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Risks and Opportunities within Self-Study: A Presentation for the S-STEP SIG, American Educational Research Association, 2006

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Abstract

This paper documents a self-study research group from its inception, storying its development and impacts on the curricular lives of 11 participating educators individually and collectively. Drawing on the scholarship of the self-study tradition within educational research (Loughran et al. 2004), we see teacher knowledge as largely untapped and an important source for the improvement of teaching. Positioning participants to look at the sense and selves being made on a continual basis places reflexivity is at the heart of self-study. Our paper reveals multiple ways educators might engage reflexively, considering and reconsidering beliefs about the nature of learners, learning, teachers, and teaching, manifesting philosophies of education to be lived out/theorized within practice. A text emerges that deliberately foregrounds the work of reflexivity, examining the potential of intersections among theory, self-study, and concrete teaching/learning examples, elucidating educator professional development in action.

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Risks and Opportunities within Self-Study

Context:

As curriculum theorists and teacher educators we seek ways to intersect theory and practice in our work involving prospective and practicing educators. Theorizing is a reflexive medium that positions our students and ourselves at the interface of theory and practice, in a continual interchange between the research literature, other(s), and empirical experiences. Self-study of teacher education practices is a tradition within participatory action research that purposefully fosters interrelatedness between our teaching and research. It positions us to continually confront self-understandings toward enhancing our practices regarding the nature of teaching about teaching. Self-study is thus key to our professional development and reflects our desire to do more than deliver courses in teacher education.

Self-study seems to hold much potential as a vehicle for educator professional development (e.g. Hamilton, 2004; Tidwell & Fitzgerald, 2004). In our work as teacher educators, teachers relay how incapacitated they increasingly feel as "fixes" (e.g. national, state-wide, and local standardized educational practices and policies), intended to enhance student achievement, are mandated and applied. These educational "fixes" are to be carried out by teachers, but most often, are under-resourced, mis-communicated, and entail little teacher input and/or knowledge about the particular "fix". The research literature reiterates these concerns and documents the ensuing consequences (e.g. Ball, 2000; Bingham & Sidorkin 2004; Bullough & Baughman, 1997; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2001; Cole, 1997; Darling-Hammond, 1996; Day, 2000; Delpit, 2000; Fullan, 1999; Hansen, 2001; Hargreaves, 2002; Nias, 1996; Noddings, 1996). And, yet, these "fixes" persist. Over and over again the impact of teachers on the quality of education is vastly underestimated and undermined. Self-study takes into account that the practice of teaching occurs alongside teachers' relational understandings of the learning situations they meet, and teachers'

interpretations within their lived encounters with learners. Self-study entrusts the work of teaching and learning to teachers and students, and perhaps, in so doing reveals what is so desperately absent from the language and practices of fixes.

This paper documents a self-study research group from its inception, storying its development and impacts on the curricular lives of 11 participating educators individually and collectively. Drawing on the scholarship of the self-study tradition within educational research (Loughran et al. 2004), we see teacher knowledge as largely untapped and an important source for the improvement of teaching. Positioning participants to look at the sense and selves being made on a continual basis places reflexivity is at the heart of self-study. Our paper reveals multiple ways educators might engage reflexively, considering and reconsidering beliefs about the nature of learners, learning, teachers, and teaching, manifesting philosophies of education to be lived out/theorized within practice. A text emerges that deliberately foregrounds the work of reflexivity, examining the potential of intersections among theory, self-study, and concrete teaching/learning examples, elucidating educator professional development in action.

A Common Point of Departure:

An understanding of self as always being in relationship to other(s) holds consequences for teaching/learning practices. This is a persistent impetus undergirding the self-study research group formed in the spring, 2005. The tenets of self-study of teacher education practices including restoring complexity to the nature of teaching and learning, examination of assumptions implicit in teaching/learning practices, and the need to question and articulate practices surfacing pedagogical reasoning, are introduced to this group (Loughran, 2002). But, in one sense this introduction is unnecessary, as educators have already encountered these tenets daily within their

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practices. These tenets are what they find so compelling to willingly meet regularly in an attempt to come to understand this impetus more fully.

As a common point of departure we read Kerdeman's (2003) discussion, "Pulled Up Short: Challenging Self-Understanding as a Focus of Teaching and Learning". Drawing on the thinking of Gadamer (1964), Kerdeman proposes that a key dimension of teaching and learning that is largely unexplored is the "proclivity for self-questioning and doubt" that is termed "being pulled up short" (p. 294). Kerdeman develops such catching of self within the act of teaching and learning as a disposition, a way of being and living giving expression to self-understanding (p. 305). There is a resonance across the group that indeed "being pulled up short" is the catalyst initiating, sustaining, and nurturing our self-study group. The persistent impetus calls our very selves into question, demanding evaluation and reconfiguration, spawning potential for renewal and reverence for limitations. We proceed with concomitant boldness and tentativeness, cognizant that being pulled up short is unsettling, disrupting and reconfiguring our selves within our teaching/learning practices.

Turning back on self is a process interdependent with others. There is a lostness and foundness of self, characterizing this process, constituted within Dewey's (1934) notion of the live creature, "the live being recurrently loses and reestablishes equilibrium with his surroundings"(p.17). The interplay of a lost and found self is achieved through questioning and self-doubt, continually seeking "an organic connection between education and personal experience" (Dewey, 1938, p.25). Such interplay is taken up by Biesta (2004) as "the [communicative] gap in which education actually takes place" (p.21). It is such a gap that asks each of us to surrender personal control for Dewey's (1938) notion of social control, with control coming from within the learning situations encountered in the gap, itself (p. 21). Biesta insists that enunciating this gap entails both risk and opportunity.

It is this sense of concomitant risk and opportunity, affording agency and natality, the self-study research group is encountering. Interrelated dimensions of "being pulled up short", found within the educative gap created, elicit significant risks and opportunities worth exploring. These dimensions reverberate throughout as active intonations enunciating moments of being pulled up short. These active intonations 1) confront educator vulnerability, exposing self and other(s) as inherent within the process character, necessitating openness and willingness; 2) feel the weight of educator responsibility, confronting accountability to self and other(s); 3) seek out integrity between teaching/learning beliefs and practices turning toward theory as working notions for educators to name and situate themselves and their practices; and 4) navigate the uncertain teaching/learning terrain through the pull of possibilities.

Our paper attempts to reveal the process character of what we come to see and experience as professional development. Engaged in conjoint reflexive conversations with participants, we pursue how it is that one learns to act wisely and teach well in pedagogical situations. The ensuing confronting of selves is modulated by active intonations giving expression to the work of reflexivity. Particular dimensions within the intersections of our professional and personal identities strike each of us with varying impacts. Lincoln and Denizen (2005) refer to these as "precise or fuzzy points at which we are irrevocably changed" (p. 1116). We each examine the dimension that resonates most deeply and/or we cannot dismiss as we find ourselves encountering it over and over again, way-finding within the gap. What follows are the "precise and fuzzy points"-- reflexive moments, glimpses that reveal the sense making, the ruptures, the discomfort, the pleasures, the risks alongside the opportunities, we encounter within the individual/collective movement. This reflexive movement is a continuous process of coming to see; a backward movement that re-covers and re-presents, and concomitantly a forward movement that generates and evokes. Thus we reveal a movement of teachers seeking out and seizing back

possibilities for teaching and learning again and again. Moments of being "pulled up short" cause each of us to catch ourselves within our teaching/learning practices. Reverberating throughout we encounter vulnerability as the necessary determining ground enabling greater accountability to self and other(s), empowered through theory, and demanding the reflexivity of bodily engagement. The reader is invited to layer the ensuing intonations into each other, deliberately bringing their own experiences to bear, seeking their own self-understandings.

Intonation 1: The Active Choice to Make Self Vulnerable

Vulnerability is a given within self-study. Its encounter is inevitable as actions reveal identity. Smith (1996) explains, "…the question of *what is to be done* with respect to Others depends on who I think the Other is, and who I think I am in relation to them" (p. 6).   The risks and opportunities of the ground such questions open onto forms the vulnerable terrain our self-study group immediately confronts. And, this ground is concomitantly ethical in character as the intersections of who we are individually and collaboratively gather and emerge (e.g. Zeni, 2001). Joyce, in her role as a high school counselor, relays a personal narrative facing up to the rawness of exposed identity cognizant of "being with and for the other, not looking at" the other (deLaine, 2000, p. 16). And Kathy, through her attention to Joyce's narrative, examines the ensuing relational vulnerability.

> **Joyce:** In my role as a school counselor I meet a student and find we share a similar feeling, one expressed so well by Nam (2001) in <u>YELL-Oh Girls</u>: "I had grown up feeling invisible, yet conspicuous at the same time and all the time" (p. xxv). Rather than allowing this student to be trapped into a feeling of hopelessness I hope to empower through the possibilities of self-reflection alongside other(s), navigating through what could remain isolated, inhospitable terrain toward an emancipated state of mutuality. Nicholas has emotional, physical, and social scars adversely affecting his interactions with family, friends, and peers. My assistance as Nicholas's school counselor was sought, in part because we share a similar childhood experience as we are both international adoptees raised by White parents. For students of color attending predominantly White

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schools, the lesson in survival can be complex as they learn the social structure of the school while simultaneously exploring their racial/ethnic identities. For this young man, attending a primarily White school was comparable to navigating an obstacle course and became a series of challenges. When students of color are unable to find a way to fit into a predominantly White school, they often feel they have failed the survival game with only shattered dreams remaining. As his counselor, Nicholas's meaning-making process drew me to confront personal vulnerabilities. In my attempts to work alongside him, toward finding his way and fulfilling dreams of fitting into the social realm of school, the Lakota Sioux legend of the dreamcatcher came to mind on several occasions. I dreamed he would discover how to capture the good things happening in his life while finding ways to release those painful elements in life. Some weeks, his dreams of fitting in seemed attainable as he progressed in recognizing and confronting vulnerabilities isolating him from others. There were moments when he battled with broken dreams. Shattered pieces became sharp-edged instruments to emotionally wound himself, to escape reality, to end his pain. In one such instance, as he became more isolated in his own world, he rocked back and forth in his chair as the communicative gap (Biesta, 2004) between us disappeared. He escaped into a world void of communication. Later, as I completed the suicide risk report, I felt pulled up short because not only did his dreams shatter, but also my dreams for him at that point in our work together. I recalled that when he described how it felt to be a student of color in a predominantly White school, I was reminded of my awkward adolescence, questioning my belonging, feeling White on the inside while others saw me as Asian on the outside. I found resonance and interconnection across our experiences, becoming vulnerable by sharing my experiences with him in order to understand what he was experiencing as a student of color in a predominantly White school. As he shared his feelings about being adopted and not knowing his cultural roots, I revisited my past as I listened to him speak, for his words echoed my own words at his age. More than once as I observed him hesitantly and shyly sharing his life story, I saw my own ideas, feelings, and experiences reflected in him. This was the first time a student's life narrative so closely resembled my own, and it greatly impacted my understanding of the relationship between myself and other(s), and the necessity of seeing and working within the educative gap.

Kathy: Gadamer (2000) writes of "belongingness" as recognizing self in the world. This sense of belongingness is what makes self-understanding a catalyst to further learning, a learning which does not "fall

back, uncritically, upon an idealized or ideological 'possession' when pressed to listen, to think, to question, to reconsider, to reexamine" (Hansen, 2001, p. 168). Attending to Joyce's account surfaces numerous personal examples of relational vulnerability from my own teaching and learning experiences. Opening pathways for learning that emerge as learning occurs makes the teacher relationally vulnerable. Listening to what students say, and hearing what they do not say, makes the teacher relationally vulnerable. Cultivating the student's disposition to experiment makes the teacher relationally vulnerable. Embracing the unknown and all its possibilities makes the teacher relationally vulnerable. Given this relational vulnerability and the change it invites, what is the yield for the teacher and student?

Being relationally vulnerable emphasizes a "proclivity for self-questioning and doubt" instead of "proficiency and power" (Kerdeman, 2003, p. 294). Relational vulnerability embraces constant conversations with other as a means of realizing circumstance and, thus, invigorating practices. Being relationally vulnerable entails living amid the constant tension of being pulled up short as Kerdeman suggests. Thus, relational vulnerability welcomes question, conflict, challenge, and resolve as continually oscillating progress toward becoming. It honors the voice, the process, and the embodied knowledge of teachers and students. Bass et al. (2002) notes "Self-study offers us research that puts us in touch with who we are, what we do, and how we change – to consciously be working on ourselves so that we are agents in our daily lives . . . we can work with our defensiveness and vulnerabilities; we can grow as we continuously learn to teach" (p. 68). It is only in the midst of exposed vulnerability – as counselor, teacher, learner, and researcher - that we find ourselves reframing knowledge, moving in the midst of uncertainty, seeking strength for the growth challenges sure to come.

Intonation 2: Accountability to Self

The vulnerable intertwining of action with identity becomes the task our self-study group must embrace. This task demands the presence of others, the constant interchange with others, brought to bear on individual sense-making. Accountability to self is desired as each participant seeks to see herself in her teaching/learning practices and, in turn, be seen by her students. Seeing oneself averts pedagogical blindness, the inability to see what is before self.

Chandra, Virginia, and Colette as female educators of color are struck by their own visibility in

classrooms and relay critical incidents that problematize their "pedagogical mode of address"

(Ellsworth, 1997, p.6) within homogeneous classrooms. Subsequently, their experiences lead

Gayle as a teacher educator committed to issues of diversity, to problematize her own

practices of recruiting and preparing educators of color to teach in homogenous classrooms.

> **Chandra:** My first two years of teaching, I taught in a school that was not racially or ethnically diverse in its
>
> student population. But this was okay. As a Latina, I wanted to make a difference anywhere I chose to teach.
>
> During parent teacher conferences, I welcomed parents with a big smile and handshake and before I could
>
> get the words out, several parents said, "Oh, Ms. Diaz, you must be my child's Spanish teacher." I didn't
>
> think much of it until it continued to happen. I guess Latinas of Mexican decent aren't supposed to be able to
>
> do math. I thought it was funny the first time and then hoped parents would realize how ignorant they
>
> sounded asking that question based on my ethnicity. I persisted in imagining what a wonderful experience I
>
> was going to have as a teacher. I imagined how all students and parents would see that I was a great math
>
> teacher who cared about students. I speculated that they would see it was also my job as a math teacher to
>
> teach and speak from different perspectives. I never thought that my teaching of mathematics would be
>
> called into question. Didn't they know that I had tutored all through college? I knew what I was doing. I was
>
> called into the assistant principal's office to discuss phone calls the counselor had received. Parents were
>
> complaining that I didn't know how to teach. Before I knew it, my assistant principal and the math curriculum
>
> specialist for the district were observing my classroom. Little recommendations were made and I thought this
>
> nightmare had passed. My assistant principal asked me to meet with him again for what I thought was going
>
> to be a conversation of praise for working through this situation. On the contrary, I was notified that because
>
> of all the complaints, I was being put on a performance concerns plan. Wow, my heart sunk. This is when I
>
> started to believe what I was being told. Maybe I wasn't the great teacher that I thought I was.
>
> It was difficult going back into the classroom because this was not how I imagined my first year. My
>
> apprehensions soon faded and I was back to teaching as I had been.   Parent teacher conferences came
>
> quickly. Again, the memories of parent's assuming I was the Spanish teacher surfaced. It had always been
>
> in the back of my mind, *what if* I was the Spanish teacher? Would my teaching have been called into

question? As parents greeted me, their mouths would move but all I could hear is, "You must be the Spanish teacher." The next day, the assistant principal shared with me that parents had informed him that I was teaching better. I soon made the correlation. The parents who were calling in were parents of students who were in the accelerated classes. This was probably the first time their child received a B or C. At the end of the year several students told me that this was the first year they ever learned and enjoyed math. I sure hope so; I stayed after school almost every day working with students. At the end of the year, I was happy to meet with my assistant principal to check off my accomplishments on the performance concerns plan. I was confused. I thought my year ended well. I was asked if I wanted to move down and teach a lower grade. I did not want to because I had been through the book once and was ready to make changes for the following year as all good teachers do. I was planning on teaching Geometry the following year until I was told that I was being moved. I was angry and felt let down because there was no choice in the matter. I was crushed. I assumed my role the following year even though I felt like everyone looked at me as the teacher who failed. Isolation subsumed and consumed me.

Virginia: During the weeks I taught the events leading to the Civil War I was guaranteed at least one phone call to my principal exposing me as a racist. I was told that I expected too much from the students and spending three weeks on Native American Cultures was too long. The list goes on and on. There was so much wasted time spent on combating such behavior from parents it was almost comical. As I revisit the situations and listen to myself it is so difficult not to say, stop! Get over the "Woe is me" syndrome. Then I remember how I felt. How I was made to feel as if I was not worthy to teach their children. Maybe it would have been easier to print up a flyer that simply read:

Christian female educator from a family of postgraduate degree professionals. Strong family values, superior references, great communication skills…

Over the years I receive less calls and I have become more responsible for my behavior meaning, I do not allow others to dictate my feelings. My philosophy has become take action, which prevents reactionary behavior based purely on emotion. My behavior should not be dictated by the behavior of others. There are

still difficult days when you combat the condescending and pompous attitudes of others. But, I never forget the focus should always be what is in the best interest of the students. What are their needs, not just for the here and now but what will encourage them to be better adults and citizens? What will foster critical thinking so they may in turn encourage someone else to be more willing to embrace new ideas, maybe even their parents?

Despite greater consciousness of my own teaching practices, I am increasingly aware of the multiple eyes/expectations/assumptions/beliefs/values—looking back at me. How can I push beyond feelings of display and teach authentically?

Colette: As I begin my career in higher education, I struggle with issues of identity. Initially, I feel comfortable and confident in my academic pursuit. I am adamant that I will not become the American Indian representative. My perspective toward teaching is undergirded by philosophical principles, critical theories and other social theoretical influences. I am driven to further my studies carefully, seeking to contribute to society in a positive manner. One of the challenges that I face is my identity within higher education. I find my identity being configured and re-configured on my journey toward the professorate. The great opportunity to witness teaching and teach firsthand holds primary responsibility. I struggle with applying my theories, philosophy and principles within the actual practices of teaching. I confront perceptions of others, read through long held assumptions, beliefs, and values. I confront fear within myself and in my students. Ultimately, I confront myself as I find I cannot separate from my ethnic roots.   And, I cannot simply "get over it".

Through this process I attend to my "inner dialogue" devoting time to issues of community, class, race and gender, and attempt to take this dialogue to my students. After reading Enora Brown (2002) my feelings as a new teaching assistant are validated. I identify with the intersections of ethnicity, race, gender, and culture, portrayed within the scenarios of her classroom situations. I appreciate the sincere manner in which she tells her story through the article. Teachers ought to acknowledge that that they cannot "divorce" themselves from the classroom, instructional style, or any other interactions within the institutions. But, what does that entail?

The intersections of my background, values, beliefs, and culture definitely influence or direct my words and actions within the classroom. My passionate commitments to social issues are revealed in all areas of my life. Issues such as race, gender and class have been very important to me as a teacher in a homogenous environment. But, when my students were reading Delpit's (1995) Other People's Children, conversations about race and class did not come through in forthcoming ways. I was completely perplexed by this because I struggled to engage students in a dialogue about these very issues. There were "scenes" within the Delpit text that explicitly addressed race. Through small group discussions I probed student responses to these scenes, trying to dig beneath surface levels. Some of the students held back hesitant/resistant to probing. I found myself repressing my thinking to put forth an "accepting" atmosphere. Why did I assume a more restrained, passive role in an effort to get students to engage in these discussions? The fast and easy response is-- I value the opinions and thoughts of my students. That sounds very "teacher" like doesn't it? If I push my own thinking further, I have to admit that I hold some fear about pushing some of these potential hot button topics. Perhaps this fear comes from my position as a disenfranchised person in society. I find that issues of race, gender, culture, and class, can stir up emotions that scare others and myself. This can erupt in conflict, and my very being as Northern Cheyenne/teacher/mother/activist/student is called into question. My years of training and socialization in the discipline left me with little solace. The very theories, philosophies and cultural knowledge feel miles away. Within this "afterplace" I am propelled into unknown territory, pulling back fears to seek new understandings about the various positions I hold.

Gayle: Laubscher and Powell (2003) describe their experiences as educators who are marked as 'other'. According to these authors, such a mark often includes qualities that are considered of lesser value by members of predominately White institutions. Sometimes being marked as such, leads the educator to feel pressure to think, feel or act as others expect. Chandra, Virginia and Colette's self-studies reveal their realization that they also had such a mark, the strong feelings associated with being marked as different, and the negative impact this label has on their ability to meet the needs of their students. They entered the classroom seeing themselves as a math, social studies, or multicultural education teacher; but quickly found those identities being reconfigured for them. They approached their teaching duties prepared to hold themselves accountable to their students and, through the self-study process, found themselves questioning

what it means to be held accountable to self; self as a teacher and self as a member of a disenfranchised person in society.

Kerdeman (2003) states:

> While the difference between the world and us can be experienced when unforeseen happiness comes our way, more significant disclosures of difference occur whenever our assumptions, expectations, and desires fail to materialize, are thwarted, or reversed. Such disappointments of expectation Gadamer calls 'being pulled up short' (Gadamer, 1993, p. 268 as cited in Kerdeman).

As a teacher educator committed to issues of diversity, I desire a teaching profession that is not dominated by one population – White, middle-class, females. I assumed that a diverse teaching pool would easily lead to a more inclusive education for all children. In light of my desires and assumptions, I have often encouraged members of populations traditionally underrepresented in teacher education to enter the profession. As I worked with Colette, Virginia and Chandra on their self-studies, I became painfully aware of how I was "pulled-up-short" in regards to preparing diverse teachers to enter the classrooms. Instead of a more inclusive education, I see the deeply embedded expectations of the students and parents for teachers that are White, middle-class and female impacting these high quality teachers in unexpected ways. Ways that they were not prepared to encounter, ways I, and teacher educators like me, did not prepare them to encounter. Fortunately, these women are strong. They did not just "get over it" or leave the teaching profession. Instead, they were able to explore what it means to be accountable to themselves and emerged stronger teachers and women of diversity. Now, it is my turn. My disappointment of expectation leads me to question what it means to be accountable to my goal of a more inclusive education for all children. I must explore what it means to prepare diverse teachers to encounter a historically homogeneous profession. Fortunately, these teachers have built a strong foundation on which I can build.

Intonation 3: Theory as Working Notions

Kessels and Korthagen (1996) point out that theories are often abstract lacking:

> Flesh and blood in a very literal sense; they do not have a face, nor a repertoire of actions. They have no temperament, no personal characteristics, no history, no vices, and no virtues. They cannot be seen in action, nor talked to, nor criticized, nor admired. In short, they do not have any perceptual reality; they are just concepts, abstractions. Therefore, they cannot be identified with. (p. 21)

The relevance and power of theory is felt when experienced as a medium for sense-making within acts of teaching and learning. Theories are taken up deliberately by participating educators as working notions to examine as philosophical/theoretical/pragmatic processes to be concretely worked within the particularities of an individual's teaching/learning practices, and concomitantly, collectively seeking and gaining vocabulary and teaching/learning images through theory. In this way theory is given a "face" and a "repertoire of actions" teachers bodily identify and can articulate.

Borrowing Hargreaves' (2001) concept of "emotional geographies" explaining the nature of teachers' recollections of emotionally laden interactions with those around them, Terry maps out her attempt to re-story herself in a new high school during her 26th year of teaching. As she maps out the terrain encountered, focusing on one interaction in particular, Margaret examines the embeddedness of self-understandings revealed through negotiating the teaching self. Hargreave's emotional geographies identified through sociocultural, moral, professional, physical, and political distances surface as Terry relays her thinking as she plans for an advanced placement high school language course. A dialogue between Terry and

Margaret ensues "exploring and interrogating professional understandings" (Guilfoyle, et al., 2004).

Terry: Hargreave's (2001) concept of "emotional geographies", of sociocultural, moral, professional, political, and physical distance and closeness, resonate with the emotionally laden interactions I have experienced teaching/learning to be over 26 years. But, beginning my 26th year of teaching in a completely different school setting heightened my consciousness of teaching and learning as emotional practices. Before this year, I had been in the same high school for 14 years, 12 of which I served as English department chair in addition to my teaching duties. This year I needed a change and ended up in a three-year old high school, on a four-by-four block schedule with three new preps. It was a humbling experience, to say the least, and through this emotion-laden year, I came to understand my beliefs about teaching and learning more fully. One event, in particular pulled me "up short" and forced me to ask who I am as a teacher and to examine my theory and practice. Above all, I realized my vulnerability in this new position and the emotion that teachers pour into their work, as well as the emotion students experience in the classroom and in their homes.

Margaret: Teaching understood as a sharing of self with other(s) surfaces one's values, beliefs, and assumptions in every breath, every action. In this way, you see teaching and learning as necessarily relational. The lack of storied relationship in your new school setting is immediately encountered and the pressing task becomes cultivating a co-presence between students and yourself (as teacher) that initiates the reciprocity you seek in the work of teaching and learning. Hargreave's (2001) notion of "sociocultural distance" reveals some of the emotional contours you meet. Your students are strangers to you. The school context is unfamiliar. The community context is unknown and you are not yet known in this community of students/parents. Negotiating the sociocultural distance is part of building pedagogical relationships between students, self, and subject matter.

Terry: Mapping out this terrain, re-storying my teaching self, I particularly felt the contours as I embraced a new teaching assignment Advanced Placement (AP) Language and Composition. Though I had taught AP Literature and Composition before, this was a different course. In my years of teaching at the other school, I had committed myself to teaching with a multicultural vision. My participation in Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity (SEED) classes over the years shaped my pedagogy with frequent opportunities for students to hear many voices in the literature they read so they can participate in discourses that act as both windows

and mirrors. What I wanted my new AP Language class to do was to construct a meaningful cultural study for themselves through my invitations.

Margaret: The invitations extended express your desire to engage each student in the learning conversation, beginning with each individual's experiences brought to bear alongside the literature and the voices of others. And, the ensuing thinking reveals and grows student identities and, also, reveals and grows your teaching identity.

Terry: What was revealed to me in the experience I will recount is a clearer understanding that teaching for me is a political act. I would not have used that adjective before; in fact, I might have rejected a suggestion that teaching is political. However, we live in an age in which morality is political. As I recollect the emotional geography of this interaction, there remains a rawness that very much confronts and exposes who I am (or, who I desire to be) as a teacher. I have accumulated numerous books dealing with various cultures through my years in SEED. I grouped the books for this study as follows: 1) African American experiences; 2) Native American experiences; 3) Hispanic experiences; 4) women's lives; 5) people with disabilities; 6) Middle Eastern cultures in America; 6) the poor and working poor; 7) gay and lesbian experiences; 8) Jews in America. My students were primarily Caucasian and middle and upper middle class. I hoped this study could be both a window and mirror as they read and discussed (mostly nonfiction books) multiple cultural views. Each group member would be reading a different title from the same cultural group. We did some preliminary reading and I gave book talks over each book, which included warnings about language and content where I thought it was necessary; included was a caveat that they could change books or groups if they found the reading too emotionally or morally challenging. Then they arranged themselves into groups and chose their books to set out on their various tasks.

 Everything seemed to be going well; they had gotten into their books and were engaging in some lively discussions. I had been attentive to the group that had chosen to study gay and lesbian issues. One book in particular, Paul Monette's (1992) <u>Becoming a Man: Half A Life Story</u> is somewhat graphic in places. I did not want the young woman who had chosen it to feel stuck reading it if it didn't suit her. I often asked her how the reading was going and if she was comfortable with it. She didn't appear to be having any problem with it; in fact, she was finished writing her book review when the trouble began. Her father discovered the book in her possession and was incensed. She evidently told him she "had" to read it. The next day he stormed to

his daughter's counselor and demanded that she be removed from my class. The counselor encouraged him to talk with me and tried to assure him she was sure I would never force a student to read a book she was not comfortable with, but he wanted no part of that. He would speak to an associate principal, but not to me. He said he didn't want to "get me in trouble."…I didn't "get in trouble" because the associate principal trusted that I had not made the girl read the book. The administrator supported me when she spoke with me later, but I felt horrible.

Margaret: Aspects of your account stir a familiar unease in me as similar experiences surface in my thoughts. I know what you mean by the unfinished, uncomfortable, felt lack. The thoughtfulness of your planning process was not seen. The care for multiplicity of ideas and the deliberate attempt to grow student thinking was identified as irresponsible.

Terry: Yes, all of those things you mention were troubling, but even more, I realized I was in the throes of a political struggle, one that made me afraid, in a way. One of my best friends is gay and an educator. What would this parent want to do if his daughter were in this class? Since there was no opportunity for dialogue with the girl or her father, an important medium for learning was severed. Such conversation is not only a means of interaction but also a relationship with participants and context, and the conversation was shut down or, perhaps, thwarted is more accurate, as we all knew we had wandered into uncomfortable territory and instead of pursuing the conversation, it was never going to happen.

Margaret: In theoretical terms, it is easy to talk of the significances of difficult learning conversations, the importance of plurality and natality, the integral role of grappling through discomfort and turmoil. But, the embeddedness of teachers' emotions in the conditions and interactions of their work (Hargreaves, 2001), and the lived consequences, are concrete realities that can present themselves with a suddenness that consumes, eradicating and eroding ways of living and being in classrooms.

Terry: Hargreave's (2001) notion of moral distance causing negative emotion came to life as my teaching purposes were threatened. Furthermore, as Hargreaves points out, the means to work through these differences of purpose were absent, and so, loose ends were all abandoned.

Margaret: The professional distance was trampled; the physical distance, increased.

Terry: Professionally, I found my self-understandings ignored with no space for expression and explanation. I never HAD to explain myself, but I never GOT to explain myself either. It seems my student's father must

think I am some kind of lunatic and should not be trusted to teach his child. I didn't get to talk this over with him so I could come to understand where his concern lay. Obviously, my student was in a bind and felt compelled to tell her dad that she *had* to read it, right? Or was she just too afraid to talk to me about it? Was he trying to protect her innocence? Does he think homosexuality is an abomination, or does he just not want his daughter reading a somewhat sexually explicit book? Does he think I am evil? Incompetent? Irresponsible? Has he told others in the community about this painting me in a bad light? The physical distancing of the student and the situation asked me to be pedagogically blind. I had so many questions that will never be answered because I have not talked to the girl, except to say hello to her if I happen to see her in the halls. I still have a very unsettled feeling about the whole thing.

I thought about writing her a letter explaining to her that I understood why she told her dad she had to read the book, and to tell her I am sorry she is not in my class anymore. I want to say that I am sorry that a book came between a student and teacher, because it wasn't worth that. Alas, I did not write it.

Margaret: The interaction was bound up with relations of power and powerlessness, permeated by emotional political distance.

Terry: As a teacher and as a human being, my interactions with my students and their parents mean so much to me. I am trying to establish my professional identity and integrity in this new school, and this very emotional and political experience could leave a lasting impression on my practice. Should I leave that book on my shelf at school? If I do the cultural study again, should I leave that book as a choice? What kind of access should students have to books in an English teacher's own collection? I often share and recommend books to my students; how much should I self-censor my political and moral beliefs? How much risk should I take? How much stamina do I have to navigate the "emotional geography?" Good teaching is.such personal investment.

Margaret: Your thinking points to the visibility of your identity in your teaching practices. And, our dialogue has made me very visible, cognizant of my self as a teacher educator.

Terry: I think our dialogue became a method of inquiry (Guilfoyle et al., 2004). The theorizing we engaged in articulates the risks and opportunities of such visibility for both of us. The emotional ebb and flow that moves in my life as a teacher is a given; I know that being "pulled up short" is a way of being in teaching and learning, but I find that through dialogue, teaching and learning events are articulated, analyzed, and

enlarged. I see, again and again, the significances of being in touch with self, context, and other(s) as an integral dynamic within the nature of teaching.

Margaret: A stronger professional identity is the outcome, but such strength is derived from a capacity to see/act with reciprocity, complexity, and humility, with the emotional geographies melding theory, practice, and ethics. Locating language giving expression to these teaching/learning interactions enhances professional practices and integrity realized as Dalmau and Gudjonsdottir (2002) term "professional theory": working theory extending beyond explanations for further actions to situating teacher identity in individual and collective professional action of the community (p.110).

Intonation 4:

The Pull of Possibilities-Mindfully Moving within Being "Pulled Up Short"

Experiencing the pull of possibilities in teaching/learning situations assumes teaching and learning are moving forces to be grappled with through deliberation and interaction. Many thinkers take up deliberation and interaction as the location of education (e.g. Biesta, 2004; Carr, 2000; Dunne, 1997; Meier, 1997; Noddings, 2004; Sidorkin, 2002). Biesta states that "It is not about the constituents of this relationship (i.e., the teacher and the learner) but about the relationality of the relationship"(p. 13). Therefore the locus of education lives in-between teacher and learner. Biesta terms such in-betweeness "mind the gap" and argues that this gap is not something to be overcome but indeed what makes education possible (p.13). It is within the gap that the pull of possibilities is first glimpsed and provokes panic to overcome, or, evokes a boldness to proceed with care. And, as Biesta points out the latter venture entails both "risk" and "opportunity" (p.24). It is this concern for the pull's agentic possibilities within teaching and learning (and life, for that matter) that characterizes Sarah, Sandy and Judith's mindfulness.

Sarah, Judith, & Sandy: The process of developing one's pedagogical identity is much like operating in poetic form where multiple dimensions of one's being—mind, soul, and body—allow for the pull of

possibilities to be experienced.   According to Bowman (2004), "*embodied accounts* construe mind as an activity emergent from, structured by, and never wholly separable from the material facts of bodily experience" (p. 36); therefore, we submit that the physicality of reflexivity be explored in greater depth. When we are at our finest, when we occupy our most humane spaces as thinkers, creators, educators, we contend that we live out poet W.S. Merwin's (2005) perpetual state of looking and listening since just as "a poem…. results from a sudden awakening of attention, when you perceive something that has always been there but that you have not really 'noticed'" (p.37), reflexivity dives into that which is routine, familiar with new eyes and ears and voice. Seeking luminosity from the familiar is akin to poet Ted Kooser's (2005) observance of the poetic eye as one that becomes a "prism-like kaleidoscope held against the familiar, seeking strands of extraordinary" (personal communication, 06/08/05).   Moving through the continuum of pedagogical development, we observe the necessity for Kooser's pause—for considering each "shard of color," to extend the metaphor, in hopes of better understanding its center, the convergence on our lives amidst inquiry and change.

Kirk (2005) says "the self is a starting point for professional and academic development, the place from which to identify what it is I want and need to do, and the place from where I can start to do that better" (p. 240). Reflexivity starts with self, but involves the other significantly. Reflexivity entails clearly paying attention to the other, whatever that other is: other ideas, other thinkers, other images, *other*—then bringing it back to bear on one's own thinking. Recognizing the physical role in reflexivity—in holding the prism to the familiar to seek the extraordinary, we have each spent the space of an hour attuned to the physicality of reflexivity—a slice of time in public education, doctoral studies, and musical rehearsal—attuned to the eye, the ear, and the voice. What such attunement stirs spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, mindfully moving within Gadamer's notion of "being pulled up short", are recalled through Sarah's eyes, Sandy's ears, and Judith's voice.

Sarah- Physicality of Self Study: The Eye
As I write, I examine the strewn books stacked next to my computer monitor—the most striking image depicts two identical but opposite-facing images of a black woman crouching, holding her knees in silhouette, shaved

head bowed and beautiful—a body in sculpture set atop an expanse of trees. Juxtaposed, the identical

profiles half-shadowed appear as a single butterfly—Yvonne Vera's (2000) novel, Butterfly Burning, a story of

a young woman navigating her way through life within an African township in Zimbabwe.

I imagine, as educators, the possible transference of such imagery. I prop the book and walk a few feet from

it—as suspected, the composite image becomes mostly shadow, the butterfly shaping accented. In ways,

this is universal human form—a posture of reverent humility—a strength that comes from taking hold of the

self before an eruption of faith, of flight. At times this recurring physicality I embody or hold before me as an

aspiration feels crushed by the constancy of both milling through details and moving among one hundred

students daily as a part-time educator and doctoral student.

In reflexivity moments of suspension restore the integrity of Vera's silhouetted image. Such suspended

episodes open up possibility for Bruner's (1979) "effective surprise," moments of epiphany where "the

unexpected…strikes one with wonder or astonishment…it need not be rare or infrequent or bizarre and is

often none of these things…. they rather have the quality of obviousness about them when they occur,

producing shock of recognition following which there is astonishment" (p. 18). Considering what incites such

abrupt convergences, the insights yielded often find linkage with both the tactile and visual senses. The

carefully discerning eye led by intentional hands are inseparable forces moving and at once centering the

intellectual, spiritual and emotional strands that easily entwine chaotically as educators move through

multiplicity. (Dewey, 1938; Eisner, 1991; Macintyre Latta, 2001) When I attempt to re-locate Vera's image

that more often feels ideal rather than realized, I engage the visual and tactile symbiosis. Images of paradox,

tensions, and beauties awaken my need to engage my pedagogical identity with greater immersed

physicality.

 I return to my writing life, participate in visual art processes with students to better attune myself with their

learning experience. Something as simple and yet profound with implication as assembling a new classroom

space with tapestries, a gallery of student and personal artwork, rope lights enclosing the borders of bulletin

boards and bookcases, a lemonade stand located at the entry of the classroom next to a newly bought and

assembled "poetry shrine" creates space for my dynamic need to grow in this profession—to realize the aesthetic in all aspects of my relationship with students.   These movements of eye and hand navigating creative projects become ways of re-turning, re-entering the flow of possibility and, ultimately, restoration.

Sandy--The Physicality of Self Study: The Ear

Recently a dozen doctoral students came together for the sole purpose of discussing papers I had written to provide a "mock oral examination" for me just before the real thing two weeks later. As I listened and processed their questions, concerns, and suggestions I began to realize that I was engaged in the reflexive practice inherent within self-study. Kubler LaBoskey (2004) explained that in their self-study they had been "engaged in critical reflection and that we were transforming our thinking and our practice" (p. 135). As I listened to these fellow students participate in the discussion, I began to realize that my thoughts concerning the potential and direction of my research were slowly evolving. Putting this into the terms of the physicality of self-study, the ear, along with the auditory processing system, is a gateway to reflexivity.

As I listened to the conversation concerning my research that day, I was cognizant of the fact that the conversation was of extreme importance to me. I listened carefully to each comment, trying to process not only what I was hearing but also what it might mean for my research. Occasionally as others engaged in conversation across the table, I recognized ease in their tone that I did not feel personally. I was tuned into every comment, concern, or question. But the listening did not stop when the session ended. I had made a tape of the conversation, a tape to which I listened nearly a dozen times over the next two weeks—hearing new things each time.

Each person in that room that day had different ideas and thoughts concerning the papers I had written. Each brought a unique perspective filtered through a unique set of experiences. Sharing those perspectives and experiences, gave me opportunity to listen, process, and bring it back to bear on my own thinking. The possibilities were increased by each participant and by combinations of participants. I was forced to firm up what I believed about my research, but I was also privileged to reevaluate and to change direction as I experienced that self understanding necessitates attending to the other. As a result I entered the "real thing"

two weeks later more confident in what I believed *and* more willing to engage in conversation with other**(s)** and come away changed—to listen to *other* and discover the possibilities in self.

Judith--The Physicality of Self Study: The Voice

The lines of empty pews stand before me, shoulder to shoulder, my audience, for now. The introductory music briefly suspends itself amidst the rafters, dancing from beam to beam before floating downward, searching for a voice to mate itself with. Mine is that voice, and she begins. The moment is captured, the music is absorbed, and the voice sings, line-by-line, verse-by-verse.

The journey of my voice on that day in that church was intimately engaged in a sort of reflexive interpretation at several levels: contact with the language, awareness of the act of interpretation, and connection with the other "voices" providing feedback. My voice engaged in open play for the sake of reflection at various levels of interpretation, all the while striving for a rich musical experience embracing sound, rhythm, and emotion. Just such an experience is complimented by Alvesson and Skoldberg (2000) who suggest this with their double meaning of 'reflexive' in that the "levels are reflected in one another" (p. 248). Thus, reflexivity is such that interpretations are constructed with a multi-dimensional perspective that values the consideration of the interpretive character of all levels. Steedman (1991) clarifies "nothing means anything on its own. Meaning comes not from seeing or even observation alone, for there is no 'alone' of this sort. Neither is meaning lying around in nature waiting to be scooped up by the senses; rather it is constructed. 'Constructed' in this context means produced in acts of interpretation" (p. 246).

The voice of which I have spoken experienced the complex construction of interpretations by valuing the relationship that exists between the process of producing music and the various dimensions of such a process, all the while conscious of the involvement of the voice herself. Gergen and Gergen (1991) maintain, "The reflexive attempt is thus relational. . .. to invite the expression of alternative voices or perspectives into one's activities" (p. 243). Kirk (2005) validates this assertion by suggesting that "the praxis of reflexivity . . . includes a sustained attention to the positions in which I place myself and am placed by others, a listening to and acknowledging of inner voices…"(p.233)

Sarah, Judith, & Sandy: Surrendering to Reflexivity's Pull

Recovering the living landscape that Sarah, Judith and Sandy are corporeally and sensorially embedded within is mediated through the eyes, the ears, the voice; manifested through silence, gesture, example, milieu, and speech. Quieting the self in order to glean significance within the particulars is an integral feature of an educator's identity development, a core element of reflexivity. Insularity provides a meditative and transcendent possibility for pedagogical vision. In tandem with this reflective practice of culling out and discerning "luminosity" within our practices is the seeking of community to explore these individualized meanings. In the midst of an epic amount of interior work that takes place as a teacher/scholar, we necessarily seek input that supports, echoes, and productively interrogates our projects.

Naturally, within Kerdeman's (2003) interpretation of Gadamer (1964), this process is uncomfortable at best because within such an episode is "bound up with who I am and where I am headed, a process of ongoing moral negotiation with oneself, [involving] application and ultimately self-understanding" (p. 295). In referencing Gadamer, Kerdeman addresses this essential dissonance by concluding that amidst our innate and unyielding need to categorize and operationalize our perceptions/assumptions, "the world departs from our expectations and desires, refuses to be appropriated by us or subjected to our categories. A degree of tension always exists between what we believe, see and hope and that which happens despite our expectations and preparation" (p. 295).

This is why we surrender—allow ourselves to engage in a process wherein we likely will be "pulled up short" via the insularity of private reflection alongside a community of intensive interactions with professional peers. What we are calling for is greater attunement so that this kind of authentic participation occurs more frequently and thus, influences a fuller bodied response to the humility required of teaching. For reflexivity to become indelibly operational, the educator occupies a state of paradox: a place of being "pulled up short" leading to vulnerability and the pull of possibilities.

The Individual/Collective Movement:

There is a felt personal worthiness permeating across and through all accounts, revealing particularities of the risks and opportunities of self-study. The issues identified by Kelchtermans and Hamilton (2004) of "the relationship between the individual and the collective in the process and position of outcomes, the content of the knowledge produced, and the ways to, and the consequences for, that knowledge production" (p. 785) enable us to articulate the movement created. The active intonations enunciate the ensuing intersections of professional knowledge, teacher education, and "the ways self-study research might strengthen that relationship" (Hamilton, 2004, p. 375). Vulnerability, the greater cognizance of values, beliefs, and assumptions in self and others, and the ensuing tensions, relations, pulls, and possibilities, give collective expression to teaching selves demanding that "to be a teacher…requires that [we] face our teacher, which is the world as it comes to meet [us] in all of its variation, complexity, and simplicity" (Smith, 1996, p.11). Indeed, our intonations reveal such meetings pulling each of us up short. Repeatedly turning back on self is the necessary turn we have all taken. In doing so, it asks us to see fundamentally what is at stake within teaching/learning situations, encountering ourselves and our relations to others/otherness. Bringing thinking, feeling, seeing, acting, into pedagogical relationships leads us to the body as the ground of all sense-making. Bowman (2004) clarifies, "…knowing is inseparable from action: Knowing is doing, and always bears the body's imprint"(p.46). The imprints our intonations recall form the sensible ground occupied with bringing meaning to being. Bowman continues, "Knowing in any humanly meaningful sense is emergent from and grounded in bodily experience and continuous with the cultural production of meaning" (p.48). Within this movement, attention is called to process—how one is creating meaning and being created. The active intonations document that daring to examine ourselves and the sense we are making demands "falling into trust"(Gottlieb, 2004) with the body's role in teaching and learning. "Not the body as a

chunk of space or a bundle of functions but that body which is an intertwining of vision and movement" (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p. 283). It seems that this intertwining relationship is the place where the conjuncture must be experienced as a "sensible thing"-holding together of itself cohering into things, embodying within it a unity of sense (Merleau-Ponty, 1968). Indeed, the intonations reverberate through our bodies causing each of us to pause, living with the felt experience, exploring the reverberations, the movement forward, backward, and in place. As practicing educators we are aware that there is much in our day-to-day practices that robs teaching/learning of such bodily participatory engagement. Self-studies opportunity to attend to these bodily imprints embraces the contingencies of a becoming self, disclosing the pursuit of greater self-understanding as the long overdue return to the work of learning.

The Individual/Collective "Afterplace":

The process character of the interrelated and interdependent intonations lead the self study group collectively to embodiment as a compelling "afterplace" to rethink the nature of professional development in teaching and learning. Merleau-Ponty (1968) refers to embodiment as the fundamental reversibility experienced through one's body, "the fabric, into which all objects are woven, and it is, at least in relation to the perceived word, the general instrument of my comprehension" (p.235). Current teacher education literature increasingly confronts many of the dimensions we raise, but avoids identifying embodiment as the means of comprehension. For example, Kessels and Korthagen (1996; 1999; 2001) both link theory and practice through perception and reflection. Cochran-Smith (2001) calls for keeping complex relational understandings integral to learners and learning and Gallego et al. (2001) establishes the need to develop opportunities for teachers and teacher educators to develop this capacity within themselves in order to effect it in others. Munby et al. (2002) states that the nature and development of that knowledge is only beginning to be understood by the present generation of

researchers in teaching and teacher education. Hiebert et al. (2002) points out that professional knowledge requires means for verification and improvement. Many document that the process character in professional development has been neglected and have begun to examine how effective change can occur through professional development (e.g. Darling-Hammond, 1997; Fullan, 2000; Garet, et al. 2001; Hargreaves, 1998; Leiberman, 1996; Loughran, et al., 2002; Richardson & P. Placier, 2001; and Russell, 1999). Teacher content knowledge is a key feature identified as being overlooked, with researchers arguing that teachers lack strong content-specific teaching skills that constrain effective practices (e.g. Hiebert, Gallimore, & Stigler, 2002; Kennedy, 1999; Reynolds, 1995; Rhine, 1998; and Snow, 2001). The body's role in teaching and learning is not foregrounded in this cross section of examples, but the intonations the self-study group encounters suggest our bodies very much undergird these acts of perception and reflection, the capacities to see relational complexities and effect change, and deepen content knowledge. The intonations confronting vulnerability, seeking accountability to self, negotiating theory as working notions, and experiencing the pull of possibilities, reveal the power of our bodies to form and inform self and other(s). And yet, the body's role within teaching and learning continues to be marginalized, perhaps feared. Dewey (1934) in fact drew attention to this disregard for the body suggesting that it is indeed "fear of what life may bring forth" that perpetuates this subservient role of the body (p.22).

Current teacher education scholarship reflects a growing interest in topics closely related to the body such as passion (e.g. Day, 2004), emotion (e.g. Hargreaves, 2001), ideological becoming (Ball & Warshauer Freedman, 2004), reflection (e.g. Clark, 1995; Newman, 1998; Wells, 2001), narrative inquiry (e.g. Lyons et al., 2002; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Ritchie & Wilson, 2002), the moral dimension (Hansen, 2001), and a wealth of important work under the umbrellas of self-study of teacher education practices (e.g. Loughran, et al., 2004; Samaras, 2002) and arts-based

educational research (e.g. Barone, 2001; Barone & Eisner, 1997; Bresler, 2004; Finley, 2005; Garonian, 1999). Hager (2005) portrays an emerging understanding of learning as "a holistic, integrative emphasis that aims to avoid dualisms such as mind/body, theory/practice, pure/applied, education/training, intrinsic/instrumental, internal/external, learner/world, knowing that/knowing how, process/product, and so on"(p.663). This overview of current work surfaces aspects of embodiment, reorienting to the very "flesh" of learning, assuming a self wholly involved as participator, bringing thinking, feeling, seeing, and acting into a vital relationship.   Merleau-Ponty (1964) sought out this notion of "flesh" as a medium to circumvent the persistent problems of mind/body dualisms dominating history of Western philosophy. And, it is Merleau-Ponty's notion of "flesh" that coheres the body of our search across the individual/collective movement the self-study group initiates and sustains. Flesh returns learning to the self. This turning back to self is the expression of embodied understandings. Such attention to "moving minds" is the work of embodied teaching and learning (Bresler, 2004).

Educators must have intimate experience with embodied teaching/learning practices in order to foster like experiences in their students. As such, deliberate attention to the embodiment of theory/practice relations might be one means to address the call for wider relevance of teacher education research (Clift, 2004; Clift & Brady, 2005), reaching beyond the particularities of individuals and specific contexts. Examining the consequences across teacher education programs and ongoing professional development initiatives purposefully emphasizing a pedagogy of embodiment, may be a means to document the development of teaching/learning practices over time. In particular, it may provide an operative construct to address the conclusions reached by Clift & Brady (2005) specific to teacher education coursework noting the needs to evidence the impact(s) of methods courses and field experiences on prospective and practicing teachers, to distinguish the interrelationships between teaching/learning beliefs and actions, and to enable the

translation of theory/practice relations (p. 331). Very importantly, embodiment may be a medium offering much needed connections (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005) across teacher characteristics, teacher education, teacher learning, and teacher practice, more broadly. Horn and Wilburn (2005) explain that embodied learning regards *information* "as both noun and verb, an artifact that cannot be separated from the act that made it so" (p. 755). Referencing Varela's (1979) consideration of the etymological origins of information as *in-formance*, to form with, Horn and Wilburn convey embodiment as the sensible ground occupied with forming connections. Our self-study reveals the role and place of the body within teacher education as the "afterplace", holding implications for connected professional development knowledge, empowering teachers, fostering the work of learning.

We seize the "fuzziness" along with the "precision" of this moment to pull common understandings. All educators in the self-study voice that it is working with (rather than against) human beings fundamental reciprocity that holds implications for learning in multiple contexts. The ensuing reciprocal interaction and modification holds the significances as educators negotiate the learning situations they meet and the lived interpretations with learners. Individually and collectively passionate involvement is instilled and re-instilled, increasingly articulating why one orients teaching/learning practices in particular ways. This is what is so desperately missing from the language and practices of educational "fixes". These fixes tend to undermine teacher and student participation in the learning process. Bakhtin's (1993) principle of "no alibi" in existence cuts to the core of the issue. If participatory thinking is not an expectation, Bakhtin states, "In that world I am unnecessary; I am essentially and fundamentally non-existent in it"(p. 9). "Fixes" encourage such teacher (and student) alibis. Fixes sustain such alibis because they foster indifference. As Bakhtin clarifies, "A life lived on the tacit basis of my alibi in Being falls away into indifferent Being that is not rooted in anything"(p. 43). Self-study as a professional development movement entrusts the

work of learning to teachers and their students rooted in self-involvement. Educator professional

development can be evoked and nurtured, derived out of individual/collective involvement entailing

no alibi in existence. It seems that such connectedness is fundamental to what it means to be

human. To disregard the potential power of embodied teaching is inhuman, undermining teachers,

and undermining the inherent risks and opportunities of what it means to educate. The

consequences matter to (our)selves.

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