and began the initial memo writing and categorization process, without even realizing it.

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Analysis through writing. As the 2008 fall semester drew to a close, I decided to take a week off to focus on my dissertation and prepare for my student teaching and practicum teaching responsibilities for the following semester. During this time is when I

decided to refocus my journaling efforts from a more reactive to more proactive practice, which I previously describe in the *Data Sources* section. I spent hours organizing, combining, and deleting codes. I also formally began placing my codes into categories and copying and pasting quotations from the data into a document I had divided according to the categories. I do not mean to make this sound like it was a creative or rigorous process. If anything the act of categorizing seemed to take care of itself. I had already organized data (regardless of its source) according to what it dealt with: course work, supervision, K-12 teaching, teaching as a graduate student, policy. I had also noted whether the data was of personal or professional nature. When I came across a piece of data that seemed to fit into more than one category, I placed the data in both.

I went into the 2009 winter semester feeling ready to continue gathering, analyzing, categorizing, and memo writing. I was becoming increasingly aware that my desire to continue on the same path was becoming an excuse to put off actually writing my dissertation. By this point I had identified my research topic and preliminary questions I wanted to explore, completed the initial data collection process, and gone through several iterative coding and categorizing processes in which I refined and standardized my codes and organized them by categories. I had reached the point of saturation late in the preceding semester. In terms of the grounded theory process, I had worked my way through the bottom two thirds of Charmaz's chart in Figure 3.

That is not to say I had completed the analytical process by any stretch, however. I had definitely reached the point in the processes in which I needed to begin to think of

my categories in theoretical terms and refine my memos in a way that they began to turn them into actual text. In short, it was time to begin the actual writing of my dissertation.

Limitations of the Study

Although it may be more common to look at the validity, trustworthiness, and limitation of a dissertation, I feel it is more revealing to explore this work in terms of its resonance, potential for marginal influence, and its overall worth (Lincoln & Guba, 1994). I do not mean to suggest that addressing the validity, trustworthiness, and considering its limitations is not important, rather, I believe they are born out in the narrative as whole.

From a personal and professional perspective my hope is that my story and the stories of my colleagues and friends resonate in a manner that causes me and my audience to pause and reflect on our own experiences and the manner in which we influence the experiences of those with whom we teach and learn.

In the end, my hope for the study itself is to contribute to my personal journey of becoming and to humbly present my interpretation of the data in a manner that inspires readers to consider the importance of the journey of becoming a teacher educator. This is both the primary strength of my dissertation and is its intended limitation.

Chapter 4: Beginning the Journey of Becoming a Teacher Educator

Introduction

I divide my findings into two chapters. Chapter Four focuses on the *journey* that the participants in this study, including me, have taken as we worked our ways through graduate school in pursuit of doctoral degrees in education. Chapter Five, on the other hand, explores the *role* of graduate students who are employed as university practicum and student teacher supervisors and methods instructors. As a result of this division, the one-on-one interviews that I conducted with my colleagues provide the primary source of data for Chapter Four, and the supervision classes that I recorded and transcribed provide the primary source of data for Chapter Five. This is by no means a hard and fast rule; all data sources are interwoven throughout both chapters.

The goal of this chapter is to provide my interpretations in my effort to work toward a theory of becoming a teacher educator. My analysis of the data has led me to two important findings: (1) journeys began as movements away from teaching, and the vehicles for this move became graduate school or jobs unrelated to education; and (2) some of the doctoral students did not identify teacher education as a professional goal, nor had they given it much thought.

The contextualization of intentionality continues to grow in this chapter. I have used intentionality to describe the personal and humble nature in which I am attempting to approach life and the writing of this work, programmatic intentionality in the context of the preparation that graduate students receive prior to acting as student teacher supervisors, and personal intentionality in terms of how I and others viewed and

approached acting as teacher educators through the act of supervising student teachers. I am now adding reactionary as an additional contextual qualifier. I believe this is a distinctly different type of intentionality. We make decision related to how we approach a task, action, or event but it is not wholly reflective but rather limited. It is visceral, tied to unprocessed emotions and tends to direct action in the moment.

Many Pathways

If we work backward and consider the roads followed by all college professors or instructors whose responsibility it is to educate the next generation of teachers, we would see that there are many possible paths. Some very indirect, such as the one followed by my friend and mentor, John (all names in this chapter are pseudonyms). When asked how he became a teacher educator he explained that he played tennis regularly with a couple of professors from a local college's teacher education program. At some point, one of his tennis partners asked if he would like to teach a night class in their program. He agreed and taught a couple classes a year for more than 10 years, until he was eligible for retirement after 30 years of teaching high school social studies. When he retired from teaching he became an assistant professor. It is interesting to note that John does not have a Ph.D., nor does he feel compelled to work toward a Ph.D. He is already a teacher educator and has better things to do with his time than pursue a Ph.D.

The data in this research study suggest several possible pathways that lead individuals to the vocation of teacher education. For some participants in my study, like Kim, Steve, and John, the pathway began by assuming the responsibilities of a teacher educator. Kim had been a science teacher and cooperating teacher for several years when

one of the supervisors and professors she had worked with as a cooperating teacher asked her if she would be interested in becoming a teacher educator as there was an opening for an Elementary Science Methods Professor at the college where he worked. Kim interviewed, got the job, and was told if she wanted to be on a tenure track she would need to earn a Ph.D. With this goal in mind she applied to graduate school, was accepted, and began work on her Ph.D.

The paths of others were more typical. Most left classroom teaching and entered graduate school to pursue a Master's degree or Ph.D. in education. This does not mean that those I interviewed took this path with the intention of becoming teacher educators as we shall see. It simply means that for some, graduate school was an alternative to teaching and they chose education as a field of study. Only three of the 13 people I interviewed sought admittance to and entered education doctoral programs with the stated goal of becoming teacher educators: Bill, Beth, and Sarah. Others, like Mike, took a middle road, one that led out of the classroom to a job unconnected to education or teaching, or to a graduate program unrelated to education before entering an education doctoral program like I did. Given the divergent routes and combination routes taken by those who enter education doctoral programs, it seems fitting to begin with a conversation about the journeys that have led the participants in this study to a doctoral program in which they expected to be prepared for careers as teacher educators.

Journeys Begin with Exits

The findings in both this and the next chapter may give a false sense of a neat chronological flow from one state of being to the next. This is not the case; rather the

route followed by almost all of those I interviewed, including me, was indirect and more about moving away from something, at least initially, than about moving toward something. It is also interesting to note that although the participants in this study and I made big changes in our lives by entering graduate school, for many of us, the real reasons we left the classroom did not become clear until we had put time and experience between ourselves and our decisions to leave. Mike explained, “When I left the classroom, my plan was to take a couple of years off to get a Master’s in Spanish Literature. It was something I always wanted to do. After being out of the classroom for a while, I realized that I did not have a knot in my stomach anymore and that I felt like I had a life again” (interview, October 14, 2008).

In my case, I thought my depression and sense of failure as a teacher was due mainly to teaching on the reservation. But when I moved back to Indiana I could not bring myself to apply for teaching jobs. I used the excuse that teaching jobs were very competitive in Indiana and my chances of getting one were slim. However, as I reflect on it now, I had no plan to even apply for a teaching position. I simply could not see myself back in the classroom. The very thought of it was exhausting and depressing.

This reframing of experiences, in a manner that modifies personal and professional reasons for leaving the classroom, entering graduate school, and modifying goals once in graduate school, emerged to some degree in every interview. Jill noted:

I applied to grad school because I got laid off and had thought I would go back to the classroom. But after being here and seeing how much I like academia, I am

not planning to go back to the classroom. I have not ruled it out but it is not my first choice. (interview, October 17, 2008)

Jill did not leave the classroom intentionally, but was literally pushed out. This quote is subtle yet powerful. It demonstrates a reactivity in that Jill applied to and entered graduate school as a result of being laid off. However, she grew to enjoy the academic path she was on. I think this demonstrates one of the many possible aspects of how the becoming process evolves. We react to a given event or circumstance, we grow into it and at times it has the power to reshape and redirect us. Joan, Megan, Mike, and Sarah all spoke to this, saying in one fashion or another that graduate school seemed to be a good alternative to teaching at the time and gave them a place where they could figure out what to do next

Although all of those I interviewed were deeply committed to their present responsibilities as teacher educators and to the process of becoming teacher educators, many did not start out with this as a clear goal when they left K-12 teaching. Rather, their decision to work toward a vocation of teaching preservice teachers how to teach emerged over time, and, at least initially for many, their desire was to move away from or out of the classroom and not move toward the vocation of teacher education.

I found both unique and reoccurring answers to the question, why did you leave the classroom? One of the most interesting and freeing realizations I came to as I listened to the stories of why my colleagues left the classroom was that I was not the only one who felt as if I was pushed out of the classroom by sheer exhaustion and a constant sense of being overwhelmed. The stories about why those I spoke with left the classroom were

like a fine tapestry woven with both personal and professional threads to the point that it is impossible to disentangle one from the other. I, by no means, claim that others who change careers or positions do not go through a complex decision-making process.

However, I do believe that for many, making a change in one's professional life does not have the same impact on one's identity, financial security, and daily schedule as that of leaving the K-12 setting (or other position) to become an education doctoral student.

All of those I interviewed went from the security of an adequately paying job as a teacher or other job to the financially tenuous position of a graduate assistant. We also went from a reasonably set schedule to a very fluid schedule. Above all, we went from a place of authority, expertise (or at least perceived expertise in the eyes of others), and reasonably high status, to the low and, at times, demeaning status of being a graduate student.

In addition to these new realities, the experience of being a graduate student was one that blurred the lines between the personal and the professional. As we shall see, nothing is straight forward; the personal and professional are too tightly bound. This binding together of the personal and the professional create an incredibly complex and paradoxical reality in which those I spoke with lived while making the decision to leave K-12 classrooms. This begs a rhetorical question for these individuals; is/was becoming a teacher educator a consequence or a result?

Unintentional Beginnings

Most of those I interviewed entered graduate school in unintentional ways. For instance Michelle explained:

I just kind of ended up in graduate school. I had been working for the University as a tutor for student athletes and I could take a couple of classes for free each semester. Naturally, I took education classes and then the opportunity to work for my Ph.D. presented itself and I took it (interview, September 15, 2008).

Michelle's path to graduate school demonstrates a combination of unintentional and reactionary intentionality. Unintentional in the sense that she took education courses because that was what she was familiar with and intentional in a reactionary manner because the opportunity to work on her Ph.D. presented itself to her and she simply followed it. This quote is important as it demonstrates how the journey of becoming a teacher educator is not necessarily a methodically planned set of events. Yet it can and for Michelle did turn into a purposeful pursuit. Michelle was deeply committed to her growth as teacher educator. She even went so far as to focusing on her practice as a student teacher supervisor in her dissertation.

The impetus for Mike was to fulfill his desire to study Spanish Literature. Jolene's reasons were a bit more vague; she thought graduate school would give her the opportunity to rebuild and redirect her life while pursuing an area of study she was deeply committed to:

I knew I wanted to work with those who were committed to being intentional about their inner growth and was in the process of putting my life back together after my divorce. I thought that graduate school would give me the time and space I needed to work on my own inner growth and chronicle the experience in a way that would help me work with others. I had worked in schools in the past and

felt that this type of work should be a part of education so I ended up in this program. (interview, September 29, 2008)

Jolene's quote resonated with me on a personal level, as I was going through a similar experience. I thought it was particularly interesting as she was reflective about her personal process of becoming and believed graduate school would provide the community she was looking for. However, she did not mention or imply that she had entered graduate school with a desire to become a teacher educator and her reason for entering graduate school was a reaction to her divorce. As such, some may see this as entirely reactionary. I believe that view does not take into account her desire to form community and surround herself with others she believed were looking for same thing.

For others, graduate school was a deliberate act but their goals were not necessarily to become teacher educators. Megan explained:

I had been teaching for several years at a private school without a teaching license and felt like I needed more education to become a credible teacher. So I went to graduate school thinking I would go back to school. But when I was about half way through my master's program I just decided to go on for a Ph.D. I am still not quite sure why I made that decision but I am glad I did. (interview, September 22, 2008)

I found Megan's quote very intriguing, there was a reflective quality as to why she enrolled in the MA program. She felt like she needed her teaching certification to be a "credible teacher". But her decision stay in school and peruse a Ph.D. was

unintentional, it just happened. It was not planned or intentional but more like “oh what the heck, I will take the next step”. She was becoming a teacher educator through inertia.

For Jill and Kate, graduate school was simply a time to regroup. Jill had been laid off and thought she would go back to teaching in a year or two and Kate, as mentioned above, had wanted to get a PhD in English Literature but did not get in and saw a graduate program in education as a stepping stone to gain entrance into the program of her choice.

While the goal of becoming teacher educators had not solidified when most of the participants entered their doctoral programs, all were intent on becoming teacher educators at the time I interviewed them for this study. Thus, for many of this study’s participants, the process of acquiring the goal of becoming a teacher educator was a significant part of the act of becoming itself. However, it was an elongated and somewhat unconscious process.

For most, the goal of becoming a teacher educator appears to have come about as a realization. I use the term ‘appears’ because I did not explore this realization directly. I was able to glean some information but never asked specifically when and why did you want to become a teacher educator. Rather I asked, “When did you begin to see yourself as a teacher educator?” This question was in the context of supervision and methods instruction so will be covered in detail in the next chapter.

Intentional and Purposeful Beginnings

For a small group of those interviewed, becoming a teacher educator was an intentional act. Bill, Sarah, and Beth were the only participants who stated clearly and

plainly that their decisions to enter graduate school were based on desires to become teacher educators. Bill noted, “Well, I came to the U to become a teacher educator; that was the path I wanted to be on....I wanted to do something specifically in science education with the aim of becoming a teacher educator someday.” When asked how he came to his decision, Bill explained:

I was sitting down with one of my mentors who had been a teacher educator of mine when I was an undergrad. And he said maybe you should try it for a couple of years, maybe go for the sabbatical and give it a shot, you are at a good point in time in your life, not a lot of responsibilities. He did warn me that the grass is not always greener. But I had wanted to do it for a long time, so I did. (interview, September 1, 2008)

Bill’s was in the minority of those I interviewed. His response demonstrates a reflective quality to becoming a teacher educator even prior to entering graduate school. That said it is hard to tease out the level of reflection. Some may argue he may have been swayed by and reacted to his mentor’s advice.

Beth’s reasons were layered with personal and family expectations:

It was kind of an unwritten rule that we, my sister and I, would get a Ph.D. My dad had been a college professor for years and my sister had already begun a Ph.D. program. So it was my turn. I had been teaching and enjoyed it. I did not think I wanted to be a full blown researcher and felt like I really had something to offer future teachers, so that is what I came to the U to do. To become a teacher educator. (interview, October 2, 2008)

I found Beth's comments very intriguing. Some may say that this demonstrates a lack of intentionality, that she was simply following family norms. I see her decision as intentional but it was in reaction to family expectation and lacked reflection.

Push on the Person

Most of those who I interviewed, with the exception of Jen, who was laid off after two years of teaching and Bill, Sarah and Beth who made a conscious decision to enter graduate school, were pushed out of the classroom to one degree or another by a combination of mental, physical, and emotional exhaustion; difficulties with administration; and personal reasons. These reasons for leaving were usually coupled with a desired change, to reclaim their lives, or the hope for more sustainable professional lives, new careers, to find a mate, or simply to have the time to figure out their next steps.

There were also personal reasons for leaving the classroom. Both Michelle and Bill were single when they left their teaching jobs; they both taught in rural schools and thought that if they stayed they would have a very difficult time finding a partner. Michelle noted, that if she stayed she felt like she would never find a life partner. Bill explained that one of the reasons for leaving his teaching job was that he "really wanted to find a wife, have a family, you know, have a real life. I did not see that happening while I was teaching high school science, coaching, or in the town I was living."

As I mentioned above, I felt as if I was a failure in the classroom, but I also did not know how I could work any harder. Not only did I work long hours, but thoughts about teaching followed me wherever I went. I dreamt about teaching; I thought about teaching on weekends and holidays; teaching was simply consuming. This is an

important point because although most of those I interviewed cited exhaustion as one of, if not the, most important reason for leaving the classroom and participants talked about a profound sense of loss of self.

Exhaustion. For most, their journey began with feelings of sheer exhaustion. I am an example of this. After three years of teaching, I felt truly exhausted. I did not know what I was doing. I had thought teaching would get easier, but it did not. I thought I would like it more but I did not. One of my peers shared a similar experience. Kate explained with a pained look on her face:

I taught middle and high school English, grades 7, 8, 9, 10, and 12, in a span of four years' time. Three different schools, two different districts, five different administrators, it was crazy....After four years I was exhausted, utterly exhausted, and I could not figure out why. I had all of these questions, I felt suffocated, and I felt like I could not teach what I wanted to teach or how I wanted to teach. Kids were not learning what I thought they should be learning in school. There was all of this stuff I was trying to deal with and I couldn't explain it... so I got my letter for tenure and the next day I walked in the principal's office and I resigned.

(interview, October 15, 2008)

Kate was both exhausted and frustrated. Her reaction was to resign. There is an obvious display of intentionality as she wrote a letter, however there does not appear to be much reflection. Some may interpret her action differently, that she reflected on the chaos of the last several years and made a well-formed decision. The exasperated tone of her comments and reactionary nature of her action leads me to believe otherwise.

Others were less dour and felt like they had been successful teachers and were proud of what they had done. But they, too, were exhausted. Bill explained:

I was happy at the school I was at, but I was spending an inordinate amount of time doing lesson preparation, doing stuff in the community I was in, and I did not see that time becoming any less. I saw myself burning out in a couple of years. It was becoming my life, my identity, it was all consuming, and I did not want to head down that road. For pragmatic reasons I wanted to move on with my life, wife, family, house, those kinds of things. And I needed to spend less time and less energy on my professional life...So I kind of pulled the trigger.

(interview, September 15, 2008)

Bill was both moving away and reacting to the all-consuming nature of being a teacher—reacting to these circumstances. But he was also reflective to how he wanted to approach the future. He wanted to reclaim something he felt he was losing as well as things he wanted. I think this quote is powerful both as it builds on the all-consuming feelings of exhaustion we have seen in others. It also has a directional component. Bill did not see the possibility of attaining his personal desires “wife, family, house” while he was teaching.

Jessie’s story, in addition to those already discussed, is quite fascinating as we see how a change in her personal life helped her realize just how much work she had been putting in as classroom a teacher:

I had been a teacher for about five years when I got married. We were married for two years before I got pregnant. And I figured I had been teaching for seven

years, I had plenty of experience. I could have my baby and go back to work. But I never realized just how much time I was spending on school work until I went back to work after our baby was born. I lasted about a month. I just couldn't keep up! I felt tired all the time. I just had not realized the amount of time I was putting into teaching until I had something, someone competing for my time. I felt I was being unfair to my students and my family. So, after talking it over with my husband, I quit. (interview, October 1, 2008)

Jessie's realization that, for her, teaching was incompatible with raising her family is quite telling. I believe this quote provides a very poignant description of the level of time and effort that those who I have quoted above were putting into their teaching.

These quotations about exhaustion also suggest that the large amounts of time that these participants spent on their job of teaching gave them a sense of losing one's self in the all-consuming nature of teaching. This is an interesting reality when we think of it in the context of one's starting point to become a teacher educator. It is ironic and troubling that the participants in this study, including me, were working to prepare students for jobs that we found unsustainable.

Loss of self. My personal loss of self was profound and partly due to the environment in which I found myself teaching. As an Anglo teacher on the Navaho and Zuni reservations, I was an interloper, an unwelcome other who, like those of my kind, were "put up with" at best. We were a necessary evil of sorts. And although at first I felt welcomed, I soon came to realize the quiet smiles and civility that I was afforded were simply a way of coping with those of us who had been forced upon this community. We,

myself and other Anglo teachers were interlopers from another world who were arbitrarily put in positions of authority and respect. That is not to say I was respected, but the position itself garnered a good deal of deference. I had gone to the Navaho and Zuni reservations with the hope of making a difference, to help a group of wronged and impoverished people. I later came to realize that most of the Navahos and Zunis with whom I came into contact did not see themselves as impoverished. This realization gradually grew in me and led me to question the source of my passion to make a difference and whether it was even up to me to try to make a difference. The disregard that many Navaho and Zuni hold against the greater U.S. culture was due to continued attempts at forced assimilation, and, as a white teacher, I was part of this assimilation process. It was not me that they disliked but, rather, they were trying to hold on to their own culture and saw me as a small part of a much larger system that was trying to destroy it. It is important to note that this is my (current) interpretation of an experience that happened 20 years ago and should be taken as such.

I changed positions three times in a two year period. Each change was quite significant and meant taking on a radically new professional role. In my first position I taught U. S. History to seventh and eighth grade students on the Navajo Reservation at a BIA boarding school in Tohatchi, New Mexico. My original goal was to teach U. S. History from a Native American perspective. I spent a good deal of time reviewing the text book and putting together lessons that considered concepts like Manifest Destiny from a Native American perspective. However, at the end of the first week, one of the dorm counselors told me several students were very upset with this approach and did not

want to learn about the unjust way they were treated from a “white guy” who had no idea what he was talking about. Although the counselor was very kind and shared this with me in a very compassionate manner, I began to experience a crisis of self. I was plagued by questions like, “Who was I? Why was I there? What did I think I was doing?”

Kate also experienced a crisis of self. She explained that teaching had led her to feel “like I was dying, I didn't know who I was any more. I tried to put on a strong front when I went to school, but it fell apart as soon as I left. I literally felt like I was living for the weekends. I felt that I was slowly losing my excitement for life, which had always been a part of who I was. It was very scary and very discouraging” (October 15, 2008).

The Formal Process of Becoming

Regardless of the reasons for choosing to attend graduate school, all of those with whom I spoke had some form of expectation or fantasy about what graduate school would be like.

Unmet Expectations: A Systematic Disconnect

My own enduring fantasies had to do with mentorship and comradery. I had thought that I would form a significant and lasting relationship with my advisor, a relationship that would have, at its core, my intellectual, scholarly, and professional growth. I also dreamt about finally forming a peer group of like-minded friends and colleagues, a community of sorts where we would share our ideas and work together. I came to find out that both expectations were unreasonable and very grandiose. However, I did seek out and find two professors who I admired and who appeared to have a genuine interest in my experience as a student, viewed my work as significant and important, and

had a true concern for me as person. However, this was not part of my earliest experiences and it was up to me to search them out. I do not see this as a negative, but as we shall see, this type of relationship is the exception among those with whom I spoke.

Regarding my vision of finding a peer group, this was met in some ways but not in others. I did meet and form very close and supportive relationships with many of my fellow graduate students. However, we did not talk about each other's work or discuss theory. Rather we sought out and offered advice, we discussed which professors were good to take classes from and which were not, and we shared news about assistantships and scholarships. We also ate and drank together and formed important friendships. For me there was still something missing. So just as I had sought out and formed relationships with two advisors, I reached out to one colleague and shared my desire to have someone to discuss and critique my work, to talk about the theories I found interesting and how they could be put into practice, and to have a partner to navigate the maze of trying to present at conferences and publish papers. She confided in me that she felt the same, as well as feeling somewhat isolated. So we established a critical friendship.

I know now that my expectations were naïve in the sense that I had expected interested mentors to simply be a part of the graduate school experience, and for a scholarly peer group to form itself. My tendency for grandiose and idyllic expectation is not new as we saw in my expectations about becoming a classroom teacher. I went into teaching thinking that I could make a huge a difference in the lives of my students. And although this may in fact be true, the unrealistic component is that I thought I would

witness the effect of my actions. As a teacher, the effect I have more likely only manifests itself years later as my example interacts with a host of other examples and life experiences.

A story I heard years ago speaks to this much better than I can. During World War II, a man lay dying from his wounds on a raining battlefield in Belgium. Next to him lay the man whose life he had saved. This saved man asked him why he had knowingly given his life for his friend. The dying man told him a story about a Sunday school teacher he had in his childhood who had both taught him and been an example to him about the importance of self-sacrifice and that the greater the sacrifice the greater the gift of selfless love. As the two men talked the dying man shared the lessons he had learned so many years earlier as well as the name of the Sunday school teacher. After the war the dead man's friend searched out and found the Sunday school teacher he believed had saved his life through his work so many years before. When he finally found him, he shared the story and his immense gratitude. Both men wept bitterly as the story unfolded. After a time, the saved man asked the now very old man if he was still teaching Sunday school. The old man began weeping again and replied that he had given up on teaching Sunday school years ago because he felt that his teaching had had no effect and was a waste of time.

This story may be a bit out of place. However, I think it provides a very important lesson about both the expectation I had about teaching, my expectation about graduate school, and expectations in general. Namely, it is very difficult for us to grasp whether or not the expectations we have of ourselves and our actions will be met while

we are living within the confines of a given experience. It takes time and perspective to understand not only if our expectations were met but also if they were even reasonable expectations.

I believe this is a very important point to consider as we reflect on my expectations and examine the expectations of this study's participants. Most of the expectations appear to have gone unmet, and experiences that were relayed to me have an undeniably negative tone to them, a tone which I believe is important to stick to and honor. However, I also believe that a good deal of what is negative in the moment may in fact not be negative in the end.

My personal expectations were very common among those with whom I spoke. All of those I interviewed mentioned mentorship, guidance, advice, or direction when asked what their expectations were of their graduate advisor. In addition to expectations about mentorship, more than half mentioned developing a core group of peers in one fashion or another. Other expectations concerned the areas of coursework, financial support, and research opportunities as well as the opportunity to teach and be mentored as a teacher. Many also mentioned that they thought educating future teachers was more important than research. I found this to be somewhat of a paradox, in light of the findings discussed in the preceding section that the doctoral students in this study did not originally identify becoming a teacher educator as a primary goal when they entered graduate school.

Kate spoke to virtually all of the expectations expressed by those with whom I spoke when I asked how her experience of graduate school met her expectations:

I feel like I was a little bit, like, tricked. I mean I knew there was going to be a lot of stuff about research. But I thought we would work at learning how to teach future teachers, as well. The literature I read and the professors I spoke with claimed that mentorship and guidance were among their top priorities. They also said that educating future teachers was very important. I came to find out that neither was true. Teaching methods classes seems like a bone professors throw to graduate students and is certainly something that professors want to avoid, and as soon as you have taught a class once or twice you get moved on to something else. Hell, it took teaching the class once before I had any idea what I was doing. How can that be good for the preservice teachers? I know this sounds very negative, but I don't mean it that way. It is just the way it is, and I am glad I came here. I don't think it would have been any different anywhere else. (interview, October 15, 2008)

Kate touches on some very important and sensitive issues. Perhaps most important is the issue of perception. I have no reason to believe that the individuals with whom Kate spoke prior to entering graduate school were lying. Quite the opposite; I believe they believe what they said and are very committed to mentoring their graduate students and to preparing preservice teachers. However, there appears to be a disconnect between what they feel is important and the reality that graduate students experience. In my mind this disconnect is tied to a break down between visionary intentionality and institutional intentionality. I will go into more detail regarding visionary and institutional reality in the following chapter. But for now I will like to define these contextual expansions

briefly. Visionary is the simple articulation of how we want, plan, or hope for an experience to be. While institutional intentionality is taking programmatic and structured steps to ensure a course of action occurs in accordance with articulated vision. The program information and those that Kate spoke with relayed a version of reality that was hoped for but in practice it did not play out. Individual professors and administrators may argue that this is only one isolated case. The limited number of individuals that participated in this study do not allow me to make the claim that Kate's experiences is the norm but it does allow me to make the claim that Kate's sentiments were not isolated. Thus the visionary intention was not institutionalized.

Like Kate, I faced a reality that differed from my expectations once I began the Ph.D. program in Curriculum and Instruction. When I came to the department, from another department in the same college, I was very excited about my transfer. I had engaged in a number of conversations with my future advisor in which I was told that the tracks worked very hard to ensure that each graduate student would be given a chance to work on a research project, to publish with one of the track's professors, that every effort would be made to financially support graduate students, and that they took mentorship and advising very seriously. This sounded very enticing and totally different from what I had experienced in the other department.

In retrospect, I see that very few of these commitments were actually met. I believe, however, that university officials did not deliberately lie to me. Rather, the promises eroded over time. I was placed in an assistantship my first year that fully funded my education, but by the second year I was told that I would only receive half of

what I needed to fund my education and it was up to me to fill in the gap, and by my third year I was completely on my own. I was never given the opportunity to be involved in a research assistantship, and the mentorship I was given consisted almost exclusively of telling me what classes I needed to take with very little discussion about my interests or future goals and absolutely no discussion of how I would grow into being a teacher educator.

For some, the relationships doctoral students had with their advisors was a source of negative energy and disappointment. Beth and Jessie mentioned, with a sense of regret, that they thought their advisors would be more available and open to just talking about their studies and their futures. Jolene said simply, “I hoped my advisor would be more invested in our relationship. As it is, I feel like a burden at times.” Megan put it bluntly:

I am not blaming anyone; I just thought that my advisor would have been more involved. I thought we would have regular meetings, discuss my future, you know, strategize about my course work and research. This was simply a fantasy. My advisor has dozens of advisees, she was on sabbatical, and she had her own research. I am not saying that I never saw her, but our meetings were informal and I had to initiate them. Which I understand, this is a doctoral program, but for the first two years I did not know what to ask about and when I did she was gone.

(interview, September 22, 2008)

Like Kate, Megan felt lost and was searching for a path without a map. I am not saying nor does Megan abdicate that she has no responsibility. As she said “this is a doctoral

program,” I believe she was implying that she bears responsibility to exert personal responsibility. However, when one is feeling lost or isolated, it is difficult to exert one’s self in an intentional manner.

Others spoke to the fact that they did not receive adequate preparation for being teacher educators. Bill explained, “I thought that I came here to become a better science educator and to learn to teach others to be science educators and learn to be a teacher educator, but that has not been the focus since I have been here” (interview, September 1, 2008). Beth and Jill both noted emphatically that there is a clear hole in our course work regarding learning to teach future teachers; it is simply not a part of the program, nor is it seen as important. While neither listed this as one of their expectations, they both spoke about it in a manner that implied it was an expectation or at least came to be an expectation.

The security of financial support, or lack thereof, and tuition benefits were also an important and unmet expectations. Michelle, Megan, Joan, and Jolene all mentioned that they had been led to believe that assistantships, although not guaranteed, would not be a problem and that if their advisors did not have one for them they would do everything in their power to help them find one. Jolene put it plainly:

I felt like I was misled; my advisor implied that assistantships would be easy to obtain and I truly thought she said I could almost count on four years of support. It was one of the reasons I chose this program. But when I got here I was told I only had a 25 percent assistantship and that I was next in line for more but there was nothing available. Luckily I was able to get another 25 percent assistantship

with the help of one of the graduate students I met, but this was a real blow.

(interview, October 8, 2008)

Thus, on the whole, my expectations, and those with whom I spoke were not met regardless of the reason behind them or how realistic or unrealistic these expectations were. This reality added to the complicated and difficult transition from being a classroom teacher or other profession to being a graduate student.

Feelings of Inferiority

In addition to the reality of unmet expectations for the participants, there was also a very steep learning curve. Mike explained, “Epistemology this, ontology that. I did not even know what ontology was and I was somehow supposed to have some deep philosophical opinion and be able to discuss it at length” (interview, September 18, 2008). I felt the same way. During the first class session of my first course, Research Methods in Curriculum and Instruction, the professor began with an overview of her own research background. She said something like “I am a qualitative researcher and primarily a phenomenologist.” She went on to discuss positivism, postmodernism, critical theory, and so on without explaining what these terms meant. I did not know what any of those terms meant but felt like I should have. Not one person asked a question so I thought I was the only one who was in the dark. I did not realize that others felt just as ignorant as I had until I began the interviews for this study.

Others harbored similar feelings to what Mike and I did. Megan, Jill, Beth, Jolene, Joan, and Bill all mentioned being both confused and insecure about their knowledge base or lack thereof during their first semester. Mike, much like Bill and me, said “I just

did not know the vocabulary. I had heard of modernism and postmodernism but I had no idea what they meant, and nobody else was asking what they meant so I wasn't going to" (interview, September 1, 2008). Beth shared, "The toughest thing was not knowing what my instructor was talking about and thinking I was the only one who didn't" (interview, October 2, 2008). All of those who spoke about this were animated which I interpreted to imply that it was a big deal to them. They also said, or implied, that they felt they were the only ones who did not know these terms, but did not want to make this public to the class.

Coursework: A Research Base

Virtually everyone I spoke with, both those I interviewed and I spoke with informally including graduate students, faculty, staff, and administration, readily admitted that the primary focus of doctoral coursework was to prepare educational researchers. This is not a negative, necessarily. However, the University of Minnesota is also the premier educator of teacher educators for the state. And, as has been mentioned numerous times, our degree will hopefully lead us to a position as teacher educators. That is not to say that we do not want to become educational researchers as well, but for many of us, our main goal is to become teacher educators. The lack of coursework that addressed teacher education will be covered in great detail in the following chapter. For now I believe the words of Michelle and Beth help us to understand the sentiments of those I interviewed. Michelle claimed that "coursework about the pedagogy of teacher education – nonexistent" (interview, September 15, 2008). Beth went a bit further:

It's obvious that the priority is research; all the courses I have taken either focus on research, theory, or doing research. The closest that we actually get to practice is talking and writing about the research on teacher practice. Not the practice of learning how to teach about teaching. But it is more than just the courses; I have really noticed it in my job search. Just the way some people have been steering me. They know that I do not necessarily want to be an educational researcher. But they have their own agenda and like what they are doing so it is natural they would want their students to follow in their footsteps; they want me to be an educational researcher. It almost feels like it would look bad for them if my focus is *just* on being a teacher educator. (interview, October 2, 2008)

Beth's comments lead us back to the relationship between students and their advisors.

Seeking Guidance: The Role of Faculty and Fellow Graduate Students

More than any other topic, talking about relationships with their advisors evoked feelings of anger, disappointment, and at times hostility. My own experience was initially very difficult. The best conversations I had with my original advisor happened before I had officially entered the program. During these initial meetings I got the sense that my advisor would have an open door policy and that we would talk a great deal. But after I began, we had a discussion about my interests in which I told her I was very interested in Human Rights Education. She said that that was not one of her interests and that I should change it or find someone who shared that interest. In all fairness she was very kind and we had a nice discussion. She was not suggesting I find a new advisor; merely that I find someone who was interested in Human Rights Education. She even

gave a few possible names. However, during that conversation she also suggested that I take some particular coursework, which I thought was truly a suggestion and decided not to take those courses. This upset her and, along with some other disagreements, led to an untenable relationship.

Our main difference of opinion had to do with the role I and other graduate students occupied at the University. I saw and see myself as a client of the University and one who deserves certain services while my advisor at the time led me to believe she saw graduate students as neophytes who were hopefully growing into the role she occupied.

As I mentioned, the lack of mentorship was and is a huge issue for all of those I spoke with. Beth shared:

I definitely feel like I get some support from my advisor but it is something I have to initiate, and sometimes I feel like he is too busy. I feel like the most support that I have gotten comes from other graduate students who are a little bit ahead of me. They help you navigate through stuff, like don't take that class, don't work for that person, or take that class. But that is about it. (interview, October 2, 2008)

Others were much more direct and more discouraged. Bill's response, when asked if he had received mentorship from his advisor was:

NO! No, no I do not. I have talked to Shellie (Bill's advisor) but she is very busy and I do not want to bother her, but my advisor is not really interested. I do not really feel like I can have conversations with, mentor type conversations with her.

I have had good conversations with other students but that is pretty random.

(interview, September 1, 2008)

Ann's reply to the same question was:

Guidance from my adviser, no it has been nonexistent. It takes him forever to reply to my emails if he responds at all. And the few times we have met, I feel like he thinks he is doing me a big favor. (interview, October 2, 2008)

Sarah and Mike were exceptions, and both worked with the same advisor. Both were highly complementary of the advice and mentorship they received. Sarah's response to the question about the guidance she received was "My advisor is tough but great. She really challenges me and seems sincerely interested in my growth as a scholar and a supervisor" (interview, September 24, 2008). Megan and Kate were much more ambivalent. Kate said simply, "Well I did not get much advice, but that has been my own fault; I have not pursued it. She has definitely made herself available; I just have not taken advantage of it" (interview, October 15, 2008). Kate's comment highlights our responsibility as graduate students to be pro-active and personally intentional players in seeking out mentorship. We cannot expect advisors to be totally proactive in our mentorship.

One form of guidance that we all recognized as incredibly important and invaluable is the support and advice we received from other graduate students. We recognized the financial difficulties that plague many graduate students, including finding and maintaining graduate assistantships, and the logistical hassles of managing academic work. We knew and shared our knowledge about professors' teaching abilities. Jill

noted, “Although I did get a good deal of advice from professors, not necessarily my adviser, the most important advice came from other graduate students” (interview, October 17, 2008). Beth relayed a scenario:

I felt like I got contradicting messages from my advisor and another faculty member. For instance, my advisor told me that I should definitely take the high level stats sequence while two other professors told me it really didn’t matter. I did not want to take the upper stats; stats just isn’t my thing. So I asked a fellow graduate student who suggested I take the lower level stats class and tell my advisor that I was doing it to get ready for the upper level stats, and then just not to bring it up again. That is what I did and it worked out. (interview, October 2 2008)

Beth’s quote highlights an important sentiment—namely that a graduate student needs to learn how to negotiate the relationship with his or her advisor.

The Role of Graduate Assistantships in the Process of Becoming

The final item I would like to discuss before moving into the summary and analysis of this chapter is graduate research and teaching assistantships. All of those with whom I spoke had several different forms of assistantships. Some were research assistants, some were instructors or teaching assistants, and all had experience supervising student teachers (discussed in Chapter Three as one of the requirements for participation in this study).

I found myself to be out of step with the rest of this study’s participants, of which it was typical to have an average appointment time of 50 percent, which translates into

roughly twenty hours of work per week for a semester in return for a salary and health and tuition benefits. I consistently maintained a 75 percent appointment of which the vast majority comprised practicum and student teacher supervision. I mention this because I believe it gives me a somewhat unique vantage point from which to view the reality of supervision, which I spoke of in Chapter One and will go into more depth about in Chapter Five.

At this point I would like to lump all assistantships together and consider them as the means by which we supported ourselves and paid for our tuition, or precisely as a job. However, assistantships are not like a typical job that one interviews for and then has until they are fired, promoted, laid off, or quit. Michelle explained:

The graduate assistantship thing was very hard on a number of levels, with a 25 percent assistantship here and a 25 percent assistantship there and if they are new assistantships it is like you are learning two new jobs and you are doing your course work at the same time. And you have the added stress of not knowing if you will have them next semester, let alone have them next year. Not to mention, at least for me, I was given them with very little direction. Teach this class, here is a syllabus, supervise these student teachers, here is a list of schools and here is what we expect you to do. The “what we expect you to do” consisted of observe the students at least three times and grade their lesson plans, that’s it. (interview, September 15, 2008)

Beth, Carrie, and Jill highlight another aspect that may be summed up in a comment Beth made: “I felt like my advisor was giving me assistantships out the

goodness of her heart, like they were a gift that I was somehow indebted to her for” (interview, October 2, 2008). Ann also had a bad experience: “After the first semester my advisor did not lift a finger to help me find an assistantship” (interview, October 2, 2008).

In reviewing the data, I feel lucky because I secured two assistantships before I officially transferred to the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. Although I only maintained the social studies assistantship for three semesters, I was able to keep the practicum supervision for four years and picked up a different student teaching supervision assistantship which I had for three years. Yet one of things that struck me about my own assistantships is that they were totally separate from my academic program. In my mind, this was a missed opportunity. All my assistantships and most of the assistantships of the participants in my study dealt directly with preservice teachers in a supervisory capacity. Although there were in fact “supervisory” tasks such as making sure student and practicum teachers were in the right place at the right time, fulfilling university requirements and other administrative tasks, the majority of a supervisors’ role was spent as a teacher educator, observing teaching, providing feedback, grading lessons and offering guidance and advice. However, with the exception of the supervision class I co-taught and taught, these assistantships were totally divorced from the doctoral program curriculum. In my mind this is a missed opportunity. As a result, supervisory assistantships, although firmly tied to the process of becoming a teacher educator, are relegated to informal and individual processes of becoming rather than the formal,

programmatic, and communal process of becoming. Suggestions as to how this may be altered will be explored in my final chapter.

Summary and Reflections

The data in this chapter present a picture of the situations that pushed me and those I interviewed out of the classroom and into graduate school. They also explore the experiences that many of the participants faced while in their doctoral programs. Together, the data lead me to an unsettling realization that as teacher educators we are charged with providing student teachers with the tools, confidence, and attitudes needed to navigate teaching in a sustainable manner. But, more importantly, it introduces two concepts that are central in interpreting my experience and the experiences of the graduate students who took part in this study. The first is the notion of shifting identities and the second as we have seen is the further contextual expansion of concept of intentionality. Since I have already covered the contextual expansion of intentionality I will confine my closing remarks for this his chapter to the exploration of shifting identities.

Shifting Identities

I would like to use the notion of shifting identities as the foundation for the summary and analysis section of this chapter. Its sentiment brings us back to the beginning of this chapter when Bill commented that being a teacher was his sole identity and a contributing factor in his decision to leave the classroom. Bill later went on to say, in reference to entering graduate school:

It has been really hard. It's been a real challenge because so much of my identity has been tied up in Mr. Donald, the physics teacher, the physical science teacher, the coach at John Jay. That's who I was, I was good at it, I was well respected in the community, and I was well known. And coming up here nobody knows you, nobody knows your experience and what you were like in the classroom. So it was kind of like this death of identity, or this identity that was going away, it was still part of me, part of my experience, but it did not seem to count for much.

(interview, September 1, 2008)

Like Bill, I also experienced a crisis of identity; when I started my graduate program I was a father and husband, a student, and an employee. Assuming several different identities was nothing new for me. I went to the office as a professional and I came home as a father and a husband. I thought that my professional identity had been evolving in a forward direction for years. I had received several promotions, my salary had continually gone up, and I had steadily accumulated more responsibility. However, this all changed when I returned to school; I went from a set of identities with a clear split to a multiplicity of overlapping identities with no clear boundaries. I no longer left my professional identity at the office and picked up my personal identity on my way home. I was a student, an employee, and a father and husband all at the same time. This, in and of itself, is not a big deal. Many people lead frantically busy lives. However, the fact that I was a doctoral student gave me time—maybe even forced me—to read and think about ways of looking at life that I had not had the opportunity to do while I was working as a classroom teacher or the years I spent in the publishing industry.

Murray and Male (2005) speak about the challenges to one's identity brought by a regressive shift in identity. Their description and examples of the difficulty of moving from a first order position, a position of expertise and relatively high status, to a second order position, a neophyte with relatively low status, helps us to understand the challenges to our identity in the shift from a teacher or other professional to that of a student. This is not to say that these shifts are always negative. The same shift occurs when one graduates and becomes a professor. The individual is leaving a first order position as a student. In most cases they are looked up to by students who are not as far along in their studies and they have developed a certain experience at being a student. However, when they secure and begin a professorship they are *junior* faculty members, in the case of a tenure track position they have a long probationary period of sorts, and they, again as Murray and Male point out, are neophytes who have a steep learning curve.

I would also like to hypothesize that the reality of going backward, from a professional (teacher or other) to a non-professional (student and university hourly employee) contributed to the negative tone that was alive in all the graduate school experiences I chronicled. I do not mean to dismiss the negative tone, however, and believe that most of the expectations held by the graduate students I spoke with are poignant and worthy of consideration and reflection on the part of professors, advisors, and those involved in administering doctoral programs in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

For now it is important to recognize that in these cases a small group of Ph.D. students in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Minnesota

appear to see a need for guidance and mentorship as an attribute of being doctoral students and as part of the support they want as the transition from teacher to teacher educator. They also believe that guidance and mentorship should come primarily from their advisors and secondarily from other professors. It also appears that they believe that their advisors and professors should give this counsel in a proactive manner, which differs from how they think their advisors view their responsibilities to advise.

Chapter 5: Continuing the Journey of Becoming a Teacher Educator

Introduction

The overarching goal of this chapter is to share my experiences and those of my colleagues as student teacher and practicum supervisor. I will share and analyze my experience and the experiences of those I interviewed and who took part in the supervision course, Theory and Practice of Pre-Service Teacher Mentoring and Supervision discussed in previous chapters. All who participated in the supervision class either had or were supervising student teachers and several had or were teaching preservice discipline-specific methods courses.

As was discussed in Chapter Two, many doctoral students take up the role of teacher educator when offered a position as a supervisor. They obviously have a choice to accept or turn down the position. However, given the scarcity of graduate assistantships, many times the choice is tied to the ability for a graduate student to persevere or not pursue his or her degree. Once the assistantship is accepted they take on the role of teacher educator whether they see themselves as one or not and regardless of their confidence and the preparation they have received. As I mentioned in previous chapters, I am using supervision as a formal manifestation of the process of becoming a teacher educator. I define supervision as formal due to the fact that it is a common representation of the work of teacher education that is offered to some, but not all, graduate students in doctoral program in this department and across many institutions of higher education in the nation.

There are significant differences between practicum supervision and student teacher supervision in the elementary licensure program in which I worked. Practicum supervision is tied to the teaching methods course. The course itself meets five days a week for two and a half hours for one semester. Three days are devoted to content area methods for math, science, and social studies and taught on campus. Two days are spent in a classroom at a local school where two to three students are assigned to a classroom where the practicum students are charged with observing teaching practices, helping the classroom teacher with educational tasks, and preparing and delivering three two-to-three day lessons in each of the content areas being covered in the course. In addition to supervising, the practicum supervisor also acts as a liaison between the university and the school and cooperating teacher. Student teacher supervisors are charged with observing lessons taught by preservice teachers during their student teaching experiences as well as providing feedback on the lessons, providing support to the student teacher, and acting as a liaison for the university and the school and cooperating teacher.

I do not intend for this to be a critique or editorial on the quality of supervision. Rather, I am exploring the position itself, be it practicum or student teacher supervision, as one aspect/experience out of many on the road toward becoming a teacher educator. With the exception of the graduate course on supervision that I co-taught and taught the graduate program has few opportunities for graduate students to engage in reading, research, or theorizing about student teacher supervision. Quite the opposite, supervision is seen as a job, a means of paying for tuition and procuring healthcare. However, it is one of the very few places that future teacher educators have the opportunity to teach and

learn to teach future teachers. Another possible opportunity to teach and learn about teaching future teachers is to teach a course that is part of the preservice teaching program. An analysis of these opportunities is not part of the present study.

I have organized this chapter around three overlapping themes. The first and most pervasive is *complexity*. Student or practicum teacher supervision is complex as was described in Chapter Two and this analysis further confirms this. Student teacher supervisors are the face of a teacher education program to the schools in which they supervise, the cooperating teachers they work with, the students who the student teachers work with, and the student teachers themselves. Their skill or lack of skill, thoughtfulness or lack of thoughtfulness, and professionalism or unprofessionalism has a direct impact on how schools, cooperating teachers, and student teachers view the university teacher education program. Student teacher supervisors have the potential to influence student teachers pedagogically, philosophically, and personally. Student teaching is often professionally overwhelming and very emotional for the student teachers and they are regularly confronted with a wide range of personal and professional issues.

The second major theme is *intentionality*. Much like complexity, intentionality as a theme is multidimensional and pervasive. As a concept it has been expanding throughout this work and continues to do so. Most recently reactionary intentionality was added to the contextual mix. I also briefly discussed visionary and institutional intentionality in chapter 5. It is these two contextual qualifiers that I would like to expand on here. The first is visionary intentionality and may be seen in the mission

statement used by the University to guide its teacher education programs. Although this may seem obvious, I believe it is important and provides the canvas on which to paint the second, institutional intentionality. This form of intentionality is responsible for carrying out the vision or mission in the work of, in this case, student teacher supervision. I believe that visionary and institutional intentionality can work together to form a catalyst for, personal intentionality. The intentionality or lack thereof with which supervisors approach the act of supervision.

The third theme is *regard* and refers to the regard in which the supervision of student teachers is held on all fronts. It is hard to go into depth about this theme without context, so I will defer my explanation until later in this chapter.

Before considering this chapter's themes I would like to provide a bit of context. I also want to make it clear that my data come from a single institution and I do not mean to imply that my findings are transferable, although they do echo much of what I found in the literature. In an effort to provide some institutional context I reflect on the College's mission statement followed by a short rebuttal of sorts. I will then relay a short informal conversation with a colleague that provides a nice background before the focus shifts to a more in-depth examination of the data across this chapter's three analytic themes.

The Role of Supervision in the University and its Programs

As I mentioned above, one aspect of intentionality is visionary intentionality. An example of this may be seen in the College of Education and Human Development's mission statement. The University of Minnesota states very plainly, "Teacher education has been central to the mission of the College of Education and Human Development

since its founding in 1905” (Regents of the University of Minnesota, 2006). It goes on to state:

Extensive field experiences are central to each program in the College of Education and Human Development. Throughout their licensure programs, student teachers work with cooperating teachers and University supervisors to develop pedagogical skills as well as the dispositions toward inquiry, research, and reflection that lead to life-long professional development. Clinical opportunities also provide the opportunity for student teachers to link research, theory, and practice in a “real-world” setting. In addition, they experience the intense social interaction with pupils and colleagues that is the essence of effective teaching... This process of development is part of the student teacher’s larger program within the College that is organized around ten Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice for Teachers. Each of the program’s foundations and methods courses address particular standards. Within these courses, student teachers are assessed according to particular tasks and criteria related to these standards. By drawing on the same standards, University supervisors can provide student teachers with feedback according to the same or similar criteria, enhancing the link between the College’s courses and clinical experiences. (p. 6)

It is hard to interpret the above in any way other than that clinical experiences are a central focus to the College’s teacher education program and that the quality, consistency, and preparation of those who work with preservice teachers is of the utmost importance. In reality this does not appear to be the case. Below is an account from

Janet, an assistant professor who was charged with managing the clinical experience for one of the many teacher licensure programs at the University.

In terms of training, I was given no mandate nor clear direction. There is a college level “training person” but the assumption is that placement coordinators know what they’re doing and that meetings with student teachers will take care of everything, the goal of which is to give a little direction, introduce student teachers to their supervisors and everyone will be fine. That was the assumption [regarding student teacher supervisors]... Their preparation is supposed be handled by the track, be it Social Studies, Science, Elementary or other. There was no mandate, and quite frankly, very little direction. I met with supervisors to get us on the same page. But that was never a directive, it was just assumed that I knew what I was doing. (informal conversation, November 8, 2008)

Another staff member, Teresa, who oversees the clinical experiences for a different teacher licensure program in the college, gave her perception of the College and the Department’s attitude toward ensuring well-trained student teachers supervisors.

It’s really a “show me the money attitude.” The teacher education program supports this department in a lot of ways. But it is not an area they make any real concerted effort to ensure quality. Quality training and developing practicum and student teacher supervisors is done at the program area and it is very difficult to do with the small number of faculty and resources we have in this program. I do what I can but you really need a faculty member to drive this type of thing. (informal conversation, September 30, 2008)

I feel I must once again address the negative tone of the above as well as what is to come. The quotes that I have shared suggest that the University's mission does not paint an accurate picture of the teacher education program on the whole and clinical experience in particular. In short, this is true. However, I choose to view the University's mission statement not as a painting of what is, but rather how things should be, and an opportunity for my dissertation to be a small part of the conversation.

The context in which a student teacher supervisor works helps to create a sense of disassociation between the educational program in which the doctoral student is enrolled and the supervision position itself. In my opinion this is a missed opportunity that will be discussed in the next chapter in the context of viewing supervision as an apprenticeship that should be integrated into the formal process of becoming a teacher educator instead of relegated to job to be carried out.

As pointed out by Teresa above, preservice teacher education at the University is fundamentally decentralized and organized according to licensure area. For example, if a student is interested in teaching middle or high school science, their application for admittance would be accepted or rejected by the program area of Science Education. The program area also administers an overall course of study and clinical experiences for students in its program. That is not to say that they have a free hand in designing the program or its requirement. All program areas have certain guidelines they are obligated to follow. Some of which come from the state or other accrediting agencies and some come from the College. However, the program area has almost complete control of the clinical portion of the program, including identifying, securing, and developing

cooperating teachers and student teacher supervisors. There is college-level administrative support for clinical experiences at the University, but administration and placement of student teachers happens within the individual licensing programs, i.e., social studies, elementary education, art education and so forth.

This decentralization has given rise to subtle yet important differences from one program area to another regarding the responsibility of the practicum and student teacher supervisors. For instance, elementary and literacy program supervisors are required to teach the student teacher seminar that runs concurrently with the student teaching experience. While the social studies and science student teaching seminars are taught by faculty members or instructional staff. This is one of many differences between programs.

In spite of these differences, the job of the supervisor is fairly consistent across all initial licensure programs. The university supervisors observe the teaching and practice of student teachers who are typically in the final portion of their licensure program. They also provide feedback on the quality of the instruction they observe, submit evaluations of the student teacher, and write letters of reference. These seemingly simple core responsibilities are anything but simple. In reality, the job of the supervisor is incredibly complex.

The decentralized nature of student teacher supervision adds to a lack of communal commitment to the process of becoming a teacher educator itself at an institutional level. It is walled off from core and subject matter courses taken by doctoral students. It does not appear to be viewed as an apprenticeship opportunity for those who

participate. The largest student teacher area, elementary education, has been traditionally run by an administrative staff member not a professor. This reality and suggestions about how to modify it will be discussed in the final chapter.

Complexity of Supervision

Organizationally this section will begin with an overview of the complexities involved in student teacher supervision by sharing my experiences and those of my colleagues guided by the questions “How have we been prepared by the college and by ourselves to be a student teacher supervisor?” and “In what regard is student teacher supervision held?”

As we saw in the literature review, supervising student teachers is incredibly complex on several levels. The complex nature of supervising student teachers was a very common topic of conversation during the check-in portion of the supervision course. We talked about the chaotic nature of managing the relationships and varying expectations and logistics that student teacher supervisors dealt with on a regular basis. To help set up the complex nature of student teacher supervision I provide a very small glimpse of my own experience. I will then pull on supervision class conversations to provide an overview of some of the complexities and challenges faced by student teacher supervisors. I have chosen to use a combination of paraphrased discussions and direct quotes, and will look first at logistical challenges that supervisors dealt with, followed by emotional and relationship issues they faced, and the administrative tasks associated with the position.

My own story as a supervisor began in the spring of 2006 when I was responsible for 13 student teachers spread over four schools and three far-flung school districts. At one of four schools I had four student teachers. One was very aggressive and confrontational, which led to a great deal of difficulty for her cooperating teacher and the necessity for me to spend a great deal of time with the cooperating teacher and student teacher both together and separately.

The second student teacher at the school was a wonderfully energetic, very skilled, and extremely self-conscious candidate. However, she wanted constant feedback. This student teacher needed, and I feel deserved, a good deal of hand-holding. She called or emailed to discuss her lessons, solicit advice, or fish for reassurance several times a week. In addition, her husband was serving in Afghanistan and at one point during her student teaching he was reported missing along with several others for three days. The emotional strain of this was very intense.

The third student teacher at this school was a male. He started out very strong. He was full of energy, appeared to be very excited to be working with younger children and appeared ready to be a student teacher. But it became apparent that he was overwhelmed by the situation. Classroom management was very challenging. At one point he confided in me that he really thought his students “would just do” what he told them to. He also mentioned that he knew he would have to plan and know in advance what he was going to teach, but did not realize he would need to plan and know in advance how he was going to get his students to art class with a stop at the bathroom on the way. I do not mean to imply that he was a bad teacher or that he did not have the

potential to be a good teacher. Rather, he felt like he was in over his head and that he sought me out for guidance. As a result, I took extra care to follow up with him on a frequent basis by sending emails several times a week to ask how things were going. He would often call me on his way home (especially during the first several weeks of the term) to review his day or ask for tips and tricks related to classroom management.

The fourth student teacher was quiet and seemed to have everything under control. Her cooperating teacher said things were going well. I spent a good deal less time with her relative to the time I spent with other members of her cohort placed at this school.

As I mentioned, this was one of four schools on my circuit that semester. I also supervised three student teachers at two other schools. Each student teacher had his or her own unique personal and professional challenges as did the cooperating teachers, which is a simple and natural reality. The supervisors in this study typically worked with between nine and twelve student teachers. It is easy to imagine the emotional and relationship complexities a supervisor must face. Supervisors must also deal with an intricate set of logistical challenges and continually changing administrative responsibilities.

Complex Use of Time

Logistically student teacher supervisors have to juggle the scheduling of their multiple responsibilities. All of those I interviewed and all the members of the supervision class where full-time graduate students enrolled in both day and evening classes and about half had an assistantship other than supervision. With this as a starting

point, supervisors then needed to schedule observations and conferences that worked for the student teacher and the cooperating teacher. One of the graduate student supervisors observed that scheduling is never an easy task. Some student have block schedules, others don't. "Ideally I like to have a post-observation conference right after the observation which happens about half the time. It is very hard to consistently schedule observations before a student teacher's prep" (supervision class discussion, October 3, 2008). Another student went on to say that in addition to the scheduling challenges, "it is very common for a student to want to reschedule for any number things." An important add-in to all of this is that "we are dealing with multiple schools [many times twenty or more miles away from each other]... and different schedules... it is a logistical nightmare" (supervision class discussion, October 3, 2008).

Missing or being late to an observation is a bad thing, and can have very negative repercussions. This can be seen in the comments of one of the students in the supervision class:

I made the mistake of scheduling three students in one day. I thought I had plenty of time. The first student was at an early start middle school, the second student was at the high school which was right across the street, and the third student was at another middle school about fifteen minutes away. I really thought it would work. The first student taught three periods in a row so I could not talk to him right after my observation, I would then go to the high school and observe and talk to my student there, go back to the middle school and talk to my student

there, and then head to the other middle school. (supervision class discussion, November 14, 2008)

She went on to explain that she had no reason to think that the timing would not work out. But as we will see, things did not flow as smoothly:

So I arrived at the middle school in plenty of time and had a nice talk with my student teacher. He taught a great lesson and we talked for a few minutes, I said hi to his cooperating teacher and said I would be back for their prep. I then headed to the high school, which was huge! I could not find a parking space, the check-in process at the high school took a lot longer than I thought... and the classroom was on the other side of the building. When I finally arrived, the lesson I was supposed to observe had been going on for about ten minutes. I knocked on the door which was answered by the cooperating teacher who gave me a dirty look and I took a seat in the back and totally interrupted the class. The lesson was fair, he had a tough time controlling the kids and pretty much lectured the whole time. After the class was dismissed, I apologized to the cooperating teacher and my student teacher. The cooperating teacher was upset and said it was very unprofessional and on and on. I was totally shocked. He finally left and my student teacher said, "Welcome to my world." (supervision class discussion, November 14, 2008)

The story goes on in great detail from there, but the logistical ramifications were that she was not able to return to debrief with the middle school student teacher and she was late (although without the turmoil) to her third observation. Which by her account went well.

To add a bit more context to the picture, this particular supervisor had a midday statistics class that met on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and a second assistantship which she attempted to do on Tuesdays and Thursdays as well. Although, this is only one story, it was not an uncommon one. Almost all student teacher supervisors had something to say about the complexity of scheduling and logistics.

Emotional Complexity and Relationship Management

Student teaching, as has been discussed, has the potential to be a very stressful period of time for the student teacher. I, along with several of my colleagues, did not consider this before we began and were caught totally off guard. Bill provided a good example of this:

Teaching teachers is not like teaching high school students. It is way different than teaching kids science. I first realized it when I had my first preservice student teacher break down in tears in a debriefing. I mean, this is a different deal. With my physics students I could have a conversation with them about physics; I could push them and probe them, keep on them, but student teachers... it is a different deal. You need to treat them with kid gloves, things are caught up with identity and career. I did not know that coming into this. (interview, September 1, 2008)

Having a student emotionally break down is quite common. One participant opened the check-in discussion of the supervision class with, "I did it again. I made another student teacher cry. That is three this semester and it's not even half over" (supervision class discussion, October 17, 2008). She did not say this in a flippant manner at all but rather

went on to ask, “what am I supposed to do? What do I say?” and the conversation that resulted was very productive.

Student teaching can be a grueling experience—physically, emotionally, and intellectually. The University suggests very strongly that student teachers should not work at an outside job while student teaching. For some, this is not possible due to financial realities and this adds to the stress. Student teaching is a capstone experience for student teachers, most of whom hope to find a teaching position in the greater metro area and are looking for and applying for teaching jobs while student teaching. The market for many teaching specialties is saturated in the Twin Cities area, so this can be a significant and immediately relevant stressor. Student teacher supervisors are expected to guide, mentor, and teach student teachers through this crucial time.

The complicated nature of the relationships with cooperating teachers and student teachers adds a good deal to the complexity of supervision itself. During my last assignment as a supervisor one of my student teachers was having a very difficult time. The student’s cooperating teacher was very direct and at times demeaning. During my first visit to the school, I stopped in to chat with the cooperating teacher with no real agenda while the student teacher was taking the kids to lunch. As soon as the cooperating teacher saw me she said we needed to talk. The conversation was not good. She said that her student teacher was not working out for a number of reasons, most of which sounded valid. I asked her if I could spend some time with the student teacher that afternoon.

When I spoke to the student teacher she was very emotional and claimed that her cooperating teacher had yelled at her a number of times in front of the students and that she was so intimidated by her that she was constantly nervous. This was the first incident in a series of incidents that did not end well. The student teacher ended up in the hospital and I recommended to my program supervisor that we not use that particular cooperating teacher again. Although difficult relationships were the exception in my case and appeared to be the exception for the students in the supervision class, they consumed a good deal of emotional energy from all who were involved. This example as well as those already discussed and yet to be discussed shed light on the emotional complexity that supervisors deal with on regular basis.

Administrative Complexity

In addition to the logistical challenges and the emotional and relationship issues, a supervisor is also expected to take care of a number of administrative details. These expectations are not necessarily complex in and of themselves, but they add yet another layer of complexity. Student teacher supervisors are responsible for obtaining several somewhat confusing forms from their cooperating teacher. These include a midterm and a final formal observation form and an evaluation form. The University's Teacher Education Data System (TEDS) has a number of web-based forms that must be completed by the supervisor and there are a number of assignments (which vary across program areas) to be collected and graded. Finally, the supervisor is expected to write a letter of recommendation for each of his or her students.

These administrative tasks need to be managed by the supervisor in conjunction with all of the other aspects of supervision. In my case, the administrative tasks helped to promote the feeling that supervision is a job, not necessarily an opportunity associated with the process of becoming. I do not mean to imply that they are somehow unimportant or unnecessary. Teacher educators along with all teachers are charged with administrative tasks of all kinds. However, if not guarded against they can become a distraction from the true task at hand—providing guidance, support, and feedback to the student and practicum teachers that a university supervisor has been assigned.

Intentionality

The notion of intentionality as it relates to the process of becoming a student teacher has been discussed at length. However, I would like to use this section to focus on intentionality as it relates to supervision. As mentioned above I believe visionary and institutional intentionality work together as potential catalysts to spark personal intentionality on the part of graduate students to embrace the becoming process. As was discussed in the previous chapter, the doctoral program has been designed to educate future educational researchers and professors who may work as teacher educators. In my experience and that of the participants in this study there has been little if any preparation, mentoring, or encouragement for them to develop personal intentionality as teacher educators. This points to a lack of institutional intentionality on the part of the doctoral program to develop teacher educators.

I believe this is a missed opportunity. I also believe that learning to be an educational researcher and adding a sense of explicit institutional intentionality to the

process of becoming a teacher educator are not mutually exclusive endeavors. From a programmatic standpoint, student and practicum supervision offers a wonderful opportunity to conduct educational research. Which in turn helps graduate students to realize the responsibility they wield as practicing teacher educators and promotes a sense of personal intentionality.

I was struck by the commonality in experiences between the participants and my own. This may be seen by some as coincidental; the literature suggests this is not the case. Several issues, experiences, and comments were almost identical among participants. As has been noted, many participants became teacher educators almost immediately upon entering graduate school. All participants took on the responsibilities of a teacher educator in their first or second semesters of graduate school as practicum or student teacher supervisors. The transition was both difficult and confusing for all. Both the lack of preparation and the tendency to view supervision as a job make it difficult to approach supervision as an intentional and personal portion of the becoming process. I believe the course designed and taught by Oja (2003, 2002), discussed in the literature review as well the Theory and Practice of Pre-Service Teacher Mentoring and Supervision class discussed in this chapter provide a forum to create a sense of institutional intentionality as it relates to the becoming process. Courses like these shine a spotlight on challenges and issues faced by graduate students who are becoming teacher educators. They offer graduate students a chance to slow down and reflect on how their personal actions and views toward their position impact the student and practicum teachers they work with. They provide a forum to learn from a mentor as well as their

colleagues. To share experiences and alternative course of action. The visionary intentionality of consistently high quality supervision lived out by the institutional intentionality of a supervision course has the potential to spark personal intentionality on the part of the graduate student.

Assumed expertise

The data suggests that the doctoral program assumed that the Ph.D. students knew how to supervise and teach about teaching. The pervasive nature of the assumption that those who have taught can teach others how to teach is partially responsible for the feelings of unpreparedness felt by all the supervisors with whom I spoke. Michelle spoke to this when she said, “I always thought it was funny, I came here and BAM I was a supervisor. OK, you go out and observe, you grade lessons. And base it on what? I felt that there was a training model missing” (interview, March 10, 2007). The transition from being a classroom teacher to being a novice teacher educator was swift and scary. The data show that participants lacked confidence, training, and background in teacher education yet were expected to act as teacher educators early in their graduate school experience. Bill noted, “It was assumed that because I had taught, I could supervise and teach in this context ... When it comes down to it, the pedagogy is very different or it should be different” (interview, September 15, 2008). Yet, in my own experience and that of this study’s participants, we became “teacher educators as soon as [we] accept teaching and supervisory positions in teacher education programs” (Dinkelman et al., 2006, p. 5). I do not want to imply that I was not purposefully trying to do a good job nor did I get that impression from any of those I spoke with. We were not without intention

but there was a lack of personal intentionality to see our work as a part of the process of becoming a teacher educator.

Russell and Loughran (2007) note, “Teaching about teaching is complex work and demands a great deal from teacher educators. The complexity is embedded in the very nature of teaching itself, and thus when the focus is on teaching, even more sophisticated understandings of practice are essential” (p. 3). Dinkelman et al. (2006) state in simple terms that “becoming a teacher educator involves much more than a job title” (p. 3). This points to a lack of intentionality on multiple levels. Since expertise is assumed there is very little preparation given to supervisors. Yet we have seen that the participants in this study, who had teaching experience, did not agree that having taught equates to expertise in the area of supervising novice teachers.

Student teaching is a crucial portion of a preservice teacher’s education. The College mission statement makes the assumption that supervisors are somewhat consistent and working from the same playbook, namely the Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice for Teachers. Thus those who wrote the mission statement had a clear and intentional vision but that vision was based on an assumption that the supervisors would know or be informed about the standards as well as how to use them to evaluate and support the student teachers with whom they work. Thus, although there is obvious visionary intentionality in the statement, there is a fundamental lack of institutional intentionality in its implementation. There are no overarching requirements for training regarding observing student teachers teach, which lies at the core of the supervision process.

Tacitly, the teacher education programs assumes expertise in teaching among its supervisors because one of the qualities considered when hiring student and practicum supervisors is their K-12 teaching experience. Teacher education experience is not part of the job requirements for hiring and until recently there has been very little training or preparation for supervisors and no professional development. At the time of this study, supervisors received a two-hour training session that covered administrative responsibilities, legal information, working with cooperating teachers, and other details such as mileage reimbursement, emergency contact information, and background criminal checks. It did not cover observation techniques, things to consider when conducting post-observation conferences, or anything else related to actually teaching others how to teach. I found it fascinating that of the interview participants, only one had any prior experience as a teacher educator—Sarah had been a cooperating teacher. None had had previous experience supervising student teachers. The lack of prior experiences points to a great need for the creation of an institutional intentional process for onboarding supervisors.

Feeling unprepared

One of my standard interview questions and supervision course questions was: Did you feel prepared to supervise student teacher? All of those I interviewed spoke either directly or indirectly to this. Michelle commented:

I would like to see a course. I don't think training is the right word but we need something that focuses on the pedagogy of teaching and not just research. The goal now is for us to be researchers regardless of what our own personal goals are

... the mission here is not about developing future teacher educators but developing future educational researchers. But I want to be a teacher educator and am doing it right now and I did not even realize it...It amazed me. (interview, March 10, 2008)

My own journal reflected a similar sentiment. "As I look back on the classes I have taken in order to complete my program plan for the graduate school, I was shocked to realize that I had not taken one class that focused on the pedagogy of teacher education. All of my classes had to do with theory or research; not one of them explored the methods and pedagogy of how to teach teachers" (personal journal, 10/22/07). Although, my findings portray the situation at one institution, they support what Guilfoyle, Hamilton, Pinnegar, and Placier (1995) describe in their reflections on the institutions of which they were members. They report that there was "no class at the university [that] discussed the process of becoming a teacher educator" (p. 41).

Kate and Jill were both caught a bit off guard when I asked them if they felt prepared to be student teacher supervisors. Both said they did feel prepared, they had been to the College's training program, had met their student teachers, knew where their schools were, and knew their responsibilities. Kate continued to talk about this and later said, "Prepared is the wrong word. I knew where to go, who I was supposed to work with, and what I was supposed to do... but I did not know how to do it" (supervision class discussion, October 15, 2008).

Beth's view was that the best form of preparation was actually "doing it...just like being a preservice teacher, you can't really get a feel for what it will be like until you do

it” (October 2, 2008). However, “just doing it” does not imply that “it” is done with personal intentionality.

Regard

As we saw in chapter two, student teaching supervision is seen as a relatively low status position in the university. Not only is it considered low status, but the vast majority of supervision takes place off campus making it almost invisible at times. The literature identifies both of these realities as reasons for the lack of preparation available to student teacher supervisors. I did not find this to be entirely true. Although supervision definitely takes place off campus, I and several of those with whom I spoke did not feel like it was a low status position. Rather we thought of it as an experience and a job. One of the students spoke directly to this: “Supervision isn’t really a good thing or bad thing, it is one of the experiences I am supposed to get while I’m here” (supervision class discussion, October 17, 2008). There was a general consensus that supervision is a job, not a part of one’s graduate program. It is a very important job that provides tuition benefits, health insurance, and a modest wage. Without a job with these benefits neither I, nor most of those with whom I spoke, would be able to be full-time doctoral students.

However, looking at supervision as a job and not as part of the process of becoming a teacher educator fosters a reality that Jessie illuminated:

I think you can put in as much or as little [supervision work] as you want. Because it is seen as a job, not as a part of your program. We aren’t evaluated on our practice. No one was watching what I was doing and most people only do it for a

year and then they teach or work on a *research project* (supervision class discussion, October 1, 2008).

I italicized *research project* because Jessie's tone totally changed when she said it. I know I said that neither I nor my colleagues characterized supervision as a low status job. That said, a research assistantship was definitely seen as a more desirable assistantship among my colleagues. The attraction to a research project is not merely about status issues, however. Many research projects go on year-round and offer the possibility of publishing a paper and/or presenting at a conference. This is a huge benefit for most graduate students as assistantships are very hard to come by in the summer term. If a student can secure one they not only have reasonably stable employment, they are also able to take courses during the summer, have opportunities to present at conferences and possibly publish, and form potentially important relationships with a professor.

In addition to being viewed as a job, supervision is also seen as one of many experiences that a graduate student should accumulate over the course of their studies. Jessie mentioned later that her advisor saw supervision more as an experience that she needed to get and then move on, preferably to a research project:

I thought this was weird because I had told her that I wanted to be a teacher educator ... But I do not think that supervision was given a lot of value ... I think supervision is kind of tossed to graduate students. Like, "Oh well, you can be a supervisor," without a lot of thought given to: "would this person be a good supervisor? How are we going to support this person? What do we want them to do? (supervision class discussion, October 1, 2008)

Several advisors have told me directly that they want their students to have a combination of assistantships including supervision, teaching, and research. This is by no means a bad thing. However, regarding supervision as one of several experiences sets up a dynamic in which developing and improving as a supervisor is not a priority. Rather, the priority is to have been a supervisor and move on to the next experience. Thus, student teacher supervision is not regarded negatively nor is it regarded as an opportunity to become a teacher educator.

Summary and Reflections

As we have seen in the preceding pages, supervision is incredibly complex on multiple levels. How, when, and where supervisors conduct observations is fraught with logistical challenges and competing responsibilities. Interpersonal relationships, stress, and emotions, as well as administrative challenges all contribute to this complexity. The lack of preparation and guidance for supervisors points to a lack of intentionality on many levels. While the notion of regard, in that supervision is regarded as a job and not as preparation for becoming a teacher educator, illustrates how supervision fits within the practical nature of doctoral preparation in many advisors' eyes.

As I bring this chapter to a close I would like to reflect on the process of becoming a teacher educator. Complexity and intentionality, or lack thereof, are to me the mainstay of the becoming process. Both are born out in this chapter. We have seen how logistically, emotionally, and administratively complex the supervising is.

Although we have not discussed the emotions of the supervisors themselves it may certainly be felt in the data. The quotes I have used in both this and the preceding

chapter have deep emotional tones. No one spoke lightly about having a student teacher cry. A latent sense of anger and lack of confidence may be felt in quotes dealing with insufficient training. I believe these are tied to the becoming process. I also believe they are fundamentally a good thing. The feeling and expressing of emotions help to break down the wall between the personal and professional that is central to my worldview. The dismantling of this wall is very important and helps to bring about Crawford's notion of spiritually engaged knowledge. For me this is the most important realization that I have gleaned from this chapter. My own experience as a supervisor, as well as those that were shared with me, teach me that the becoming process is multidimensional. It is tied to emotional, pedagogical, financial, and administrative realities that must be negotiated as we live in the process of becoming a teacher educator.

Finally, I would like to close with what I believe is a strong take away. Graduate students seeking to become teacher educators seemed to be calling out for more institutional intentionality in the form of supports to help them improve as supervisors and work toward becoming teacher educators. This chapter discussed training workshops on logistics and processes, forms, and schedules. I am not saying these are not important, but they are simply not enough. Supports that foster community, offer strategies for dealing with the emotional complexities and support the individual while explicitly tying the act of supervision to a graduate student's journey of becoming teacher educator would be great places to start. The course from which some of this data was gathered provides an example, a small group of doctoral students were given space to talk about their emotional and personal experiences as student teacher supervisors. They were also

given space to talk about their prior teaching experiences and how they supported or got in the way of their supervisory responsibilities. These opportunities for student teaching and practicum supervisors to share and discuss their experiences in a structured fashion provided an opportunity to intentionally name and focus on the process of becoming a teacher educator.

Chapter 6: Moving Toward Becoming

Introduction

To say this has been a long journey is an understatement. For me, this work has stretched across more than one hundred pages and almost five years. In this final chapter, I first review my discussion so far to reorient the reader to the core ideas of the dissertation. I then describe my emerging grounded theory about becoming a teacher educator. Finally, I suggest how what I have learned may be taken as recommendations for creating an atmosphere of intentionality for myself and others as they continually become teacher educators in the programs in which this study is situated. Before jumping in, I want to revisit the intended audience as well as the voice I have attempted to use in my writing. I also want to revisit and discuss the process of becoming itself both as it relates to my personal journey and the process of becoming a teacher educator. As I mentioned in Chapter One, this work has two primary audiences. The first is, you my committee, although this is obvious, as it is this group charged with evaluating this work as worthy or unworthy of acceptance. In addition, it is also for you in that you are charged with mentoring, advising and teaching future teacher educators. It is my hope that this work will offer fodder for your practice. I struggle with this last statement as it may appear bold or presumptuous. This is not the intent, rather I am not under the impression that my dissertation will be widely read outside of this group so for it to have any meaningful impact beyond myself I can only hope that it has had some minor impact on you, my committee. The second audience is myself. I have tried to and many times failed and recommitted to use this work as a vehicle for personal growth. My hope is that

this final chapter will walk a fine line between writing for both of these audiences. For my committee, I try to tie the work together in a way that brings meaning to my findings and suggest action and future research. For myself in that I am a work in progress. I am still and will always be in a state of becoming a person and hopefully a teacher educator.

One last note before moving into the heart of my final chapter regarding the voice I have used. I realize that it has vacillated between very personal and somewhat impersonal. I mentioned my goal has been to use the personal tone as bookends to this work. Reserving the body for more detached and less personal exploration of the literature, methods, and findings used and found in this study. In this chapter I will return to a more personal voice as I bring this work to a conclusion.

Re-Examining My Assumptions

Chapters One and Two shed light on my personal worldview, and as I close out this work I am once again returning to the realm of the personal. I do not intend to rehash what has been covered, but rather use this summary to lead both myself and my readers toward the culmination of this work.

In Chapter One I stated that the narrative of this dissertation began more than 40 years ago with my first experiences with formal education. I positioned my experiences of becoming a teacher in the late 1980's and early 1990's as backdrop and source of influence. Topically, however, I was not aware of the notion of "becoming a teacher educator" until the fall of 2006 when I took CI 8151 Paradigms and Practices of Teacher Preparation. I was, by definition, a teacher educator. Everything my classmates and I were reading was saying, *hey this teacher education business is really, really important*

and I was doing it with little to no guidelines or training. I viewed it simply as a job, a means of paying for tuition and providing healthcare. Not only did this seem like an important realization to explore, it also felt somewhat provocative and led me to my research questions that I would explore for the next several years. As a reminder to the reader, they are:

What are the personal and professional experiences of graduate students who have goals that include becoming a teacher educator and who attend the same institution that I do?

Assuming that the preparation of doctoral candidates is not intentional in their development as teacher educators, what can be done to make the journey of becoming a teacher educator more intentional?

The second research question provides insight into my bias at the time—namely that I was already assuming a lack of intentionality. The tone of the question insinuates that this was somehow the fault of the institution. This undercurrent of predetermination and judgment runs throughout this work. However, at the time and in the moment I did not recognize it as such, but rather thought it was insightful, smart, and a bit provocative. That said, both self-study and constructivist grounded theory recognize that we are always changing, and my responsibilities are to be honest with both myself and my readers that my views have changed.

The intent of the second chapter was to share my theoretical grounding and provide an overview of the literature and historical conversation that has been, and is, going on related to my topic. One of the most significant things that my exploration of

the process of becoming a teacher educator has taught me is that the becoming process itself is of paramount importance if you accept the premise I put forth in chapter two. I maintain that teaching is fundamentally a sacred act because teachers model for their students how to address life and the content is merely the conduit for doing so. I also believe teacher educators occupy an extraordinary role in our society and wield profound influence.

Chapter Two was devoted to positioning the topic of *becoming a teacher educator* within the context of my personal worldview and frameworks that have been used to guide this work itself. As I mentioned in Chapter Two, this work takes a human sciences approach, guided by Van Manen and Gadamer. This approach has made it possible for me to keep returning to this work with a sense of freshness, open to new and evolving interpretations. Had I used a natural sciences approach this would have been much more difficult, and perhaps not possible at all. However, the importance of *common sense* that Gadamer ties to the approach of the human science method (1975, p. 23) has allowed me to continually revisit my assumptions and biases. In short, it gives the researcher the license to do what they think makes the most sense. In my case, this has been to continually refine and come to grips with my biases. Most of which I did not even realize or accept as bias in the beginning.

Both Crawford (2005) and Palmer (1993, 1998, 1999, 2007) gave me permission to ignore the arbitrary barriers that our society has constructed between the personal and the professional as I interviewed my classmates, wrote my journal reflections on my own personal experiences, analyzed my data, and reported my findings. I believe this has

allowed me to explore the topic of becoming in a more realistic and holistic fashion and consider elements like exhaustion and emotionally charged situations.

Finally the notion of horizons has and continues to have a great influence on me and my views on becoming. Gadamer has taught me that our ever-expanding horizon is much more than a field of view. If our horizons were static we would always have the same field of view to the front, sides, and rear. The very notion of becoming would be irrelevant. My belief is that Gadamer's notion of expanding horizons is not only influenced by our journey through a continually changing landscape but by the weather of our lives. At times our weather is sunny and crisp. We are able to see great distances, observe existing detail, and experience vivid colors. At other times our world is cloudy and our view is limited, colors are muted and details are unclear. In short, the very way we experience the world around us actually shifts. These shifts occur continually, powered by the *fusion* of an individual's current self—their views, experiences, frame of mind, state of health, and physical wellbeing—with those of the becoming self, the result not being to see further, but rather, to see differently.

Our horizons are not totally a personal construct. Rather, the communities in which we live have a significant influence. What and how we experience the world, as well as the meaning we draw from present and past experiences, narratives, and the resulting actions are being formed by *shifting horizons* as we are continually influenced by the individuals and groups with whom we come into contact along the way. Accepting this gives us tremendous power to influence our journey of becoming.

Chapter Three's purpose was to share the method and logic I employed to explore my research questions and to explain the types of data I collected and analyzed. Chapters Four and Five are intended to give a voice to my findings and my interpretations as to their meaning, as well as to answer the first of my research questions: What are the personal and professional experiences of graduate students who have goals that include becoming a teacher educator and who attend the same institution that I do?

Finally, this concluding chapter's goals are to answer the second research question: Assuming that the preparation of doctoral candidates is not intentional in their development as teacher educators, what can be done to make the journey of becoming a teacher educator more intentional? I turn now to my concluding statements about what it means to become a teacher educator.

A Grounded Theory of Becoming a Teacher Educator

In this section, I share a constructivist grounded theory informed by my data and observations, as well as my analysis and reflections. My hope is that my theoretical discussion offers insight into the elements that make up the journey of becoming a teacher educator. I believe there are two parts to this journey. The first is one of movement. Although movement and motion are present at all times while becoming it is by no means in a unified direction. Nor is it in a perfect or true direction. Rather, as we become we may move from side-to-side or we may spiral while possibly inching forward. The second part the process of becoming is making meaning. How do we incorporate our movement into the narrative of our lives? Making meaning is a personal endeavor but it is not done in isolation. It is influenced by the community in which we live, by those we

choose to form community, and those who are placed in our path. The discussion that follows addresses each of these parts and closes with my thoughts as to how we can bring intentionality, discipline, and sense of sacredness to the journey of becoming a teacher educator for those who follow us.

Becoming as Movement

The movement of becoming is very complicated; the movement is not necessarily uni-directional or forward. It is true that we are moving forward in time and are continually becoming as we do so. However, there are forces other than time at play as we become. An arrow shot at a distant target is affected by the force that propels it forward, wind and gravity, even the air pressure and humidity all play a role in the arrow's flight. The environment, space, and time in which the arrow is shot are dynamic even as the arrow continues in a generally forward trajectory.

However, there are other types of movement that are possible as we become. We might be jolted in a way that throws us backward, drops us to our knees, or forces us to one side or the other. We might spiral like an eddy in a river, spiraling around and around while making little or no forward motion. We might move from side-to-side like a miss-hit puck on an air-hockey table that ricochets horizontally from bumper-to-bumper. The directionality with which we move affects how we look and what portion of our horizon we see. Movement does more than influence our field of view it adds dynamic variables to how we see and live in the moment. The type of movement influences how far we see and the crispness of our vision. I will discuss each of these types of movement as part of the process of becoming a teacher educator.

Becoming a teacher educator is a dynamic process and each person's movement in this process is unique. The manner and direction that the participants in this study moved were shaped and reshaped by our course work, conversations with colleagues and advisors, emotional encounters with the preservice teachers, and how we view our supervisor position (as simply a job or as practicing as teacher educator).

As for the types of movement, being jolted was quite common. This type of movement happened in real-time events that the participants were unprepared for such as having a student teacher crying during a post-observation conference, being told he or she was unprofessional, rushing from one observation to the next and missing or being late to an observation. These types of experiences shake our confidence and set us up to react rather than reflectively act. Being jolted is uncomfortable and something we naturally try to avoid. Becoming in and through a jolting experience can feel like an electric shock—it can be terrifying, painful, and not something you would enjoy repeating.

If we were prepared for a jolting experience beforehand we may be able to react or move in a different way. If we were prepared or even forewarned that a student teacher may cry during a post-observation conference we might not be left with a feeling of “What do I do? What went wrong? Who am I to create such anguish in another person?” These jolts can leave us doubting ourselves as people and who we are becoming through these experiences.

They can also lead to feelings of callus acceptance if not attended to. There is the real danger that we accept and grow used to be jolted and after a time having a student teacher cry during a post observation conference is normal, we accept that we will be late

or miss observations at times and be viewed as unprofessional by some is unavoidable. We run the risk of becoming numb to being jolted. I believe this can lead to a lack of movement, and thus halting of the becoming process, being stuck in practice and accepting how things as they are.

Feeling like you are moving from side-to-side also acts as a distractor and inhibits forward progress. Moving from side-to-side happens for different reasons such as dealing with competing pressures (course work, other assistantships, and personal and family situations), completing administrative tasks, feeling insecure and unprepared. Bill, for example, had been a confident and successful physics teacher. He realized he was stepping out of one reality and into another when he entered graduate school. By his account, he was not prepared for this new world, saying that student teachers are “a different deal” from working with high school students because “things are caught up with identity and career.” Bill was not aware of how different teaching adults and teaching about teaching was going to be before he started the doctoral program and he felt little support in making this transition. Rather than moving forward into a new career, he moved to the side, to a new realm of teaching and he lost confidence and self-assuredness.

When we move from side-to-side we are constantly trying to find our bearings, we become disoriented as our view forward has no fixed points. Much like being jolted there is the danger that we get used to this. Instead of trying to look forward we look to the ground and focus on what is immediately in front of us. We simply do our best not to stumble and fall.

Circular or spiraling movement was the motion in which I found myself. I was caught spinning around the fact that I was acting as a teacher educator without even seeing it. I was more focused on the job at hand and what needed to be done next. The fact that it was a job and I needed to complete my duties in order to pay for school was all I could see. I needed to be here at this time, there at that time and make it back in time for class or to pick up my kids. I was so busy spinning that I did not notice my horizon was shifting continuously, yet never expanding. All I could see was what was directly in front of me over and over again.

Moving around and around promoted a sense of being unengaged in the present situation and more focused on what I had to do next or where I had to be. It was not until the course I spoke about in Chapter One provided me with a catalyst that began to propel me out of my spinning. I was then able to take a step back and refocus my direction forward.

In my opinion it is only when we are moving forward that we can have influence over our motion as individuals and as a community. For example, both Kate and Jill felt ready for their supervisory tasks. They knew where to go, what to do, and who they were supposed to supervise—and they both had a sense of confidence. Yet, when they were asked if they were prepared to guide teacher candidates into becoming teachers, Kate explained that although prepared in terms of where to go and who she was supposed to supervise she really did not know exactly how to supervise. So even moving forward, although preferred, is imperfect.

We can move forward with lurching or stumbling progress. Although this is forward progress it does not always feel comfortable and is less than methodical. The goal is to move forward in a sure-footed manner so that we see what is in front of us and are able to adjust to the terrain underfoot. Looking forward to our horizon offers us the chance to integrate forces that are pushing on us from behind and from the sides or spinning us around. It allows us to reflect on the responsibilities we have been charged with as teacher educators.

While looking forward we are able to live in our roles as supervisors and graduate students and use the *in the moment* experiences that jolted, spun, or moved us from side-to-side to learn new ways to interact with teacher candidates and cooperating teachers. Looking and moving forward offers us the chance to embrace the dynamic nature of the journey of becoming a teacher educator and plot our course onward. This course onward is where we make meaning for ourselves and in community with others. It helps us to take control of our motion and the manner in which we move.

Becoming as Making Meaning

The process of becoming is influenced by both personal and communal experiences. It requires us to understand and draw meaning from the type of motion in which we find ourselves moving and allows us to move in one direction or another. I also recognize that the meaning we draw is not arrived at in isolation. We are affected by views and actions of those we live with in community and we are constantly integrating new experiences and interactions with others who have come before. This ongoing integration is at the heart of the becoming process. That said, how do we make meaning

of the process of becoming? How do we live in and through becoming? Taking control of our motion with discipline is not easy.

Among the participants in this study, some experiences were shared by all of them, including myself. We were all in graduate school, all of us were student teacher supervisors, we had all taught in a K–12 setting, and we were all perusing doctoral degrees in education. Other experiences varied, some based on gender, support or lack of support from our advisors, and the curriculum and clinical experiences within the program we worked (e.g., science, math, elementary). Still, other experiences were unique to each individual such financial circumstances, family background, educational background, personal goals and aspirations, research interests, and worldview. And some were shared and unique at the same time. We all left K–12 teaching and entered graduate school, but some left due to exhaustion and only intended to take a break. I felt like teaching was just too much, another participant was not rehired, and another sought a job in the metro area to be around more people.

Whatever the reason for leaving teaching and entering graduate school I believe it is important to ask ourselves and be asked by our mentors, advisors, and colleagues how the person we once were and the forces that influenced our decisions affect how we address and live out the process of becoming a teacher educator. Asking ourselves, being asked and having a the space to consider and answer these questions can provide a catalyst that brings personal intentionality and can help us recognize and live in the process of becoming a teacher educator. Personal and communal questioning and

reflection is what forms the *becoming* narrative of our lives and it does so whether we accept it or not.

The level of acknowledgement, reflection, and awareness with which we view the process of becoming forms a continuum of sorts and directly influences the type of motion in which we move and whether we are able to modify and redirect our motion. At one end of the continuum is the reactive state of becoming. We can live in a state of reaction that pays little mind to how or what type of motion we find ourselves moving in. We can fall into the future with no plan of action, with little to no awareness of how our past selves are affecting our present selves and dictating the way we move into the future. Meaning here is shallow and directly tied to recent events. The meaning we make on the reactionary end of the continuum is primarily an individual exercise. In the data, reactionary stances may be seen as blaming and contain an undercurrent of anger: “I came here and BAM I was a supervisor. OK, you go out and observe, you grade lessons. And base it on what? I felt that there was a training model missing” (interview, March 10, 2007). There is a tendency for meaning to be made with a lens of “it’s my fault,” rather than a lens of “what can I do to improve?”

On the other end of the spectrum is awareness, reflective practice, and personal intentionality. When on this end of the spectrum we can take stock of who we are and what brought us to this point, why we are affected by circumstances and interactions in a given way and ask ourselves “is there a better or a new way to understand situations in this moment and going forward?” On this end of the spectrum we make meaning in union with others and are aware of forces that work to distract us from moving forward.

We seek out guidance and look inward while actively seeking communal supports. We can change our motion through understanding the meaning behind the motion. For me, I was motivated to propose and work with others to design the supervision course. It spurred me on to take action and form community when I could not find the support I felt I needed.

At least for myself, the reflective and intentional end of the continuum is almost impossible to live in with any real consistence. It is St. Augustine's City of God while the reactionary end is the City of Man. This is where the individual needs an intentional community. Reflective meaning is bound to those who influence us for both good and bad. Our narratives are not insular or detached from others but rather made in concert or discord with others. Ideally, with individuals and communal intentionality. This is the final contextual expansion of intentionality. Communal intentionality has the power to tie institutional and visionary intentionality to personal intentionality. It can help mitigate the negative influences of reactionary intentionality and promote reflective and intentional approach to our practice. If we need help to locate ourselves within a community of people who share some of the same questions and confusions we can move forward in a stable and sustained manner. This is at the heart of my theory of becoming, our journey of becoming a teacher educator is deeply affected by the communal catalysts to which we have access. It is dependent on having positive mentorship and camaraderie with others who can empathize with our situation and struggle and help us to look at challenges in a new way that makes meaning that directs us forward.

As I stated in Chapter One, teacher educators have a unique, sacred, and powerful role, a role that ripples throughout society. Teacher educators are teaching future teachers not just what and how to teach, but also how to approach the act of teaching. Although these are my words I did not arrive at this belief on my own. Parker Palmer, Jennifer Crawford, and many others led me to this belief. They provided the catalyst and background that helped me make this meaning. It is this opportunity that I believe is needed to support others on the journey of becoming a teacher educator.

How does this lead to action and what does that action look like? Reflecting on and trying to understand why we move in one way or another can be affected by the guidance of our advisors, mentors, fellow doctoral students, and intuitional intentionality. Explicitly stating the immense power that our profession as teacher educators wields and forming meaning in concert with others who embrace that power would help to form positive and reflective meaning.

Implications for Practice and Future Research

I have learned many things about the process of becoming a teacher educator while writing and rewriting my dissertation. I have realized that becoming a teacher educator is about *becoming* itself and the context that I am exploring is that of becoming a teacher educator. I believe the communal aspect of becoming can provide the catalyst for intentional focus on the personal and propel our becoming in a forward motion. It is with this spirit that I would like to call for reform. I do not believe there needs to be radical reform. All the components necessary to make significant improvements are in place and that small changes in how the university runs its programs could have a

profound impact. The building, coursework, faculty, administration, programs, and the graduate students themselves are in place. The opportunities to practice the art and craft of teaching about teaching and learning are in place. Graduate assistantships, including practicum and student teaching supervision, teaching assistantships, and research assistantships are in place. I would like to echo the calls for reform heard in the literature. The reform I am calling for is implementation of the vision that was so aptly written in the University of Minnesota mission statement. I am calling for a higher degree of institutional intentionality. It is my hope that this will act as a catalyst that leads to great personal, communal and programmatic intentionality in a manner that promotes a reflective practice.

Creating forums like the supervision course and communities like discussion and study groups in which questions about our reasons for entering graduate school and why we left teaching (if that was the case) can be asked. Discussions related to how our personal experiences and beliefs impact and push us forward as we become teacher educators. Conversations about the lived realities and day-to-day experiences, pressures, and situations in which we find ourselves while supervising can be had. Dialogues devoted to how we can grow into and improve our practice as teacher educators that explicitly identify the challenges, stresses, and emotions that graduate student supervisors are likely to encounter along with some tools for coping with them would help those becoming teacher educators to form meaning on the reflective end of the continuum in community with others in a manner that directs and redirects them forward.

Structural and programmatic habits like prompting advisors to incorporate similar questions and discussions into their advising sessions with their students would also be of great help and would promote a commitment to institutional intentionality supporting the process of becoming a teacher educator. These actions could act to help bring a sense of awareness to the forces that are influencing our motion and bring a sense of deliberativeness toward the individual and communal journey forward toward becoming a teacher educator. All that is needed are a few modifications in practice and an intentional, explicit, and visionary calling out of a commitment to the process of becoming a teacher educator.

As for future research, I would like to first suggest an area related to a theoretical perspective. I believe the human sciences perspective accompanied by elements of self-study and spiritually engaged knowledge situated within intimate communities provides opportunities for personal and communal growth. I would like to refer to this type of research as spiritually engaged human sciences research. This perspective allows us to embrace the human experience itself without the need to compartmentalize and isolate research questions from the lives and experiences of the researcher and research subjects. It prompts us to ignore the arbitrarily constructed wall between the personal and professional.

In an effort to expand on spiritually engaged human sciences research I would like to return to Chapter One. I began my work by calling out three guiding concepts: intentionality, discipline and spirituality. Intentionality has overshadowed discipline and spirituality throughout this text. I would like to turn the tables and focus on discipline

and spirituality. I believe discipline unifies scientific inquiry in a way that allows us to define and ask research questions, explore problems and phenomena, and conduct research in an purposeful manner. As researchers we need to maintain a sense of discipline as we identify problems and questions to explore; situate and consistently apply research methods; identify, gather and analyze data; and strive to make theoretical meaning and offer suggestions for how to apply our findings and continue the research.

However, there is more to discipline than method when considering in spiritually engaged human sciences. If we choose to explore and conduct research using the spiritually engaged human sciences perspective, it is important to continually remind ourselves in a disciplined manner that we are not just conducting research. We are exploring what it means to be human. We place ourselves within our research in ways that allow us to grow as individuals and communities. We embrace our biases in an open and honest manner that allows our audience to see our perspectives and agree or disagree with them.

Spiritually engaged human science research is also fundamentally communal in nature, whether conducted by one researcher or in partnership with others. The goal is not to separate the researcher from the participants but rather to form communities between the researcher and the participants.

Discipline also helps us to accept and gives us permission to call out the sacred nature of spiritually engaged human science research. Sacred, not necessarily in a religious sense, but in an acceptance and realization that our research is bigger than we are, and not entirely of our own creation. It is tied to individual and communal growth.

In addition, the discipline of reminding ourselves of this fact helps to promote and to maintain a humble perspective. I will bring my discussion to an end by calling for others to consider expanding on the theoretical lens of spiritually engaged human science.

The second area for future research is topical and based on the notion of becoming. I believe there is a nebulous and shifting space between training and education. It is in this space where we integrate and make meaning of learned skills and acquired knowledge. The topical focus of becoming a teacher educator is particularly important in educational research. What, who, how, and why teach are in a continual state of evolution. New and evolving technology, changing workforce needs, economic and social evolution, and other variables all affect the need to accept the reality that it is impossible to complete the process of learning how to teach about teaching and definitively determine a best way of learning. If we apply the notion of continually becoming to research devoted to improving teacher education we leave ourselves open to new and yet to be seen horizons. We can ask old questions in new ways and ask entirely new questions.

To further research on becoming a teacher educator, I would like to explore how we become teacher educators in concert with those who we are charged with mentoring. If we accept the premise that teaching and learning are always changing then it seems clear that those who teach about teaching should continually strive to hone their skills and knowledge. As a result, teacher educators are in a state of mutual and co-development with those who they are teaching. By co-development I am referring to the fact that as we continually become teacher educators we are working with individuals and groups

who are also in a state of becoming teachers. Although, the *what* we are becoming in terms of position and function are different, the spirit of becoming is in a state of co-development.

I believe research that explores co-development would add a positive line of research to the field of teacher education. It would also add to the communal conversation of becoming a teacher educator by explicitly calling out the need for ongoing development. It would provide a healthy example to preservice teachers that speaks to the need to constantly review and reflect on their teaching practice, modeling for preservice teachers that we are ourselves reflecting and constantly striving to improve and maintain a disciplined awareness, that our practice is never completely honed, but that it is practice in the truest sense. We are practicing in order to improve.

Also connected to research on becoming teacher educators, I would like to expand on the groups we categorize as teacher educators. I have limited my work to include only one category of teacher educators—those who are in the formal process of graduate school. There are many other groups and communities who teach about teaching and learning. Practicing teacher educators (those to teach foundation and methods courses), cooperating teachers, mentor teachers, and school administrators all act as teacher educators. Of these groups I believe cooperating teachers wield the most influence. All too often cooperating teachers are left to their own devices to figure out what to do with student teachers. The cooperating teachers I have worked with received little to no training and education. They received a packet of information that laid out what they were committing to, the schedule they were to follow, and various other documents and

forms. Cooperating teachers are by definition teacher educators. They are charged with modeling, mentoring, and evaluating the student teachers in their care. They spend a semester or more with a student teacher in class virtually every day. In almost all cases they spend more time in one-on-one contact with individual preservice teachers than any other teacher educator. There is certainly literature that focuses on cooperating teachers but the research I am proposing is to position and view cooperating teachers within the context of becoming teacher educators.

I am particularly interested in working with cooperating teachers to understand the nebulous shifting space between training and education. Cooperating teachers model and provide training to nascent teachers but more needs to be known about how we turn this modeling and training into reproducible educative experiences. I believe communally oriented research that embraces a spiritually engaged human sciences approach could offer one of many possible avenues that would help build communal knowledge and practice.

Closing Thoughts on My Own Intentionality and Journey of Becoming

The concept of intentionality has grown in contextually meaning throughout this work. My goal of being aware of how and who I am becoming along with the passion and emotion in the voices of my fellow doctoral students strongly draws me to the concept of intentionality. I understand and accept that it is a multi-faceted concept and that it has been used with many descriptors: personal, programmatic, reactive, visionary, and institutional. I return now to how I defined intentionality in Chapter One: writing and living humbly and thoughtfully while being disciplined and attentive to my work. If

I had maintained this stance in the world, my dissertation would have been done years ago, I would be in better shape, and I would be living in the moment rather than agonizing over past decisions and dwelling on a future that is yet to be written. My personal journey of becoming is still very much a work in progress. I will continue to recommit and grow into my own journey. I end this dissertation much as I began, flawed and humbled by circumstances in which I find myself. Yet I am also intent on sharing my thoughts, feelings, and ideas as to how to make marginal changes that have the power to lead to a greater good by improving the communal process of becoming a teacher educator.

As I continue to work toward becoming a better person and to grow as a humble practitioner of teaching it is my hope that I will be able live in and make meaning at the reflective end of the spectrum in community as much as possible. I also know that I will fail in this and that I will be jolted, moved from side-to-side, and spiral at times.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. Let's talk about why you want to become a teacher educator.
 - a. Probe: How did you arrive at this point in your career / life?
 - b. Probe: Talk about why becoming a teacher educator is important to you.
 - c. Probe: Did you have prior experience in teacher education before you began your PhD? If so, please explain.
2. What has been your experience thus far as you have been making the transition to teacher educator?
 - a. Probe: Talk about University experiences.
 - b. Probe: Talk about school-based experiences.
 - c. Probe: Talk about challenges.
 - d. Probe: Talk about supports you have been given or that you have found.
 - e. Probe: Talk about your needs as you are becoming a teacher educator.
3. What do you imagine lies in your future as a teacher educator?
 - a. Probe: What is your ideal for yourself as a teacher educator?
 - b. Probe: What do you foresee as challenges for you in the future?