

PERCEPTIONS OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND
SURVEILLANCE THROUGH HIGH-STAKES TESTING
ON ELEMENTARY TEACHERS' PEDAGOGICAL
DECISIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

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PERCEPTIONS OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS
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SURVEILLANCE THROUGH HIGH-STAKES TESTING

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The examination combines the techniques of an observing hierarchy and those of a normalizing judgment.

It is a normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify and to punish. It establishes over individuals a visibility through which one differentiates them and judges them.

Michel Foucault.

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 has contributed to a debate among all sectors of society. When I retired from public education, NCLB had been in effect for two years and my fervent hope was that I would not have to deal with this contentious federal law ever again. However, my desire to teach led me to teacher education at a local university, where the debate continues with preservice teachers, classroom teachers, administrators and professors.

Overview of the Issues

High-stakes testing and accountability, a result of the federally mandated No Child Left Behind Act (2001), is a form of the examination of which Foucault (1977/1995) speaks. This examination has made it possible for a system of surveillance to qualify, classify, and to ultimately punish schools based on the results of testing. The results of these tests are then published and scrutinized, ultimately holding the teacher accountable for the quantification of student learning. Foucault's (1977/1995) study of

discipline, surveillance, and normalization in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* is useful for studying the effects of a technical rationality sponsored by NCLB in education, how it has become possible for government to infiltrate the culture of school to the degree that is seen today, and the extent to which teachers find themselves in a space of subjugation to multiple stakeholders in education.

According to Foucault (1977,1995), the disciplinary mechanisms of the institution of school and anonymous powers who seek control of individuals do so to normalize the student and teacher, creating docile bodies. Also, Foucault's theory of institutional, normalizing mechanisms of power and control through space, time, and movement can be helpful in analyzing how elementary teachers perceive changes in their pedagogical practices in the classroom. A more thorough review of Foucault's theories will be included in Chapter II.

With the passage of NCLB, according to Pignatelli (2002), teachers currently find themselves mired in the:

promise of progress driven by a technical rationality; that is, a way of operating in the service of others marked by narrowness of purpose, inflexible systems of accountability, increasingly more efficient, but restrictive modes of surveillance, and top-down mandates decoupled from local histories and particular struggles; indeed, a way of thinking about making progress which increasingly drives the dominant stream of educational leadership and school reform. (p. 159)

The confluence of a technical rationality forced on educators assumes that teachers' practices are in need of repair according to the mandates of NCLB, which is the latest reform, among many in the last century that have led to a common belief that teachers are

not to be trusted and are in need of regulation. A by-product of this belief is an environment in the classroom which diminishes the attempt by teachers to work within a social democratic process of teaching.

In conversations with colleagues, former teachers, student teachers, and even strangers, the dialogue concerning the recent trend of teaching to a high-stakes test that narrows the curriculum to test taking strategies and attempts to place teachers in a marginalized space are revealing and powerful. These informal conversations begin to weave a common thread through the fabric of education. The following conversations are offered in an effort to illustrate how the power of NCLB infiltrates the dialogue of ordinary citizens regarding education in present-day discourse.

1. *A fifth grade teacher at a high-performing elementary school relates that her principal, via the superintendent, has suggested that she and the other teachers focus on math and reading to the exclusion of science and social studies as math and reading are used to measure performance. She worries about the effects of this narrowing of the curriculum on student learning.*

2. *While riding in a shuttle from the Dallas- Fort Worth airport to a hotel hosting the annual meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators, the driver talks about his fifth and seventh grade children who attend public school. He is enthusiastic as he talks about his support of his children's teachers as caring and doing a great job but that they are only teaching to a test. This driver is sympathetic to the teacher's plight. He states that he supports teachers and understands the constraints that they are under in order for students to pass the test. However, he also takes the initiative to supplement his children's education by working with them at home on skills he believes are missing in*

the curriculum. Digging around in the cluttered mass of papers and books on the floor at the front of the van, he pulls out the book; Math Doesn't Suck, by Danica McKellar, a young actress that addresses the subject of math for middle school girls. He explains that he wants more for his daughter than what is being offered in a test-driven curriculum. He complains that his seventh grade son is working at a slow pace on fractions and at home he works with his son on higher level math concepts. Obviously, this father is committed, involved in his children's school, and he has compassion for the teachers caught in the web of high-stakes testing. He further expounded on his respect for teachers who constantly use their own funds to supplement what is needed in the classroom. I was astounded by this man's knowledge of how the culture of school is driven by the need to make sure students pass a test.

3. A novice first grade teacher of three years states that she might well leave teaching because she is weary of teaching first graders how to take a test. She shares that she is not employing pedagogical practices learned at her university that creates a classroom of creativity, fun, and the possibilities of making learning relevant for her first graders.

4. A student teacher complains that her cooperating teacher will not allow her to deviate from the scripted math and reading programs used in the classroom. She is frustrated that she is unable to put into practice a constructivist approach to learning that was part of her university methods courses. She also states that the math and reading curriculum are boring and that the students are bored.

5. *A non-traditional preservice teacher complains that his first grade daughter is allowed only one recess per day. He is told that more classroom time is needed so that students can be prepared for the end-of-year test.*

Statement of the Problem

As a doctoral student pursuing studies in curriculum and social foundations, I became acutely aware of my apparent lack of understanding of the political, social, cultural, and economic role of power in the culture of school during my three plus decades as an educator. As I struggle with my position of (re)living past experiences in education through a radically different lens, I am led to an examination of the institution of school, curriculum, pedagogical practices, and how power and knowledge circulate through the institution of schooling. Admittedly, I was an uncritical educator. Too busy and too focused on intuitive pedagogical instinct that serves teachers, I simply closed my classroom door to the perpetual and seemingly never-ending parade of reforms aimed at “fixing” education. I am guilty of allowing the system to silence the voices of reason regarding education.

No Child Left Behind was signed into law by President George W. Bush on January 8, 2002. According to Hursh (2007) the political process that allowed the overwhelming passage of this law signifies a move from a social democratic educational society to that of federal control over the culture of school. As schools struggle to maintain the Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) mandated by the federal government via NCLB, teachers have increasingly taken on more duties, altered pedagogies, and have

been subjected to the dictates of those in power at the state, local, and federal government aimed at raising student test scores.

Today, the battle of fighting off the power of school reform by the federal government cannot be won by closing a door. NCLB demands that the doors stay open to a system of surveillance that tracks curriculum choices and pedagogical practice. As this practice continues, I seek to know how teachers in the technical rationality of the school climate of accountability, high-stakes testing, and surveillance negotiate their way through such issues of power, autonomy, democracy, and the freedom to make decisions that exist in the profession of teaching.

School reform in the twenty-first century, through NCLB, has set the stage for the current premise of externally imposed teacher accountability which places elementary teachers, in particular, in a space that denies them the opportunity to employ pedagogical decisions with a sense of professionalism and autonomy. Paradoxically, NCLB, in its expectations of reforming education based on a punitive system to punish schools and “inadequate” teachers, has also constricted those teachers who were already teaching with a sense of purpose and pride. These teachers were relatively free to employ pedagogical decisions based on best practices and employing some autonomy in curriculum decisions before NCLB. While it is assumed that there are “bad apples” in the profession that need investigation by local districts, I suggest that we are losing sight of those who were already doing a great job, and could do an even better job in the absence of inappropriately constricting regulatory structures (Bushnell, 2003).

According to prior related studies and a review of literature, No Child Left Behind with its mandates has profoundly affected the culture of school, the way teachers teach,

and the manner in which students are taught. Scripted programs, limited access to recess, programs designed to master facts for a test, and a feeling of the loss of control over the democratic and social process of schooling pervades our nation's schools. For the first time in the history of education and curriculum of public schools, the government has infiltrated in such a way that there is little escape by closing a door to the mandates. There now exist areas of schooling that are quantified, surveyed, and managed by a power that is outside the control of teachers and schools. NCLB has reduced education to the ultimate form of a technical rationality that limits the democratic process of schooling for all involved.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

During the 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 school term, I was teaching in a small K-5 elementary school in Northeast Oklahoma. Most of the monthly faculty meetings held at this school where I was teaching were devoted to conversations and "dictates" about a new piece of legislation called No Child Left Behind. Much of the discussion was met with a rolling of the eyes and "here we go again." My colleagues and I snickered at the statement: Every third grade child will read at a third-grade level with 100% proficiency by the year 2014. Having weathered school reform after school reform, we wondered who might actually make such an illogical statement and how did that relate to our everyday practices in the classroom? We had never considered leaving a child behind.

We were not laughing when our baseline data was set for the 2002-2003 school year. As this school was a high-performing school, the baseline data was set according to previous years' scores on standardized tests. This left little room to account for any

variance in scores that might have more to do with individual students, parental involvement, and other factors of a particular classroom. A dip below the baseline data could potentially place this high-performing school “at risk.” Thus began the journey of devoting more time to test-taking strategies and less to critical and constructivist classroom pedagogy. NCLB was the last so called school reform that I was to be a part of during my tenure as an elementary teacher. Admittedly, after more than three decades of a successful teaching career, I jumped ship and retired, thinking that once and for all I could dismiss the madness of NCLB.

Nonetheless, I find myself mired in the hotly contested debate of NCLB. It is ever present in the dialogue of preparing future teachers and in the courses taken during my doctoral studies. It fills the conversation with other teachers. The rhetoric of this piece of legislation brings on a sense of helplessness, oppression, silence, and anger among educators. McLaren (2007) states, “This punitive test-driven ‘reform’ puts inordinate pressure on teachers to teach to the test—to narrow their focus on what subjects should be taught and what themes and topics should be addressed” (p. 39). As tests become the focus of curriculum, denying pedagogical approaches to teaching critically, it appears that an approach to schooling as a means of a democratic social life is diminished.

This study seeks to give a voice to elementary teachers who are affected by school reform, caught in the power of being normalized through accountability mechanisms, and surveillance. This study has developed out of the literature on the effects of accountability, high-stakes testing, and surveillance of teachers in today’s schools and

addresses the exercise of power through the federal legislation of NCLB and its effect on the daily practices of elementary teachers, their curricular choices, and job satisfaction.

Teacher Image

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2006) critique the language of NCLB and assert that its “mandates and definitions, coupled with its explicit accountability procedures and penalties, are overtaking practice and policy related to virtually every aspect of teaching” (p.669). This can be seen in the daily practices of classroom teachers as they struggle to overcome the daily grind of teaching to a test and still maintain the image of a professional. Cochran-Smith and Lytle defines the term ‘images’ “to mean central common conceptions that are symbolic of basic attitudes and orientations to teaching and learning” (p.670) and maintain that the language of NCLB offers a troubling image of teaching. This problem of teacher image implied by the text of NCLB, high-stakes accountability, externally imposed mandates and the surveillance of those in power over teachers’ decisions regarding how to teach and what to teach begs for an in-depth look at this phenomenon within the culture of teaching.

Accountability and Surveillance

Educational accountability in the United States, in the twenty-first century, has taken center-stage as the ultimate form of punishment of educators through a network of surveillance. The teacher is now caught up in a culture of politics where the technical rationality of teaching to a high-stakes standardized test results in an oppressive atmosphere of accountability in the form of surveillance by the federal government. Foucault (1977/1995) names surveillance as one technique of power. Surveillance in the form of federally-mandated high-stakes accountability allows multiple stake-holders in

education to monitor teachers. Although surveillance is not a new idea, the present surveillance of teachers as a punitive form of accountability has placed educators in a culture of extreme visibility.

Teacher Voice

Teaching as a vocation is troubled by the notion of a “feminized occupation.” Inherent within this sphere is the marginalization of the feminine voice and “a silence regarding how teachers and students produce and reconstruct meaning in everyday life” (McLaren, 2007, p. 243). The current culture of teaching under the restraints of NCLB disables the voices of teachers as they struggle in their everyday practices of teaching to a test. The lack of voice in teaching is hidden behind the weight-bearing processes of accountability, surveillance, and teaching to a test. Giroux’s (1988) concept of voice refers to the multifaceted and interlocking set of meanings through which students and teachers actively engage in dialogue with one another. Under NCLB, teachers often find themselves in a culture of silence, without a voice to oppose constricting mandates that keep them in a system of oppression by means of regulating what and how they teach. This research study offers a space for the voices of teachers.

Research Question

This research study examined the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) and its intended and unintended consequences of accountability, high stakes testing, and surveillance on the practices of elementary teachers and their pedagogical decisions in the classroom. This study was organized around 1) how elementary teachers perceive the

tenets of NCLB, accountability, high stakes testing, and surveillance, and 2) how disciplinary technologies have altered pedagogical practice in the classroom.

Conceptual Framework

As a part of my graduate studies, I was introduced to the works of such critical theorists and poststructuralists as Foucault, Giroux, Apple, McLaren, Freire, Noddings, Slattery, Sirtonik, and many others who have led me on a rather reluctant journey of the processes of meaning-making through a cultural, social, political, and economic view of the institution of school as a place of power and knowledge and how these circle around, in, and through the enclosure.

Critical theory, as a way to call ideology into question and initiate action in the case of social justice, can keep the spotlight on power relationships within society so as to expose the forces of hegemony and injustice (Crotty, 2004). Allowing researchers and participants to open themselves to new ways of understanding offers the possibility to take effective action for change. School, as a socially-constructed, political, and economic institution, is inescapably tied to power relationships.

According to Patton (2002), “critical theory belongs to orientational qualitative inquiry, which begins with an explicit theoretical or ideological perspective that determines what conceptual framework will direct fieldwork and the interpretations of findings” (p. 129). The term *critical* refers to the “detecting and unmasking of beliefs and practices that limit human freedom, justice, and democracy” (Usher, 1996, p. 22).

Curriculum inquiry, according to Sirtonik (1991) is not a trivial issue:

What do teachers make of standardized test scores? What meanings are attached to these scores by teachers, administrators, parents, students, legislators, corporate executives, and others? ... How is the theory and practice of accountability function and/or dysfunction in public education at school, district, state, and national levels? (p. 244)

Sirotnik further describes critical inquiry as a process of informed reflection and action that is dialectical in nature where human discourse and action play out through the inquiry process. “My particular construction is ... to bring some of the concepts of critical theory to the level of critical practice in public schooling, such that educators become consciously and actively involved in their own processes of school improvement and evaluation” (p. 245).

Lather (2004), asserts that “critical inquiry views techniques for gathering empirical evidence and methodology, the theory of knowledge and the interpretive framework that guide a particular research project—as inescapably tied to issues of power” (p.208). Through a process of advocacy and scholarship new ways of generating ways of knowing can begin to interrupt power imbalances.

Overview of the Study Design

The purpose of this study was to determine how the pedagogical practices of elementary teachers have been altered by the mandates of NCLB, as well as how these teachers perceive accountability, high-stakes testing, surveillance, and normalization. During a one year period, this study focused on the narrative inquiry of six elementary teachers, drawn from two Midwestern cities in two different states. The participants

included elementary teachers in a fourth, fifth, first, and third grade in one district in a Midwestern state. In another Midwestern state, the participants included a fourth grade teacher in one school district and a third grade teacher in a neighboring school district.

Researcher Position

I must acknowledge my position as a researcher. I have extensive knowledge of elementary education and the role of a teacher in a classroom. It was nearly impossible to keep any bias I might harbor against NCLB in my research. Critical theory coupled with narrative inquiry demanded that I take a stance on the issue. During the teacher interviews, I made a conscious effort to listen to the stories without infusing bias into the questions and stories. However, I did not account for the questions by the interviewees regarding my understanding, thoughts, and feelings about NCLB. There were instances when I could not deny personal feelings as the participants were curious about my work with NCLB and my opinions regarding the law. At times, the researcher became the researched. This is a part of qualitative research, particularly known in the methodology of narrative inquiry. My identity as an elementary teacher related to my researcher subjectivity and it was inevitable that my identity was a part of the study.

Limitations of the Study

Qualitative research, specifically narrative inquiry, allows the reader to enter the world that is studied. In this case, that is the world of the elementary teacher. Limitations that pertained to this study include: 1) The impact of the researcher on the researched; 2) small sample size; 3) researcher bias; 4) the purposive sampling procedure

decreases the generalizing to all areas of elementary teaching; and 5) the findings could be subject to other interpretations.

Summary

Chapter I outlines the need for this particular study of NCLB, an overview of the issues, a statement of the problem, purpose and signification of the study, research question, a conceptual framework for the study, an overview of the study design, researcher position and limitations of the study. It is important to end this chapter with a twist in my research. Before this research study was completed, the federal government has begun a reauthorization of NCLB as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the original title of the 1965 Act which increased the federal government's involvement in public education. This reauthorization is being debated and as of yet has not moved forward to hearings or any legislative action. Regardless of what becomes of this new proposal, the legacy and imprint of a flawed law that has been in effect for nearly ten years will remain a part of public education and will more than likely be debated at length by educational researchers as a part of curriculum history. There is little reason to believe that a different name and changes in the language of the new document will hinder the *sciencitization* of education by those in power. It is doubtful that the federal government will alter its power on the everyday lives of students, teachers, administrators, and those involved in all aspects of public education. Further research and an explanation of this twist in my research will be included in Chapter II.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

You teach a child to read, and he or her will be able to pass a literacy test.
George W. Bush, February 21, 2001

Chapter I established the need to research the consequences of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) on the everyday practices of teachers in an elementary classroom. NCLB is the latest piece of legislation that has allowed the federal government a greater involvement in state and local control of education. Chapter II provides a historical summary of school reform and federal education policy from 1958 to 2001 including the National Defense Education Act of 1958 (NDEA), the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), the National Commission on Educational Excellence in 1983, and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). This literature review provides an overview of the major tenets of NCLB.

During the course of this research, President Barack Obama was elected President of the United States in 2008. While NCLB was scheduled to be reauthorized in 2007, President George W. Bush left it intact during his last year of office. Consequently, during President Obama's first two years as President the reauthorization of NCLB has begun. The United States Department of Education, headed by Secretary Arne Duncan, released a forty-one page document titled "A Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the

of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act” in March 2010. This review of literature provides an overview of this new proposed educational reform. Chapter II also presents an analysis of Foucault’s book, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1977/1995) and his disciplinary mechanisms as they relate to the institution of school and NCLB. Lastly, related literature by researchers on the philosophical implications of NCLB is reviewed.

Historical Precedents for Federal Involvement in Education

The National Defense Education Act of 1958

In the United States, there is a strong tradition of state, local, and democratic control in the practice of public schooling. According to Anderson (2007) ample precedent for federal school aid existed before the 1950s; however, that decade marked an important shift in the perception of schools as legitimate avenues for solving national problems. The beginning of the reform movement of school curriculum in the United States is commonly identified with the successful launching of the first Russian satellite, Sputnik I, on October 4, 1957 (Garber, 2003). As Ellis (2007) states this event marked a change in education forever and it also brought forth a perceived need for the federal government to involve itself in educational curricula. After this event, critics reasoned that America lagged behind the Soviet Union in the space and arms race because of the schools’ failure to produce scientists, mathematicians, and high-level technicians. Politicians, academicians, and military men argued that the Soviet’s satellite success cast doubt on the quality of the American education system.

Three weeks after the first Sputnik launch, Representative Carl A. Elliott (D-AL), member of the House Committee on Education and Labor, (as cited in Anderson 2007), spoke at an NDEA field hearing on October 28, 1957:

Our very survival depends, I believe, in maintaining the technical superiority of the free world over that of the Communist world, and to maintain that superiority depends largely upon our having enough scientific, engineering, and other technical and professional people with enough training of sufficient quality to outthink and outproduce the Russians. Some have termed this struggle between communism and the free world as the war of the classroom. (p. 42)

Even though some congressional members expressed concern over federal aid involvement into the arena of education, and others questioned the narrowed focus on math, science, and foreign language that did not define a well-balanced, educated citizen, the majority of the Congress felt the fear and perceived crisis brought on by Sputnik.

In response to the perceived lack of academic rigor in public schools, The National Defense Act of 1958 was enacted. The language of Public Law 85-864 speaks to the culture of crisis and fear:

AN ACT - To strengthen the national defense and to encourage and assist in the expansion and improvement of education programs to meet critical national needs, and for other purposes. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, that this Act, divided into titles and sections ... may be cited as the National Defense Education Act of 1958. (pp. 1580-1581)

Hofstadter (1962) states, “The post-Sputnik educational atmosphere has quickened the activities of those who demand more educational rigor, who can now argue that we are engaged in mortal educational combat with the Soviet Union” (p. 358). The NDEA act authorized an unprecedented federal involvement in the amount of a four-year program of federal financial assistance in several areas, even though it is best remembered as a math and science program. The legislation provided scholarships and loans to undergraduate and graduate students, in addition to funding state efforts to strengthen math, science, and foreign language courses in public schools. Much of this investment went into the National Science Foundation, which supported the creation and revision of curricula in biology, chemistry, physics, and math.

Hofstadter (1962) also observed that:

The Sputnik was more than a shock to American national vanity: it brought an immense amount of attention to bear on the consequences of anti-intellectualism in the school system...Cries of protest against the slackness of American education, hitherto raised only by a small number of educational critics, were now taken up by television, mass magazines, businessmen, scientists, politicians, admirals, and university presidents, and soon swelled into a national chorus of self-reproach. (pp. 5-6)

The language of NDEA includes words that were intended to evoke fear in the public sector: *national defense, critical national needs, and crisis*. Searching for a scapegoat, the government shifted its focus to the public schools and curriculum. The crisis in national security was transplanted onto curriculum planning, the threat clear: control of what is taught and learned in school. According to Pinar (2004) the threat

posed by Sputnik turned out to be a civil war, rather than a foreign war, one in which public school teachers were soundly defeated. Pinar states that “since the 1960s, reformers usually agree that educators are not to be trusted and such stakeholders: such as politicians and textbook publishers have created something that may look like curriculum consensus but is more like ‘curriculum gridlock’ in which the process of education is grinding to a halt” (p. 66).

It is interesting to note that Section 102 of NDEA states that:

Nothing contained in this Act shall be construed to authorize any department, agency, officer, or employee of the United States to exercise any direction, supervision, or control over the curriculum, program of instruction, administration, or personnel of any educational institution or school system. (p. 1582)

Even though it may not have been the intention of the federal government to get involved in the state and local affairs of education in 1958, the NDEA did open the door for further legislation.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965

Seven years after passage of the NDEA of 1958, Congress enacted an even larger school-aid package. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) authorized a large increase in the federal contribution to elementary and secondary schooling. This act was a turning point in the evolution of federal involvement in education. Anderson (2007) states that “the ESEA was packaged as an educational contribution to the federal civil rights movement and the ‘War on Poverty’ and it

significantly expanded federal support for K-12 schooling and stands as a major tribute to Great Society optimism of the 1960s” (p. 84).

The implementation of ESEA is best remembered for establishing Title I, “Financial Assistance to Local Educational Agencies for the Education of Children from Low Income Families.” According to Timar (1994) the significance of Title I’s origins is that education became a part of a larger struggle for social, political, and economic equality. Consequently, the federal interest in education was framed by the language of fear and a national crisis. Education became the center piece of social policy, integral to the national commitment to social justice through equal opportunity. Title I was worth almost \$1 billion—80 percent of the funds appropriated by the act. It stipulated that federal funds go to schools with large numbers and/or high concentrations of children from low-income families.

The ESEA represents the expansion of federal assistance to schools and reflects another change. As federal assistance to schools expanded, so did pressures on Congress to maintain and increase education spending and federal action on behalf of children in poverty. “The fact that federal dollars were flowing to schools in virtually every congressional district was not lost on legislators, including those who had previously opposed federal education programs” (Anderson, 2007, p. 86). Once the ESEA passed, it became the centerpiece of federal assistance to elementary and secondary education. It gathered strong, consistent support from most liberals and many conservatives in Congress. Opponents of federal aid lost their ability to block education legislation. With the passage of No Child Left Behind (2001) thirty-seven years later, “the magnitude of federal involvement in schools was close to what foes of federal control had warned

about in earlier episodes” (Anderson, 2007, p. 86). It should be noted that from 1965 to 2001, federal funding has never risen above ten percent of school funding whereas the bulk of funding is still maintained at the state and local level. The federal government through NCLB mandates standardized testing for accountability measures and uses scores to reward or sanction schools; however, it does not fund the cost of the testing. It is left to local and state agencies to incur the cost of standardized testing.

Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Education Reform 1983

Eighteen years after the passage of the ESEA, a report titled, *Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* was published in 1983. Ronald Reagan was elected President of the United States in 1980 and the call for school reform came from his perceptions that the expectations of our students and schools were too low. Terrel Bell, Secretary of Education in the Reagan administration, appointed the Commission on Excellence in Education (1983). The result of this commission was the highly publicized report, *Nation at Risk*. The report begins:

Our nation is at risk. Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world. This report is concerned with only one of the many causes and dimensions of the problem, but it is the one that undergirds American prosperity, security, and civility. We report to the American people that while we can take justified pride in what our schools and colleges have historically accomplished and contributed to the United States and the well-being of its people, the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a

rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people. What was unimaginable a generation ago has begun to occur—others are matching and surpassing our educational attainments. If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war. As it stands, we have allowed this to happen to ourselves. We have even squandered the gains in student achievement made in the wake of the Sputnik challenge ... We have, in effect, been committing an act of unthinking, unilateral educational disarmament. (p. 5-6)

This report echoes the war-time rhetoric of the NDEA of 1958. The Commission claimed that the United States was facing a crisis caused by secondary curricula that had been diluted and diffused. Gutek (2004) states that:

A Nation at Risk, extensively covered in the media, gained a national audience. President Reagan and Secretary Bell urged the governors of each state to take a leadership role to bring about a more academically focused curriculum, high standards of academic achievement, and improved classroom discipline. The states heeded the call and the standards movement was born. (p. 267)

A culture of fear and alarm at falling standardized test scores, expressed in the language of *Nation at Risk*, led to the belief that teachers were ill-prepared, incompetent, and unmotivated. The picture of school failure described in this report led to teacher-bashing. According to Willis, Schubert, Bullough, Kridel, and Holton (1994), “the Commission concluded that poor schooling was what put the nation at risk economically

and socially, and that rigorous standards were necessary to alleviate the problem” (p. 402).

The legacy of *Nation at Risk* appears to be the credence that all students should study the same basic academic subjects and that a single curriculum is appropriate for everyone. More importantly is the idea that educators cannot be entrusted with creating and implementing curricular decisions (Willis et al., 1994). In a few decades, this legacy would erupt in the greatest interference in the history of public school education and curriculum by the federal government, based once again on the rhetoric of crisis, national security, and of a fear of falling behind in a global economy.

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), is the latest intervention of the federal government into the institution of school. Perhaps the evolution from limited involvement by the federal government to the profound control over public schools can be summed up by United States Senator Harrison H. Schmitt, R-NM and can be helpful in understanding federal expansion in the sphere of education. Anderson (2007) includes a portion of Schmitt’s words during a debate regarding the case for establishing a Department of Education. According to the Congressional Record of 1978, Senator Schmitt states:

It is not difficult to imagine [the Department of Education] establishing national ‘advisory’ standards at some point in the future. Later, the department could require adherence to the compulsory standards, if Federal aid is to be continued.

Next, standard tests, developed by the Federal Government, could be mandated to

check whether the compulsory standards are being met. Last, state and local authorities will be coerced into acceptance of standardized curriculum as the only possible guarantee of meeting compulsory standards. (p. 110)

It is not lost on this researcher that twenty-three years after Senator Schmitt's remarks, much of No Child Left Behind's provisions came close to these sentiments. Standardized testing is mandated and state and local officials are being coerced into accepting a standardized curriculum so that schools can pass the tests. Whatever federal aid given to schools is dependent on the scores of the high-stakes testing required by the federal government.

George W. Bush launched his national education agenda early in his first term. President Bush's proposal for the NCLB Act of 2001 was sent to Congress almost immediately after he took office. The Senate began its hearings on the act during the early weeks of the 107th Congress. Just eleven months later, the president signed No Child Left Behind into law. Congressional action might have been even faster without the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

No Child Left Behind is both a continuation of and a departure from previous federal education laws. Many of the provisions of NCLB build on earlier policies. Anderson (2007) notes that the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 included elements that later appeared in NCLB such as funding for educationally disadvantaged students and state planning requirements. At the same time, the assessment, accountability, and teacher-qualification requirements in Title I of NCLB are significant new developments in federal policy for schools.

Anderson (2007) goes on to state:

The new law also departs from the concept and practice of limited federal involvement that was the hallmark of most earlier education policies. No Child Left Behind represents a major expansion of the federal role and a dramatic shift in the attitude of conservatives toward this expansion. The administration's NCLB proposal, the amendments considered in Congress, the deliberations in both houses of Congress, and the votes were a political and ideological potpourri. By the time NCLB became law, ideological values and beliefs with respect to federal involvement in education had evolved in unusual directions (p. 160).

With the passage of NCLB, this unusual direction of federal involvement in education has created an extraordinary amount of controversial discussion regarding this piece of legislation by both opponents and proponents.

Overview of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

In President George W. Bush's Executive Summary of NCLB, he states that:

Today, nearly 70 percent of inner city fourth graders are unable to read at a basic level on national reading tests. Our high school seniors trail students in Cyprus and South Africa on international math tests. Although education is primarily a state and local responsibility, the federal government is partly at fault for tolerating these abysmal results. The federal government currently does not do enough to reward success and sanction failure in our educational system. We have a genuine national crisis. More and more, we are divided into two nations. One that reads and one that doesn't. One that dreams and one that doesn't. (p.1) Bush further expounds on the fact that even though

the federal government is spending \$120 billion dollars a year on education, the United States has fallen short in meeting our goals for educational excellence.

NCLB addresses many of the established Title funds that the federal government administers to the states for the purpose of educating children. The following are the specific Titles affected by NCLB (Public Law 107-110):

1. Title I, Part A: Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged School Wide Programs
2. Title I, Part C: Migrant Education Programs
3. Title I, Part D: Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk
4. Title II, Part A: Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund
5. Title II, Part D: Enhancing Education Through Technology
6. Title III: Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students
7. Title V, Part A: Innovative Programs
8. Title VI, Part A, Subpart 2 Funding Transferability
9. Title VI, Part B: Rural Education Initiative

The most well-known provision of NCLB is that every child will be proficient in mathematics, reading or language arts, social studies, and science by the 2013-2014 school year. It is noted that NCLB does not define “proficient.” A more detailed look at this timeline follows:

1. 2002-2003 School Year - Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) steps are determined; State Education Authorities (SEA) develop and make available state report cards; Local Education Authorities (LEA) develop and make available

district report cards; SEA identifies districts that are in need of improvement; newly hired teachers must be “highly qualified”; at least 2% of Title I, Part A funds must be spent on school improvement

2. 2003-2004 School Year – targeted assistance grants for Reading First Program are available; 4% of Title I, Part A funds are used for school improvement; 5% of Title I, Part A funds are used to ensure that all teachers are “highly qualified; districts that are not making sufficient progress towards having all teachers be “highly qualified by 2006, in the judgment of the SEA, must develop an improvement plan
3. 2005-2006 School Year – state content and assessment standards, for all core subjects must be in place; state testing in all core subjects must begin; all core subject teachers must be “highly qualified; SEA must develop reporting mechanisms to ensure that all core subject teachers are “highly qualified:
4. January 2006 School Year – all paraprofessionals must meet education requirements
5. 2013-2014 School Year – every child is proficient in core subjects of language arts or reading, math science, and social studies

The Major Tenets of No Child Left Behind Act of 2002

There are multiple major divisions of NCLB. Each division delineates actions and/or consequences for areas of improvement that the authors of NCLB designated as important. For the purposes of this literature review, these will include accountability for performance, assessment and accountability, and high-stakes testing.

Accountability for Performance

According to NCLB (Public Law 107-110) each State plan shall demonstrate that the State has adopted challenging academic content standards and challenging student academic achievement standards that will be used by the State, its local education agencies, and its schools to carry out this part, except that a State shall not be required to submit such standards to the Secretary. The academic standards for all public elementary school and secondary school children in subjects determined by the State, but including at least mathematics, reading or language arts, and (beginning in the 2005-2006 school year) science, which shall include the same knowledge, skills, and levels of achievement expected of all children.

NCLB calls for “Challenging Academic Standards.” These standards shall include: challenging academic content standards in academic subjects that specify what children are expected to know and be able to do; contain coherent and rigorous content; and encourage the teaching of advanced skills; and challenging student academic achievement standards that are aligned with the State’s academic content standards. For the subjects in which students will be served, the State plan shall describe a strategy for ensuring that students are taught the same knowledge and skills in such subjects and held to the same expectations as are all children.

Each State plan shall demonstrate that the State has developed and is implementing a single, statewide State accountability system that will be effective in ensuring that all local educational agencies, public elementary schools, and public secondary schools make adequate yearly progress as defined. Each State accountability system shall be based on the academic standards and academic assessments adopted and shall take into

account the achievement of all public elementary school and secondary school students and include sanctions and rewards, such as bonuses and recognition.

NCLB mandates Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Each State plan shall demonstrate, based on academic assessments what constitutes adequate yearly progress of the State, and of all public elementary schools, secondary schools, and local educational agencies in the State, toward enabling all public elementary school and secondary school students to meet the State's student academic achievement standards, while working toward the goal of narrowing the achievement gaps in the State, local educational agencies and schools. The definition of "Adequate Yearly Progress" shall be defined by the State in a manner that applies the same high standards of academic achievement to all public elementary school and secondary school students in the State, is statistically valid and reliable, results in continuous and substantial academic improvement for all students, measures the progress of public elementary schools, secondary schools and local educational agencies and the State based primarily on the academic assessments.

Assessment and Accountability

NCLB expands previous assessment requirements, and substantially increases both the expectations and consequences for accountability. This piece of legislation is more expansive and explicit than previous legislation in defining assessment and accountability. According to Broden and Schroeder (2004) the most important changes include the following:

1. Annual reading and mathematics testing is required in grades 3-8, and one high school grade, by the 2005-2006 school year. Annual science assessment in an

elementary, middle school or junior high school, and high school grade is added in 2007-2008.

2. AYP is defined as *progress* toward meeting the goal of 100% of all children in a state to meet state proficiency standards by 2014. Other indicators (e.g., attendance) may also be used to track progress, but achievement is considered the essential goal.
3. Schools are required to track and meet AYP for identifiable subgroups, including groups defined by race/ethnicity, poverty, gender, disability, and English proficiency. States must also ensure that they include at least 95% of the students in each category in annual assessments.
4. Federal funds will be withheld from states failing to meet progress and inclusion requirements; states must provide funding and “corrective action” to schools failing to meet AYP for two consecutive years (i.e., identified as “In Need of Improvement”). Schools needing improvement for more than two consecutive years must consider restructuring in major ways (e.g., reconstitution as a charter school).
5. States are required to inform parents of the AYP status of every school, and provide parents in schools needing improvement with the right to transfer their children to a school within the district that meets AYP with the district providing free transportation. Districts must also provide any supplemental services such as private tutoring for economically disadvantaged students attending schools in need of improvement for more than one school year.

6. Schools in need of improvement must develop plans to improve. The plans must incorporate instructional strategies from “scientifically based research.” These schools also must spend at least 10% of NCLB funds on professional development (p. 73-74).

High-Stakes Testing

Educators often refer to NCLB’s mandated state assessments as high-stakes testing. Briefly, high-stakes testing means that significant (high) consequences (stakes) are influenced by test scores. NCLB accountability requirements provide severe economic consequences for states failing to meet AYP and assessment inclusion goals. Consequently, states develop consequences for districts, schools, and their employees. NCLB requires states to give money to schools not meeting AYP and allows states to provide monetary rewards to schools exceeding expectations.

Braden and Schroeder (2004) note that:

A more likely consequence for failure to meet AYP goals is a loss of autonomy. Educators at a district or school not making AYP are likely to lose the opportunity to determine teaching materials and methods, governance structures, and other forms of professional autonomy, such as the privacy and freedoms common to most individual classroom teachers. NCLB requires educators at schools to restructure their practices, and to adopt practices supported by scientifically based research, which implies substantial changes in organization and behavior. (p. 75)

Research on some of these consequences follows later in this literature review.

NCLB may well contribute to the erosion of public support for public schools. As more and more schools fall into the failing or at risk category, there could be the

perception that some schools are failing when in reality they are not. The mandate that every child will be proficient in the 2013-2014 school year is flawed and a provision that cannot be met. However, this perception might well lead to the belief that the schools are failing and need further intervention from the federal government.

The new reauthorization of NCLB by the United States Department of Education, now called “A Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act” has removed the mandate calling for proficiency in the 2013-2014 school year. However, it is not clear how this new piece of legislation identifies failing and “at risk” schools. If not by proficiency on test scores by 2014, then what methods will be used to determine successful schools? I now turn to the provisions of this latest piece of school reform.

Overview of a Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

On March 13, the Obama administration released its blueprint for revising the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (2010). The blueprint challenges the nation to embrace education standards that would put America on a path to global leadership. It provides incentives for states to adopt academic standards that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace, and create accountability systems that measure student growth toward meeting the goal that all children graduate and succeed in college. President Obama’s introduction to this proposed new reform states:

Every child in America deserves a world class education. America was once the best educated nation in the world. A generation ago, we led all nations in college

completion, but today, 10 countries have passed us. And the countries that out-educate us today will out-compete us tomorrow. A world-class education is also a moral imperative – the key to securing a more equal, fair, and just society. Instead of labeling failures, we will reward success. My administration’s blueprint for reauthorization of the ESEA is not only a plan to renovate a flawed law, but also an outline for a re-envisioned federal role in education. I look forward to working with the Congress to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act so that it will help to provide America’s students with the world-class education they need and deserve. (pp. 1-2)

As of the writing of this research, the reauthorization of NCLB is still in its early stages and there has been no legislative action to date. The Blueprint for Reform is a forty-one page document which outlines priorities for reforming public education. I have highlighted the major tenets of this new proposed reform.

As with NCLB, this new reform calls for raising standards for all students and better assessments that are aligned with college – and career ready standards, as well as a complete education for all students. This includes literacy, mathematics, science, technology, history, civics, foreign languages, the arts, financial literacy and other subjects. It should be noted here that since NCLB began in 2002, science, foreign languages, and the arts have all but disappeared from the curriculum in elementary schools.

The reform asks for effective teachers and principals, calling for a new program that will support ambitious efforts to recruit, place, reward, retain, and promote effective

teachers and principals while enhancing the profession of teaching. A system of teacher and principal evaluation based on student growth and other factors will be put into place.

Rigorous and fair accountability for all levels is a top priority in the Blueprint for Reform. It states that the Reward states, districts, and schools that do the most to improve outcomes for their students will be celebrated. Those schools that are on the path to have all students graduating or on track to graduate ready for college and a career by 2020 will be celebrated. As in NCLB, rigorous accountability standards are required by states. They may “choose” to upgrade existing standards, working with a four-year public university, to certify that mastery of the standards ensures that a student will not need to take remedial coursework when admitted to a postsecondary institution.

Reward schools are defined as schools that are successful in increasing student performance and closing achievement gaps. These schools will receive funds for innovative programs. At the other end of the spectrum will be the Challenge schools or those in need of specific assistance. The lowest five percent of schools in a state, based on student academic achievement, student growth, and graduation rates will be required to implement one of four school turnaround models. The next five percent will be identified in a warning category. The four turnaround models include:

1. Transformation model: Replace the principal, strengthen staffing, implement a research-based instructional program, provide extended learning time, and implement new governance and flexibility.
2. Turnaround model: Replace the principal and rehire no more than fifty percent of the school staff, implement a research-based instructional program, provide extended learning time, and implement new governance structure.

3. Restart model: Convert or close and reopen the school under the management of an effective charter operator, charter management organization, or education management organization.
4. School closure model: Close the school and enroll students who attended it in other, higher-performing schools in the district.

It is not surprising that this reform supports public school choice as it supports the expansion of high-performing charter schools and expands public school choice options for students within and across school districts.

The Blueprint for Reform calls for a new approach to great teachers and great leaders. It focuses on elevating the profession of teaching through recruiting, preparing, developing, and rewarding effective teachers and leaders. To measure success, transparency around key indicators of whether students and schools have effective teachers and principals will be required. Both states and districts must publish report cards at least every two years that provide information on key indicators, such as teacher qualifications and teacher and principal designation of effectiveness. States will also be required to report on the performance of teacher and principal preparation programs by their graduates' impact on student growth and other measures, job placement, and retention.

The Blueprint for Reform gives very little information on the specifics of how each of these reforms will be implemented, yet it is clear that accountability is still a major concern and it does briefly describe the methods by which teachers will be held accountable, including public report cards on their performance. This level of surveillance is significant for the educators in a public school system.

Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault presents the genealogy of the modern individual as a docile and mute body by showing the interplay of a disciplinary technology and a normative social science. As Foucault (1977, 1995) explains:

This book is intended as a correlative history of the modern soul and of a new power to judge; a genealogy of the present scientific-legal complex from which the power to punish derives its basis, justifications and rules, from which it extends its effects and by which it masks its exorbitant singularity. (p.23)

Although Foucault uses the penal system for this history of the modern soul, he expands his theories of punishment to the institution of school. Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983) note that Foucault proposes that we approach punishment and prisons, as well as schools, as complex social functions, not just a set of repressive mechanisms. Foucault's approach to the prison and school is a way of isolating the development of a specific technique of power of which punishment is political as well as legal.

According to Foucault (1977, 1995) the study of punitive methods on the basis of a political technology of the body might lead to a common history of power relations and object relations. He goes on to say

Thus, by an analysis of penal leniency as a technique of power, one might understand both how man, the soul, the normal or abnormal individual have come to duplicate crime as objects of penal intervention; and in what way a specific mode of subjection was able to give birth to man as an object of knowledge for a discourse with a "scientific" status. (p.24)

Foucault claims that power produces knowledge and that each implies the other. There is no power relation without a field of knowledge, nor is there any knowledge without some power relations. Man as an object of knowledge is also an object of power. “A soul inhabits him and brings him to existence ... a factor in the mastery that power exercises over the body. The soul is the effect and instrument of a political anatomy; the soul is the prison of the body” (p. 30).

Part III of *Discipline and Punish*, titled Discipline, provides a link to how Foucault relates his theories to the institution of school. Foucault introduces the body as object and target of power. This body becomes docile as a set of regulations and methods relating to the army, the school, and the hospital are put into place for controlling the operations of the body. Discipline produces subjected bodies, docile bodies, and increases the forces of the body in economic terms. In the context of school, regulations produce a body that is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved.

Foucault (1977, 1995) explains how discipline results in the art of distributions. The first art of distribution from which discipline proceeds is that of the distribution of individuals in space. Discipline sometimes requires enclosure or the specification of a place such as colleges or secondary schools. However, the principle of enclosure is not sufficient in disciplinary machinery. Space must also be partitioned so that each individual has his own place. “Disciplinary space tends to be divided into as many sections as there are bodies or elements to be distributed. One must eliminate the effects of...uncontrolled disappearance of individuals ... to know where and how to locate individuals” (p. 142). The institution of schooling today represents the enclosure of which Foucault speaks. “The educational space unfolds; the class becomes

homogeneous, “rank” begins to define the great form of distribution of individuals in the educational order: rows or ranks of pupils in the class; rank attributed to each pupil at the end of each task and each examination” (p. 146).

The organization of a serial space was one of the great technical mutations of elementary education. Foucault (1977, 1995) asserts that it made it possible to assign individual places and made possible the supervision of each individual and the simultaneous work of all. The educational space functions like a learning machine, but also as a machine for supervising, hierarchizing, and rewarding. “In every class there will be places assigned for all the pupils of all the lessons, so that all those attending the same lesson will always occupy the same place” (p. 147). This is eerily similar to the enclosure of the institution of schooling in today’s era.

The second art of distribution of discipline is that of the control of activity through time. The time-table, originally suggested by the monastic community soon spread to schools establishing rhythms, imposing particular occupations, and regulating the cycles of repetition. “In the elementary schools, the division of time became increasingly minute; activities were governed in detail by orders that had to be obeyed immediately” (p. 150). However, the quality of time must be assured by constant supervision, the pressure of supervisors or the elimination of anything that might disturb or distract. In schools, it is expressly forbidden to tell stories or to amuse one’s companions by gestures in any way, or to play games. This technique for taking charge of time of individuals for regulating time, bodies, and forces, began in the 17th century with the organization of a school.

Disciplinary time was gradually imposed on pedagogical practice. Foucault (1977, 1995) theorizes:

specializing the time of training and detaching it from the adult time, from the time of mastery; arranging different states, separated from one another by graded examinations; drawing up programmes, each of which must take place during a particular stage and which involves exercises of increasing difficulty; qualifying these series. A whole analytical pedagogy was being formed, meticulous in detail (it broke down the subject being taught into its simplest elements, it hierarchized each stage of development into small steps. (p. 159)

Disciplinary time, as seen through Foucault's work, is a part of the institution of schooling that is in existence today.

When speaking of the examination, Foucault (1977, 1995) combines what he calls an observing hierarchy of surveillance and that of a normalizing judgment, a normalizing gaze that makes it possible to qualify, to classify and to punish. "That is why, in all the mechanisms of discipline, the examination is highly ritualized. It combines the ceremony of power and the form of the experiment, the deployment of force and the establishment of truth" (p. 186). The school became a sort of apparatus of uninterrupted examination that duplicated along its entire length the operation of teaching. "The examination introduced a whole mechanism that linked to a certain type of the formation of knowledge a certain form of the exercise of power" (p. 186). This theory is linked to the high-stakes testing, or examination, of students in schools.

Foucault (1977, 1995) devotes a considerable amount of information on the idea of surveillance. He uses Bentham's *Panopticon*, an architectural figure, a building with a

tower where a man could gaze at the individual cells of a prison where each individual is in his place, securely confined to a cell from which he is seen from the front by a supervisor. Foucault even states that if the figures were schoolchildren within this structure, then there is no copying, no noise, no chatter, and no waste of time. “The major effect of the Panopticon is to induce in the inmate [student] a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power” (p. 201). However, Foucault also posits that individuals who are subjected to a field of visibility, also assume responsibility for the constraints of power, and simultaneously plays both sides.

The Panopticon does its work among school children by making it possible to observe performances, to map aptitudes, to assess characters, to draw up rigorous classifications, and to note and compare the time it takes to perform tasks. The school building, a form of the Panopticon, is used to instruct children. It is a type of location of bodies in space, of distribution of individuals in relation to one another, of hierarchical organization, of channels of power and the modes of intervention of power. Foucault (1977, 1995) notes, “Whenever one is dealing with a multiplicity of individuals on whom a task or a particular form of behavior must be imposed, the panoptic schema may be used” (p. 205). In a space not too large, a number of persons are meant to be kept under inspection. It is an apparatus of power and once it is thought of, it is easy to integrate into any function, such as education.

Foucault’s (1977, 1995) theories are linked to a whole series of “carceral” mechanisms which exercise a power of normalization. He states:

In this central and centralized humanity, the effect and instrument of complex power relations, bodies and forces subjected by multiple mechanisms of “incarcerations,” objects for discourses that are in themselves elements for this strategy, we must hear the distant roar of battle. (p. 308)

Foucault speaks of a battle and though at the time of writing he could not know about No Child Left Behind, there are those who think of this piece of legislation as a political battle. Reviewing Foucault’s arts of distribution of the discipline of space, time, movement, surveillance, and the examination can be linked to the present-day normalization of the institution of schooling in the 21st century that is bound by the mandates of NCLB and have significantly altered teacher practices and student learning. It is important to connect Foucault’s work to what is happening to the teacher’s place in the classroom and how these theories affect pedagogical practices.

Philosophical Implications of No Child Left Behind

A critical review of the implications of NCLB for educators and students is offered by multiple authors. McLaren (2007) posits that NCLB uses flawed standardized tests and unorthodox approaches to assessment and accountability to punish schools that “fail” with sanctions that worsen the situation, instead of rewarding schools for success. These sanctions include a wide variety of activities that open the door to corporate and faith-based sponsorship of instructional services. McLaren (2007) states:

Legislative provisions of the NCLB Act clearly make the process of privatizing education a lot easier through a testing and accountability scheme that will increase the likelihood of failure of students in economically disadvantaged

schools. NCLB is all about transferring funds and students to profit-making private school corporations through vouchers. (pp. 38-40)

The standardized test does little to motivate students, puts inordinate pressure on teachers to teach to the test, and to narrow their focus on what subjects should be taught, and leaves little time in the school day for learning about a socially and economically just society.

Testing in schools has been a part of public education since the time of Dewey and Thorndike, giving rise to a science of education and uneasiness about the effects on educational practice (Gunzenhauser, 2006). High-stakes accountability and high-stakes testing gained steadily and now pervades educational practice in the wake of NCLB.

Addressing the long-term implications of high-stakes accountability on philosophies of education, (Gunzenhauser, 2006) asserts:

I contend high-stakes accountability has so dominated discourse and practices in public education that dialogue about the purpose and value of education has been circumscribed to dangerously narrow proportions. To understand education under current condition, I turn to Foucault's (1977, 1995) analysis of normalization and position high-stakes accountability as a problem of a particular kind: the foreclosure on possibilities for our aims for what it means to be an educated subject. Using the technology of the examination, educators are encouraged to remake the individual as a set of attributes, each assessed by its deviation from the normal. (p. 242)

The individual thus becomes a normalized educated subject.

The consequences of high-stakes testing should be scrutinized as Foucault (1977, 1995) provides an understanding of exercises of power (e.g., public policies and their implementation) serve intended and unintended goals. Gunzenhauser (2006) argues that to work toward countering this process of normalization, educators need to expose the ways in which high-stakes testing forms the normalization of the subject and closes educational possibilities. Foucault asserts that the examination is one of the most powerful tools of normalization. Foucault explains the history of the school as a history of the exercise of power over children. Normalization works through the multiple disciplinary practices mentioned in the previous review of Foucault.

Bushnell (2003) advocates that much of the current accountability discourse presumes that without the state and educational administrators establishing such controlling measures as accountability and high-stakes testing, teachers' practice would be inadequate. External regulation of teachers becomes necessary as teachers cannot be trusted to regulate themselves. The cultural landscape of school illustrates:

How educational reforms subordinate teachers, particularly elementary school teachers, and reduce their opportunities for professionalism. The daily activities of teachers, principals ... remain under close monitoring by school and nonschool-based persons and institutions. The monitoring of teachers occurs within a panopticon of surveillance—an image of a system of power presented by Foucault. (1977, 1995) (p. 252)

Both Foucault and Bentham name the school as an institution that functions as a political technology. The student corresponds to the prisoner, and the teacher to the guard. Power

is always visible as the student-prisoner knows the teacher-guard is present. A student, during an examination can be certain that a teacher may be watching.

According to Pignatelli (2002) educators are increasingly responding to the pressure to prove school effectiveness by systems of accountability driven by standardization of process and outcome. “Embedded in these systems are a cluster of technologies of power –e.g., the grid, the timetable, the chart, the graph, and the examination” (p. 171). Matters of curriculum, school organization, and professional development are being buried by a system of surveillance that narrowly defines performance indicators. Pignatelli states “that sorting and marking children, schools, and staff on the basis of their performance on these standardized, high-stakes tests reduces the notion of school effectiveness to something akin to a military campaign (p. 172). Pignatelli’s words echo Foucault’s (1977, 1995) warning of the distant roar of a battle.

The implications of NCLB have had consequences for all educators and educational researchers who focus on K-12 education. The implications for teachers derive from the requirements of the law that schools demonstrate steady gains in student achievement and close the gap in achievement between various subgroups of students. Linn, Baker, and Betebenner 2002) note the following:

Schools that fail to meet improvement targets must adopt alternate instruction approaches or programs that have been shown to be effective through *scientifically based research*, a phrase that appears one hundred eleven times in the NCLB law. NCLB clearly presents a major challenge to the field of educational research. (p. 4)

The challenges posed by the NCLB law are many; unless considerable flexibility is allowed in the interpretation of some aspects of the accountability components of the law, “It seems likely that many more schools will be placed in the improvement category than can be provided with effective assistance” (Linn et al., 2002, p. 4).

Unintended consequences of high-stakes testing are being felt by schools and educators. According to Linn et al. (2002) the unintended consequences affecting schools and individuals may include:

1. Narrow curricular focus to teach only what is tested.
2. Academic demoralization among teachers, students, and parents following repeated test failure.
3. Anxiety among students, teachers, and parents.
4. Corruption, such as cheating or teaching to the test.
5. Inappropriate resource allocation, such as targeting students near the cutoff while ignoring students not near cutoff levels.
6. Exclusive use of a single data source to make high-stakes decisions. (p. 3)

Evidence is mixed with respect to the degree to which unintended consequences occur.

A longitudinal study by Cuban (2009) claims that one would assume that progressivism in public schools has declined since NCLB and that teacher-centered pedagogy has replaced student-centered teaching. This assumption is questioned in Cuban’s study of teachers in Arlington, Denver, and Oakland where in spite of top-down policies aimed at altering what teachers teach and how they teach, have “hugged the middle” of the continuum of the two teaching traditions. He calls this middle of the continuum a hybrid progressivism between teacher-centered and student-centered

pedagogy. Teachers, nonetheless, regardless of hugging the middle in pedagogy, claim in this study that the curriculum has narrowed and that the end-of-the year-test is the goal.

Au's (2010) study on high-stakes-testing in the United States reports that the bulk of educational research on the effects of these tests on classroom practices of teachers and students are controlling what knowledge is taught, the form in which it is taught, and how it is taught. Au contends that this means at least three things:

One, the content of instruction is being determined by relevancy to the test themselves. Second, in teaching to the tests, teachers are also catering their instruction to the form and presentation of knowledge included on the high-stakes tests. Third, in response to high-stakes testing, teachers are shifting their pedagogy relative to changes in both curricular content and form of knowledge being taught. (p. 3)

Au disagrees with Cuban (2009) in that teachers are moving towards lecture and rote-based, teacher-centered pedagogies in order to meet the demands of content and knowledge of testing.

Au (2010) further claims that high-stakes testing exerts so much control over classroom practice and is evidence of the hierarchies of institutional power. These tests hold so much power because their results are tied to rewards or sanctions that affect lives of students, teachers, principals, and communities. "High-stakes testing thus manifests bureaucratic control, or control "embodied within the *hierarchal* social relations of the workplace" (p. 4). Au goes on to say that bureaucratic control is evident in education policies structured around high-stakes testing place authority at the top of the Federal,

State, and District level, and takes control away from local decision-makers by shifting the power up the chain of command.

A year- long ethnographic field study of two schools, conducted by Mathison and Freeman (2003), focused on the relationships among teaching, learning and state mandated testing in four New York school districts. The findings of this study suggest that the many meanings of “teaching to the test” and the validity of the test itself conspire to create anxiety about the right thing to do. “The basic tenet seems to be: if a test measures what is important then teaching to the test is okay, but if the test is misdirected or poorly constructed then teaching to the test is not okay” (p. 9). Teachers value what they perceive to be positive changes the tests have led to in their teaching; however, they resent what they have had to give up to make these changes. Mathison and Freeman (2003) state that sometimes teachers defiantly teach what they think is important even though it may not help the students do well on the test. The authors continue to postulate that teachers do not feel good about the constraints that testing places on their work. MacNeil (2000) describes teachers moving away from particularized child-centered teaching to teacher-centered generic teaching, because the latter reflected state mandated curriculum and assessments. She concludes that, “The reforms required that they choose between their personal survival in the system or their students education” (p. 192). This move away from child-centered teaching conflicts with Cuban’s (2009) study that teachers hug the middle between student-centered and teacher-centered pedagogies.

Summary

In order to understand NCLB and the federal government's involvement in the public school, it is important to look at the history of the social, political, and economic developments of the past fifty years in education. The government has always had an interest in education; however, this literature review presents the path of expanded federal intervention from NDEA to NCLB to illustrate how the institution of schooling has evolved over the past fifty years.

This review presents a troubling image of NCLB and its effect on public schools. The unintended consequences of this act are felt by students, teachers, administrators, and all who are involved in the everyday processes of school. There are too few studies on the stories of those who deal with the mandates of NCLB on a daily basis—the teachers themselves who are primarily responsible for schools meeting AYP through accountability measures in the form of high-stakes testing. Their stories need to be told and voices heard.

Finally, Foucault's theories of discipline and his arts of distribution can be helpful in analyzing the classroom structure in today's public schools and a teacher's response to accountability measures and high-stakes testing mandated by the federal government. This review of the literature has provided a framework for a critical look at the everyday practices of elementary teachers and the pedagogical decisions they make in the classroom.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

It cannot be the aim of education to turn out rationalists, materialists, specialists, technicians and others of the kind who, unconscious of their origins, are precipitated abruptly into the present and contribute to the disorientation and fragmentation of society.

Carl Jung

If Jung is to be taken seriously, then there can be no doubt that the public schools are contributing to a fragmented society. No Child Left Behind mandates that schools turn out a standardized student, one who can pass a test. Yet, there is still the space of the teacher. Does the teacher comply, resist, go around, or attempt to move through the technical-rational curriculum? Statistical data cannot answer this question to a degree of satisfaction. To understand the world of the teacher, one must enter that world. Qualitative research seeks to understand and interpret how participants in a social setting construct the world around them. This study's research question of how teachers regard the tenets of NCLB, accountability, high stakes testing, and surveillance, and how these disciplinary technologies have altered pedagogical practice in the classroom, demands qualitative research. This chapter provides a description of the research methodology that will be used in this research study.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative methods facilitate study of issues in depth and detail, without the constraints of standardized measures inherent in quantitative research. The very nature of this research study is to resist the scientific methods being used to quantify and classify schools, teachers, and students in public schools. Patton (2002) asserts that qualitative research can produce a wealth of detailed information about a much smaller number of people and cases which increases the depth of understanding of the cases and situations.

According to Barone (2007) the No Child Left Behind Act and the federal government have contributed to a narrowing of the officially sanctioned methodological spectrum by calling explicitly and exclusively for the use of *scientifically based research* as the foundation for many education programs and for classroom instruction. The current discussions of education in America follow a theme of a continuing failure of educational research to improve the dire state of the public education system. These discussions and the passage of NCLB “represent a clear reaffirmation—indeed, a particularly aggressive codification—of a pervasive and familiar cultural predisposition toward the glorification of the work of scientists and the technologies it produces” (p. 455). Within this looming culture of scientifically based research, the call is even greater for qualitative research that can open up the life-world of teachers. The information that follows is organized in the following sections: research paradigm, narrative inquiry, research design, role of the researcher, and establishing mechanics for validity and trustworthiness.

Research Paradigm

This research study is guided by a transformative paradigm which directly addresses the politics in research by confronting social oppression at whatever level it occurs (Mertens, 2005). Another name for the transformative paradigm is cited by Creswell (2003) as advocacy or participatory. For the purpose of this research study, I use Sipe and Constable's (1996) critical theory research paradigm as a place to stand. In critical theory, the researcher joins the researched in an effort to not only understand the world view of the researched, but to assist in changing it in some way.

Ontologically, critical theorists view reality as subjective and constructed on the basis of issues of power, but the socio-politico-economic features of reality are taken as objectively real, and not dependent on the perspective of the observer (Sipe & Constable, 1996). Multiple realities are recognized in the critical theory paradigm and "that which seems 'real' may be reified structures that are taken to be real because of historical situations" (Mertens, 2005, p. 23). Therefore what is taken to be real needs to be critically examined through an ideological critique of its role in perpetuating oppressive social structures and policies.

Critical theorists, epistemologically, agree with interpretivists that there are multiple truths; however, critical theory looks for one truth that undergirds all the rest and accepts that the truth is the reality of political and economic power. "Knowledge is a form of power and can be used to change the world into a more just and equitable place for all groups of people" (Sipe & Constable, 1996, p. 159). Additionally, critical theory assumes that discourse is tied to the rhetorical and political purposes of those who speak or write and can be used to alter the world into a more just and equitable space for all

groups of people. In an active light, communication serves the purpose of deciding what to do to change the world and how to accomplish this.

The term *critical* refers to the “detecting and unmasking of beliefs and practices that limit human freedom, justice, and democracy” (Usher, 1996, p. 22). Elementary teachers, as a group, have historically been underrepresented and limited in raising their voices to governmental influence into their daily lives as educators. Therefore, a critical research study could empower elementary teachers to voice concerns regarding freedom, justice, and democracy in the classroom. Patti Lather (2004) characterizes a critical research design by the following:

- (1) they explore more interactive, dialogic, and reciprocal research methods that work toward transformative action;
- (2) they connect meaning to broader structures of social power, control, and history;
- (3) they work toward open, flexible theory building grounded in both confrontation with and respect for the experiences of people in their daily lives and profound skepticism regarding appearances and ‘common sense,’ and finally
- (4) they foreground the tensions involved in speaking *with* rather *to/for* marginalized groups. (p. 209)

With the above characteristics in mind, I turn to narrative inquiry as a methodological approach to the research design.

Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry as a choice of methodology arises from the nature of experience. It is a form of inquiry that is increasingly being used in studies of

educational experience. The study of narrative is the study of the ways humans experience the world. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) describe narrative as both phenomenon and method. They further claim the phenomenon as ‘story’ and the inquiry ‘narrative.’ People, by nature tell stories of their lives and narrative researchers describe these lives, collect and tell stories of them, and write narratives of experience.

Elementary teachers, as a group who directly experience the mandates of NCLB, can relate stories of their experiences of accountability, high stakes testing, surveillance, and the effect on their classroom practices.

As an educator for almost forty years, thirty-two at the elementary level and six as a teacher educator at the university level, I am comfortable with the use of stories in education. Using story in a classroom engages the learner and can open up the life world of humans. I have used storytelling to teach all subjects, ethical issues, and virtually all aspects of a curriculum. I have spent years listening to students, teachers, and others involved in education as they retell events in their lives. The idea of using story to seek answers to my research question regarding the lives of elementary classroom teachers seemed like a natural progression of this study.

There are many ideas and definitions of narrative inquiry used by researchers and practitioners, but I find that Connelly and Clandinin (2006) offer one that is most useful to this research study of teacher experience in the classroom:

Arguments for the development and use of narrative inquiry come out of a view of human experience in which humans, individually and socially, lead storied lives. People shape their daily lives by stories of who they and others are and as they interpret their past in terms of these stories. Story, in the current idiom, is a

portal through which a person enters the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful. Viewed this way, narrative is the phenomenon studied in inquiry. Narrative inquiry, the study of experience as story, then is first and foremost a way of thinking about experience. Narrative inquiry as a methodology entails a view of the phenomenon. To use narrative inquiry methodology is to adopt a particular narrative view of experience as phenomena under study. (p. 477)

The phenomena in this study are the stories that elementary teachers relate through their experience of how NCLB has affected classroom practices and the inquiry is the view of this phenomenon.

A conceptual framework for narrative inquiry is offered by Connelly and Clandinin (2006). This framework offers the researcher a guide to direct one's attention in conducting a narrative inquiry. They identified "three commonplaces of narrative inquiry—temporality, sociality, and place—which specify dimensions of an inquiry space" (p. 479). Temporality refers to people, places, and events as in transition that has a past, present, and future. Sociality is concerned with personal and social conditions of the inquirer and study participants. Personal conditions refer to feelings, hopes, desires, aesthetic reactions and moral dispositions. Social conditions attend to environment, surrounding factors and forces, and people that form each individual's context. Another relevant dimension of sociality is the relationship between participant and inquirer in narrative inquiry. "We cannot subtract ourselves from relationship" (p. 480). Finally, place is recognized as the specific boundaries of the physical. Important to the narrative inquirer is the impact of place on the experience. Paying close attention to each of these

commonplaces of narrative inquiry as research progresses in this study will be critical in the interpretation and findings presented in Chapters IV and V.

In addition to the above framework that will be used by this researcher, Clandinin, Pushor, and Orr (2007) offer a framework of elements for designing, living out, and representing narrative inquiries. A central element to consider is the justification, the reasons why the study is important. These authors claim that there are three kinds of justification: the personal, the practical, and the social. For this research study the personal is deeply embedded in my own experience as an elementary teacher who seeks to know how today's teachers respond to the mandates of NCLB and to create a space for their stories. The second justification is the practical and involves how the narrative will be insightful to the researcher's own practice and the practices of others. This element relates to narrative inquiry as an insightful means to offer change through story. The third justification for the researcher of narrative inquiry points to the larger social and educational issues the study might address. In particular, this justification will be significant to the essential questions of the "So what?" and "Who cares?" questions of this research study that seeks the answer to the social and educational issues that exist in teachers' lived experiences of the mandates of NCLB. Who does care about this research and why does it matter?

Research Design

Participant Selection and Data Collection

The goal of qualitative research is enriching the understanding of the experience and thus needs rich exemplars of the experience for the study. The selection of the

subjects should not be left to chance or random sampling. These selections are purposeful as the concern is not how much data were gathered or how many sources used, but rather whether the data collected are sufficiently rich to gain an understanding of an experience. Polkinghorne (2005) suggests, “The purposive selection of data sources involves choosing people or documents from which the researcher can substantially learn about the experience” (p.140). Patton (2002) states that it is important to “select *information-rich cases* for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry” (p. 230). For the purpose of this study, I use Polkinghorne’s term *purposive selection* rather than *purposeful sample* as the term sample implies choosing participants from a larger sample.

Individuals who can provide relevant descriptions of an experience are those involved in having the experience. Experienced elementary teachers, directly involved in the daily experience of NCLB’s effect on classroom practices can adequately reflect on this experience through their stories. Multiple participants in this study provide different perspectives about the experience under study. These perspectives can be compared and contrasted across the multiple sources and reflect on variations in the experience.

“Multiple participants serve as a kind of triangulation on the experience, locating its core meaning by approaching it through different accounts” (Polkinghore (2005) p. 140).

Triangulation through the use of multiple participants serves to deepen the understanding of the experience under study.

The participants selected for this research were solicited from school districts in two Midwestern states. For this research study, I contacted ten practicing elementary

teachers, of whom six consented to participate in this study. I targeted schools that had met AYP through the continuum of NCLB to gain insight into how pedagogical decision in the classroom had been altered by the participants. Recognizing that the degree of “representativeness” (Creswell, 2008), which could not be determined, limited the generalizations that would be made from a larger sample.

The participants’ teaching experience ranged from six to thirty-two years. A purposive selection of teachers was made through personal experience, superintendents’ recommendations, and the feedback from university faculty who supervise student teachers across the two states. All of the participants are acquaintances of this researcher through the profession of teaching; however, none of the participants share a social setting with this researcher. The choice of the participants included a personal knowledge of teaching style. Cuban (2009) discusses a hybrid classroom using the phrase *teacher-centered progressivism*. He states, “This hybrid classroom’s practices and particular student-centered features have been incorporated into most teachers’ repertoires over the decades as they adapted their practices to coercive accountability policies” (p. 31). It is this researcher’s opinion, through observation and a personal connection, that the participants’ pedagogical practices define a hybrid classroom. They are identified by administrators, the community, university supervisors, and their respective schools to be highly qualified and effective teachers as well as caring, competent, and committed educators.

The six participants in this study represent two states, three cities, and four elementary schools. Four of the participants teach in a Midwestern school district that contains five neighborhood elementary schools with varying enrollments. Two of these

participants teach together in one elementary and two teach together in a different school within the district. The other two participants in this study teach in two cities in another Midwestern state. One of these cities has five neighborhood schools. The sixth participant teaches in a small town which houses only one elementary school.

Participants were initially contacted through email and phone. Once each participant agreed to an interview, a copy of the Institutional Review Board consent form was sent via email. During this study, data were collected from participants through open-ended interviews that centered on the research question. Roulston (2006), defines an open-ended qualitative interview as “one in which a researcher poses open-ended questions to participants, and follows up on responses with further questions” (p. 523). A semi-structured interview guide was used as a starting point for the interview.

Initial interview time ranged from sixty to one hour forty-five minutes. These interviews were audio-recorded on a digital recorder with a computer connection which allowed the interviews to be downloaded to an audio file on a computer. These files were then transferred to an audio CD. The files were also transcribed in a written text by an experienced transcriptionist whom was given a set of detailed instructions for the process. Each participant was asked to keep a simple reflective journal that could be sent by email to this researcher. Participants were contacted through email within two weeks of the interview for any additional information or thoughts that they might want to share from the personal reflections. All six replied through email and their reflections were sent as attachments. The journal text was incorporated into the individual interview data. These word documents were printed and kept with the rest of the data. The individual interviews were the primary source of data for this study.

The audio CD allowed multiple “readings” of the entirety of each interview. Listening to the interviews became a part of the researcher’s daily commute to work and for approximately one month, this researcher was immersed in not only the voices of the interviewees, but in the nuances of the actual speech, pauses, pitch, and voice. This technique contributed immensely to the initial reading of the typed transcripts as the written word came alive with the participants’ voices.

Data Storage

All data sets including audio-tapes, CDs, transcriptions and typed journal documents were stored in a locked file cabinet in the home of this researcher. Data will be kept for a period of one year upon completion of this research. After this period, the data will be destroyed to protect the participants.

Data Analysis

Much has been written about the analysis of text for narrative inquiry. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) describe analyzing the transcribed interview as a text which is analyzed and coded to support or develop some generalization or theory. They state that “an interview is a purposeful conversation, usually between two people ... that is directed by one in order to get information” (p. 133). Patton (1990) maintains that “the purpose of interviewing is to find out what is in and on someone else’s mind ... to access the perspective of the person being interviewed” (p. 278). Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe an interview as “a conversation with a purpose” (p. 268).

Scheurich (1995) maintains that the modernist notion of coding, numbered lines, and decontextualizing the text into discrete parts where variations in tone, intensity, and rhythm disappear, is reductionist in nature so that meaning becomes stable and bounded.

He states that “the conventional, positivist view of interviewing vastly underestimates the complexity, uniqueness, and indeterminateness of each one-to-one human interaction” (p. 249). Scheurich redefines research interviewing through the following:

1. Highlight the baggage we bring to the research.
2. Illustrate the shifting openness within the interview.
3. Highlight the indeterminacy of interactions that allow the uncontrollable play of power within the interaction.

In order to convey the findings of this study and to approach the tasks set forth in the research questions, the principles of hermeneutics were applied. Hermeneutics, the study and practice of interpretation, originated from the mythological Greek deity—Hermes, whose role was that of a messenger of the ancient gods. Hermes served as a mediator between gods and humans. Hermeneutics, one of the earliest philosophical methods dealing with the understanding of the relationships between language, experiences, perspectives, and logic lent itself well to the focus of this study. As the research questions of this study implied some perceived contentiousness, it was a conscious decision to employ a hermeneutic investigation that would allow findings to be gained from a commitment to the nature of the questions.

In the hermeneutic mode of understanding, there is an assumed connection between text and reader, a basis for the interpretation that is to emerge. Crotty (1998) sees hermeneutics as a sharing of meaning between communities or individuals, but more importantly within history and culture. “Hermeneutics—the critical theory of interpretation—has become part of our cultural self-understanding that only as

historically and culturally located beings can we articulate ourselves in relation to others and the world in general” (p. 91).

Hermeneutics is a theory of conveying oral communications through written text into an understanding that is humane, objective, and useful to those who read it. I selected this study in an effort to understand in-depth the situation of teachers under the constraints of NCLB. With this in mind, I endeavored to write the results of the emergent themes in a language that gave a clear meaning to the “lived experiences” of the participants. In so doing, this researcher intended to convey the explicit meanings of the participants, so that other readers could go in different directions and to use alternate methods when they experienced similar situations.

During the interview process of the participants, I was surprised at the openness, honesty, the emotional ups and downs of talking about the subject, and amount of data that was generated. It was as if they were extremely thankful to talk to someone about their experiences and “unload” their burdens. I had a list of open-ended questions ready at the interview, but once the participants started, I rarely referred to them as they answered the questions by simply telling their stories that emerged at this particular time in their educational careers. The typed interviews bear this openness as huge chunks of narrative by the participants filled the typed text. By repeatedly listening to the narratives on a CD and after typing the narratives into an autobiographical format, themes emerged from the data. Instead of breaking the data into bits and pieces, based on line number or other methods of coding data, themes were allowed to emerge from the narratives.

Bogdan and Biklen (1992) list Situation Codes as one way to code data. They define Situation Codes as units of data that tell you how the subjects define the particular

topic. “You are interested in their world view and how they see themselves in relation to the setting or your topic” (p. 167). I utilized this definition for the themes that emerged. Starting with one narrative, I made notes in the margins of the narrative and then followed the strategy with the other texts.

In narrative inquiry, data analysis is ongoing through all phases of the research. In keeping with personal views of the openness of qualitative research, the stories of the participants were written without any initial coding, transferring text to a re-telling of the participants’ words. Even though themes emerged as immersion in the data took place, I elected to keep the stories intact for the audience. These stories are included in the Appendix so that readers of this study can reflect on the themes that emerged for this researcher.

Once the interviews were transferred to text, I used an inductive content analysis, by coding and categorizing the information and allowed themes to emerge. This researcher attempted to “organize the perceptions in the context of immediate purposes and relationships which must correspond to the context as well as to the phenomenon” (Patton, 2002, p. 597). The emergent themes of this study are presented in Chapter IV.

This research study was based on a critical look at how elementary teachers view high-stakes testing, accountability, surveillance, and how pedagogical decisions in the classroom have been altered by the mandates of NCLB. Moen (2006) states that often researchers occupied with teaching practice are former teachers themselves. “When they enter the classroom to collect their data, the scene is so familiar that it might be difficult to see anything at all. The researcher may however, distance him- or herself from the everyday life of a classroom, making it unfamiliar, by looking through theory” (p. 7). A

theoretical perspective offers understanding and insight. Researchers using a narrative approach employ theory in systematic ways both when they approach the field and when they give reasons for the interpretations (Gundmundsdottir, 2001). It is the interaction between theory and data that makes it possible to gain new insight. The narratives are always interpreted within a theoretical framework.

Role of the Researcher

I acknowledge my position as a researcher and as an educator for the majority of my life. I came to this research with biases, opinions, and knowledge of the institution of school and how educators occupy the space of a classroom. This position could be construed to be a hindrance to the research; however, I utilized what Clandinin and Connelly (2000) termed ‘wakefulness’ or ongoing reflection throughout the course of research. Reflexivity is the process of examining the way a researcher analyzes the data in order to reveal how researcher position may influence the gathering, interpretation, and findings of a study. Gordon (2005) explains,

Reflexivity holds the potential to undermine the notion that reality has been “captured” by situating the account within the partial and positioned perspective of a particular researcher. Reflexivity offers an invitation to readers to challenge the accounts to them and reminds both readers and researchers alike that these accounts, as textual creations, are, at best, insightful. (p. 294)

It is the intersubjectivity between researcher and participant that allows both parties the process of reflexivity which creates an open space for both.

Validity and Trustworthiness

Validity of qualitative research does not carry the same connotations as it does in quantitative methods. Qualitative researchers need to convey the steps they will take to check for accuracy and credibility. Qualitative researchers can use reliability by examining stability or consistency of responses and checking for consistent patterns of theme development. Validity is seen as strength of qualitative research but it is used to suggest a determination of whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participants, or the readers (Cresswell & Miller, (2000). Creswell (2003) offers eight strategies to check validity of research. The present research study employs four of these strategies. First, member-checking was used to determine the accuracy of the findings of the participants' stories. Secondly, I clarified biases brought to this study based on career involvement in an educational setting. Next, Creswell states that rich, thick description to convey findings can be a source of validity. The six interviews totaled approximately one hundred thirty pages of text and there were long passages of talk by the participants. Another strategy involved peer debriefing that involved a university professor, knowledgeable in qualitative research, who reviewed the research periodically, checked themes, and asked questions about the research. NVivo software was an additional strategy that was utilized to compare computer-generated themes to researcher findings. However, I did not follow through completely with NVivo as I found using it impersonal and not a good fit for narrative inquiry.

Personal Statement

While many students pursue doctoral studies at a relatively young age, I on the other hand began my studies after teaching at the elementary level for thirty-two years. The decision to earn a doctorate is founded in my continual pursuit of knowledge as I continue to teach at the university level. Even though most of my classmates were much younger, I brought with me a vast amount of experience and knowledge founded in years of teaching. I embraced the coursework and was led on a journey of reflexivity that allowed the self to take a critical look at the institution of school and my place in education. This research is as much autobiographical as it is sharing the stories of elementary teachers whom are still in the classroom. It was of the utmost importance that I respect the participants and data, assuring reliability and trustworthiness. All participants signed a consent form filed with the Institutional Review Board. The form articulated objectives and described how the data were to be used. Participants were informed the researcher would use a recording device and how the data were to be stored. Interviewees were also informed of their right to verbatim transcripts and written interpretations of the data.

This study explored the perceptions of elementary teachers regarding the imposed accountability mandates of NCLB, high-stakes testing, surveillance, and how this system has altered pedagogical decisions in the classroom. The participants' years of experience in the classroom ranged from six to thirty-two years, which allowed evidence of changes that have been made as a result of NCLB as well as any restrictions on curriculum and instruction. This chapter provided an overview of qualitative research, a research paradigm, narrative inquiry, research design, participant selection, data collection, data

storage, data analysis, role of the researcher, validity, trustworthiness, and a personal statement.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to investigate how experienced elementary teachers perceive the tenets of NCLB, accountability, high-stakes testing, and surveillance, and how disciplinary technologies have altered pedagogical practice in the classroom. Six practicing elementary teachers were interviewed using open-ended questions. In keeping with narrative inquiry, I approached each text as story. Although each participant's story is unique to that person's experiences, there were commonalities between the stories that were analyzed using hermeneutics and Foucault's theories. This chapter contains the analysis of the data and the emergent themes of the six stories of the participants. An introduction to each participant's demographic information, setting, and personal information is provided and to protect the privacy of each participant and their respective schools, pseudonyms are employed throughout the study. All of the participants are white, female, Christian, and are middle to upper-middle class.

Darcie

Darcie teaches fourth grade in an elementary school that houses one class per grade level, K-5. This school is the smallest of five neighborhood schools in the district with an enrollment of approximately one hundred twenty students per year. The school building is well-maintained and has an appealing appearance. A billboard sign that displays events included the dates for the upcoming testing at the school. The interior of the school has a colorful, neat appearance and an inviting atmosphere. Teachers and staff

were standing around the commons area visiting as school had just let out for the day. Darcie met me at the door and led me to her classroom. Her room is neat but includes the usual paraphernalia familiar to teachers. The classroom includes the latest in technology including a Smartboard and airliners for the students to use to manipulate objects on the Smartboard. I commented on the amount of technology that she has in her classroom. Darcie laughed stating that it is great but that she doesn't really have time to use it effectively. Darcie is well-dressed with short blond hair and even at the end of the school day appears fresh and bright, ready for the interview. She is fifty years old and has taught third or fourth grade for twenty-seven years in the same district.

Hannah

Hannah is a fourth grade teacher in a small community where there is one elementary school and she has taught a total of 33 years as an elementary teacher. She asked that our meeting take place away from her school so the interview was conducted in another location. Hannah is very outgoing with an infectious personality. During the interview, her hands were flying and there were a multitude of expressive facial features which added to her story. Hannah is full of energy and is very passionate about her educational beliefs and has strong opinions about mandated high-stakes testing, accountability, and the impact on her pedagogical practices in the classroom. Hannah is politically active in the National Education Association (NEA), the state, and the local organizations. She brought a copy of the state's June 2010 publication that has an article regarding the reauthorization of NCLB which will be called the Elementary and

Secondary Education Act (ESEA) originally enacted in 1965. The article centered on the concerns of the state organization of NEA of the proposed reauthorization of NCLB.

Angela

Angela's interview took place at a different neighborhood school in the same city where Darcie teaches. This elementary houses approximately three hundred students, K-5. At the time of the interview, students were pouring out of the building, some boarding buses, others walking down the sidewalks, and others being picked up by car. When entering the building, there was still a great deal of activity taking place. Staff was scurrying from place to place and a few students were still milling around. While waiting for Angela, I observed a paraprofessional struggling with an autistic boy who was screaming and running defiantly down the hall. I asked her about the boy and she was willing to talk about him. She stays with this child at all times and it is her primary job to take care of him. She states that he is a loving child but that something had just set him off so she was working to calm the student down. This boy is included in a first grade classroom where the paraprofessional cares for him.

The overall impression of the interior of this particular school was that of anxiety and although I cannot define what led me to the emotion of stress, it seemed evident in those standing around visiting. Perhaps it was body language that led me to a heightened awareness of anxiety. Angela walked by several times assuring me that she would be right with me. Finally, Angela and I entered her classroom which appeared to be a bright and inviting space. It was in direct opposition to the atmosphere I felt outside her classroom.

Angela is in her early forties and has been teaching third grade for six years. She was a stay-at-home mother until her four children were in school before entering the teaching profession. Angela looks more like a woman in her late twenties, dressed in a professional manner, and was very pleasant during the interview.

Susie

Susie asked that I come to her newly remodeled home to be interviewed. She took me through the whole house that she shares with her mother whom I also met. Susie teaches fourth grade in a city that has five neighborhood schools. Susie was obviously excited about her home and she was very open to being interviewed. She offered me a drink and cookies and made me feel very comfortable in her home. It was as if the role of the researcher and the researched were reversed. Susie is a “talker” and laughs frequently, and before I had a chance to ask any questions, she began to relate her educational experience. I quickly started the recorder as she was on a roll.

Lily

I met Lily in her fifth grade classroom at the same school that Darcie teaches. When I entered Lily’s classroom, she was visiting with a lady and writing her a check. She later told me that she is so busy and stressed and that her regular cleaning lady won’t take care of such things as washing windows. She has hired a second person to take care of those major household chores. Lily began to explain that she is very stressed because as a mother of two she just can’t get everything done, take her boys to after school church and other activities, and then go home and take care of everyone else. Even though Lily

appears calm, the underlying stress manifested itself throughout the interview. Lily is a tall, stately young woman, dressed professionally, with the persona of someone who has it together. She started talking before I could get the recorder on and she was off and running about NCLB and high-stakes testing. Unfortunately, the recorder button did not engage and the original text was lost. I reconstructed the interview from notes jotted down immediately after the interview.

Alice

Alice is in her third year of teaching first grade and teaches in the same school as Angela. She is an attractive brunette with auburn highlights and a smile that invokes images of commercials for dental whitening strips. She smiles and laughs frequently throughout the interview which was held away from the school. Alice's interview was very emotional and poignant and I wanted to represent her data in a way that would support her story of a very young teacher whose time in the classroom did not include experience before NCLB. I have taken the liberty of artistically representing her narrative as a short story based on *Alice in Wonderland* by C.S. Lewis. This allowed the integration of data into a well-known story that has become a favorite for its nonsensical charm. Many view NCLB and high-stakes testing as nonsense and illogical so it was not a leap of faith to parody this story. Although I have taken license with Alice's story, her words are clear throughout the narrative. Alice's story is included as an interlude following the analysis of the data.

The narratives in this research study are interpreted through a critical theory framework utilizing a Foucaultian analysis of the emergent themes. It was never the

intention of this researcher to become a critical theorist; however, the gaze backward into an educational space through a critical lens allowed what can be viewed as self-preservation in a voiceless and marginalized profession. Foucault's work intrigued this researcher and led me on a very reluctant journey through his theories on the institution of school as a space that creates normalized, docile bodies through discipline and the art of distribution of individuals. I doubt that even Foucault could imagine the increased technical rationality of today's schools that are based on minute details of knowledge and how teachers, through accountability, high-stakes testing, and surveillance are segmented into fragments. This research intends to give a voice to the participants who remain silent in the institution of school.

Categories and Themes

Foucault (1977, 1995) speaks of a body that becomes docile through a set of regulations and calculated methods relating to school that controls or corrects the operations of the body. "A body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved" (p. 136). It was the regulations and calculated methods, the observation of detail, a political awareness of small things, and discipline that emerged through the classical age, including an increased control of the level of mechanisms – movements, gestures, attitudes, or a power over a body. "Lastly, there is the modality: it implies an uninterrupted, constant coercion, supervising the processes of the activity rather than its result and it is exercised according to a codification that partitions as closely as possible time, space, movement" (p. 137). These disciplines became the general formulas for domination. Foucault names these as the *art of distributions* that create docile bodies.

Space, time, and movement in an elementary school are closely related, and these appear to intertwine throughout the structure. The participants unknowingly wove their narratives around these disciplines. They were not asked specifically about space, time, and movement; however their stories revealed a powerful link to Foucault. In an effort to answer the research question of how elementary teachers perceive the tenets of NCLB, accountability, high-stakes testing, and surveillance, and how disciplinary technologies have altered pedagogical practice in the classroom, nine themes emerged from the data that fit under the umbrella of Foucault's categories.

Time, Space, and Movement

1. My main focus is on reading and math.
2. I'm not teaching the way I want.
3. I'm leaving some children behind.
4. It's criminal to keep students in their seats all of the time.

One of the disciplines of which Foucault (1977, 1995) speaks is that of the control of activity through time. "In the elementary schools, the division of time became increasingly minute; activities were governed in detail by orders that had to be obeyed immediately" (p. 150). He adds, "It is this disciplinary time that was gradually imposed on pedagogical practice ... A whole analytical pedagogy was being formed, meticulous in its detail (it broke down the subject being taught into its simplest elements) (p. 159). Time has always been an important element in the elementary school as teachers decide how much time to devote to subject areas and other activities; however, NCLB, high-stakes testing, and accountability for performance based on a yearly increase of the AYP

demands that teachers spend a great deal of time on two subjects – reading and mathematics – which in turn ultimately narrows the curriculum.

Foucault (1977, 1995), describes space as one of the disciplinary techniques used in the structure of school and how individuals are placed in an *enclosure*. Foucault notes, “Discipline organizes an analytical space” (p. 143). After 1762 the educational space unfolds and the class becomes homogeneous, no longer made up of individual elements, but ‘rank’ begins to define the great form of distribution of individuals. “The organization of a serial space was one of the great technical mutations of elementary education. It made it possible to supersede the traditional system” (p. 147). Assigning educational space became a learning machine for supervising, hierarchizing, and rewarding. This use of space led to a better economy of time and gesture. It was a technique of power. Foucault (1977, 1995) names space and movement as ‘disciplines’ that exert power and domination over the body. These two techniques were intertwined in the stories of the participants. One seemed to be linked with the other.

The participants’ narratives were peppered with the word *time*. I analyzed time in the context of not having enough time, too much time, and time as an enemy. According to the participants’ stories, the focus on high-stakes testing and test preparation took too much time in the classroom resulting in not enough time to teach all subjects and participate in activities that would ordinarily have been part of the school day before NCLB. The terms, space and movement, were not mentioned in the narratives; however, in reading the text with space and movement in mind, it became clear that movement in the elementary school and classroom has decreased and space limited by lack of movement.

My main focus is reading and math.

Darcie: You don't have time to do the other things I feel like are important in the classroom because we are teaching to a test and we do not have time for hands-on-exploration and free thinking, discovery, and that sort of thing which is so important. Even though I do science every day, I don't do as many experiments and I just don't delve into it as deep as I used to because of time constraints mostly. Not at least until the end of the year. Before NCLB, you could stop in the middle of something and just really talk about things or get off track and have fun moments and that just doesn't happen anymore. Now you are constantly trying to stay on target. I think that I don't do a lot of the activities and fun things that take up so much time that I used to do.

Hannah: Time is of the essence and we have to teach those standards and benchmarks. I'll tell you what I used to do before NCLB. I had gone to Peru and the rainforest. I had been to paradise and wanted to share it with my kids so we did a rainforest unit. It was a whole-language thematic unit and we actually built a rainforest. We made butterflies, lianas, and birds with feathers. It was an unbelievable learning experience for the kids. I haven't done that since then.

According to the participants, reading and mathematics are the focus of the curriculum. Three of the participants in this study are bound by scripted programs in reading and mathematics. These texts offer the teacher a script to follow when teaching allowing a ninety-minute time period for each subject. These subjects are broken into their simplest elements and teachers are bound to the elements and details of the subjects. Scripted programs offer a linear approach to teaching. Teachers move as quickly as possible to get from point A to point B without deviating from the script.

Hannah: Reading is a ninety-minute period and it is a sacred time with no interruptions including getting drinks or going to the bathroom.

Angela: It is so frustrating that I cannot teach more science and social studies because I have to do so much reading and math. We used to have an art teacher that came once a week and we don't have the Spanish teacher come anymore. I try to bring in some Spanish, but honestly, I don't have time because I know that I have to get my reading and math in.

Susie: One thing we've had to do in math is teach some tested indicators early because we use Saxon Math and we take the test in April. Some of the things like long division, or double-digit multiplication we have to teach in February because Saxon doesn't get to those until later. Science is not involved with AYP yet so I've seen a change there. The primary teachers are doing more reading and math to prepare the students. They're doing less science and social studies because the time is not there ... the world's equalizers.

It is interesting to note the unintended consequences of NCLB including lack of time to delve into a subject deeply, too many standards to cover throughout the year, and a decrease in higher-order learning and problem-solving skills.

I'm not teaching the way I want.

Lily: I am not teaching the way I used to teach. I just don't have time to do some of the things I used to do because I have to make sure they can pass the test. I would love to teach more science and I do after the testing is over, but I love hands-on-science.

Darcie: *It feels very 'surfacey' to me. There is just so much to cover in a short amount of time and I feel like instead of teaching something to the best quality that you can and as deep as you can, you are just getting through as much material as you can to pass a test. I'm having to go back and reteach skills my fourth graders should already know like multiplication facts. I've also noticed that they aren't as good in critical-thinking and problem-solving.*

Darcie: *I wonder if even the way we teach how much they are really assimilating. How much depth is really going into that knowledge? There is so much to cover in a short amount of time and I feel like instead of teaching something to the best quality that you can and as deeply as you can, you are just getting through as much material as you can to pass a test.*

Susie: *I would like to see the curriculum opened back up again. You are still going to get reading and math but I could do more in-depth learning in the other subjects. There's not as much higher order learning and problem solving has gone down in math because Saxon Math focuses so much on computation and you don't have time to put in problem-solving.*

Darcie: *There are committees for everything and there is just so much time taken just to keep your classroom ready for teaching. I know that I am sounding like a typical teacher right now complaining about extra things that you have to do. There has been more and more placed upon you with the addition of NCLB and the structure of the test. It's just coming to school feeling good every day and not feeling that lump in your throat and that stress that you know what you've got to face to get through the day.*

I'm leaving some children behind.

Susie: *Another thing I've noted because of NCLB is that we don't do as much with our gifted students. It has dummy-downed us a little bit. We had some parents of our High Flyers come and tell us that they didn't want their child sitting there just reading a book while the teacher works with the other students.*

Darcie: *Since NCLB there has been less and less attention to the gifted children and to kids who need enrichment. Every bit of your strength and effort throughout the day is doing interventions trying to bring kids up to where they are supposed to be.*

Angela: *The students that are getting left behind are the lowest students who have a low IQ, and they say that they are performing to their IQ level so there is no discrepancy and they can't be placed on an Individual Education Plan (IEP).*

The participants revealed that the gifted students or high-flyers are not being served because of the amount of time necessary to teach students who need reteaching to pass the test. They noted that the above-average student will likely pass the test without interventions and those that are below-average are not served as their scores may not count in the results of the testing. These findings fit into a normalizing judgment, both teacher and student. This phenomenon is one of the unintended or perhaps an intended consequence of NCLB.

It's criminal to keep students in their seats all of the time.

Hannah: *It is criminal to keep nine to ten year old students sitting in a testing situation and quiet for the duration of three hours for three days.*

Darcie: *I know that students need to get up and move around. I structure my class so that we try to get as much done in the morning as we can and then sometimes I can let them move about or work in groups.*

Lily: *I know of some students who didn't get recess all year long because they were tutored before school, after lunch, and after school.*

All of the participants stated that recess has been reduced to one a day for the duration of a twenty-thirty minute period.

Hannah's narrative became provocative in the discipline of space and movement as she related that her school had stopped departmentalizing math and science because of high-stakes testing. This revelation was an epiphany for this researcher in relating space and movement to the narratives.

Hannah: *We are going to self-contained classrooms for the very first time. We stopped departmentalizing math and science when we realized that one person teaching the entire math would take the hit. That wasn't safe.*

Even though the teachers who were teaching math and science loved their subjects, they were reduced to a self-contained classroom so that they were not solely responsible for scores. In essence, these teachers were now being limited to a self-contained space and the movement from class to class to teach math or science was reduced. The idea of keeping these teachers safe is an idea that this researcher had not even considered when pursuing the research question.

Hannah also expressed how happy her students were to be able to take a twenty minute bathroom break between tests and take a walk during a lull in the testing.

Time, space, and movement are woven together when the teachers related that there isn't time for social studies, science, art, and other activities in the classroom that would make teaching more enjoyable. The lack of time for these subjects is evident; however, when viewed through the disciplines of space and movement, the analysis takes a turn. Not being able to teach science with inquiry and a hands-on approach was mentioned in all of the narratives. This would require more movement and a different type of space in the classroom, as would art, putting on a play, teaching social studies with projects, or involving students in active learning

Angie: This is the first year we are not testing K-2 students because of money. This is what's so funny. I saw the looks on those teachers' faces. It was a totally different atmosphere in here. The whole building! I felt so good for those teachers. Kindergarten, oh my goodness. Babies bubbling circles. What's the point? What IS the point?

I analyzed Angela's words in the context of space and movement. The primary teachers were going to be allowed the freedom to use their space in a different manner and that movement within the classroom and building would increase.

The Examination and Surveillance

1. I am overwhelmed and feel the weight, pressure, and stress of teaching to a test.
2. It seems like we test all of the time.
3. Fear

Foucault (1977, 1995) names the examination as a combination of an observing hierarchy with a normalizing judgment. "It is a normalizing gaze, a surveillance that

makes it possible to qualify, to classify, and to punish. It establishes over individuals a visibility through which one differentiates them and judges them” (p. 184). This research study focuses on the teachers who are being observed through a normalizing judgment. It is the teacher who is accountable for the outcome of the high-stakes testing mandated by NCLB. Foucault notes that in all the mechanisms of discipline, the examination combines the ceremony of power, force, and the establishment of truth. High-stakes testing is analogous to Foucault’s examination.

I am overwhelmed and feel the weight, pressure, and stress of the test.

Alice: If I could take the pressure of testing in my classroom out of the picture and feel like I’m not constantly getting through the next test that would take me back to what I believe education is and not how my first graders perform on a test. If I could take that out of the loop and get rid of it, I really think we would be able to do what educators are supposed to do – teach the whole child.

Darcie: There is so much pressure put on us and especially at this school as we have made a perfect AYP score the last three years. That is all fine and great but there is a lot of stress involved in that. It is something to be proud of, but at the same time, it comes with a price. We are so hooked in to the test most of the time and that wears on everybody.

Hannah: No one wants to be a third grade teacher or fourth or fifth because you know your head is on the chopping block.

Angela: Oh my goodness! It is extremely stressful. You are exhausted and you know which kids are struggling.

Susie: *I get sicker than the kids during the state testing. It upsets me that they have to go through this.*

Lily: *I get stressed over taking the test and then I am really stressed because my son is not getting what he needs in second grade and I have to supplement at home. Every year my husband and I have this big blow-up and I tell him I just can't take care of two young boys, teach, run them around, and do everything else and then make sure that my son gets enrichment at home because he doesn't get it at school.*

Alice: *It is a heavy weight on me – teaching to a test. If I could I would totally alleviate the pressure of testing and it just feels heavy on my shoulders and on my heart because I see teaching as so many more elements than just a test.*

Lily: *I always get this way during testing and I think I just can't do it anymore. Then it is over and you start all over again next year. I just don't know.*

Darcie: *I wonder what the students I've had for the last five to ten years will say when they look back at my classroom. I know that sounds foreboding but it used to be just so different.*

Fear

Panopticonism refers to a system of surveillance based on Jeremy Bentham's architectural figure, the Panopticon, which has a central tower that looks out on inmates in a prison. In the literature on Foucault this has been described as the "eye of surveillance." Surveillance is not new to teachers as they assume the role of educating students. What teacher has not heard the intercom in the classroom come on and buzz but no voice comes through the box? Teachers are made visible to administrators, the

media, and the community but now they are visible to everyone and especially the state and federal governments, as scores are used to determine rewards or sanctions. Scores are published online, in newspapers, and reported through the media.

Participants who teach in two different schools had their test scores printed in the local newspaper as both of these schools made a 1500 AYP which is a perfect score. The narratives of these teachers indicated that there were rumors that these schools had cheated or one school had all of the rich kids in class. The newspaper article quoted the principals as saying that everyone is focused on doing their best and that preparation for the test starts at the beginning of the school year. Throughout the narratives, when the subject of surveillance surfaced, the participants knew they were “under a gaze,” but there was a sense that it really didn’t matter as it was not something they could control.

Stress is a strong emotion that runs throughout the narratives. The discipline of time evoked feelings of pressure, a weight, and stress associated with preparing students for high-stakes testing. Underlying these feelings is a sense of fear of not meeting AYP at the end of the year. All of the schools in this study are currently meeting AYP and although the participants never used the word in their narratives, it is this researcher’s analysis of the contextual content, that there is a great deal of fear underneath the pressure and stress of teaching to a high-stakes test. One participant expressed it best when she talked about the “law of diminishing returns.” There is always a sense of fear at the end of the testing that “perhaps this is the year where we don’t make it.”

Darcie: As to surveillance, I know that it is there but I try not to pay attention to it. The scores in the paper made us uncomfortable in this school. I would have preferred

that it not be posted in the paper but I can't dwell on it. Big Brother is everywhere and I just don't have time to worry about it.

Hannah's earlier comment regarding departmentalization of classes and keeping teachers safe by not letting one person be responsible for a test score can be viewed through the eye of surveillance. The participants are cognizant of surveillance through scores on high-stakes testing; however, they stated that they are resigned to this phenomenon. The fear is there.

I admit that Foucault's work of the examination and surveillance was the beginning of a journey that led me to contemplate a link between NCLB and the pedagogical decisions of elementary teachers in today's schools. How could Foucault know that in thirty years his words would perfectly describe a piece of school reform? A single examination, specifically the high-stakes test given at the end of a school year that places teachers under increased accountability and surveillance, relates well to his work. In discipline, it is the subjects who have to be seen which assures the hold of power. At no other time in the history of school reform has teachers been as visible or accountable for student performance.

It is this researcher's analysis of the data that surveillance has led to the fear that is not talked about by the participants. Teachers are aware that test scores are published, scrutinized, and used for sanctions and punishment. However, it was the sense of this emotion conveyed to this researcher rather than actual words.

Tests and more tests

Hannah: *I feel like we are testing on something all of the time. There is a lot of testing through the year and you have to make sure the students are familiar with the format of the test questions. This limits a lot of teachers in their creativity. I hate to say it out loud but we are just teaching to a test not depth of knowledge.*

Angela appeared to be conflicted about NCLB. At the beginning of her narrative she felt NCLB was a positive as it made teachers accountable. The rest of the narrative focuses on the negatives of NCLB, namely the unintended consequences of the mandates.

Angela: *I think what has happened is they weren't sure how to mandate it and so they chose testing as a way. We have several ways of testing. We use DIBELS to test fluency but sometimes I have children that just read a little slower but have fabulous comprehension. I feel sometimes like the DIBELS is saying if you can't read this many words in one minute, you're a failure. We also do STAR testing for math and reading levels. I tell my kids before we take it, if you don't hit at this level, you are going to have to go to our programs which are during lunch, before school, and after school. I have one boy this year and I know he is a good reader but he doesn't care. He'll get a low score and has to go to the programs.*

Docile Bodies and Normalization

1. Following the herd.
2. Making everyone the same.

According to Foucault (1977, 1995), “A body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed, and improved” (p.136). The ‘disciplines’ became formulas of domination. “What was then being formed was a policy of coercions that act upon the body...a mechanics of power, was being born; it defined how one may have a hold over others’ bodies” (p. 138). Naming the participants as docile bodies in this research is akin to labeling this researcher as a docile body. During my years as an educator, the thought of a researcher labeling me as a docile body would be troublesome. However, knowledge is illuminating and re-living experiences through a different lens brings clarity. I did not ask the participants specific questions of docility but the narratives bear some indication that it exists.

Following the herd

As a doctoral student, when I was introduced to Foucault, I began to get an uneasy feeling about my years as an elementary teacher. Realizing that in many ways I was a docile body following curriculum and the many reforms that came along every few years, and even in some instances an attempt at being normalized was present. However, the pedagogical decisions I trusted and utilized were not threatened until NCLB was mandated. I was always allowed to teach how I wished as long as content was covered. I considered myself to be a successful and good teacher so I was comfortable with the pedagogical decisions I made on a daily basis. Yet, I followed the herd. The participants in this study relate that they are not always employing what they consider to be good pedagogical decisions as they struggle to maintain AYP and I liken their circumstances to not just following the herd but caught in a stampede of the herd.

The participants do not understand themselves as docile beings being manipulated into teaching to a test. However, when reading the text through a critical lens, it is apparent that these participants are being driven by the mandates of NCLB. I did not find any indication of resistance by these participants to counter the current climate of NCLB. They were angry at the system but did not see a way out of what is expected from them. In the following narratives I have placed text that relates to following the herd in bold letters.

Hannah: *Everybody knows what has to happen to our scores this year, so we had an academic pep rally before the testing where we danced and the kids were howling. It was like an Academic Super Bowl! And is that terrible? Is it sad that we have to do those kinds of things? **Well, that is just the way it is. Are you going to sit there and go, this is just not right, or are you just going to suck it up and do it? You don't want to be on the bad list. Every school at some point is going to be on the bad list.***

Hannah: *It used to be a negative to be politically active. I think there have been a lot of thumbscrews placed on our profession just because of who we are. It is getting better but you still have to be really careful. **You don't argue back too much. You don't want to be viewed as a Norma Rae.***

Susie: *I try to teach standards and not just the test but now I see that there are lots of repercussions with the high-stakes testing. **All I can do is my best under the circumstances.***

Darcie: *I am just waiting for the reform circle to come back the way it used to be. I didn't think that a few years ago, but now I am beginning to really feel like we are*

going down a slippery-slope. I don't see it ever moving back to what it used to be. I have two years left.

The participants do not see themselves as docile and they remain powerless to affect change at this point in time. Most of them have no desire to become politically active to alter the direction of education. Instead, they just want to close their doors and teach.

Making everyone the same

The participants also do not recognize the normalization of themselves or their students. A single high-stakes test attempts to move each player into a normalized state through punishment and sanctions. Teachers unknowingly do their best to place students into a range of normalcy. Those who don't fit, such as the gifted and low-performing students, are left out and in many ways are viewed as the abnormal. Limiting knowledge through high-stakes testing has had the effect of keeping teachers in a normalized stance, teaching what is perceived to be normal skills mandated by someone else. These statements are not meant to portray the participants in a bad light. They are committed, caring, and competent professionals caught in a power struggle that they don't acknowledge. Yet.

INTERLUDE

Representing Alice's data as a short story seemed natural based on the type of data and the themes of time and control that emerged from the interview. Using *Alice in Wonderland* allowed the integration of data into a well-known story that has become a

favorite for its nonsensical charm. Many view “high-stakes” testing, accountability, and NCLB as rather senseless so it seemed natural to parody the themes of time and control through a children’s story.

The overarching theme in the data I collected, in the interview of a young first grade teacher, is time. Woven into this theme is the control by what Foucault (1977, 1995), would call anonymous powers. Time is also one of Foucault’s disciplinary technologies. By parodying a piece of children’s literature to represent time and control, I can lend an air of satire and irony to the story through an adult perspective. *Alice in Wonderland* represents the world that children can enter and believe in whatever nonsense is going on. Reading the story from an adult perspective can illuminate the nonsense in an adult world. I have taken the liberty of beginning the analysis of the data with this representation short story as an interlude to the rest of the data analysis of this study.

Alice in Dunderland

Chapter 1

Once upon a time there was a first grade teacher named Alice. She loves teaching and works very hard but there is a problem. Alice worries because it is such a struggle to get everything done in the school year and there never seems to be enough time to teach everything before the D.D.T.S. at the end of the school year. (That stands for the Do or Die Test of Skills).

One warm and sunny day Alice was out sitting under a large oak tree by a pond, pondering about the D.D.T.S. that her first graders were getting ready to take. Talking to

no one in particular, Alice shouted to the wind, “Oh, if only I could teach the way I want. That stupid test changes the way I teach – how I want to teach. I don’t feel comfortable teaching to a test. Just keep them moving – don’t go back – you just don’t have enough time.”

Out of the corner of her eye, Alice caught a blur of white. A white rabbit with pink eyes ran right by her mumbling, “I’m late! I’m late! For a very important date!” When Alice thought about this afterwards, it occurred to her that she ought to have wondered at a white rabbit that was talking. However, at the time, it seemed quite natural; but when the rabbit actually took a watch out of his waistcoat pocket, looked at it, and then hurried on, Alice started to her feet for it flashed across her mind that she had never before seen a rabbit with either a waistcoat or a watch. Burning with curiosity, she ran across the field after it, and was just in time to see it pop down a large rabbit-hole under a bush.

Without really thinking, Alice followed the white rabbit down the hole. She was in a tunnel and before she could stop herself the floor fell away and she found herself falling down what seemed like a very deep well. It was either very deep or she was falling slowly as she had lots of time to look around and think. The sides of the wall were covered with clocks of all shapes and sizes. They started ringing, dinging, donging, cuckooing, and buzzing all at the same time. There was such a cacophony of dissonance that Alice had to cover her ears. Floating in the air around her were the most amazing sights. Science experiments were in various stages of development. Maps, globes, and loads of beautiful children’s books were floating around her. She tried to reach out and grab things, but just as she touched the items they swirled away out of her grasp.

A jar labeled – TRY ME – floated by her and Alice did manage to grab it. The very fine print on the jar said, “Drink me and all of your students will pass the test! Manufactured in the USA.” Well that sounded like a fix, so Alice drank the bitter substance. Suddenly, thump, thump down Alice came upon a heap of sticks and dry leaves and the fall was over. She jumped to her feet and looked up the hole and wondered, “How am I every going to get back up?”

“Ooh, there is the white rabbit,” and Alice hurriedly followed it as there was not a moment to be lost. Alice ran like the wind, and was just in time to hear the rabbit say, “Oh my ears and whiskers, how late it’s getting!”

Chapter 2

“Umph!” Alice tripped right over a large log lying across the path. However, before she could manage to get up, something said in a lazy and languid voice, “There you are. I’ve been expecting you.” As Alice’s eyes were quite level with the log, she noticed a very large, green snake resting atop the log. However, this particular reptile, instead of having two eyes had one very large eye in its head! “Well, what are you – a one-eyed monster and why are you expecting me?” laughed Alice.

“My name is Eye-or and don’t you be so sassy with me young lady. You should already know who I am: the all-seeing, all-knowing eye that keeps watch over you. Tell me, have you been teaching to the test and have you properly prepared your students thoroughly for the D.D.T.S? You know, you and your students will be at-risk and you will be punished if they don’t pass the test?”

Alice stood up and looked down at the eye. “You know. I would like to talk to you about that. When I went to college, I was told DON’T teach to a test and now that is all I get done. I don’t have time to teach all of the stuff you want and what’s worse I don’t have the time to teach what I think is really important to first grade students. You know, Eye-or, it is a heavy weight on me—teaching to a test! It affects me and my students and my outlook on education. If I could, I would totally alleviate the pressure of testing and it just feels so heavy on my shoulders and on my heart because I see teaching as so many more elements than just a test.”

Eye-or stared at Alice and it stared so hard that his eye got larger and larger until it was nothing but an eye! “Listen to me you impudent little ingrate! You just need to do as you are told! Hasn’t your principal told you to not worry about all that other stuff you want to teach – just move those little buddies along whether they are ready or not? And I know that you have been told what and when to teach. That is the law of Dunderland.”

“Dunderland? Is that what this place is called?” asked Alice.

“Yes, it is and you are one of us now. Dunderland is where we keep all of you who think that you know what is best for children.”

“Well, I do know what is best,” answered Alice hotly. “But trying to keep us in Dunderland, well, that is just not right. That is like keeping us imprisoned. Whether you like it or not, we teachers do know what is best. Put the focus back on the importance of learning instead of passing the next test and what scores they need.”

Eye-or stared hard at Alice and laughed as he took the shape of a snake again and started to slither away. He turned back to Alice and pointing his very large eye right at her lazily said, “Do as you’re told or you will suffer the consequences.”

Chapter 3

Alice was a little frightened at this, but just then the white rabbit flashed by shouting, “Oh dear. I’m running late, late, late.” He pulled out his watch and sped up, “OH my, I don’t want my head lopped off. I have to hurry!”

“Please wait!” shouted Alice. Tell me what you are late for and who is going to lop off your head?”

“No time to talk. I must hurry, hurry or the King of Hearts will not hesitate to have me beheaded!”

Alice ran after the white rabbit. She ducked under trees, ran around piles of textbooks and tripped on what looked like test prep materials but she managed to keep the rabbit in sight. Suddenly, she was surrounded by a circle of trees and within this circle was the strangest sight. A deck of cards, with heads and legs were playing croquet with the King and Queen of Hearts. Actually some of the heads on the cards looked vaguely familiar. The croquet mallets were flamingos and the balls were hedgehogs. The King of Hearts was wandering around shouting, “Off with their dunderheads.” The Queen of Hearts just kept saying over and over, “Well, they get one more chance. Not yet. It is not time yet to lop off their heads.”

Alice felt very strange indeed and began to wonder at the pure nonsensery going on around her. Who would use a flamingo for a mallet and those poor hedgehogs? How must they feel when they get knocked on the head?

“Rabbit, you are late,” shouted the King of Hearts. “Where is my list?” Huffing and puffing, Rabbit held out a scroll. “Here it is, sire. Your list of the rest of the dunderheads who didn’t pass the test. May I keep my head, sire?”

A hush fell over the forest and every eye turned toward Alice who stood rooted to the spot where she waited breathlessly. Turning to the Jack of Hearts, the King thundered, “Who is this?”

The Jack only bowed and giggled in reply. “Idiot! Off with your head,” said the King stamping his foot and turning to Alice. “What is your name?”

“Well sir, my name is Alice and I followed the white rabbit down a hole and here I am. Who are you and why are you lopping off heads? This is all very strange and – well very illogical.”

“Aha. Yes, I have heard about you. You are the one who is complaining about the D.T.T.S. and some such silly nonsense about not having enough time to do what you think is right for your students.”

“Yes, that is me. I would like to talk to you about that. You see, if I could take the pressure of testing in my classroom out of the picture and feel like I’m not constantly getting through the next test, that would be, just – well that would just take me back to what I believe education is and – and not how my first-graders perform on a test. If I could take that out of the loop and get rid of it, I really think we would be able to do what educators are supposed to do – teach the whole child. Since my first year of teaching, you know my motto has been, ‘Time is thine enemy.’ I’m not always teaching what I feel is important and it’s an everyday challenge of time and trying to get done what I want to do.”

“Stuff and nonsense and stupidity, you Dunderhead!” shouted the King. “Just what makes you think you know best?”

“Well, I know for sure that standardized testing is NOT the most logical way to assess my student’s progress.”

“Blasphemy! Hold your tongue!” said the Queen.

“Off with her head,” shouted the King.

Anger rose up in Alice as she said, “Well, who cares for any of you anyway. You are nothing but a pack of cards making up your own rules for everyone.”

At this, the whole pack of cards rose up into the air, and came flying down upon Alice and she gave a little scream, half of fright and half of anger. She tried to beat them off. Suddenly, she found herself lying on the bank of the pond brushing at leaves that had fallen down from the trees upon her face.

Alice’s heart was pounding as she struggled to sit up. “What a nightmare!” Leaning back against the giant oak tree and catching her breath, Alice began to reflect upon the dream. “Wow! None of that made any sense at all. That was most illogical!”

Suddenly, Alice shot straight up from her perch on the ground. “That’s it!” The D.T.T.S is illogical. Everything about it is just like the dream. The amount of time devoted to it, the lack of time to pursue strategies that work, the clockwork organization of the curriculum, and it isn’t logical for me to allow a test to control my time and my decisions of how and what to teach. So, now what do I do? If things don’t change, I don’t think I can do this for the next thirty years.” As Alice walked away from the pond, a smiling, one-eyed snake slithered through the grass and crawled upon a rock warmed by the sun.

THE END

It is noted here that Alice has left teaching since this study and is pursuing other interests.

This chapter analyzed the narratives of six practicing elementary teachers through a critical lens to answer the research question of the perceptions of accountability and surveillance through high-stakes testing on elementary teachers' pedagogical decisions in the classroom. Chapter V presents a summary, discussion, and implications of the results, and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The purpose of Chapter V is to present the conclusions drawn from findings of this study. This chapter includes a discussion of (1) the purpose of the study, (2) an overview of the methodology, (3) a summary of the results, (4) a discussion of the results, (5) implications of the results, and (6) recommendations for further research.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine how elementary teachers, known for their expertise, perceive the tenets of NCLB, accountability, high-stakes testing, and surveillance, and how disciplinary technologies have altered pedagogical practice in the classroom. This study used a critical theory lens and utilized hermeneutics to analyze the data. Using critical theory kept the spotlight on power relationships within the institution of school to emerge. Analyzing the data through hermeneutics allowed this researcher to organize the data into bits and pieces that flowed into a whole. According to prior related studies and a review of the literature, NCLB with its mandates has profoundly affected the culture of school, the way teachers teach, and the manner in which students are taught.

Methodology

This study used qualitative research guided by a critical theory research design that facilitated an in-depth study of the research question. Narrative inquiry as a choice of methodology allowed the experience of the participants to be the focus of the research. Six practicing elementary teachers were interviewed and their narratives analyzed to answer the research question of this study. The participants were elementary teachers drawn from cities in two Midwestern states with a range of teaching experience from six to thirty-two years. Grade levels that were represented included first, third, fourth, and fifth.

Participant selection used a purposive selection of elementary teachers who were directly involved in the daily experience of NCLB's mandates. Data collection included recorded interviews using open-ended questions and post-interview journal notes. The full narratives were included in the Appendix so that the audience would be able to form interpretations of the data which might differ from this researcher. Chapter IV offered an of the data, using themes under Foucault's categories utilizing the participants' stories.

Summary of the Results

One of the intended consequences of NCLB included increased accountability for schools, through test scores, based on schools' previous scores on standardized tests. Baseline data was set for each school in 2002 and thus began the struggle for maintaining progress based on one test at the end of a school year. The premise of increased accountability rested squarely on the shoulders of teachers. The implications for teachers

derive from the requirements of the law that schools demonstrate steady gains in student achievement and close the achievement gap between various subgroups of students.

The unintended consequences erupted quickly after the passage of NCLB. Holding teachers accountable for student performance was not an entirely new concept, but tying test scores to rewards and sanctions based on yearly growth had never been mandated. Through a critical theory lens, the forces of hegemony and injustice surrounding the federally mandated law known as NCLB became clear in the participants' stories.

Two participants indicated that when NCLB began they felt it was a good idea to make teachers accountable; however, their stories shifted to the negatives of high-stakes testing and ultimately they indicated that they would prefer to be accountable in more than one way. The other four participants were more vocal in their negativity towards NCLB, accountability, high-stakes testing, and surveillance. The following examples indicate the participants' views of NCLB, accountability, high-stakes testing, and surveillance and the various ways pedagogical practice in the classroom has been altered since NCLB:

1. *A narrowing of the curriculum.* All of the participants related the reduced amount of time spent on social studies, science, art, and other normal daily activities that were a part of the curriculum before NCLB. The focus on high-stakes testing demanded that the teachers spend most of their time on mathematics and reading as these subjects were used to assess Annual Yearly Progress to decide if a school was deemed successful or in need of repair. Four of the six participants reported the increased use of scripted instructional programs such as *Success for All*, *Saxon*

Math, and Everyday Math. These programs promoted a linear approach to learning as teachers read from a script with a specific time-table offered for instruction.

2. *Tests and more tests.* The participants indicated an increase in testing throughout the year to identify students in need of interventions. Students identified through DIBLES and STAR testing in reading were given interventions, tutoring and remedial work. According to two of the participants, some students were given interventions even though they were on or above grade level. The students either didn't test well or didn't care but teacher recommendation could not remove the student from the interventions.
3. *Leaving some children behind.* All but one of the participants indicated that there are some children being left behind under the mandates of NCLB. Paradoxically, the 'gifted students' and 'high flyers' essentially were going without services due to accountability measures that demand scores consistently rise each year and students who needed interventions took precedence. Participants indicated that the above-average student would pass the test regardless of enrichment. The academically challenged students who had low IQ scores would not have their test scores figured into the AYP. This phenomenon was problematic for the participants who felt a sense of guilt for not being able to provide for these students in their classrooms.
4. *Academic demoralization and stress.* Hope that high-stakes testing would be changed was a theme for the participants. Several hoped that the "reform circle" would take them back ten to fifteen years and that other means to assess their

students' growth would be utilized so that they could return to previous practices. However, the rest of the stories indicated a great deal of stress, pressure, and a sense of weight upon their shoulders. There was a sense of guilt over teaching to the test, leaving some children behind and failing to serve all students. Stress regarding accountability and high-stakes testing took many forms such as exhaustion, family problems, walking around with 'a lump in your throat,' and wanting to sleep all weekend. Two of the participants were close to retirement age and the youngest stated that she didn't think she could teach for thirty more years.

5. *Fear.* The participants' narratives evoked a sense of fear. Emerging themes of this emotion manifested itself in a fear of failure to achieve AYP that would result in an "at risk school." All of the schools in this research study met AYP; however, according to all of the participants, scores in their school were at the point that it was going to be difficult to maintain an increase. Teaching to the test, regardless of pedagogical practice, was the focus of these participants.
6. *Corruption.* There was never a time when participants revealed methods to cheat on the test but there were other teachers in district who accused some of the participants of cheating or only having rich kids. This was the only way other teachers could fathom a 1500 perfect score in the high-stakes testing. Being familiar with the participants and their status of high-quality, highly effective teachers led this researcher to the belief that these were untrue statements made out of frustration. This resulted in fractured collegiality among groups. Corruption might also be construed as teaching to the high-stakes test, reducing

knowledge to exactly what is on a test. This is borne out by the participants' statements of teaching what was to be tested so that their students would pass the end-of-year test.

7. *High-stakes testing as a single data source.* All participants desired different types of methods to determine student success based on a child's ability to learn in different ways, not just by taking a single test for the AYP score. The teachers felt trapped by the high-stakes testing and the accountability it placed on them.
8. *Children learn in different ways.* Each participant explained that children are always at different levels in their learning and need to be placed in their learning modality to increase performance. Teaching to a test diminished the possibilities of teaching all children. It was the hope of the participants that "something" would change so that they could teach to reach all children.
9. *Competition among teachers.* A rather bizarre unintended consequence of NCLB resulted in a competition among classes based on test scores. One participant related that a pizza party was planned for the highest-scoring class at the school. She felt that this event did not promote collegiality and that parents would start demanding their child be placed with the teacher scoring the pizza party. This teacher also talked about an unusual event called an Academic Pep Rally where students, teachers, and administrators sang, danced, and cheered before the testing began.

Discussion of the Results

This research study focused on how elementary teachers in today's schools view NCLB, high-stakes testing, accountability, surveillance, and how pedagogical practice

has been altered in the elementary classroom of six participants. Critical theory uncovered the process of meaning-making through a political view of the institution of school as a place where power and knowledge circulate throughout the enclosure. Knowledge in the elementary classroom is inextricably tied to power relationships within the institution of school. The power of the federal government to enact a law that demanded what knowledge would be taught through a standardized test in an elementary classroom cannot be denied. The participants in this study felt powerless to change this outcome. Pedagogical practices of these participants were significantly altered in ways that this researcher had not considered.

Foucault's *arts of distribution* were useful for unmasking the practices that limit a teacher's freedom to teach with a sense of purpose and to employ pedagogical practices that create a climate of learning within the classroom. Foucault's work was based on the beginnings of the institution of prisons, hospitals, and schools and his theories reflected the power relationships within these institutions. Teachers and students within a school have always been bound by a power outside of themselves; however, teachers before NCLB were relatively free to teach in a manner that was consistent with best practice. Even though they might have been bound by a textbook, a program of instruction, administrators, and previous federal interference in schools, there was some sense of freedom of choice in delivering instruction and designing a classroom conducive to learning.

Today, teachers are held hostage to the dictates of NCLB. I do not think that using the word 'hostage' is too harsh. There is clear evidence from the teachers in this study that they are subjected to a power that is beyond their reach and at this particular

moment in time they are helpless to alter the path that NCLB has placed before them. NCLB has kept them in a state of fear, anxiety, stress, and overburdened with maintaining AYP. These teachers do not have the time or energy to fight the system and their wish is to be able to close their classroom door to the mandates of NCLB and just teach.

Using Foucault to analyze NCLB, the institution of school, and teachers' altered pedagogical practices provided a bridge to connect the federal government's power over teachers. Individuals through the technologies of discipline are subjected to power through time, space and movement. The participants in this research unknowingly wove their narratives around these themes and I found this piece of the research fascinating.

Foucault's examination is the high-stakes test. At no other time in history has one examination been the focus of so much dissent, contempt, conversation, and attempted litigation by school districts to prove this test unconstitutional, and a method to normalize teachers and students into docile bodies that do not have the means at this time to break out of this situation. Foucault's interpretation of the examination to rank schools as "at risk" based on punitive measures is powerful.

Surveillance by the federal government brings to mind a picture of those in power standing in a tower in Washington, D.C. surveying teachers and schools through mediated test scores keeping teachers visible at all times. It is noted here that the participants are aware of this surveillance but feel helpless to worry about the effects.

Implications of Results

Most teachers do not go into the profession of education to ensure that students pass a stringent high-stakes test, to brace against their school being deemed “at risk” nor should scores not follow a formula based on percentage of growth. I suggest that most teachers wish to provide students with an engaging curriculum in an inquiry-based classroom. Education reform must be driven by a far broader vision than it has been in recent years. Today, standardized testing threatens the autonomy and democracy of teaching. Rather than creating a classroom of hope, teachers of today are faced with less autonomous ways of teaching and a feeling of helplessness to alter their situation. Christensen and Karp (2003) state, “The effort to rethink our classrooms must be visionary and practical: visionary, because we need to go far beyond the prepackaged formulas and narrow agendas now being imposed on our schools and classrooms” (p, 4).

Federal and state mandates have altered the way teachers teach. According to Darling-Hammond (1997):

Teaching practice that succeeds in developing deep understanding of challenging content for a wide range of learners is highly complex: it maintains dialectic between students and subjects, allowing neither to overwhelm the other. Such teaching presses for mastery of content in ways that enable students to apply their learning and connect it to her knowledge as they develop proficient performances in the field of study. (p. 12)

This kind of teaching is purposeful and highly structured but at the same time improvisational. Darling-Hammond goes on to say that standardized testing should not deter teachers from best practices in the classroom. I wholeheartedly agree with the

above quote and it eloquently relates the intricate processes of teaching. I chose this quote because the participants of this study exemplify the qualities cited. However, NCLB had not been enacted when Darling-Hammond wrote this and thirteen years later the results are clear. Standardized testing ultimately deterred the teachers in this study from employing best practices.

Critical theory calls for action to expose and alter the hegemony and forces that subjugate individuals. The following recommendations to turn power in on itself to place the institution of school into a space of democratic practices that reverse the hegemony of the federal government are as follows:

1. State and local districts, administrators, policy-makers, and teachers need to vocalize the injustices and deplorable conditions which NCLB has fostered. Each of these entities needs to make a commitment to pursue what is right and just for teachers and schools.
2. Teachers need to be intimately involved with teacher unions to aid in the fight for the rights of teachers. Personally, I have never been a fan of teacher unions as I do not care for the protection of ineffective teachers. However, listening to Dr. Bill Ayers at the 2009 national convention of the American Association of Teaching and Curriculum held in Dallas, Texas altered my thinking about the effect of every teacher becoming politically active in the unions. Admittedly, I was taken aback by this statement because of my distrust of the union. After much thought about this idea, I came to the conclusion that this might very well be the most effective way to push teachers to become advocates for change.

3. Academic research needs to be taken out of the confines of the institution and offered to the public.
4. Teacher educators should prepare future teachers to be advocates for their profession.

Recommendations for Further Research

I felt that this study went relatively well; however if I were to replicate it there are a few changes I would make. First, I would increase the sample size and interview the participants throughout the school year. Secondly, in hindsight I would integrate Paulo Freire's, *Peagogy of the Oppressed*, with Foucault's *Birth of the Prison*. This may have added another dimension of how power relates to knowledge. Lastly, I would have included John Dewey's theories of education which would have promoted progressive education reform.

I would recommend future studies which would address the following:

1. How do elementary students perceive the high-stakes test taken at the end of the year?
2. How do elementary students characterize their time in a classroom?
3. How do principals and superintendents perceive federal involvement in schools and the relationship to teacher practices in a classroom?
4. How do student teachers view the space of an elementary classroom bound by a high-stakes test?
5. How do parents perceive high-stakes testing?

6. How do media contribute to the perceptions that schools and teachers are in need of repair?

Narrative research is an ongoing hermeneutic or interpretive process. The research starts when choosing the stories to tell and proceeds through during the entire research process. Both the researcher and the researched participate in the process. The interpretation does not end with the finished research report. According to Moen (2006), the final narrative opens for a wide range of interpretations by others who read and hear about the report. Ultimately, this narrative research will be interpreted by other audiences and is open to differing viewpoints.

As this research was being completed, there has been an explosion of media attention on the nature of America's schools. The rhetoric is the same. America's schools are in shambles and our nation is threatened by mediocrity. Much has been offered about America lagging behind other countries in mathematics and science. The National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) began a series of broadcasts titled *Education Nation*. A town hall meeting was aired by NBC that included an audience of teachers and a panel that included the president of the American Federation of Teachers, and others invested in education. This storm of media attention was precipitated by the release of a documentary, *Waiting for Superman*. At this time, I have not viewed the documentary but the media touts it as an expose of four students in an urban area that wait anxiously for their lottery ticket to a charter school. According to the media, schools are negatively portrayed and a cry for reform is heard.

Foucault (1977, 1995) ends his book with:

In this central and centralized humanity, the effect and instrument of complex

power relations, bodies and forces subjected by multiple mechanisms of
“incarceration”, objects for discourses that are in themselves elements for this
strategy, we must hear the distant roar of battle. (p. 308)

Perhaps the roar is not so distant regarding the battle for public education as a place
where teachers have the right and dignity to be treated as true professional.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

The Participants' Stories

Darcie's Story

Well, the testing. I think that what I feel about it is that there should be some sort of testing but I think that it should be used as a tool to see how the child has progressed or learned from one year to the next or throughout that school year, what concepts they need interventions for. I feel like the test is not used in that way as much as it should be. We use it, you know for that, but I feel like there is so much weight preparing for the test and getting ready for the test that it, as a teacher, you don't have time to do the other things I feel like are important in the classroom. Like, because we are teaching to a test basically anymore, we do not have time for hands-on-exploration and free thinking, discovery, and that sort of thing which is so important.

You know, there is so much pressure put on us and especially here at this school. We have made a 1500 Annual Yearly Progress (APY) score for the last three years. [1500 is a perfect score or 100% proficiency in reading and math according to the mandates set by NCLB] That is all fine and great, but there is a lot of stress involved in that, not only on the teacher's part but on the student's part, parents and everyone. It is good. It is something to be proud of, but at the same time it comes with a price. The price is for everybody. I think the teachers feel the stress a lot. A lot of parents of course here will say that they don't really like the fact that so much emphasis is put on the test, but those same parents are the ones wanting to know where their child scored. The price is the preparation that has to go towards making sure they are ready for that test and all of the Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS) skills are mastered and all the

interventions that have to go into, like if they don't pass their concepts and benchmarks then you are spending, well I tutor after school four days a week. About one-half of my students stay and I try to hit those skills that they didn't pass on their benchmarks. We used to get Title I money and we still are a Title I school, but right now we are being paid for tutoring through a Native American Tribe. Third, fourth, and fifth grades were allotted like thirty hours from January through April. So I started to tutor in February.

It's easy to tell you what I have had to give up because of the testing. In fourth grade that would be social studies first and then science. Even though I do science every day, I don't do as many experiments and I just don't delve into it as deep as I used to because of time constraints mostly. Not at least until the end of the year.

I do look at the tests to see if there is a pattern that my kids as a whole as a class scored low in so that I can maybe improve on that for next year. And I think that teacher accountability that way is good on the testing and I think it keeps a teacher focused but at the same time there is just a price because again as I said there is just too much emphasis on the scores. A test should not be the end all to be all. It should be used as a tool and I feel that since NCLB the test is the focus.

There is a great deal of stress I feel because of the time restraint but a lot of that comes from me because I am very goal-oriented and I try to pace myself throughout the school year and just know where I have got to be by April 15th. I'm sure the kids feel that stress. Because, instead of working on a play or working on something fun, or maybe even doing an art project of something that could be educational and be fun at the same time, you skip that. Because all of a sudden you feel like I need to reteach this concept in math and reviewing but then, you know, doing a lot of hands-on type of things or more

fun type things, or even afternoons we are so hooked in one hundred percent of the time to the test most of the time. That wears on everybody. You try really hard to remember that kids learn in different ways and they need to get up and they need to move but at the same time I am like I have got thirty minutes to teach this concept and I do not have time to put every child in their learning modality and teach that way.

We have given up all recesses except one which is for thirty minutes at noon. I know that the students need to get up and move around and usually the way I have my class structured, we try to get as much done in the morning as possible and then in the afternoons sometimes I can let them move about or work in groups or let them get around the room and not just stuck to their seats. That is helpful but it is still, you know, I am just waiting for the circle to come back the way it was fifteen years ago. The reform circle. But I am afraid that it is not ever going to be the way that it used to be. You know, I didn't think that a few years ago but now I am beginning to really feel like we are going down a slippery slope and I don't see, I don't see it ever moving back to what it used to be. I think it will continually change but I think we are on a path that, it is just the structure of the school and how we have our school system set up. I have a feeling we are going to have to change drastically. I don't think that it will always be for the good of everybody.

The idea that every third grader will be one hundred percent proficient in reading and math basically says that there are no differences in children. You are going to have to make them the same and in reality that is not going to be the case. I mean, it kind of scares me to think what is going to happen to make that the case. Because you are going to always have one or two children that you have to do interventions with. They need

that extra help and to say that they are all going to, you know, be proficient? They come from different backgrounds. They come from different experiences. There are different things going on in people's lives and they can't, they just don't always, you know, fall into that square box. I don't know how that is going to be possible whether they change the tests or the workings of the school to make that possible.

I just don't think it is right to expect every eight or nine year old to be on the same level doing exactly the same work. Because I wouldn't even want it to be that way. I mean it would be wonderful in a perfect world that every child could read at the same level but I've been teaching for twenty-seven years and there are always kids that need extra help so what magical thing is going to happen at a certain date to change that!

I hate to be negative like that but it's just what I am seeing right now. I am not real happy with it. And you have to realize too in the last week we have been told there's going to be no more substitutes because of money. I know of a lot of teachers who go to school sick because they don't want a substitute because of working towards the test. But now there are no subs. Also, we aren't testing K-2 students this year because we don't have the money for it.

We were all talking the other day that since NCLB there has been less and less attention to gifted children and to kids who need enrichment. Every bit of your strength and effort throughout the day is doing interventions trying to bring kids up to where they are supposed to be. Then there are those kids that need enrichment, and I sat on the gifted and talented committee for ten years, and it makes me really, really sad because things in that area have changed so much that I don't see those kids getting the kind of enrichment they need. We had to give up the gifted and talented and Spanish program

because of money. I think students can go on a Saturday morning for enrichment, but hello! We have one student this year in particular that is so bored. They dropped the gifted and talented program and they are not being served. Those are our leaders and our kids who are thinking outside the box and should be nurtured and I don't see it being done right now.

The thing that gives me the most joy on a daily basis is doing that hard work with students and having light bulb moments. It's the reward at the end. Looking at your career, I would say that the thing that really is rewarding is running into kids years later, and they come up and say you were my favorite teacher or I remember this activity. Or they come and see you and tell you little stories that you completely forgot about and the things that happened in the class. But the last five to ten years, what are they going to look back on and say and see about my class or elementary school? I know that this sounds foreboding but it used to be just so different. You could stop in the middle of something and just really talk about things or get off track and have fun moments and that thing just doesn't happen anymore and now you are just constantly trying to stay on target. I think that I don't do a lot of the activities and fun things that take up so much time that I used to do. I think what are they going to look back at and remember as something that was really fun?

I wonder if even the way we teach how much they are really assimilating. How much depth is really going into that knowledge? It feels very surfacey to me. There is just so much to cover in a short amount of time and I feel like instead of teaching something to the best quality that you can and as deep as you can, you are just getting through as much material as you can to pass a test.

Right now I just feel so much pressure and now there are so many committees that have nothing to do with teaching. There are committees for everything and there is just so much time taken just to keep your classroom ready for teaching. I know that I am sounding like a typical teacher right now complaining about extra things that you have to do. There are a lot of things that could go away that are being implemented that I feel like is not necessary. There has been more and more piled upon you with the addition of NCLB and the structure of the test and really no monetary rewards or pats on the back. Well, I don't really care about monetary rewards. It's just coming to school feeling good every day and not feeling that lump in your throat and that stress that you know what you've got to face to get through the day.

I did not have that feeling before NCLB, not to the point where it is now. If you are a good teacher you are always going to have concerns for kids and getting them through the curriculum but now I feel like my hands are tied. You don't have that freedom in your classroom. You just have to stay so focused every single day and not veer off. With the mandates that are placed on us, you don't have the freedom as much as you used to because you have to teach those PASS skills and you have to make sure that the children are familiar with the format of the test questions. There is a lot of testing through the year too. You have three benchmark tests a year and other testing in between not including the high-stakes testing at the end of the year. I feel like we are testing on something all of the time. This limits a lot of teachers in their creativity. You just don't do a lot of hands-on things because you have just too much to cover.

Sometimes you get kids who you have to go clear back to second grade and teach regrouping and that puts you on a timeline restraint for the rest of the year. I have to go

back and teach things that they should already know coming into fourth grade. I'm finding that to be more the case in the last few years. I think that things are just being taught on the surface, short-term memory. I am finding out more and more that they don't know their multiplication facts and that is taught in third grade. Even things in reading like genre, main idea or whatever and it makes you begin to wonder. You hate to say it out loud but it is teaching to a test and not depth of knowledge.

Since we only have one teacher in one grade level, you are the responsible one for your grade level and we have made Annual Performance Index (API) of 1500 for the last three years and it is bound to happen sooner or later that we can't achieve that every year because of different students. Once you meet it, it's stressful to try to make it again and not go down. I think it will be harder next year because they have changed criteria. They are doing that because so many of us were making it, more that they thought.

To be honest with you, if we could take NCLB, throw it away, and go back to the way things were ten years ago. I would do it in a second!! It's just not worth it. There is a lot of guilt attached to that score.

As to surveillance, I know that it is there but I try not to pay attention to it. This past year there was an article in the local newspaper focusing on the two schools here in town that made the perfect scores. That made us really uncomfortable in this school. Then there were the stories going around that we have all of the rich kids, or that we somehow cheated and other teachers were not happy with our success. I would have preferred that it not be posted in the paper but I can't dwell on it. Big brother is everywhere and I just don't have time to worry about it.

Hannah's Story

I don't think that I have ever left a child behind! I've been a delegate to the NEA Convention for the past few years. Obama was elected in 2008, so I started in 2007. We were in Philadelphia for the Convention and Obama came in and spoke. We heard Hillary Clinton and we had like eight different candidates there for president and only one was Republican. But the next year after Obama was elected, we had a huge political rally in Los Angeles with those plastic noise-bangers. Obama was in Iowa but he talked to us on the big screen. Since then Obama and his Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, have done some things that NEA is not really happy with at all and a lot of it is still tying test scores to the reauthorization piece. In this thing it talks about a push for alternate compensation systems that are linked to student achievement which is more like merit pay.

We have talked about this at school because last year our principal gave the class that did the best on the test's average of the math and reading scores a pizza party. I told him that is going to open a...that is a slippery slope. That is eventually going to come down to parents saying I want my kid in that teacher's class because they got the pizza party last year for better scores. It could lead to a teacher saying, I don't want that special education kid in my classroom because he'll keep our class from having that pizza party. I am going to suggest that if they want to they can give a pizza party to the class that shows the best growth. I even think that equating a pizza party to that is not good. It opens the door to so many things and closes the door to collegiality. Who wants to share stuff?

We are going next year to self-contained classrooms for the very first time. I have never taught a self-contained classroom. The kids will be with a homeroom teacher. So now, there will be one instructor responsible for scores in math and reading, rather than the combination of teachers when we were departmentalized. Now, one teacher will be accountable for scores in math and reading at each grade level.

Testing is from the beginning to the end of the school year, even when we are done with the high-stakes testing in the spring we just start working on another set of tests, getting them ready. We do extra testing in the spring and we do another type of test in the fall and spring. Before NCLB came we had some testing but we also had performance-based scores for project-based testing.

But we used to have other types of assessments like performance-based. I helped score the testing for some sixth grade projects that were not just paper and pencil tests. These sixth graders did a unit on the Greek civilization and they dressed up and gave oral reports and that was a part of their assessment. It was so cool but we have gone totally away from any performance-based testing for any kind of evaluation tool and I think that is so wrong. I think kids learn so much from projects. Of course it is hard to evaluate but still I am so much opposed to any kind of compensation linked to test scores. Like merit pay. That is a no go for me. Anything that smacks of merit pay and I think the pizza party smacks of merit pay.

Anyway, the testing today that we do takes everybody. You have to have something that drives the mindset and the philosophy that you are part of a team of teachers, parents, community members, and you have the backing of administrators. We need the superintendent and principal saying we want everybody involved. We stopped

departmentalizing math when we realized that one person teaching the entire math would take the hit. That wasn't safe. We identified that as something that had to change because at one time one person was teaching the math because they loved math. That is their forte. But it was not safe for that person. Also, one person teaching science in fourth grade was not safe for Andrea who was teaching all of the science and that is her love and passion. We just said you can't do it and take the hit for all of it.

Reading is already taken care of with Success for All (SFA) in reading. We all do that in our own classrooms. It is a ninety minute period and it is a sacred time with no interruptions including getting drinks or going to the bathroom. Now if they are doing the bathroom dance, I let them go but for the most part if you keep them engaged that is the farthest thing from their mind. On test days, on day five of the rotation, I let them as a special privilege on testing day, they have twenty minutes between tests, they can go to the bathroom and most of them go at least once or twice. You can't fault them for wanting to get up!

During the SFA testing, we all have a different schedule, so we have ninety minutes to ourselves and the test generally takes an hour. That gives us an extra thirty minutes to ourselves. We premeditate and I ask the students if they want to go on a thirty minute walk either before or after the test. They are like, are you serious? So we usually do that during the SFA test. It doesn't cost anything and they love it. They work hard and play hard. This year we did something different that was wonderful. We told them they could bring a good luck charm during the test. I told them they could bring anything they want but they could only have it during the test. Even the boys brought something like a teddy bear. I also told the parents to write encouraging words and that Hallmark

had cards that they gave to parents free that encouraged their child to do well on the test. During Parent-Teacher conferences in the spring I tell the parents about the cards. I tell them to plan a special breakfast during the testing and a celebratory dinner after testing. Also, I tell them if they want to argue with their spouse to do it all they want, but NOT before the test.

I think that one of the criminal things about testing that we have to go through is the fact that we spend, like for our math testing, it is three hours, three different days. They're just sitting in a testing situation and quiet, these nine and ten year olds. It is so out of...we don't do that any other time during the year. It just kills me. Most adults couldn't do it. I don't think I could do it. Then to watch those little ones because it is all on computer now and I get to go in as we always keep two certified teachers in the classroom when we are testing. One of us is the proctor because it is safe for us. That way there is someone to go get help for the computers or to say that I didn't go sit there and help that little English Speaker of Other Languages (ESOL) girl on the test.

I had two ESOL's this year and one of them came to me from Venezuela and she was a non-English speaker when she moved here in January and this year she met standard. But she was under so much pressure, self imposed, parent imposed, not certainly from me. I was, just do your best darling. But she suffered through that test. It was agonizing to watch her. She was under a lot of stress.

Our AYP is up so high now. It is in the upper 80% for both math and reading and we are pretty sure that we aren't going to make it this year. You have to improve so much each year and when you are up in the 80s, I mean how realistic is it? It's the economic law of diminishing returns. It is a law. Eventually, you are going to get to the

point where you can't get any better. After you have scored 100% on the test...how do you show improvement? So, if a child scores 100% in third grade, like we have three kids who scored 100% in math last year in third grade. If they score 100% this year, they have no gain. If they score a 99%, 98%, 97%, 96%, they are in the top 10%...the top 5%...and they have lost ground and it looks like they have failed. Now how much sense does that make?

George and his friends. There were no educators on that bill. I know that. Where was the National Educators' Association (NEA)? I am sure NEA was beating down the door. The federal government is using funding to leverage us and that Race to the Top that Arne Duncan is putting together. I have no problem with rewarding schools that are achieving, but I have a huge problem with taking money away from schools that aren't. You know, when someone is down and out, you don't take their paycheck away from them. The ones who make the laws think they know about education because everybody went to school so everybody thinks that they can teach. It is just like anybody who has played sports thinks that they can coach. Now, there is no aura of mystery about education because everybody has been involved in that. To the rank and file...for someone to say, well I could do that brain surgery, is ludicrous. Or someone to go to court and plea someone out so that they don't get the needle. But there is no mystery in education and I think that is a crime because people, just the regular Joe Blow on the street, thinks that he knows how to solve the problem. And all of those damn Republicans think, and if I'm stepping on your toes, sorry. But they think that we are not using everything and the legislature does not understand the big picture. They think we should be able to continue to do what we have always done with nothing new or nothing more.

When you think of the role of technology in schools and how far behind we still are in schools...what is it that they don't get?

You know, (anonymous name) lives on Facebook and he is barely literate enough to turn the computer on and yet he is helping to make decisions for us for funding education. [She is speaking about a board member] There has been a long history of that. What changes? Why are we still on an agrarian calendar? Why are we? I don't get it. When I talk to my parents about year-round school, they look at me shocked for a minute. I said we need to change it up a little bit. Go to school for nine weeks, off for a couple of weeks. They are off too long and we spend so much time reviewing and getting them back into the swing of things. But nobody wants to change. They start talking about what would happen to summer ballgames and babysitting, cha ching, cha ching. Lots of schools all over the United States do it. Seriously, how many kids are really still working at the farm in the summer?

I don't know why the wheels of progress creak so excruciatingly slow in education. I don't understand it especially when we are so smart. But think about it. In the 60s and 70s when I started teaching, women couldn't wear slacks at school. At my first school, I had to produce a marriage license. My husband didn't. Women in town were not allowed to go into [name of bar and grill]. The kids could go in but not the school teachers. It was a negative to be politically active. So, I think there have been a lot of thumbscrews placed on our profession just because of who we are. It was really looked down upon by administrators to be politically active and I think that helped the union become even stronger because we had to join a union to get our voices heard. It used to be viewed as subversive to be active or to talk about who you would like on the

school board. It is getting better but you still have to be really careful. You don't argue back too much. You don't want to be viewed as a Norma Rae.

I'll tell you some of the things I used to do before NCLB. I had gone to Peru to the rainforest and when I came back I attended a Bill Martin workshop on whole language. I had been to paradise and wanted to share that with my class so we did a rainforest unit. It was a whole language thematic unit. We actually built a rainforest. We made butterflies, lianas, and birds with feathers. It was an unbelievable learning experience for the kids...I haven't done that since then.

In January, we call it "Ham"uary and everybody had a pig name. We spoke in Pig Latin and we had Pigcasso's gallery. We included all of these pig things into the curriculum. I haven't done that since. And, oh, we had the haunted house of history where the kids dressed up and read a biography and then gave a first person report. During Halloween, we decorated the room with lights and stuff. Haven't done that in a while. Time is of the essence and we have to teach those standards and benchmarks. Now once you become familiar with the standards and benchmarks, you can pretty much teach them how you want, but actually devoting a day to just decorate the room like a rainforest...we can't do it anymore. You have to show videos that have some kind of a relationship to the standards. Everything has to be tied back to the standards. Really, that is just the name of the game. But when Joe comes down and sees me playing a ukulele in my classroom, he'll go; now I know that you can tie that to some standard. And I go, you bet I can! Do you want to know which one? He goes, no. No. I really appreciate Joe. He thinks everybody is instrumental to the success of our school.

You know, third grade. No one wants to be a third grade teacher or a fourth or fifth because they know your head is on the chopping block. Everybody wants to be K-2 because they don't have to worry about testing. But in our school, everyone worries about testing. Everybody knows what has to happen and this year we did something really cool. We were so nervous about meeting AYP so we formed a committee of teachers and had an academic pep rally. It was hilarious. We danced and the kids were howling and laughing and then we buddied up with a classroom that wasn't being tested. Like the fourth graders were buddies with the second graders and they wrote encouraging words. They came down and gave us high fives and they made posters for our walls. They did all kinds of stuff to show that they cared about the kids. We went to a lot of work in preparation for the test but we went through a lot of motivation too. It was like getting ready for the Super Bowl but it was the Academic Super Bowl!

And, is that terrible? Is it sad that we have to do those kinds of things? Well, that is just the way it is. So, are you going to sit there and go, this is just not right, or are you just going to suck it up and do it? You don't want to be on the bad list. My school doesn't want to be on the bad list. I don't know what our AYP is going to be this year. It's coming up and it's like oh crap! Every school at some point is going to be on the bad list. It's like the pole vaulter and I told the kids, no matter how hard that pole vaulter tries, eventually they are going to get to the point where the pole is too high to jump. You just can't do it. Like the limbo thing. Eventually the limbo stick is going to be so low you can't go under it.

It is so unrealistic that every one of our third graders is going to be 100% proficient in reading and math. I don't think George put that in there because I don't

think he really got it. It was probably one of his cronies. I hope that it starts to go the other way on accountability. You have to have hope. I think that educators in general are the half-full cups. We don't look at our kids every year that are coming in going, forget this. We are always trying to save the world. Here's the deal. The Peace Corp generation is leaving the classroom. We are getting to the point where the light is no longer dim at the end of the tunnel. It is shining brightly. We are streaming to it by the thousands. We have a generation of teachers coming in that are not like us. They are mercenary. They are if you want me to stay past 3:15, pay me. I don't think they have the heart. They are different and I shouldn't say all of them. I see hope for some of them. But how many of them are going to stick to it and constantly be getting the waves crashing in before they finally go and say forget this. I don't know. I don't want to think about it. All I want to think about doing everything that I can while I am still in my classroom for my kids.

I do have stress but it doesn't affect my relationship with my husband because we balance out our stress with each other. But it does carry over into my sleeping and eating. It carries over into the fact that on weekends I just go unconscious. I have no desire to do anything but sleep. I guess it does affect me.

We thought we had done the right thing when we backed Barack Obama. We thought this is the guy that is going to be the common sense, the understanding. But I have serious concerns about his Race to the Top. We are disappointed and will just have to see what changes are made. I still have hope.

Angela's Story

I have taught for six years so I started after NCLB had been in place. I felt like NCLB was a great thing in the beginning. The idea is fabulous because I remember being in high school and hearing of people graduating from Oklahoma University that couldn't read. They were getting through in sports, athletically, but they were getting through college. I remember thinking that is absolutely terrible. Since I've been teaching, I don't know how a child gets even to third grade and can't read. That absolutely blows my mind and I get them and I will be going, oh my goodness, these kids are kindergarten level readers and can't read. How is this happening? Especially now because of NCLB.

The reason I think that it is a positive thing is because it made us very accountable to make sure if these kids can read or not. Some kids struggle in math but there are calculators, but if you can't read, you are going to struggle your whole life. I think it is wonderful that we are getting to these kids. Every kid is supposed to be, according to NCLB, they are supposed to be able to read before they leave third grade and be fluent readers. I see it as a positive thing. I think what has happened is they weren't sure how to mandate it and so they chose testing as a way. You know they have several ways of testing. We use the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) to test fluency and I understand that is a good tool. But sometimes I have children that just read a little bit slower but have fabulous comprehension.

I also feel sometimes like the DIBELS is saying if you can't read this many words in one minute, you know, you're a failure and we are putting you in this category. That is almost like telling kids to go to the park and you have to run a lap in so many seconds or we are sitting you over there. Some kids, they can walk the lap fine, they can't run it. I

think that we need better means of testing. They have gone overboard on testing. That is what they have done. I feel like a child should have several different, at least three ways of testing a child on reading before you decide what kind of help that they need. Do they need help? I have a child this year that reads fluently well. We are surprised. She does a really good job because she is ESOL but she doesn't comprehend what she is reading. The boy that sits next to her reads about thirty words a minute. Very slow for third grade but he can tell you everything he read. If I read a book to him he can tell me everything, every detail that I read to him. She can't. So, one thing with NCLB, you really have to get to know your kids to find out...what do they need? Do they need fluency? Do they need comprehension? Do they need phonics? Where are they? When they come to us in third grade and they still need phonics, that's a huge red flag. They should be able to sound out words. Really, I think NCLB depends on how you use it. I see it as my job. These kids have to read before they leave my classroom. I don't see it as a negative thing. I just think we have pushed them a little too far with the testing.

That is what says if we are a good teacher or not. If our kids can all pass the state testing. I do feel the accountability on teachers. Our scores were published in the newspaper this year because we made a perfect AYP score of 1500. Of course I like it if we are doing well! Everybody has access to the scores on the web anyway. It is like being under surveillance, but at the same time, I know that I have access to that and I would look at a school's scores if my grandchildren were going to that school. That is sad, but that is what I would probably base an opinion on. Who is academically doing what we say they are supposed to do. But, how do you know that is really what kids are totally needing, just passing the tests.

I do have third graders that aren't on a third grade level, no matter what you do. It is not realistic that all third graders will be 100% proficient in reading for two reasons. One, if I get a child in my classroom and I see that there is some discrepancies that they're on a first grade reading level in third grade, I work with them and I start doing lots of things with them to try to get them up there. If I can't, that is when I check with our psych-based person that tests the children to see if they qualify for an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Every year that I have taught, I have found at least two that qualified for IEPs. Again, I say, why are they just now getting this done in third grade? This should have happened in first grade.

Those kids will be okay because we found there is a discrepancy. There is a learning disability and they're going to be okay. Secondly, the next children that I am going to talk about are the ones that really bother me. These are the children that are getting left behind. This has happened to me the last two years and I was very frustrated as a teacher. I have a student that is the lowest in my classroom in both reading and math. They test them because their Intelligence Quotient (IQ) level is low and they say they are performing to their IQ level so there is no discrepancy so they don't need an IEP. You just shuffle them through. I go, wait a minute! If they have a low IQ, they don't deserve help? They are basically saying those children will never do well and they are probably always going to perform on a first or second grade level, but you want me to test them on third grade level, next year fourth grade level, and next year on a fifth grade level? They are going to get to eighth grade and never pass that reading test. In [state named] you have to pass a reading test to get your driver's permit. I don't know

what the answer to that is and I don't know how that is happening or why. I am very frustrated. Those are the children being left behind.

I would love to know who all wrote NCLB and how many of them were teachers in a classroom? I want to know how many of them were there and wrote it. I also want to know how many did it. Who wrote it? Was it just legislation that wanted something new? I know when it was written that Mrs. Bush taught in schools. I think she was a librarian. She was probably seeing a lot of kids coming in to the library that couldn't read and I think that is where it all started. But, I would love to know WHO wrote it.

You know, I think they need more educators involved in the decision making. It is always from the top and we need to listen to teachers. It is time consuming, though. I wouldn't know how to begin with laws. I have found that sometimes in teaching you are one of the last one to know things about your students or what is going on. That was a shock to me when I first started teaching. My philosophy right now is just close the door and let me teach!

It is so frustrating that I cannot teach more science and social studies because I have to do so much reading and math. I'm getting better at using reading for social studies and science, but reading and math are top priority. We used to have an art teacher that came once a week and we don't have the Spanish teacher come any more either. I try to bring in some Spanish but I don't know a lot about art. Honestly, I don't have the time because I know that I have to get my reading and math in. At the beginning of the year you can do a lot of hands-on science but the second semester when you come back from Christmas you know you have so many weeks before testing. Then that is all you hear.

Oh my goodness. It is extremely stressful. You are exhausted and you know which kids are struggling. You try to fix it. You stay after school to tutor them. You give up your lunch to tutor them and then you just give them a test. And that's what it comes to? I have seen students get frustrated and cry, but I am not seeing that as much anymore. What I am seeing are kids that aren't afraid or worried about the testing anymore that much. I am starting to see some apathy. So what? It is a test! One huge thing I am noticing, which has gotten worse every year, has been behavior and discipline. I am trying to narrow it down to if it's just society, which has a huge role, or are we bringing this discipline problem on because we are so focused on testing and they are pushed so much?

I get stressed but I don't know how these young women with babies, having babies do it. I look at them and think there is absolutely no way I could have done it. Absolutely. I don't know how they do it. They are so strong. This year, I could actually see some of the stress leave because the district is not testing K-2. This is the first year our district is doing that but they don't have the money. This is what's funny. I just saw the looks on those teachers' faces. It was a totally different atmosphere in here. The whole building! I felt so good for those teachers. Kindergarten, oh my goodness. Babies bubbling in circles. What's the point? What IS the point? The only question I have is if they can read and those teachers can tell me that.

Another thing that is going on is we do Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) tests on the computer for math and reading levels. I tell my kids before we get in there, if you don't hit at this level, you are going to have to go to our programs, our reading programs, which are during lunch, before school, after school, so it motivates

them to try really hard to give me what they can give. I have a boy this year and I know he is a good reader, but every time we go in there to test, he doesn't care. He'll get a low score and he has to go the programs and I know that he is a good reader. As a matter of fact, I had him and some others on the front row because you know which ones to put on the front row to keep an eye on. I was watching him and he wasn't reading the stories twice like I asked. He wasn't underlining, going back and forth, and finding answers. I noticed that he was doing it and the principal just happened to walk in and I go...I pointed at him and he finished the test in her office. Sometimes they just don't care.

Susie's Story

This is my thirty-second year of teaching and I have been at the same school and in the same grade for the whole time. If I'm an expert on anything, I guess it would be the ten year old. I lived through the era of minimum competency testing. Yeah. If you just barely do this. If you could be barely competent, then we're fine so I thought NCLB would be good. I'm a Libra...you never want me on a jury because I see all sides of all issues. I really do and my first reaction of NCLB was there can be nothing wrong with an initiative that puts education at the forefront, bipartisan. I think Kennedy was involved with it in the beginning with Bush so it's a bipartisan deal with putting education in front and that's a good start. What's happened to NCLB, in my opinion, is funding. It has affected what they think up there and I think even Kennedy from the beginning said it's time to do it now, but will we have the funds to sustain what our goal is between right now and what 2014?

I'm not a mathematician or statistician at all, but in reality, we don't have a control group for NCLB with this mandate. So, you don't know how we would have been without it. I think standards are good even though each state has their own and can give their own tests. But, when you're talking about high-stakes testing, that's the part that I have a little trouble with. The assessment piece. It has changed teachers, especially the new teachers coming in, maybe not me so much. I try to tell them that you can teach standards not tests. I signed on, as I hope everybody did, to teach kids not curriculum. We teach children – you don't teach the curriculum and you're teaching them for life, not for the state testing.

I do think there's pressure on old time teachers, you read horror stories they're getting rid of old-time teachers, but I'm close. But my test scores have always been in the frame of what I think they should know. Next year we have to make 87% or something like that...we're like 84% right now. That's getting pretty high with a lot of children. You know, has any good teacher ever left a child behind? It's just how we're monitoring what's left behind too like academically. Academically, these are pretty high standards, but there are children that even if they don't reach the high academic standards and are not left behind in all the other things that make good people and good students and those types of things.

How do you make a perfect assessment for that? You can't. There's just one test out there right now and it's the one they publicize and it's the one they let people see. That is a good thing about NCLB that I see but it can be a double-edged sword. You should let them know everything going on...not just test scores. I want the parents to be involved and I think we have to communicate with our parents and I do. I have good

conferences and I let parents know what those scores mean. I show them their gain score, their reading and math scores. I communicate to the parents that not all scores are publicized and that they are not the end all and be all.

You find that a lot of parents are really interested in that test score and they want their children to do well, but usually those are the parents of students that are doing well. It's the ones we worry about more often when the parents aren't sometimes educated enough to know that this is not good. Then sometimes those students get accommodations by the time they are in fourth grade, if they haven't done well in third grade testing. Then again, is that a true picture of the student? I don't know.

I know where my children are and if they need the test read to them or if they don't. I had a very needy group this year and the first day of the assessments it took ten adults to test my class because of all of the accommodations they needed. I had a child that was visually impaired that needed extra pencils and paper. To get that paper and pencils, she needed two adults on one child and I had three children with special needs, either English as a second language or learning disabilities that needed two adults for one student. I try to have the adults meet the students ahead of time but that's hard. Our faculty is good because I had the primary math teacher meet with this little girl. She is very volatile and that's the reason she is taking the test by herself. If she chooses to do well with you, she will...but if she doesn't like anything, she won't. So the primary math teacher met with her and had two or three lunches with her and the little girl got comfortable with her. It was an accommodation that she needed for the test and she was successful. But, it could have gone either way with ten-year olds. Their dog could die

the day before the tests. Literally! I've had kids that their dog died and they don't do well on the test because they are crying or they're sad.

You're always going to have someone academically at-risk. There are children that even no matter what accommodations we make; they might not make that test score. But, we are just going to do the best we can. I think the Multi-Tier Support System (MTSS) model has changed the delivery model so I think those children in the next few years might. Or whatever they call it. I know it's called Response to Intervention (RtI) in other states. Maybe we'll see a difference because these children have come to us with more individual help. But, some of the children right now, it's very difficult for me to see some of them make it.

One thing we've had to do is teach some tested indicators in math early because we use Saxon Math and we take the test in April. Some of the things like long division, or double-digit multiplication we have to teach it like in February because Saxon doesn't get to those until later. Our math people researched it and found that some of the skills taught in our math program don't come early enough in the program so we have what we call standard lessons. The kids know that this is "math standard day" or "Saxon Day."

Science is not involved with AYP yet so I've seen a change there. The primary teachers are doing more reading and math to prepare the students. So, they're doing less science and social studies because the time is not there...the world's equalizers. That's what we see so we have to go back in science and say, do you guys remember plants? Do you remember your experiments with plants and how sunlight affects them (laughter) you know, just things like that. They really haven't done any science so we just kind of review

stuff. We do it right before the test so if they see it on the test they'll think they remember it. Stuff like rocks and minerals although we've done nothing about it this year.

I alternate Social Studies and Science. That way I can get through the standards although not as in-depth as I used to. That's why I do the Route 66 unit. It's an interdisciplinary unit. It's project-based learning and from the beginning of the school year, I integrate it into every subject area. We walk in PE and figure out miles for math. We measure where we are in miles along Route 66 and we do a map. Then they figure out mean, median, and mode. We do literature, reading, and art with it. We do technology and I used to have them do their own PowerPoints but I have the media specialist do it now because of the lack of time. It's just that creative stuff. Now that I think about it there's something else I have to leave out. It's art. I love it and I still try to get it in but I used to do an artist of the month and I did a lot of activities.

I would like to see the curriculum opened back up again. I still think you're going to get reading and math. I could do more in-depth learning in the other subjects. There's not as much higher order learning and problem-solving has gone down in math because Saxon Math focuses so much on computation and you don't have time to put in problem-solving. Also, we have reduced our recess time to twenty minutes a day so that we can spend more time on skills for the test.

Probably of anybody at school, I get sicker than the kids during the state testing. It just upsets me that they're under that much stress and some of them take it better than others. I don't even like...Hey, Julie (Susie's sister). Do you like me during state testing very much (laughter)? Julie answers, "She's nuts during that time!"

I guess another thing I've noted because of NCLB is that we don't do as much with our gifted students. It has dummed us down a little bit. I don't do as much with them because I don't worry about them on the test. This year I had some very adamant parents and I have two new co-workers and I said I want those students with me so I can enrich them. These parents want this to happen and they were a very vocal group of parents and their rights should be heard. Like one mother even asked what the school would do if she took her kids out for state testing? I don't know if I would ever call her bluff? She has had some bad experiences with her little gifted boy because he was okay...and now he's not okay. I can see why teachers don't do as much with those "high flyers" because we're so stressed on the lower end. This year those parents came to me in the beginning and I made it work. I said I need to help those gifted students even if it had to be after school. The parents said they just didn't want their child sitting and reading a book while the teacher is working with students who need the extra help while their student was not being enriched in the subject areas.

Another thing that just came to mind is we have a little guy working here that I had in school and if we had been high-stakes testing when he was in school, he would not have made it. He is out here working and caring. He has two wonderful little children. He has a wonderful life and is doing well. He would never have done well on testing.

Well, even with all of this, I still try to teach standards and not just the test but now I see that there are lots of repercussions with the high-stakes testing. All I can do is my best under the circumstance.

Lily's Story

I have taught for thirteen years and I remember giving standardized tests before NCLB and I don't ever remember being stressed about the scores. We always looked at the scores and strengths and weaknesses but that was it. When NCLB started I was teaching at another school here in town and I don't care if you write this or not, but that was the worst situation I have ever been in. Our scores on the tests were even posted in the women's bathroom wall so everyone can see them. They were also put on a graph so all of us could see how each teacher's scores had gone down or up throughout the years. My scores weren't even graphed right! We tutored before school, during lunch, and after school. I know of some students there who did not get a recess all year long. We only had one recess at noon and if a student wasn't doing well they had to be tutored during lunch. Sometimes the students who got tutored didn't really need it. They just didn't score well on the STAR testing or the DIBELS. Sometimes kids just don't test well or don't try but they still have to go through remedial work anyway.

I am not teaching the way I used to teach. I just don't have the time to do some of the things I used to do because I have to make sure they can pass the test. The test that my fifth graders take is very difficult and you just have to make sure they know the stuff that is on that test. Social Studies is a big part of that test so I teach a lot of Social Studies. I would love to teach more science, and I do after the testing is over, but I love teaching hands-on science. We do have a science book that we go through but there just isn't any time for experiments. I wait until the testing is over and then I do some fun units and more science.

I finally asked the superintendent last year to please tell me that this is not going to go on forever and that this isn't really what she thinks teaching is. She said that she understood how I felt and that things could change. I'm waiting to see if she really believes that. I know it is hard for her too because our scores have to go up each year but this just can't be right. Our school has made a perfect score for the last three years. How is it possible that we can maintain that? Then our perfect score was published in the newspaper and that doesn't sit well with some of the other schools in town. You hear all kinds of comments like they must have cheated or they have all of the rich kids in town. The money that each teacher gets here for getting a perfect score is \$3,000. At the faculty meeting I suggested that we all split our money between every teacher in the district. It would have only been around \$30 per person but at least it would say we are all in this together. Nobody said a word. We took a lot of trash about getting a perfect score. I really wish that it hadn't been put in the newspaper.

We didn't test our K-2 students this year because the district didn't have the money for the testing. I was just over by the first and second grade room and I was overjoyed to see what they were doing. The first graders had math manipulatives out and were doing math. The second graders had globes out and were looking at countries. My son is in second grade and I am so happy that he didn't have to take the test this year. It has made all the difference in how he has learned this year. He is so smart and I've had to supplement his learning at home because he wasn't getting anything but stuff that was going to be on the test. That is where I am really stressed. I get stressed over taking the test and then I have to supplement his learning at home and take care of everything else.

You know, you should do a study about what happens to teachers and their spouse or significant other during the testing. Every year my husband and I have this big blow-up. I tell him I just can't take care of two young boys, teach, run them around, and do everything else and then make sure that my son gets enrichment at home because he doesn't get it at school. I love his teacher but she is in the same boat as everybody else here. Teach the skills that are going to be tested. There just isn't enough time for it all. I bet that there are a lot of teachers that have big blow-ups at home during the test.

Then I think about my students and the stress they are under to do well. I try really hard not to make it a big deal but you have to tell them to do their best. Then your counselor comes in and tells them how important it is to do well on the test this year. She told them that they wouldn't want to be the one to keep us from a perfect score. I just died for my students. Here I am trying to take some stress off of them and then she tells them that.

I had a little girl this year that told me about a dream she had last year. It was so cute the way she told it but it is really kind of sad. She said that she had a nightmare about the test being a monster that ate her up. What does that say about how the test affects students? I don't know. I always get this way during testing and I think I just can't do it anymore. Then it is over and you start all over again the next year. I just don't know.

VITA

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Dissertation: PERCEPTIONS OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS REGARDING
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Scope and Method of Study: The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of elementary teachers regarding how pedagogical decisions have been altered by high-stakes testing, No Child Left Behind, and how teachers view surveillance through testing. This was a qualitative study which involved six practicing elementary teachers with a range of teaching experience from six to thirty-two years. Data were collected through interviews and journal logs. Using narrative inquiry, hermeneutics, and critical theory, the data were analyzed through a Foucaultian framework.

Findings and Conclusions: Findings reveal that high-stakes testing, No Child Left Behind, accountability, and surveillance have adversely affected the participants' pedagogical decisions in the classroom. Using Foucault's categories of space, time, movement, the examination, docile bodies, and the normalization of subjects, themes emerged under the umbrella of Foucault's categories. Coding patterns revealed, "My main focus is reading and math," "I'm not teaching the way I want," "I'm leaving some children behind," "It's criminal to keep students in their seats all of the time," "I'm overwhelmed and stressed," "It seems we test all of the time," "Fear," "Following the herd," and "Making everyone the same. No Child Left Behind has profoundly affected the six participants" of what they consider good pedagogical practices. Analyzing the stories for "what was not said" led to themes of docile bodies and normalization of teachers.

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