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UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

PROFESSIONAL MORAL DEVELOPMENT IN STUDENT TEACHING: CONSTRUCTING AN ETHOS

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

By

MAYLAN DUNN
Norman, Oklahoma
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CONSTRUCTING AN ETHOS

A Dissertation APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ACADEMIC
CURRICULUM

BY

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ABSTRACT

Two case studies of the professional moral development of early childhood majors during the first eight weeks of their student teaching were reported. The case studies involved classroom and context observations, interviews (informal and semi-structured), videotapes of teaching, and the student teachers' reflective journals. In the first case, Amanda was primarily concerned with the construction of a teaching role during her first few weeks in the setting. Construction of a respected teacher role made it possible for her to expand her range of choice in teaching decisions, increasing her moral responsibility. During the entire study, Amanda demonstrated a preference for preserving relationships, sometimes holding truthfulness in abeyance to do so. She consistently explained her actions pragmatically and preserved relationships whether or not she felt empathy. Amanda was surprised by the situated nature of the problems she encountered, describing them as "messy and personal and everything all at once." In the second case, Julie's understanding of her responsibility to "put the child first" was challenged by the need to respect the values of families, the difficulty of setting appropriate expectations for children, and the necessity of curricular standards. However, the basic values of her moral understanding were strengthened by her ability to build trust in her relationships with children and sustain an open discourse during a collaborative project. Both student teachers had to grapple with unexpected uncertainty in their practice. Theoretical and practical implications were drawn from the cases. Questions were raised about the situated nature of professional moral development and how it varies across individuals and contexts.

"...we come inevitably to the subject of truth. There is nothing simple or easy about the idea. There is no 'the truth,' 'a truth' –truth is not one thing, or even a system. It is an increasing complexity. The pattern of the carpet is a surface. When we look closely, or when we become weavers, we learn of the tiny multiple threads unseen in the overall pattern, the knots on the underside of the carpet."

–Rich, 1979, p. 187

Chapter One

Every profession has unique moral and ethical problems that demand creative solutions in everyday practice. Teachers of young children are certainly no exception. While they face many challenges in their efforts to become more effective teachers who further the learning and development of their students, they are also faced with moral dilemmas and difficult decisions that have foreseeable consequences for children, parents, and others in the community. Some educators even contend that teaching is a professional practice that is moral by nature (Chang, 1994; Tom, 1984).

Certainly teachers have tremendous moral influence in their communities and particularly in the lives of children. Many of the things that teachers do in the course of their everyday professional lives have moral implications. Educators are responsible for educating children toward good citizenship, or civic moral responsibility (Strike, 1996). As children spend less time at home, teachers are also compelled to accept more of the child-rearing responsibilities that have traditionally been shouldered by parents, including discipline and moral guidance (Martin, 1992). Increasingly, curricular decisions are recognized as having moral and political implications (Apple & Weis, 1983; Beyer & Apple, 1988; Kessler & Swadener, 1992). Given these social expectations for teachers, it is unlikely that early childhood teachers can fulfill their professional responsibilities without a mature moral understanding and the ability to make responsible moral decisions.

For teachers of young children, moral problems are present in a number of overlapping and interactive arenas of conduct. Those arenas include: relationships

with children, colleagues, and parents; allocation of time and resources within the school community; expectations for individual children; numerous daily decisions concerning a vulnerable population; and moral agency in the lives of children. Each problem that emerges has its own set of complications. Often teachers must make decisions involving conflicting values. Their decisions will sometimes favor one child or family over another. The people to whom the teacher is responsible have different needs. Being a teacher means operating in a complicated social landscape in which problems and conflicts present themselves unexpectedly. How do new teachers begin to make sense of these complications, problems, and conflicts?

In order to study the way that real people operate in morally demanding situations, I am focusing on the moral activity in the professional lives of the participants. Dewey (1922) contends that human beings are active beings, and that as a species we do not need to be motivated to act on our environment. Activity is adaptive behavior for humans. Early in life we discover that our actions have consequences for others and that those others attribute motives to our actions. These attributions constitute judgments that may cause us to consider our actions differently. Thus over time, we develop a sensitivity to the consequences that our actions have on others. In Dewey's view, activity leads to moral understanding and moral understanding influences future activity.

Dewey's (1922) dialectical framework of moral development is evident in the following statement.

> The moral is to develop conscientiousness, ability to judge the significance of what we are doing and to use that judgment in directing what we do, not by means of direct cultivation of something called a conscience, or reason, or a faculty of moral knowledge, but by fostering those impulses and habits which experience has shown to make us sensitive, generous, imaginative, impartial in perceiving the tendency of our inchoate dawning activities. (p. 144)

According to Dewey, moral judgment grows out of moral activity and is enhanced by a constant awareness of the consequences and potential consequences of particular actions.

Dewey (1922) defined moral activity as "all activity into which alternative possibilities enter" (p.193). Moral activity involves choice. However, in attempting to explain the nature of choice in human conduct, Dewey found that his simple definition of moral activity was complicated by the situations in which choices are made. Some choices are of no appreciable consequence. A man falling from an airplane with no parachute could be said to have a choice between falling head first or falling feet first, but the outcome will likely be fatal either way and so the choice is of little consequence. Choice is also complicated by the fact that human beings usually act according to habit. Although alternatives are available, they are not perceived to be available. Sometimes deliberation occurs, but lack of imagination limits the alternatives. Another situational complication occurs when an individual chooses under such duress that he or she experiences the decision as coercion, saying, "I had no choice." As an abstraction, choice is infinite and human freedom is absolute. As a

fact of human existence, choice occurs in a context and freedom is "situated" (Dewey, 1922; Greene, 1988).

Therefore, operating on Dewey's assumptions about human beings, I am focusing on the activity of the participants, especially those activities that have foreseeable consequences for others to whom the participants are professionally responsible. However, at the same time, I am attempting to uncover each participant's perception of his or her activity and its possible consequences on others. I am also examining habits of operation that increase or decrease the participant's sensitivity to the moral conditions in which he or she operates.

I am assuming that participants will have constructed, during their own life experiences, not only a moral understanding but an understanding of the world in general. This understanding is the basis of each person's personal practical theory (Rodgers & Dunn, 1997, 2000a, 2000b). Although the participants may have shared many of the same experiences, different aspects of those experiences will have been salient to each individual based on his or her personal practical theory (Rodgers & Dunn, 2000c). A personal practical theory may include understandings about interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning, knowledge and schooling, and the nature of self. All these understandings could potentially influence the way that individual teachers operate in the classroom, especially as they attempt to foresee consequences for others and make decisions accordingly. Personal practical theories are likely to be resilient to change and are visible (in broad terms) in an individual's

activity. I expect that each participant will bring his or her own personal practical theory into the context of the study.

I am interested in understanding the moral development of early childhood teachers (in their role as teacher) when they are beginning their full-charge teaching during the internship or student teaching semester. As novices, will they be aware of the moral implications of their decisions? How and when will they begin to make those decisions? The complex process of professional moral decision making may be difficult to uncover, understand, and explicate, because the process is not always conscious and overt. The influence of personal history and personal practical theory, social and moral maturity, and professional context may intertwine in ways that are difficult to unravel and examine.

Despite the difficulties, the complex "real-life" realm of situational judgment and action is central to my research interests. The questions that I want to address are grounded in the conception of the teacher as a reflective practitioner, rather than a technician (Zeichner & Liston, 1996). I am most concerned with those decisions made in the "swampy lowlands" of professional practice by the people most knowledgeable of the problem situation, the practitioners themselves (Schön, 1983). In addressing the questions I have chosen, I am also attempting to engage in a kind of research that Schön (1983) describes as "worthy," research that attempts to inform the theory building of knowledgeable professionals as they engage in a reflective practice. I am attempting to engage in scientific activity that lends itself to action.

> An action science would concern itself with situations of uniqueness, uncertainty, and instability which do not lend themselves to the application of theories and techniques derived from science in the mode of technical rationality. It would aim at the development of *themes*, from which, in these sorts of situations, practitioners may construct theories and methods of their own. (p. 319)

My aim is to reach beneath the surface rationalizations, philosophical ethics, and ideologies of our profession to the actual thinking and action of individuals in daily life. I want to understand the developing everyday practical theories of early childhood teachers as they struggle to meet the moral demands of the profession. I think that this understanding has the potential to inform formal moral theory, as well as teacher education practices and the work of classroom teachers in early childhood settings.

In particular, I am concentrating on three specific aspects of the professional moral development of teachers. First, how does someone new to teaching understand the professional moral responsibilities of teachers? Second, how does this teaching novice understand the moral aspects of the context of his or her teaching practice? Third, how does this novice perceive his or her preparation and supervision in regard to the professional moral responsibilities that he or she is facing?

Chapter Two

Teachers have historically been held to a high moral standard of personal conduct by the communities they serve (Lortie, 1975), but less attention has been given to the *professional* morality of teachers, the moral aspects of their activity in their professional roles. According to Oser (1994),

> [P]rofessional morality does not ask how moral a teacher 'is' –the respective competencies are a desideratum for each person in society –but how much he or she knows about procedures that help to solve moral conflicts in a just, caring, and truthful way and how he or she can combine effectiveness with a concrete evaluation of possible negative consequences for the people concerned. (p. 111)

After years in which effectiveness in terms of objectively measurable learning outcomes was considered the primary assessment of a teacher's worth, some educators have attempted to redefine teaching as an inherently moral profession (Chang, 1994; Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977; Tom, 1984) and have called for more attention to the ethical aspects of practice in teacher education programs (Goodlad, Soder, & Sirotnik, 1990; Strike, 1996; Strike & Soltis, 1992; Strike & Ternesky, 1993; Ungaretti, Dorsey, Freeman, & Bologna, 1997).

However, the moral aspects of teaching have rarely been studied empirically. The Handbook on Research in Teaching (Wittrock, 1986) does not have a chapter on the moral aspects of teaching, and only a brief mention of the "hidden curriculum" acknowledges that moral decision making is a part of a teaching practice.

Fenstermacher (1986), in the same volume, notes that "...research on teaching has not, to my knowledge, specifically addressed aspects of moral worth reflected in the teacher's actions..." (p. 40). In the latest edition of the Handbook of Research on Teacher Education, Strike (1996) advocates strongly for inclusion of ethics in teacher education programs, but articulates his position primarily from philosophical sources and research on the general moral education of children. Although helpful, there is no clear evidence that including ethical content in the teacher preparation curriculum affects the thinking or behaviors of teachers when they enter classrooms.

In fact, given Dewey's (1922) moral development framework and Piaget's (1965) research on the moral development of children, we might expect moral development to be a meaning-making process grounded in actual moral activity. In order to understand how teachers develop an understanding of the moral aspects of their professional lives, we probably need to consider more than their abstract knowledge of principles or ethical codes. We need to understand both their experience and the meaning they construct from that experience.

According to Dewey (1934), not all experience is "educative," or experience that leads to learning and development. Although all life is experience, some experience we sense as inchoate. Either we are distracted and interrupted, or we are routinely efficient. We make little meaning from experience such as this. The most educative of experiences, whether intellectual, moral, or aesthetic in nature, are "consummatory" experiences. Consummatory experiences may involve struggle and conflict, but they ultimately lead to resolution and a sense of wholeness.

> Between the poles of aimlessness and mechanical efficiency, there lie courses of action in which through successive deeds there runs a sense of growing meaning conserved and accumulating toward an end that is felt as accomplishment of a process. (Dewey, 1994, p. 78)

In consummatory experience, we have at first a sense of unfulfilled needs or unresolved conflicts and we begin to imagine ends-in-view. Our imagination opens possibilities of action in the world (engagement with people, things, and ideas). Ultimately, we construct or organize our actions into a new state of affairs. In consummatory experience, the means and ends are blurred into a harmonious integration of individual and environment. It is ultimately a creative meaning-making experience whether it involves ideas, social construction, or an aesthetic product.

Consummatory experience in the moral realm involves social intelligence. Social intelligence is a democratic method of operation. And therefore, for Dewey, democracy is the moral ideal.

> ...to get rid of the habit of thinking of democracy as something institutional and external and to acquire the habit of treating it as a way of personal life is to realize that democracy is a moral ideal and so far as it becomes a fact is a moral fact. It is to realize that democracy is a reality only as it is indeed a commonplace of living. (Dewey, 1994, p. 270)

In Dewey's philosophy, morality is an interactive process in which human beings stand in relation to one another in a responsible way. Moral activity is a kind of problem solving, involving perception, reflection, moral imagination, and interaction.

To understand the moral development of teachers, in the moral framework defined by Dewey, it would be necessary to examine the experience of teachers in the classroom as they grapple with the moral aspects of their practice.

Unfortunately, empirical work on the professional moral activity and professional moral development of teachers is scarce. In the following sections, I will review the work that has been done in the area of justice reasoning in general and the justice reasoning of teachers, and then review some recent studies linking justice reasoning and moral action. In the final section, I will discuss in more detail a procedural approach to the study of teachers' professional morality that provides a promising conceptual framework for future research.

Teacher Morality and Justice Reasoning

Most of the empirical work that has been done on teachers' morality has involved the justice reasoning used by preservice and inservice teachers as measured by one of three instruments, all based on Kohlberg's stages of moral development. Kohlberg developed his theory of moral development from Piaget's (1965) work with children. Piaget observed children at play, interviewed them, and played games with them himself in order to understand how they made moral judgments. His moral theory was based on the idea that moral judgment and understanding develop in the context of relationships with others.

Piaget observed that the power differential in a relationship affected the kind of moral understanding that could be gained from it. In relationships of unilateral respect (i.e., children and adults), a heteronomous morality developed. The party with

less power (usually the younger party) did not need to make sense of the perspective of the more powerful party. Out of respect or fear, the less powerful person accepted the judgment of the other without question. Heteronomous relationships may be essential for early development because children are constructing their ideas about society and the culture in which they live. However, heteronomous morality alone, because it conforms to specific cultural mores of the home or other social context, is not adequate for the changing circumstances and social conditions in which human beings operate.

Fortunately Piaget observed that another type of moral judgment developed in relations of mutual respect (i.e., peer relations). Relationships between peers were characterized by reciprocity and mutual respect. Because there was little difference in power, each child was likely to justify his or her own view and compare it to the view of the other. Decentering to consider another view in relation to one's own view leads to the development of increasingly complex ideas about fairness and justice. Piaget has described the morality that develops in relationships of mutual respect as autonomous. Autonomous morality involves considering multiple viewpoints and deciding on a course of action that can be justified after taking into consideration the consequences for everyone concerned. Autonomy, in Piaget's moral theory, is a way of standing in relation to others, rather than a separateness from others. It is a responsible way of operating that is adaptive to changing social conditions. Piaget theorized that individuals are able to operate in either morality (heteronomous or autonomous) and that the two types of morality develop "side by side." In

Kohlberg's dissertation research, he attempted to refute this aspect of Piaget's theory. He placed heteronomy and autonomy on a continuous scale, formulating six stages of moral judgment which began with "pure" heteronomy and culminated in purely principled autonomous judgment that stands independent of cultural constraint or authority (Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977). Some theorists believe Kohlberg's theory to be a substantial departure from Piaget's theory of moral judgment developed in a variety of relationships. These theorists describe Piaget's autonomous morality as relational, flexible, and socially mature, rather than "principled" (Gilligan, 1982; Youniss & Damon, 1992). A relational understanding of autonomous moral judgment would be inseparable from society, closer to Dewey's democratic living than to Kohlberg's principled judgment. Determining the nature of heteronomous and autonomous morality across the lifespan, and whether or not they co-occur, is still an important unresolved issue in moral theory (Bebeau, Rest, & Narvaez, 1999).

If autonomous and heteronomous moralities co-occur, they could both be in operation as different aspects of situations are considered. An individual may consider the constraint existent in a particular social context in which a problem occurs, while still trying to establish relationships in which the consideration and comparison of various perspectives can take place. Dewey (1994) and Piaget (1965) both contend that societies that place a high value on compliance and conformity make it nearly impossible to operate autonomously and/or democratically, because conditions of mutual respect cannot be created with other people. However, if

heteronomy and autonomy do not co-occur, individuals should operate in consistent patterns across all contexts.

Kohlberg's work also raises questions about the value of moral principles that exist outside of social obligation. Bebeau et al (1999) raise the issue of whether or not the Oklahoma City bombing could be described as a principled act of moral courage even though it was extremely destructive to the individuals involved and to the social fabric of the community and nation. Certainly Kohlberg never intended his theory to privilege terrorism. His Just Community approach to moral education was founded on the idea that a strong democratic community was an essential element in the moral development of children (DeVries & Kohlberg, 1987). Kohlberg, too, saw a strong relationship between democratic living and mature moral judgment. However, the scale that he developed culminates in principled argument capable of withstanding social pressure. Timothy McVeigh apparently saw his crime as a soldierly action in a time when the welfare of the nation was in jeopardy, which could be evidence of the logically complex, principled reasoning that assesses high on Kohlberg's scale. When using Kohlberg's Moral Judgment Interview and instruments based on it, these problems of interpretation need to be considered.

Despite these reservations about Kohlberg's moral theory and the Moral Judgment Interview, the line of research that has emerged from assessing moral judgment in terms of stages offers some information about the flexibility of teachers' justice reasoning in comparison to other professional groups and in relation to specific teacher beliefs. Although it is only a small part of a professional moral

practice, understanding teachers' justice reasoning may provide some general information about the ways in which teachers as a group are likely to act in professional moral situations.

Kohlberg developed the Moral Judgment Interview (MJI) to measure justice reasoning apart from moral action. Therefore he developed hypothetical dilemmas in which an individual had to make a difficult choice, asked people what they would do in the hypothetical situation, and (more importantly) their reasons for doing so. The MJI is difficult to administer and the complicated scoring procedure has limited its utility for empirical research (Kurtines & Grief, 1974). Rest (1986) and his colleagues used the basic structure of the MJI to develop the Defining Issues Test (DIT). The DIT is much easier to administer and has produced evaluations similar to the MJI. An additional advantage of the DIT is that it yields a Utilizer (U) score, which measures the degree to which participants are likely to rely on moral judgment in a situation similar to the hypothetical scenario.

Although Gilligan and others contend that a cognitive approach to moral development favors "male" notions of justice over "female" notions of care (cf. Clinchy, 1993; Gilligan, 1987), there has been no evidence of gender bias on either the MJI or the DIT when factors such as level of education are controlled (Walker, 1984). Where they occur, gender differences appear in the way that individuals interpret actual situations involving moral choice. Therefore, data on the justice reasoning of teachers as assessed by the MJI and DIT is likely reliable in comparison

to other professional groups, even though the teaching population is predominantly female.

During the 1970's, several researchers became interested in the moral reasoning level of teachers and teacher candidates. Most used either the MJI or DIT, but Lortie's (1976) sociological study of the teaching profession involved extensive open-ended interviews. His analysis of the teaching profession as a whole concluded that teaching was a conservative and conformist profession, highly resistant to change. Most teachers in Lortie's study took their moral influence on children seriously, and felt that fostering good citizenship was an important goal of public education. However, in their accounts of their interactions with children and their statements about good citizenship, they emphasized compliance and conformity. Compliance and conformity would be values consistent with conventional (stage four) moral reasoning on Kohlberg's scale.

One possible interpretation of Lortie's findings would be that teachers emphasize compliance from students because of their perception of their teaching role, but exercise principled judgment in other contexts. However, Bloom (1976) administered the DIT (a general moral reasoning measure) to master's degree candidates in education and found similar results. The scores of education majors compared unfavorably with those of students in other fields and most were classified at stage four, indicating that their habitual mode of reasoning in moral situations was conventional.

Lortie's (1976) suggestion that moral development of teachers may influence their orientation toward discipline and classroom control was upheld in a number of studies. Bloom (1978) found a relationship between the DIT scores of undergraduate education students and their scores on Willower's Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) measure. Those with DIT scores indicating principled moral judgment were more likely to have a democratic-humanistic orientation to pupil control. Deal (1978) found similar results with graduate students in a summer session (mostly inservice teachers).

Chang (1994) developed an instrument specifically for teachers. It is modeled after the DIT, but employs hypothetical situations related to teaching practice. Although the dilemmas used in the test are more specific to teaching, it still measures judgment only. Chang's assessments of teachers in Taiwan using her Test of Teachers' Moral Reasoning (TTMR) were similar to results of other studies that used the DIT.

Two studies found a relationship between moral judgment and teacher attitudes as measured by the Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory (MTAI). On this instrument, higher scores are associated with more tolerant and progressive attitudes toward educational issues. Novogrodsky (1977) used the MJI to assess moral reasoning. He found that in the sample of teachers he studied, those with the highest MTAI scores also had higher MJI scores. Holt, Kauchak, and Peterson (1980) used the DIT with similar results. By analyzing particular items on the MTAI, they found that "the higher level thinkers [were] more oriented toward the development of an intellectual and participative climate in the classroom and toward assuming an activist

role in the formulation of school policy" (p. 55). In this study, both elementary and secondary teachers were included in the sample and no significant differences were found between the two groups.

The congruence between moral judgment and teacher beliefs and attitudes seems to be well supported and theoretically consistent. However, the relationship between moral judgment, teacher beliefs and attitudes, and actual practice is less clear. Conroy (1986) found poor congruence between moral judgment, teachers' professed beliefs about discipline, and their actual discipline behavior in the classroom.

These studies do provide evidence of a relationship between teachers' general moral reasoning or problem solving and their attitudes and beliefs about teaching. The nature of that relationship is difficult to discern. A person's moral reasoning could have an influence on the way that person operates as a professional. On the other hand, the institutional context in which a person operates may influence that individual's habitual reasoning. Most schools operate as level four, "law and order" institutions (Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977), which could encourage level four reasoning by both teachers and students.

Theoretical issues concerning the relationship between social context and moral judgment are unresolved by research on moral judgment in hypothetical situations. Research on teachers' justice reasoning also needs to be considered in light of the fact that it doesn't necessarily correlate to judgment in real life situations or to

moral action. Therefore the relationship established between level of moral reasoning and teaching beliefs may be tangential to the questions addressed here.

Linking Moral Judgment with Moral Action

Thoma (1994) established a link between justice reasoning and moral action in professional practice, but described it as weak. There are probably a number of other factors involved in moral decisions in actual situations. One particularly troublesome issue in research on the professional moral activity of teachers is whether or not a teacher has framed a particular problem situation as one that requires moral consideration. Oser (1994) finds it disturbing "that often teachers can teach without taking moral responsibility and that they believe that most professional actions do not require reflection and thoughtful anticipation of possible consequences" (Oser, 1994, p. 109).

Whether or not teachers consider a given situation to be one in which justice reasoning is appropriate is probably one of the factors that inhibits or promotes congruence between moral judgment and moral action. Thoma (1994) found that high Utilizer (U) scores on the DIT identified subjects for whom the relationship between judgment and action was stronger. A teacher who is capable of complex justice reasoning will not utilize it to solve a problem if that teacher does not perceive that the situation is a moral one. The inclination to see a situation as one that requires moral consideration and judgment also may be influenced by a variety of factors. In an effort to understand how moral judgment and other factors may influence moral action, some researchers are beginning to look at morality as a series of components.

Rest (1986) has proposed a Four Component Model of moral development. The components are internal processes which operate together to produce moral behavior. Briefly, the components are moral sensitivity, moral judgment, moral motivation, and moral character. Moral sensitivity is a process whereby an individual becomes aware that a moral problem exists. It involves empathy and perspective taking as well as the initial process of formulating the problem: identifying who needs consideration, what lines of action are possible, and how each line of action may affect those involved. Moral judgment is the decision making process in which the individual determines the ideal moral response. This is the component that is measured by the MJI or DIT. Moral motivation is the process whereby a person prioritizes competing values. For example, a person may decide that personal advantage will prevail over the ideal moral action. Moral character describes the ego strength or persistence the individual employs to overcome distractions and fatigue to enact a decision.

At present, studies that examine the relationship between components of Rest's model and teacher performance have been inconsistent (Thoma & Rest, 1987). Theorizing that teaching practice provided numerous opportunities for moral decision making and discussion, Thoma and Rest also compared years of experience to measures of performance, justice reasoning and moral sensitivity. There was no evidence that teaching experience enhanced moral development. Still, aspects of the professional morality research by Rest and his colleagues have sparked some interesting studies.

Johnston and Lubomudrov (1987) explored the relationship between hypothetical justice reasoning on the DIT and teachers' thinking about actual (videotaped) events that occurred in their classrooms. They found that teachers with low justice reasoning were more likely to believe that rules served primarily to maintain a stable social order, that classroom rules came from teachers (even when children were allowed to "come up with them"), and that any rule was subordinate to the overriding rule of obedience to teacher authority. In discussing classroom situations, they were frequently unable to distinguish between a rule as such and their own authority as teachers. Obeying the rules and obeying the teacher were inseparable.

Those with high DIT scores viewed rules differently. They were more likely to view classroom rules as a way to ensure a balance between the rights of the individual and the rights of the group as a whole. Although they expected students to follow rules, they also expected them to question the rules and bring them up for discussion and reinterpretation.

The two groups also saw the teacher's guidance role in the classroom differently. Teachers with low DIT scores saw themselves as responsible for the enforcement of rules and consequently adopted an autocratic role in the classroom. Teachers with high DIT scores felt that students and teacher shared the responsibility for rule enforcement and favored more democratic, participative roles for themselves and their students.

In a study of Australian secondary teachers, MacCallum (1993) also found that teachers with the lowest justice reasoning were likely to see the authority of the teacher as inseparable from the rules. Interviews and observations of faculty discussions revealed some other interesting differences between teachers. Those with the highest levels of justice reasoning seemed to have less confidence in their decisions and reconsider them more frequently. There were also gender differences in the way that justice reasoning was employed even though there was no significant difference between the two groups on the DIT. Gender differences on the DIT have never been established, even though Gilligan (1982) found profound differences in the ways that females responded to hypothetical dilemmas. McCallum's study indicates that although men and women tended to have equal complexity in their moral reasoning, the women tended to employ that reasoning differently from the men. Women were more likely to ask students to take other perspectives when they corrected their behavior. Men were aware of these multiple perspectives but expressed reluctance to "make a moral issue of it."

The findings in McCallum seem to indicate that when women saw problems as moral ones, they were likely to seek a relational and moral solution. Men seemed reluctant to take this course of action even when they were aware of the moral issues in an interpersonal conflict. Gender differences may play a greater role in the moral activity of teachers than it does in their moral judgment in hypothetical situations.

The most interesting finding in McCallum's (1993) study was that even when teachers were capable of complex moral reasoning and were aware of the moral

aspects of a problem situation, the action that they eventually decided to take was influenced by a complicated array of situational and institutional influences. Teachers considered how effective they thought their action would be in a given location in the building or with a particular student. They considered the procedures and practices of school administrators and colleagues. Teachers' references to these practical aspects of the situation seem to indicate that a teacher's perceived and actual range of choice was an additional factor at some point in the process of moral decision making. Teachers usually do not practice their profession independent of bureaucratic structures and school culture. They never operate in isolation.

The studies reported in this section begin to forge a connection between justice reasoning on a hypothetical dilemma test and the everyday thinking and action of teachers. However, it is still not possible to predict an individual's moral action by considering measurable components in the Four Component Model. One thing that appears to confound the predictability of moral behavior is that situational factors influence decision making in ways that vary across individuals, suggesting an interactive relationship between situational context and internal processing. There seem to be few themes or regularities to guide research and practice. Recently, a procedural approach has provided a promising framework for understanding and interpreting actual moral activity in real situations.

A Procedural Approach to Studying Professional Morality

Research on the justice reasoning of teachers has identified some spheres of action that are at least partially influenced by the ability of teachers to make

judgments about moral situations. However, these findings are unable to explain inconsistencies between judgment and action and do not provide a framework for studying professional morality in context. Rest's Four Component Model explains some inconsistencies between judgment and action and provides a comprehensive theoretical framework for moral education programs (Bebeau, et al., 1999), but describes internal processes that are difficult to observe and interpret. By focusing on the individual's internal processes, Rest's model also excludes the context and the situational nature of moral activity. It does not bring us closer to understanding how teachers frame moral problems out of everyday practice. Oser (1991) has developed an approach that lends itself to the study of everyday moral activity because it identifies moral "methods of operation" in teaching. Schön (1983; 1987) has theorized that professionals actually develop "theories of action" that are evident in the way they operate in their professional lives.

Oser (1991; 1994) maintains that a professional ethos is a particular professional competence that develops in the midst of the experiences and circumstances of professional practice. Although individuals make sense of their professional lives in individual ways, they also construct domain specific attitudes and cognitions that are situated in everyday practice.

Oser (1994) further suggests that the relation between justice reasoning and moral activity may be one in which justice reasoning is the dependent variable. In other words, the kind of interpersonal activity that is habitual for a person determines the kind of reasoning that person exercises in resolving a dilemma, rather than the

other way around. This is consistent with Piaget's (1965) theory that moral reasoning develops in practical activity (in relationships) and can only be expressed at the verbal or symbolic level much later. Because Oser's approach to moral development is situated in the practical activity of the individual, it considers both contextual and personal factors and is more open to empirical examination than models that focus on internal processes.

Oser (1991; 1994) conducted brief interviews in Austria and Switzerland with teachers in different types of schools and assigned to different age levels. Based on teachers' recollections of morally sensitive events, he developed his discourse approach to the study of the professional moral development. Oser heard teachers describe decisions that coordinated concerns about justice, care, and truthfulness. For example, setting a grading policy involved a fair assessment and a truthful report to parents, but also care for those less successful students who needed encouragement to continue their efforts. In attempting to resolve difficult professional moral dilemmas, teachers typically took one of five courses of action. Although Oser speculated that a teacher might not be perfectly consistent in adopting the same course of action every time, he or she would likely have a general ethos that was a typical response or habit. An ethos is not a stage of development, but a method of operation. Some ways of operating led to more responsible behavior than others, but as a method of operation, each ethos was functional for the person who used it. Interventions designed to increase reflectivity were moderately effective in modifying a teacher's method of operation, but the change was short-lived (Oser & Althof, 1993).

The first type of ethos in Oser's theory is Avoiding. In this type of response, the teacher is aware of a problem but does not attempt to resolve it. The teacher fails to confront the dishonest student, or counsel with the parents of a child that is floundering academically, or question why only minority children are being referred for special services. Obviously, many of these problems end up falling to someone else. However, the teacher who Avoids may be spared from having to tackle many troublesome issues. One teacher told Oser (1991), "I don't want to get myself into hot water" (p. 203).

The second type of ethos is Delegating. In this type of response, the teacher faces the problem but relinquishes the responsibility to someone else. Usually the responsibility is shifted to a higher authority such as the principal or school board. For example, the teacher may send an aggressive child to the principal rather than work to resolve a peer conflict that erupts in the classroom. The teacher recognizes the need for action, but seeks to share or shift the responsibility for the solution. This course of action assures the teacher that problems are being resolved, but the repercussions of decisions fall on someone else's shoulders.

A third type of ethos is Unilateral Action or "single-handed decision making." The teacher does not provide justification to the interested parties, but as the "expert" settles the matter decisively. For example, the teacher may resolve a playground disagreement by establishing a new rule. ("The climbing frame is out-of-bounds from now on.") Unilateral Action may or may not be considerate of all viewpoints and needs, because the teacher has not sought access to other viewpoints. The parties

affected by the decision do not have access to the logic behind it. If the teacher is sure of the decision and persistent, this approach has the advantage of expediency.

A fourth type of ethos Oser describes as Discourse I, or incomplete discourse. In this course of action, the teacher accepts full responsibility for a decision that attempts to balance justice, care, and truthfulness. The teacher articulates the logic of the decision to all the parties involved, so that it can be correctly interpreted and acted upon. For example, the teacher may decide that cooperative groups need to be made up of both boys and girls. He or she will discuss the decision with the class, describe the incidents that led to the decision, and trust that the students will be able to understand the reflection and care that went into the decision. This approach allows access to the decision making process, but after the decision has been made. The teacher retains control of the decision making, and consequently the authority. However, affected parties understand the teacher's decisions to be rational responses to problems rather than mysterious or capricious actions.

The last type of ethos is Discourse II, or complete discourse. In this course of action, the teacher assumes that others are rational beings who are capable of balancing justice, care, and truthfulness. He or she works to establish a forum where all viewpoints can be considered and decisions made jointly. The teacher accepts final responsibility for decisions that have to be made in the course of professional practice, but also accepts the responsibility to cooperate and negotiate with others. This course of action is time consuming and sometimes difficult, but it has the

advantage of making the problems of practice into educative experiences that build a democratic community.

Oser (1991) regards the Discourse II ethos to be preferable to the others. He states,

> Certainly, a "discourse II" teacher is not a saint, nor should he have to be. She or he need not be a person with extraordinary virtues. But s/he must create situations in which everybody uses his or her practical reason, balancing truthfulness, justice, and care. S/he must be someone who believes in the positive potential of children, who sees them as human beings with dignity and reason, and who presupposes, even in cases of severe conflict, that they are able to share their part. (p. 225-226)

His preference for the Discourse II ethos is based on the idea that open discourse promotes the moral development of both students and teachers by making alternative viewpoints and conflicting needs accessible to everyone's consideration. Therefore Oser's theory of professional moral development shares an essential aspect of Piaget's moral theory, that practical moral activity in the form of cooperative interactions with others promotes moral development and eventually results in more complex and autonomous moral judgment.

Considered in the light of Piaget's theory, each successive ethos in Oser's theory requires more cooperative interaction and decentration. The teacher who Avoids moral decisions is not required to cooperate or consider other viewpoints at all. The teacher who Delegates may be able to avoid cooperation and decentration as

well. By passing off the decision to someone in authority, he or she may not have to consider the perspectives of those involved in the conflict or the person to whom the problem was passed. He or she will only need to submit to the decision that is made by the authority figure. Both of these methods of operation are fundamentally heteronomous.

In taking Unilateral Action, a teacher may or may not consider multiple perspectives. The action taken may be the teacher's attempt to consider multiple perspectives as he or she sees them, or it may only resolve a problem for the teacher. For example, a teacher may allow children to vote on their preference for a field trip. However, when a dispute arises over whether or not the count was fair, she may decide to have children vote with their eyes covered. This way they will not argue with the result. She has resolved the problem from her perspective, because there are no arguments. The children may still perceive the vote to be unfair, but it has been made more mysterious and they have no basis for argument.

A Discourse I ethos requires some decentration. The teacher chooses to explain his or her actions in such a way that others will have access to the reasoning behind them. Although the teacher does not seek access to other perspectives, she or he has to consider the possible perspectives of others in order to offer a coherent explanation to them.

Finally, in a Discourse II ethos, the teacher freely enters into a sharing of perspectives and attempts to consider others' perspectives in the decision making process. By seeking others' perspectives, sharing his or her own perspective, and

entering into a cooperative solution, the teacher is both democratic and autonomous. The decision making process is not constrained by "authority" and seeks a creative and mutually agreeable solution. In fact, Piaget's (1965) description of autonomous morality is quite similar to Oser's (1991) description of a teacher operating in a Discourse II ethos:

> The morality of the autonomous conscience does not tend to subject each personality to rules that have a common content: it simply obliges individuals to 'place' themselves in reciprocal relationship with each other without letting the laws of perspective resultant upon this reciprocity destroy their individual points of view. (p. 397)

Oser (1991) and Piaget (1965) also agree that adult-child relationships can potentially involve cooperation, even though there may not be complete equality. Piaget offered the possibility that adults could take the role of "elder collaborator," lowering authority but not relinquishing it. Oser suggested that the teacher need only allow children to "share their part." They describe a type of cooperation that is possible in early education settings.

Oser's (1991) theory may also explain why experienced teachers did not, as a group, display higher justice reasoning than less experienced teachers (Thoma & Rest, 1987). Even though teaching requires intense interpersonal activity and much of that interpersonal activity is potentially cooperative, a teacher's method of operation may make it possible to function as a teacher and maintain heteronomous relationships. A teacher whose method of operation excludes others viewpoints, either

through avoiding responsibility or claiming perfect authority, will not be likely to question his or her thinking and develop higher (more autonomous) justice reasoning. MacCallum (1993) found that the teachers with the highest justice reasoning were less confident of their own decisions and likely to reconsider them. Perhaps these teachers were in the habit of opening their reasoning about professional moral dilemmas to the scrutiny of others and considering others' perspectives.

Oser's (1991) "methods of operation" share some characteristics with Schön's (1983; 1987) "interpersonal theories of action." Schön's research on the reflective process in the professional practices of people from various fields led him to formulate two types of interpersonal theories of action. These theories of action were closely tied to something Schön called a "role frame," a pattern of interactions that was habitual and comfortable. Professionals sought to develop relationships with others (clients and colleagues) that conformed to this role frame and allowed them to operate in accordance with a tacit theory of what productive professional relationships should be. While people operating on one of the theories tended toward more principled reasoning and the integration of reasoning and action, the others remained insensitive to the moral dilemmas in their professional situations and continued to rely on techniques that enhanced their professional authority.

Schön (1983) identified his two types of interpersonal theories of action as Model I and Model II. Those who operate from a Model I theory deal with the uncertainty of their practice by using tactics of "mystery and mastery." They value the achievement of self-defined tasks, seek to win in win/lose situations, avoid

negative feelings, and place a high value on rational argument. Their strategies include unilateral task control, unilateral self-protection (without testing to see if protection is necessary), and unilateral protection of others (without checking to see if the others need or desire protection). They seek "to master the situation while keeping their own thoughts and feelings mysterious" (p. 227).

In contrast, a Model II theory of action is conducive to the public testing of private assumptions. Those operating in a Model II type theory value the exchange of valid information and seek opportunities to provide others with directly observable data and accurate summaries of events and circumstances. They work to create the conditions in which people can make free and informed choices. They work to raise their level of awareness and the awareness of others, especially concerning the values at stake and the limits of personal action. They work to increase the likelihood that all involved in a situation will have an internal commitment to decisions made. They seek commitment that is tied to their own intrinsic satisfaction (and the intrinsic motivations of others) rather than to external benefit or loss. Their strategies include managing situations bilaterally rather than unilaterally. If protection is necessary in a delicate situation, it becomes a joint project. They are clear about their own inferences after the available data is public, and they invite the public articulation of the inferences and conclusions of others. When caught in a private dilemma, they seek to surface the dilemma in order to test their understanding of the values involved. Operation in this theory of action enables the practitioner to deal with

uncertainty by sustaining inquiry and continuing to learn as the problematic situation unfolds.

Both types of theories tend to be self-reinforcing. The way that a problem is originally framed defines what success with that problem will look like. For a person operating from a Model I type theory of action, in which unilateral control is a value, success might be defined as making a favorable impression on others and "winning." Schön (1983) describes an urban planner who operated from a Model I theory of action. This planner did reflect on his practice, but tended to concentrate on ways to improve his strategies of "mystery and mastery." He consciously experimented with rhetorical devices such as intonation and eye contact in order to create the most powerful impression on others. He sought ways to represent his aims in such a way that others would agree to comply, often concealing his own motivations as a matter of course.

> Since the planner is doing one thing while appearing to do another, he cannot easily make his assumptions public or subject them to public testing. His sense of vulnerability discourages reflection. And he is so busy managing the balancing act, manipulating the impressions he makes on others and defending against vulnerability to exposure, that he has little opportunity to reflect on the problem settings that drive his performance. Moreover, for the same reason, he is unlikely to detect errors of interpretation which might provoke broader and deeper reflection. (p. 229)

In other words, the covert nature of the "mystery and mastery" approach discourages the type of reflection that would expose its rigidity.

Theories of action can be inferred from a person's activity and may or may not be reflected in that person's *espoused* theories about his or her professional practice (Brookfield, 1987). This could explain the discrepancies Conroy (1986) found between teachers' beliefs about discipline and their actual discipline behavior in the classroom. Regardless of espoused beliefs, a Model I teacher would probably seek to establish a well-run and orderly classroom by making expectations clear to students. When incidents of misbehavior occurred, the teacher would frame the problem as a lack of control on his or her part. He or she would begin to reflect on ways to create a more powerful impression on the disruptive child. A skilled Model I teacher would be a calm and rational manager. Children's needs would be protected to the extent that the teacher understood them. The teacher would not seek out the children's honest perspectives and so he or she would have little reason to doubt his or her own judgments. A system of rewards and punishments would keep everybody moving toward goals defined by the teacher.

A Model II teacher would see the management of the classroom much differently. The Model II teacher would be likely to agree with Schön (1983) that "a manager's task is to make sure that ...conflicts are neither suppressed nor circumvented" (p. 254). The conflicts would serve a useful purpose for learning, creative problem-framing, and growth. He or she would call his or her own view of a problem into question by opening it up to public scrutiny. Even where the teacher was

required to make a unilateral decision, he or she would seek to make the process open and accessible to the class. Wherever possible, public decision making would give everyone a stake in the outcome. Goals would be negotiated and subject to modification. The learning and growth of both teacher and students, and the intrinsic satisfaction of all, would be valued more than smooth operation and efficiency.

Schön's theories of action, Oser's methods of operation, and Piaget's morality based on relationships all favor cooperation and perspective taking in everyday life, and involve practical moral activity as a precursor to the development of moral judgment. All emphasize the moral worth of democratic living. Schön and Oser deal with the ways in which professional morality develops or fails to develop. Together they create a framework for studying the moral development of teachers based on their actual moral activity in professional contexts.

Observing the moral activity of student teachers as they begin teaching could provide important clues about how teachers come to understand their professional moral responsibilities and learn to operate in a certain way. If we want to prepare teachers who are both effective and responsible, we need to know how novice teachers grapple with the complexity of short-term and long-term consequences inherent in their teaching practices and become sensitized to the moral issues in real life settings (Oser, Dick, & Patry, 1992).

Both Oser and Schön have provided, in their respective approaches, a way to study professional moral activity and understand the professional moral development of novice teachers. Most ethical theory does not provide a way to study teachers'

moral behavior empirically in natural settings. Empirical research in the area of justice reasoning provides an incomplete picture of the processes involved in moral activity in teaching. By looking at the procedures that are followed in interpersonal classroom activity, and examining the reflections and reasoning of novice teachers, it may be possible to observe and understand an interlude in the lifelong construction of a personal teaching ethos.

After reviewing the literature on the professional moral development of teachers, I agree with Fenstermacher (1986) that "...research on teaching has not...specifically addressed aspects of moral worth reflected in the teacher's actions..." (p. 40). Such an examination would need to consider the actual daily practical activity of teachers, their everyday theories of action, and the contexts in which they act. Oser (1994) developed his framework based on teachers' recollections, but also said that, "Professional morality has to be built up by the professionals themselves and has to manifest itself under the concrete conditions of a setting, in each classroom and each school" (p. 116).

Oser is implying in this statement that teachers construct a professional ethos in the process of teaching, but there has been no research on the process of moral development as it is experienced by student teachers during their first few weeks of full-charge teaching. Little is understood about the process of framing problems from everyday practice, especially from the teacher's point of view. Almost nothing is known about the ways in which novices come to adopt a certain procedural style. Because this procedural style is quite resistant to change and appears to represent a

relatively enduring ethos (Oser & Althof, 1993), it is important to better understand how a teacher comes to adopt a particular style. I would like to know how student teachers learn to recognize and make sense of moral dilemmas in teaching. I think that by studying a teacher's earliest experiences with full-charge teaching, it may also be possible to better understand the kinds of preparation and support that teacher educators need to provide in order for teachers to face the moral problems of their professional life with competence. In order to understand the process of constructing a professional ethos, I need to address at least three broadly defined questions.

The first question pertains to the student teacher's understanding of the role of the teacher in an early childhood classroom. What kinds of things fall within the teacher's realm of responsibility? What is not the teacher's responsibility? Toward whom does the teacher feel obligation? To what extent does the student teacher feel *capable* of handling moral and ethical problems? To what extent does the student teacher feel able to exercise an influence with children? With parents? With colleagues? Does this understanding change from the beginning of the student teaching semester to the time the student teacher takes charge of the class?

The next question relates to the emergent, situated understanding of the student teacher as he/she begins to teach. Does the student teacher recognize a moral aspect to his or her everyday decision making? If so, when does this begin to emerge or become evident and under what circumstances? What kinds of dilemmas present the student teacher with difficulty? How does the student teacher describe and structure these dilemmas? What strategies does he or she employ to resolve them?

The third question relates to the student teacher's perception of his or her program and supervision as it relates to professional moral competence. When describing professional moral dilemmas, does the student teacher refer to program content? Are references made to supervision practices or conversations with the supervisor? Do interactions between the student teacher and supervisor have implications for or include discussion of professional morality and ethics?

Chapter Three

In order to understand how a student teacher begins to construct a professional ethos in the concrete conditions of everyday practice, I have addressed three questions: 1) How does the student teacher understand her professional responsibility? 2) How does the student teacher understand and frame moral problems in practice? 3) What is the role of formal teacher preparation in a student teacher's professional moral development? These questions focus on a developing process of moral activity in teaching rather than the logic or consistency of the student teacher's decisions and actions.

In order to understand a developing process, I needed to conduct the research in such a way that I could have access to the student teacher's thoughts about her teaching experience at regular intervals throughout that experience. However, I also assumed that the social environment would be an integral part of the development process (Dewey, 1922; Johnston & Lubomudrov, 1987; Piaget, 1995). Therefore, I needed to become familiar with the context in which the student was teaching and spend time with her there. I wanted to understand the context and observe the student teacher operating in that context, while gaining regular access to her thinking, in order to gain an appreciation for what I believed would be an interactive developmental process, making sense of the moral aspects of teaching.

In order to maintain this kind of intimacy with the participant and gain first-hand knowledge of the setting, I decided that a qualitative case study would be the best research design. A case study is an appropriate methodology when depth and

detail are required for understanding an issue in context (Creswell, 1998). A single case study with sufficient depth could provide a starting place for further research in this relatively unexplored area of inquiry. However, after completing the first case, I decided to conduct a second case study in the same setting with a different participant. I thought that this might result in a more dynamic view of the participants' professional moral development, and that differences in the two cases might suggest questions about intrapersonal developmental processes in relationship to social context.

Cases to be studied need to be selected on the basis of their ability to inform our understanding of a particular problem (Creswell, 1998). I selected participants in their student teaching experience for several reasons. Student teachers are in their first full-time teaching experience. Their awareness of social context increases because they are in the same setting, working with the same children, five days a week. Student teachers are also taking part in school-wide activities, working with parents, going to parent association and faculty meetings, and otherwise involving themselves in the broader culture of a school and community, often for the first time. Because the student teaching experience usually leads to an increased understanding of the social aspects of teaching, it can also be a time when preservice teachers have to consider and/or reconsider the moral aspects of everyday teaching decisions.

Student teachers are also beginning to see the long-term consequences of the professional decisions they make. In earlier field experiences, preservice teachers are sometimes "teaching and leaving." They often do not see what happens during the

next lesson or the next week. They usually do not have to think about explaining their actions to parents. Student teaching is usually the first opportunity to see how decisions made one day have a "ripple effect" in a school community over time. This experience can lead to an expanded view of the people who need to be considered or included in decisions, expanding the known moral landscape.

In other words, students enter their student teaching as true novices in many ways that potentially affect professional moral activity and development. Although I assume that they have life experiences that have helped them construct a personal system of core values (Deci & Ryan, 1987), their experiences in classrooms and with children have been brief and/or limited in scope up until that time. The first year of teaching offers numerous challenges as well, but the weeks of student teaching are often a time when teaching philosophy crystallizes (Lortie, 1975; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981). I thought they might be a formative time for a professional ethos as well.

Both participants were selected from a pool of early childhood education graduates in a large southwestern university. The early childhood teacher certification program at this university requires a graduate component for completion. The graduate component consists of student teaching (internship) and a concurrent course in action research. Because of state requirements, the internship in early childhood education is performed in a split placement, half in preschool or kindergarten and half in primary. In the case of this university, students have eight weeks of practice in each placement. At the same time, they study action research methodology and

conduct a brief action research project. Their action research question is self-selected and is based on a problem or dilemma encountered during student teaching.

The teacher education program from which the participants graduated has a strong constructivist orientation. Coursework and fieldwork become increasingly integrated throughout the program. Students in the early childhood program are involved in three levels of field experience before graduation, as well as a practicum experience in a community organization serving children and/or families. The first level is largely a classroom observation experience. The second level field experience occurs in conjunction with an introductory course in educational psychology. The third level field experience for early childhood majors is two semesters (half day per week) in the university laboratory preschool under the guidance of university instructors and a subsequent capstone project in a public school classroom. During the lab experience, students have the opportunity to talk about guidance and curriculum with teachers committed to developmentally appropriate practice. They also observe the children over the course of each semester, conduct a case study of a particular child, and engage children in games and investigations. For the capstone project, students collaborate within a small peer group to develop and implement emergent curriculum in a public school classroom. Despite regular opportunities to interact with children, most students do not take full charge of a classroom by themselves until their student teaching.

In both cases, the participants I chose were new graduates in their first eight weeks of student teaching. They were placed in a kindergarten classroom in a town I

will call Springfield, located about a half-hour drive from the university. Before conducting research in the setting, I had served as a supervisor to other student teachers who had been placed there. I thought that it was a socially complex context that would be an interesting setting for research on student teachers' moral development.

The Setting

Some of the complexity of the context came from the diverse student body. Springfield only has one elementary school. The town is situated in a prosperous rural community where farmers, ranchers, and agricultural workers mix with professionals, business people, trades people, and people working service jobs. Some of the residents in Springfield commute to jobs in a major city about an hour away. At the time of this study, a typical kindergarten class in Springfield would include some children who spoke more Spanish than English, a few Native American and African American children, children from widely varied income groups, and children with parents of widely varied educational backgrounds. Most children with special needs were in the regular education classroom for the full half-day session that was provided the other students. (They would be with the special education teacher the other half of the school day.) The study participants were placed in this classroom during two different (consecutive) school years, and so they did not teach the same children. However, the demographic make-up of the classes was similar.

The social complexity of the context was enhanced by a team teaching arrangement. Two certified teachers shared a large classroom, as they had for 13

years at the time of the first case study. Although there was a folding partition between the two "rooms" that made up the large shared classroom, the teachers joked that if they ever closed the partition, it would indicate that they had "gotten a divorce." The classroom was set up so that each teacher had an area to meet with her class for large group activities. These group time areas were at opposite ends of the classroom. The teachers used group times for singing, stories, games, calendar routines, and reviewing letters and sounds. They usually managed to end their group meetings at the same time.

Most of the room was permanently set up in "centers." Centers included a large block area, a library, a science corner with class pets and revolving interactive displays, a sensory/water table, a dramatic play center with housekeeping and an office, tables for various art activities and easels for painting, and shelves full of puzzles and math manipulatives in tubs. During center time, children were also encouraged to visit at least one table where a more structured activity was being done. These tables included assessment activities, theme related craft projects, creative construction from found materials, playdough, etc. For assessment activities, the teachers made sure that every child visited before the center was "shut down." The teachers planned in interdisciplinary thematic units that usually lasted from one to three weeks. Some of the centers were changed each week. Some were changed when a new theme was introduced. Some were relatively unchanged all year.

Each teacher also had an assistant. The two assistants functioned as independent members of the teaching team. Although the certified teachers were

responsible for all the curricular decisions, the assistants sat in on weekly "planning sessions" and usually led a structured table activity during center time. They also handled all of the record keeping, collections from students, and field trip arrangements. They set up centers and handled their own duty assignments. On several occasions, I saw parents approach assistants about problems. Sometimes the assistants handled the situation or relayed information to the teachers. At other times they immediately went after one of the teachers. Both the teachers and the assistants seemed comfortable with how these situations were handled. During the time that I was in the field, it was very common for both teachers, both assistants, and the student teacher to talk after school about everything they'd seen that day that was remarkable or interesting. There was no turnover in staff between the first case and the second.

Another thing that made the context socially interesting was the involvement of parents and other community members in the school. Both participants commented on the enthusiastic parent involvement in special events. I participated in two of these special events and was astounded at the attendance. There were very few children without guests, even though the events I observed took place in the middle of the work day. Some children had several guests: parents, aunts or uncles, grandparents, and/or siblings. Attendance at evening meetings about curriculum and other educational issues were less well attended. The teachers expressed satisfaction when half the students were represented at these meetings. Parents and other caregivers also had frequent brief contact with the faculty on a daily basis. I observed a few parents

coming into the room before each session of kindergarten, and noticed that they were not the same parents each time. Teachers and assistants loaded children into cars and spoke with parents and caregivers at the end of each session as well. The families in the community were well known to the faculty. The teachers commented on the older siblings of present students, some of whom had been their students in previous years. In some cases, they had even known the parents as young children.

Because the teachers encouraged it, members of the community were frequently involved in classroom life. On one day that I observed, a minister and a police officer from the community came to read to the children. The superintendent dropped in during one of the special events that I attended and talked with parents for nearly an hour. The teachers were well acquainted with the director of a local child care center that took many of their students for before and after school care. I saw this manager come in several times to visit the teachers when she dropped off the children for school. Former students came to help with after school classroom clean-up and shared stories of what they were doing and what their siblings were doing, while they erased blackboards and cleaned tables. During football season, members of the high school football team came to tutor and mentor the children. The class also took regular field trips to a local nursing home.

During informal interviews, conversations with the teachers, and observations, I was able to get a general idea about the decision making process in the school community. I found that the teachers in the early childhood wing of the school were not compelled to follow all the guidelines and requirements adopted by the grades,

but that they worked very closely with each other to develop their own guidelines. Besides the two teachers in the classroom that served as the context of the study, there were another kindergarten teacher and a preschool teacher on the same hallway. A parent education coordinator who worked with families before their children entered school had her office on the hallway as well. The early childhood program had gradually developed over a number of years, and the early childhood faculty worked closely together from the beginning. Most of the time, the teachers met between morning and afternoon sessions to eat lunch together.

The independence of the early childhood faculty within the school system was exemplified in a story that one of the team teachers volunteered during a supervisory conference. Ms. Harris said that she had been at Springfield a short time before Ms. Morris came. The district was starting to institute standardized testing at younger grades and Ms. Harris had gone along with it, even though she had doubts about its value at the kindergarten level. When Ms. Morris came, according to Ms. Harris, she said, "Oh, no, that isn't appropriate for kindergarten." Her statement gave Ms. Harris courage and she spoke up to agree with her. They visited the superintendent, who reportedly looked at how much the testing would cost if it was continued with the growing population in Springfield and agreed to drop standardized testing at the kindergarten level (and below). Ms. Morris added later, "Now whenever the administration suggests something that would be inappropriate developmentally, we just speak up and say, 'Oh, kindergarten doesn't do that.'"

On the other hand, when I visited a faculty meeting, I found that the early childhood teachers did not sit together. They took whatever seats were available and used breaks in the meeting to meet and greet the "teachers upstairs," as they referred to the teachers in the grades. They participated in school wide, community-building events as well, even though they also held a series of evening events just for kindergarten children and parents. The only reason that I ever heard being given for divergence from the rest of the school was, "That wouldn't be appropriate for our kids."

During informal lunch time conversations, I found that the early childhood teachers did coordinate efforts on curriculum development. Together they had developed, and continued to develop, a daily journaling process that was the heart of their literacy curriculum. They also were active in teachers' organizations, made sure they were represented at most of the School Board meetings, and stayed abreast of educational developments at the state level. They considered themselves advocates for young children in all these settings.

The diverse student body, the team teaching situation, the community involvement, and the close cooperation of the early childhood faculty in advocating for children made the setting socially complex and interesting. From an ecological standpoint (Bronfenbrenner, 1986), a great deal of the context of teaching and learning was readily accessible to a student teacher entering the setting. Making sense of that context and operating in it was potentially challenging.

Participants

Each of the two participants entered the complex social context of her first student teaching experience with a unique life history. Amanda was in her late twenties, married to a man several years older, and a "settled homeowner." She had come to the university by a nontraditional route. Amanda had first become involved in early childhood education during high school, when she decided to take a vocational education option in child care. She traveled to a vocational education center during the school day to take classes and work in the child care center there. When Amanda described her earliest experience in early childhood education, she put a lot of emphasis on the decision she had made. She said that none of her friends were going to be in the program, that her parents had not really encouraged her in that direction, and that she had not been completely sure of the decision herself. In retrospect, she was proud of making that decision on her own and thought that it had been a pivotal moment in her life.

Amanda went on to earn her Child Development Associate credential and worked in child care as she continued her education at a local junior college. While still at the junior college, she had the opportunity to work in an innovative new program for teenage mothers and their children. The program was designed to provide child care for young parents so that they could finish high school, while also providing parent education and guidance. (Although the program was open to both mothers and fathers, very few fathers participated.) Amanda was responsible for one of the infant rooms and spoke daily with young mothers as they dropped off their

infants, came for a daily playtime with them, and came after school to pick them up again. Because of schedule conflicts, Amanda had to quit this job to continue her education at the university. She was determined to continue her education, but did regret leaving her job at the teen parent center

Amanda was the first in her family, as far as she knew, to earn a baccalaureate degree. At least by the time she came to the university, she was a serious student. I knew her briefly as an undergraduate when she was enrolled in a one credit hour class that I taught. The purpose of this course was to introduce students to the field of early childhood education, help them set professional goals, and work with them on developing professional portfolios. In our brief acquaintance, Amanda was memorable. Although her appearance was unremarkable and she did not attract a lot of attention to herself in class, she did come up after class to ask questions. I soon realized that she was regularly asking about assignments that wouldn't be due for some time. I also found that her peers relied on her for everything from class notes to a sympathetic ear.

In contrast, Julie came straight to the university from a private preparatory school in a nearby city. She attended the prep school partly because her mother was the headmaster there. Julie was slender and pretty, a former debutante. Her eyes sparkled when she talked. Her classmates and teachers described her as "sweet." In fact, she did have a high, sweet voice and a demeanor that most people found very agreeable and charming. She was genuinely kind to other people. Her sense of humor was what saved Julie from being "too perfect." Julie had the ability to draw people

into a story that eventually had them laughing with her over her own foibles. In one of these stories, she described how she left school exhausted one Friday evening and tried to persuade her boyfriend to stay in instead of going out as they had planned. When he stubbornly insisted that she had to get dressed up and go out, she agreed halfheartedly but "griped" at him when he came to pick her up. She rolled her eyes dramatically as she told the story and described herself as generally "difficult." She said that a few miles down the road, she did apologize for her bad mood. She was especially glad she'd apologized when he executed his carefully orchestrated marriage proposal an hour later. She was thrilled with the proposal and excited about the upcoming marriage. It was hard to tell how much she had exaggerated her own "prickliness" to make a good story.

Julie was close to her immediate family. When asked to choose a code name for the research study, she chose her older sister's name. Julie was pleased that she was often mistaken for her mother on the phone and seemed proud of her mother's professional accomplishments. I had the opportunity to meet Julie's mother when she came to a special event that Julie and the children had planned for their parents and guests. Julie's mother, after long years of teaching and school administration, happily played the role of invited guest and let Julie enjoy her moment of accomplishment. She told me that Julie's older siblings had chosen other lines of work and she supported their choices, but that she had advised Julie to choose some kind of career that involved working with children. She believed that Julie had a special gift with

children and said that she was thrilled when Julie announced that she was planning to be a teacher.

By choosing to conduct qualitative case studies, I was able to observe some of the ways in which personal biographies interacted with the social complexity of the setting to produce a learning environment unique to each case. Although I entered each case study with an overall plan for data collection, the events and circumstances of each case, along with the personal stories of the participants, influenced the way that the data collection process in each study actually progressed.

Data Collection

Data collection involved multiple sources of information for purposes of triangulation (Creswell, 1998). In both cases, I was able to use a combination of observations, interviews, and artifacts to provide multiple sources and different viewpoints. Because I was primarily interested in each student teacher's thinking and decision making process as she interacted with the setting, the data collection focused on the participants and how each participant perceived the feedback provided by cooperating teachers, supervisors, children, parents, and others in the setting. When I collected others' perspectives, it was primarily to compare perceptions of the events and circumstances in which the participants were operating.

Data collection began with careful entry into the setting and consideration of risk for the participants. Because the credibility of the data depended on intimacy and trust between myself and each participant, I wanted to be sure that I was aware of their needs and interests. I designed the research plan to consider their needs and still

provide the breadth and depth of data that I needed to investigate the questions. Each design incorporated multiple data sources, but considered the time that the student teacher could invest. I gave special attention to confidentiality.

Entry into the setting began with two "gatekeepers," the certification chair for early childhood education at the university and the administrators responsible for the school site. The certification chair was interested in the possible benefits and risks to the student teachers that participated. The greatest risk to participants was breach of confidentiality. Because student teachers are at the beginning of their teaching careers, and not yet gainfully employed, I knew that the participants would be particularly sensitive to this risk. I asked each participant to select a code name early in the research process, so that data could be identified with the code name only. This provided more assurance to the participant. Although the school setting was not the focus of the study, it needed to be richly described. Because of that "insider's" description, it was important to protect the identity of the setting as well. Also, student teaching assignments were readily accessible within the university and known to the education community, and it would be hard to protect the identity of the participants without keeping the setting confidential as well.

Another concern relating to the participants was that the study would not detract from their student teaching experience. I hoped that the extra time for reflection during interviews might enhance the experience, but I didn't want to distract the participants from their own professional priorities or make them uncomfortably self-conscious about their decisions (possibly distorting the data as

well). The emphasis on process over the actual decisions took some pressure off the participants. During interviews, they soon found that I was more interested in the way they were thinking about their practice than in the practice itself. This seemed to convince them that I was not going to be involved in evaluating their performance or passing judgment on their decisions.

I worked to maintain a nonjudgmental role, because I did not want to constrain the participants' thinking and decision making process. I wanted a relationship of mutual respect with each participant so that she would be able to function autonomously. Because I was older than the participants and because I was a teaching assistant at their university, we could have slipped into a relationship of unilateral respect. Relationships of unilateral respect encourage heteronomy and constrain autonomy (Piaget, 1965). In such a research climate, I would not see the participant's full range of thinking and behavior.

Both participants were aware that I supervised most of the early childhood student teachers. However, I did not supervise the participants for two reasons. The first related to the verity of the data as described above. If I were providing evaluation on the participants' effectiveness as teachers, I could not maintain a nonjudgmental stance while questioning them about their thinking processes and decisions. Second, as their evaluator, I would have had conflicting interests and incompatible roles, jeopardizing both my effectiveness as a supervisor and my openness as a researcher. Information gained as a researcher might influence the evaluation process in ways

that would be unfair to the participant, or the evaluation process might constrain candid participation in the research project.

Even though I did not serve as supervisor or evaluator for either participant, I found that I had to consider a potential difference in power. I found that in Amanda's case, I had to carefully safeguard my non-evaluative role. Amanda twice asked me for feedback on her teaching. In each case, I just assured her that she was doing fine. I said that I was not really thinking about their teaching effectiveness while I was there, but that I would surely have noticed if there had been anything that really bothered me. Amanda asked for my feedback, but did not seem to be particularly apprehensive about what I would say. It seemed to me that she was more motivated by her own desire to improve herself as a teacher than any need for my approval. In fact, although I was about twenty years older than she, she didn't treat me as someone "older."

In Julie's case, I found that I needed to work harder to establish trust by respecting her decision making process and refraining from any kinds of value statements about the decisions she made. On a few occasions, after we had begun to establish that trust, Julie asked me questions like, "What *can* you do in a situation like that?" Because she honestly seemed to expect an answer, I felt compelled to provide some kind of response. However, the situations that sparked her questions were usually quite difficult. I could quite honestly respond by saying, "I don't really know. There is no simple answer."

By carefully refraining from judging their actions, I felt that I safeguarded both the research climate and the quality of the student teaching experience.

However, I know that I had an influence on the participants during the time that I was collecting data. To the best of my knowledge, the strongest influence that I had in each case was to encourage reflection that might not have taken place otherwise. The questions I asked and the frequency with which I asked them made it nearly impossible for the participants to avoid reflecting on their own thoughts and actions. They also knew I was researching the moral development of teachers, and so my questions were considered in that light. This most likely influenced the course of each participant's professional moral development by encouraging critical thinking (Brookfield, 1987 & 1995). However, this was a methodological conundrum, because there was no way to gain access to the participants' thought processes without having them represent their thoughts in some way. That process of representation encouraged reflection.

The second gatekeeper, the local school administration, was concerned with how the research would impact the school site. At the time of the second case study, the first principal had resigned to take an educational consulting position and the assistant principal had been promoted to principal. However, both administrators were primarily concerned with the possible risks to the children and my potential intrusion on the educational process. Originally, I had planned to videotape the participants each time I came to observe. I thought that these videotapes would be helpful for later reflection during interviews. However, the administrators were concerned about my photographing children when they were away from their parents and in the care of the school. I agreed to avoid including them in the tape. My

agreement to avoid photographing the children turned out to be a restriction that limited the value of the videotapes somewhat.

Amanda's Case Each case was conducted separately and the data collection process was somewhat different in each case. Amanda began her student teaching in January, the middle of the academic year. There were five months between the end of data collection on Amanda's case and the beginning of Julie's student teaching in August. By the time I began collecting data on case two, I had almost completed the analysis on case one.

Amanda embraced the project enthusiastically, especially after she realized that I would not be evaluating her teaching, even informally. Several times she asked me, "Are you getting enough? Is this helping?" Her eagerness to participate meant that interviews could be extended well past school hours or could even take place in the evenings on campus. Toward the end of the study, she delayed the last interview for a week while she finished a renovation project on her house. Other than that, I found her eager to put other demands aside whenever I asked for an interview.

I adopted the role of participant observer in the classroom. I observed and participated in various school events: classroom life at various times of day with both morning and afternoon sessions, student arrival and departure, lunch time with the teachers, a special Valentines Day "tea party" with parents and guests, a faculty meeting, and after-school conversations while setting up for the next day. During these observation periods, I had the opportunity to talk informally with Amanda and serve as a sounding board for her questions, doubts, and concerns. During my visits, I

also had the opportunity to interact with the teachers and assistants, help with center set-up and clean-up, and assist children with their work. I made twelve visits over eight weeks, ranging in length from two hours to the entire day. These observations were recorded in field notes made the same day after leaving the setting.

Often Amanda or I brought up classroom events and conversations during interviews that followed the observations. I conducted eight interviews over the eight week period. A few of the interviews included a review of videotape made earlier in the day. One interview was a half-hour phone interview, but most interviews were held after school following an observation period. These interviews lasted about 45 minutes to an hour. A ninth interview was held away from the setting after Amanda had completed her work there. This interview lasted a little over two hours.

I transcribed the audiotapes of interviews as soon as possible, often before the next interview. If this was not possible, I replayed the tapes to discover dominant themes and make interpretive notes. This gave me the opportunity for "member checking" (Merriam, 1988). Usually this would take the form of a question in the next interview, "I wanted to ask you about something you said the other day..." It also gave me a chance to direct the interview questions into areas that my initial interpretations indicated might be fruitful lines of inquiry.

My first interview with Amanda was on her third day of student teaching. At that time I asked about her understanding of teachers' responsibilities, before she had the opportunity to take on those responsibilities herself. I also tried to get a sense of her initial impression of the social climate, the norms, and the shared values in the

school setting. However, my main objective during the first interview was to begin to establish a trusting relationship with Amanda.

When Amanda began teaching, I began videotaping portions of the day. I soon found that my equipment made it difficult to exclude the children from the tapes during the times when they were free to move about the room. Therefore, my taping was limited to large group times when Amanda was leading songs, reading books, and guiding daily routines such as calendar updates. I taped three of these sessions. In each case, I replayed the tape with Amanda that afternoon to guide our reflection on the day. During the first of these sessions, I gave the remote control to Amanda and asked her to stop it wherever she had something to say. In the other two sessions, either of us could stop the tape at any point for a discussion. Although group times did figure prominently in our interviews, Amanda frequently brought up student responses that were not visible on the tape and talked about other parts of the day as well. The tapes may have played a role in her memory of events, but appeared to be of limited value. I also observed that I attracted attention from the children when I walked in with a large camera and tripod. They would ask me if I was going to take their picture, even though I had explained to them several times that I was not going to be photographing them. I also found that Amanda was more nervous on the days that I was taping and would sigh with relief on the days that I didn't bring the camera. I decided that in the classroom context of this study, the camera was contributing to a slight distortion in the data.

With or without videotape, most interviews still took the form of debriefing sessions in which I probed for events that Amanda saw as problematic. I tried to discover in these sessions how Amanda was framing the problem. Often these problems involved a decision that Amanda had to make between conflicting needs and some of these conflicts were recurrent. In each problem that Amanda framed as a moral dilemma, I tried to find out who or what she felt she had to consider in order to make a decision.

Amanda also provided me with a copy of the reflective journal that she kept during the study. This journal was kept as a part of the student teaching requirement and was meant to serve as a way for her to establish the habit of reflecting on her teaching practice. In Amanda's case, her journal was much more formal than our interviews. The entries also became briefer as her time in the field progressed. This was in contrast to her interviews which were becoming longer and longer as she struggled to articulate more of her thinking. However, the journals were still helpful to me in that Amanda sometimes summarized a change in her thinking or a new discovery in a few eloquent words in her journal. I was also able to gain a broader picture of Amanda's professional concerns during her first eight weeks of student teaching and better understand the relative importance of professional morality and ethics in those concerns.

Amanda's university supervisor was an additional source of information. Amanda's supervisor was also her instructor for the action research class that she was taking concurrently. The supervisor generated and collected a number of documents

that represented her perspective on Amanda's general professional growth as well as the perspectives of Amanda and her cooperating teacher. Amanda and her supervisor conferred before and after each of two formal observations and participated, with the cooperating teacher, in an evaluative conference toward the end of her weeks in the setting. I observed and audio-recorded these conferences. The conferences involved discussion of particular events and varying perceptions of events and provided triangulation for Amanda's interview accounts and my observations. They also provided information about the role of supervision in the development of the student teacher's professional ethos.

Amanda also gave me a copy of her report on the action research project completed during her student teaching experience. This project was Amanda's attempt to solve an educational problem that related to a child in the morning class, but it was rich in ethical and moral considerations.

During data collection, I worked to keep my role as neutral as possible. I was more of an observer in the setting than a participant. However, I needed to be involved enough to be a familiar and comfortable figure. Therefore, I helped with setting up and cleaning up after center time, assisted students with their daily journal writing, and joined the social exchange over brown bag lunches. I identified myself primarily as a graduate student although everyone was aware of my teaching experience in inner-city classrooms. This was similar to the early teaching experiences of one of the cooperating teachers.

To minimize constraint and encourage candid interviews, I did not serve as Amanda's supervisor as stated previously. We became increasingly comfortable with each other in our professional roles. At the end of the study, after the tape was turned off on our final interview, Amanda asked me about my experience in graduate school and what I planned to do afterwards. She then confided that she was considering graduate school, possibly even a Ph.D. program. I realized then that I had been providing her with a model of what a graduate student does and that her interest in my role was what motivated her enthusiastic participation in the study.

Amanda's case provided a unique opportunity to join in the struggles and conflicts of a novice teacher as she made sense of the moral landscape of teaching. Amanda's enthusiasm made my involvement in the setting and my interviews with her almost effortless. Julie's case was governed by different parameters and required a different approach.

Julie's Case Julie had doubts about whether or not she wanted to participate in the study. When I approached her about it, I told her that she was being asked to participate because of where she was placed for her internship and not because of anything related to her personally or professionally. I told her what would be involved and what I was researching. I told her that she could choose not to participate or could withdraw at any time. I was very careful to define my role as researcher, not evaluator. She said that she would need to think about it and took the Letter of Informed Consent with her for consideration. Even after she decided to participate, she went to my dissertation advisor, who also happened to be the Certification Chair

of the Early Childhood program, and to her cooperating teachers with concerns she had about her participation in the project. I began the study with the understanding that Julie's participation was tentative and that the verity of the data might be compromised by self-consciousness if I probed beyond her comfort level.

For our first interview, I attempted to overcome some of the discomfort and minimize any power differential in our roles by conducting the interview on "neutral ground," an informal restaurant near the school. Still, Julie sat very still and tall during the interview. She didn't laugh or tell stories as she was prone to do in normal conversation. In retrospect, I probably should have begun the interview process without a tape recorder. Julie continued to look at it throughout the interview and provided answers to my questions without any extraneous comment.

During the first interview, I focused on finding out Julie's general views of the responsibilities of teachers. As in Amanda's case, I held the first interview on the third day of her student teaching and Julie had not had the opportunity to take on those responsibilities in her new setting. However, I found out during this first interview that Julie and one of her classmates had taught a preschool class over the summer. They had recruited students at the private school from which Julie's mother had recently retired. Julie said that they collected tuition and ran the summer session "sort of as our own business." I wondered how this experience would affect her experience as a student teacher. Even though it was a short summer session, primarily an enrichment experience for the students, the parents expected a quality program. From Julie's account, she and her classmate did not receive any direct supervision

during the short summer session. They did not have responsibility for evaluating the students or coordinating their curriculum with the regular preschool program. However, Julie had already accepted a great deal of responsibility in order to complete the summer session successfully and I wondered if her understanding of professional responsibility would have been different before the experience.

During the first interview, we discussed the videotaping. I said that I only intended to use the tapes as a tool for reflection later, that we would view them together and talk about them. Later Julie told Ms. Harris that she was "still nervous" about the videotaping. Ms. Harris told me about Julie's concerns. She said that she had assured Julie that I was so technically inept that the chances were good that she'd never show up on the tape. I laughed when Ms. Harris told me that and was very pleased. I thought that the more I could lower my authority and appear NOT to be an expert, the more comfortable Julie would be with the research process. However, she still seemed uncomfortable about videotaping later that day and asked apprehensively when I would start. This put me at a crossroads as a researcher. I began to see the videotaping process as something that might jeopardize the whole study because of Julie's discomfort. I also remembered the tapes as being less valuable than I had hoped in the previous case. I was still under the restriction to avoid taping children. I decided to forego the tapes, at least at first, and make quick notes about events that I would like to discuss. I also asked Julie about what she perceived as problem points in the day.

I also found that Julie was more open during informal interviews than she was when I was asking direct questions with the tape recorder running. Over the summer, the parents at Springfield Elementary had finished a walled playground for the kindergarten. The space was smaller and safer than the large rambling recess area they had been sharing with the older children. The teachers were able to set up outdoor center activities and provide outdoor play equipment appropriate for younger children. The new playground turned out to be a benefit for my research. Julie was comfortable talking outside as we watched the children play. I was able to get a better sense of her struggles as a teacher, because she would often bring up things that puzzled her and things that had not gone as expected during that day. She often talked about individual children as she got to know them better.

My participant observer role in the classroom also provided opportunities for informal interviews. I was by now a familiar figure to the teachers and assistants and we did not have to spend a lot of time figuring out my role. I felt more comfortable about talking with Julie (as well as the teachers and assistants) during the course of the school day. While I was collecting data on Julie's case, I was also supervising a student teacher down the hall in the other kindergarten room. This student teacher usually joined us for lunch and the conversation would turn to football and personal life as well as school matters. In time I learned how to use these informal interactions to understand Julie and her way of operating.

Altogether, I was only able to record four formal interviews although I made nine extended visits to the setting. I also recorded two supervisory conferences in

which Julie freely discussed her classroom decisions with her supervisor. I found that Julie became more relaxed and confident in later interviews than in earlier ones. She also called one evening toward the end of her placement to invite me to a special event the next day. Because of this, I felt that the time I spent in the setting, talking informally with Julie, and talking college football over lunch, had been effective in establishing familiarity and trust in our relationship.

I also learned to use formal interview time to good advantage. While observing and talking informally with Julie, I made mental note of things to record later. In the process of recording field notes, I often noticed relationships and patterns that I could pursue during interviews. Sometimes this took the form of "member-checking," as in "Let me ask you again about something you said the other day." Other times, I would be less sure that I remembered or understood correctly. Then I would ask in a more open-ended manner for an explanation, as in "I think we got interrupted the other day. What were you telling me about....?" Although awkward at first, this process began to flow easily from one visit to the next as the eight weeks progressed.

I also had some unexpected opportunities to gain insight into Julie's thinking. She kept a more detailed journal than Amanda had kept and was completely comfortable in sharing it with me. She also made her own edited videotape to share with her peers in her action research class. The professor who taught the class invited me to come for the session when the early childhood student teachers shared and discussed their videotapes. This gave me an opportunity to see Julie interact with her

peers, explain her actions and curricular decisions to people with whom she felt comfortable, and share her view of the setting in which she taught. Another advantage was that the tape had been compiled and edited by Julie. She was sharing aspects of her work that she felt proud to share. This supplied some additional insight into Julie's values and priorities. She was also comfortable in providing me the opportunity to copy the tape for my data set.

It is important to note here that Julie did not experience much discomfort in her role as teacher. She was comfortable with the children and confident in her actions in the classroom. The discomfort that she had with the research project was not a reflection of any overall lack of confidence in herself as a teacher. In fact, she did not seem to be at all uncomfortable with my presence in the classroom. Only audiotaping and videotaping made her uncomfortable.

However, there also seemed to be a difference in power or status between us that I could never overcome completely. It is possible that the age difference was an important factor, as Julie was several years younger than Amanda and had not really lived independent of her family's support. Also, Julie's mother was a teacher. If Julie perceived the study as potentially threatening to closely held values or beliefs shared with her mother, it would be potentially threatening to her identity as well (Rodgers & Dunn, 1997). However, I was never able to find out the source of Julie's discomfort. Whenever I would ask directly if she was uncomfortable with anything in the study, she would say that everything was "fine," even though she confided her discomfort to others.

The challenges of Julie's case provided me with an opportunity to stretch my skills as a researcher. I tried to balance my need for "thick" and plentiful data with my need to have data undistorted by self-consciousness or truncated by an early conclusion to the study. I had to be very attentive to any discrepancies between Julie's account of her thinking and activity and the way that I saw her operating in the classroom. Most of the time I found remarkable consistency. I concluded that although Julie was probably uncomfortable (especially at first) and did not volunteer a lot of extra information, the verity of the information she provided was established by the consistency of her words, my observations, and the perceptions of her cooperating teachers and supervisor. She appeared to be operating in the way she described.

All the data collected in each case were assembled in hard copy in a data notebook organized chronologically, with the exception of the videotapes. The tapes were dated and filed separately. Field notes and interpretive notes were separate and labeled. I also kept a notebook in which I recorded "odds and ends." The notebook has references to consult, notes about ill-formulated questions and concerns, quotes about dissertation research and research in general that were gleaned from various sources, and personal reflections on the process. This notebook was helpful in constructing a subjectivity audit (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992) and in "picking up lost threads" during analysis.

Analysis

In both cases, I began analysis during the data collection process as described in the last section. I found that transcribing audiotapes myself, and writing field notes after leaving the setting for the day, gave me time and opportunity to "listen" for themes. Listening for themes was compatible with what I intended to accomplish in my research, namely "a way of seeing" professional moral development in teaching (Schön, 1983). I also made interpretive notes and developed questions for subsequent interviews.

I held the themes that I identified early as conditional and tentative, but they informed my data collection. In particular, I was able to notice changes over time in the way that a participant defined a problem by identifying it early. For example, Amanda felt very early that she needed to be seen as a "real teacher." This constrained her decisions and actions a great deal at first, but became less important in her later weeks of practice.

During data collection, I also analyzed my own perspective and began to construct a subjectivity audit (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). During the data collection periods, I felt extremely comfortable in the school setting. The community was diverse and tolerant. The teachers in the setting were down to earth, experienced teachers. They were near my age and held similar philosophical views about education. The classroom atmosphere was calm and pleasant. (Both supervisors shared this same perception and volunteered it during conferences.) Very quickly, I realized that I would have to work to keep from identifying myself with the setting in

the eyes of the participants. In particular, I wanted the participants to feel free to disclose any misgivings or discomfort they had with the setting or the cooperating teachers. Both participants felt free to make decisions about curriculum that they saw as divergent from the usual procedure in the classroom and a possible improvement. Each participant talked to me about her decisions. They seemed completely without conflict about these decisions and were comfortable talking about them. Either they did not see me as a part of the setting or they perceived their decisions to be inoffensive to their cooperating teachers, or both.

However, I did notice myself becoming increasingly identified with the setting. I began to see myself more as a participant as the weeks progressed. The more I enjoyed my time in the classroom, the less I wanted to be seen as someone from the "ivory tower" who came and went at will. I began to feel discomfort with my observer and researcher role as I identified more strongly with the context and participants. I found myself feeling affection toward the children and toward the very human adults that sometimes demonstrated such tenderness and compassion for them. While affection reduces the distance between the researcher and the researched, it also softens the "sharp, harsh light" that dispassion can bring to the research process (Peshkin, 1991). I was aware of my subjective attachment to the people in the setting during my fieldwork and thought of it as an emotional lens. Becoming more aware of ways in which my attachment might "color" my view of the setting helped me to maintain some distance from my own emotional responses during data collection. As

I stepped back from the data collection phase of the study, my sense of detachment and involvement came back into balance.

While I struggled with becoming over-involved in classroom life, I faced the opposite struggle when it came to the participants' lives away from school. I was hesitant to intrude in the participants' private lives and personal biographies. I felt that the topic was sensitive enough without probing into areas that might or might not be informative. I didn't want to confuse professional moral development with overall moral character in the minds of the participants. In Amanda's case, this concern became a minor consideration after the first few interviews. Amanda was willing to discuss her own memories of school, her feelings, and professional biography whenever she had the opportunity. This was the "personal" information that I wanted. In Julie's case, I knew that she was uncomfortable already. When she didn't volunteer information, I proceeded cautiously. I had professional reasons for proceeding with delicacy and consideration. However, I often asked myself if I was also reluctant to invite Julie to share material that was potentially charged with emotion or threatening to family loyalty.

During a previous study (Rodgers & Dunn, 1997), I interviewed a participant who revealed intense personal confusion and psychological pain that I was not professionally equipped to handle. Although I perceived Julie to be emotionally stable and resilient, perhaps I was still hesitant to engage her with questions that would cause her to connect her professional practice and the research study with more personal conflicts. Awareness of my subjective view of the setting and participants

helped me look for the distortions it could cause during data collection. It also led me to be cautious and more aware of assumptions I might make during formal analysis.

Formal analysis began when data collection was complete in each case. As stated previously, there were five months between the end of data collection for case one and the beginning of data collection for case two. Most of the formal analysis for case one was complete before case two was under way. Although my knowledge of Amanda's case was part of my understanding of professional moral development as I began Julie's case, I treated each case as unique and whole.

The nature of the data, my research purposes, and the results of the preliminary analysis determined the procedures to be followed in formal analysis. The chronological arrangement of the data sets facilitated the search for change over time. It also made it easy to search for divergent viewpoints on specific events or evidence that a participant was not operating in a way consistent with her description of her thought processes. After listening for themes and identifying them, I wrote brief descriptions of the themes and revisited the data again and again to develop and expand them with actual events, statements by the participants, and statements made by others in the setting. In a few cases, I charted events and statements over time to be sure that a particular dilemma was thoroughly described in the text. During this process of development and enrichment, I continued to check for accuracy as I revisited the data. I also reconsidered the importance of the themes and questioned the ways in which my choice of descriptive vocabulary might constitute interpretation of the data (Peshkin, 2000). These processes helped me to look for relationships between

and within themes. I then used direct interpretation to identify patterns (Creswell, 1998).

Chapter Four

I conducted two case studies in order to find the answers to three questions. The questions referred to the specific individuals participating, but I hoped that the answers might suggest themes that would help teacher educators form theories of practice in the uncertain area of professional moral development (Schön, 1983). The three questions were: 1) How does the student teacher understand her professional responsibility? 2) How does the student teacher understand and frame moral problems in practice? 3) What is the role of formal teacher preparation in a student teacher's professional moral development?

In addressing these questions, I hoped to understand how each participant would construct an ethos in the concrete conditions of everyday practice. I expected this ethos to evolve over time as each participant made professional moral decisions (decisions with foreseeable consequences for others, especially others to whom the participants were professionally responsible). I assumed that moral decisions would be deeply embedded in teaching practices and that the participants would have to make sense of the moral landscape of teaching in order to operate in it.

Amanda

Amanda began her student teaching with a fairly complex model of her responsibilities as a teacher already developed. Her understanding of the scope of her responsibilities did not change appreciably during the time she participated in this study. However, her understanding of how she would have to operate in order to fulfill those responsibilities did change. The change in her understanding was evident

in the way she interpreted her setting differently over time and modified her own behavior based on her reflection.

During Amanda's first interview, I asked her to describe the responsibilities of teachers. She described those responsibilities in the framework of a widening circle. At the center of the circle was the responsibility to the children. In this realm she included the responsibility for designing developmentally appropriate curriculum that considered the class as a whole and individual needs. In a little wider circle was the responsibility to children's families. She said that a child couldn't be separated from the family and dealt with in isolation. It was in dealing with families that Amanda stressed the need to be authentic and respectful. Another realm of responsibility was to colleagues. In this realm, Amanda stressed cooperation and said that in addition to relationships with individual colleagues, a teacher had a responsibility to the school as a whole. To summarize, she said, "I think everything's kind of connected to each other. They're parts of each other, but what happens to one piece of it affects everything else."

In our first interview, Amanda also described the potential influence of a single teacher in a particular context by giving a hypothetical example. She said that if a teacher did not have a "respectful, cooperative" relationship with peers and co-workers, it would be difficult and frustrating to establish appropriate practices in the classroom. Then interactions between the teacher and the children would be affected. Then children would go home unhappy and frustrated, affecting the family. Amanda

also saw this "ripple effect" as extending into the community almost indefinitely. She said, "You know, the more you look at it, the further out it goes."

Amanda's description of a teacher's responsibilities closely resembled an ecological model of contextual influences on children's development (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Amanda had encountered ecological theory in her coursework, and she may have adopted the "widening circle of context" to describe the social complexity of her influence and responsibility as a teacher. Her ability to articulate this idea on the third day of her student teaching suggested to me that she expected teaching to be complex and social in nature.

As stated previously, I began data collection during the first week, transcribing and listening for themes at the same time that I was conducting interviews, visiting the school, and videotaping group times. My initial analysis (during and immediately after data collection) yielded two closely connected themes relating to Amanda's professional moral activity: the need to socially construct the role of teacher and a consistent preference for preserving relationships above other values. Subsequent (more detailed) analysis yielded a third theme: the situated nature of Amanda's professional decisions. The third theme tied the first two themes together more closely and revealed the complexity of Amanda's way of operating in the classroom. Each of these themes appeared in my observations of Amanda's moral activity in the classroom, as well as in her descriptions of her moral problem-solving process. After examining the dominant themes, I will describe Amanda's perception

of how her preparation at the University and the support provided during the student teaching experience influenced her professional moral development.

Amanda's Construction of her Role as Teacher Amanda's understanding and construction of her role as teacher influenced her perceived and actual capacity to make professional decisions and act on them. The ability to make and act on professional decisions (based on the foreseeable consequences for others) constitutes the heart of professional moral activity. Therefore Amanda's ability to construct a functional "teacher role" was crucial to her professional moral activity and development. Role construction in a new setting is similar to construction of a self (Mead, 1934) in that the interaction between the individual and the group results in the gradually negotiated model of a person's function in the group. Without these models, human beings would find it hard to predict each other's behavior, and stable social organization would be impossible. The fact that Amanda understood that her role would be socially complex before she ever began to interact with others in her new setting made role construction a complicated process for her.

Amanda often expressed the need to "be a real teacher" or "feel like a real teacher." During our first interview, I noticed that Amanda was concerned about how she would fit into the classroom. I asked a very open-ended question: "What have you noticed about your school?" In response, she described how the two teachers and two assistants had very similar roles in the eyes of the children. She said that the assistants led specific center time activities and the children went to the assistants and teachers for help with equal confidence. Amanda then described the difference that she had

seen in the teachers' roles and the assistants' roles, saying, "The only time that the assistant teachers aren't actively involved is during group time." Amanda also said that she felt supported and trusted because she had been introduced to the class as "one of the teachers" and had already been allowed to lead group time once. She described the teachers and assistants as having "a lot of respect for each other," and she expressed pleasure at being introduced and included. However, later in the interview, she also expressed anxiety about assuming her new role.

Amanda said several times in her first interview that she felt comfortable at Springfield. She also said that she felt like she could make decisions on her own, especially when it came to guiding children during center time. I probed, "Is that because you understand their rationale or you feel confident that they trust you or..." Amanda jumped in, "I feel like I understand their rationale." She went on to describe the ways in which the curriculum and the procedures in the classroom resembled the best practices as she had learned them in her teacher preparation at the university and elsewhere. Then she added, "They've welcomed me into the classroom and they've shown me where everything is, and they've told me that I can make decisions and they've made me feel like I'm a part of the classroom."

Amanda's anxiety seemed to be specific to her role in the social organization of the classroom and how that role related to the role of "Teacher." She saw the role of teacher as something different from the roles she had filled previously. As she described it, "...still I feel like I'm at the total beginning because ... even though I've had quite a few field experiences and I've volunteered, now it's my turn to be the

responsible one in the classroom, be the teacher." When I asked for clarification, she said,

> I can walk into a classroom and I can immediately find kids to work with and things to do, ways to interact and become a part of the community with the teachers ... but I have never had the opportunity to be the teacher where someone else is walking into the classroom... That's what's new to me, transitioning from that person who always has a teacher there... [to] the one who knows what to do.

Amanda appeared to be connecting knowledge with leadership and responsibility. The classroom leader is the one who "knows what to do," and the other adults in the room, as well as the children, take their cue from her. She also seemed to have doubts about her ability to fulfill her responsibilities as a teacher. She was unsure if she would "know what to do."

Thus, in her first few days in the classroom, Amanda had identified herself as a novice in the teacher role. Even though she was comfortable in the classroom, she was not comfortable with the level of responsibility that she saw as a part of her new role. She recognized the leadership involved in the teacher's role by describing the teacher as the one to whom others turn when a decision has to be made. She also identified leading group time as a crucial function of the teacher role. With this understanding of what the role entailed, she began to construct a teacher role for herself.

Although Amanda said that she was warmly welcomed and included, I saw her having to work to construct the leadership role she desired and win the complete confidence of her colleagues. An incident that occurred during Amanda's second week exemplified the difficulties involved in constructing a new role and demonstrated one way in which Amanda's role construction affected her professional moral activity. Considering Amanda's understanding of group time leadership as a crucial function of the teacher, it is important that the incident occurred during an afternoon group time. I was there that afternoon and observed the events as they happened. Therefore, I was able to observe how Amanda operated in the situation and discuss it with her later.

In the afternoon class was a child with some perceptual difficulties and developmental delays. Shari had trouble attending to a story or lesson for more than a few minutes and often required a little extra guidance. Even though she did not express herself well verbally, she had a great smile and relied on a few key questions to grab Amanda's attention, such as, "Am I the helper today?" From what I heard in after school conversations, I concluded that all the teachers and assistants enjoyed Shari's sociable and charming personality. However, they expressed mild frustration with her apparent preference for being in front of the group with all eyes on her!

On the day of the incident, Amanda noticed that Shari was getting restless and noisy and brought her up directly in front of the calendar (which was being updated and discussed). Soon after, one of the assistants noticed that Shari was out of her regular assigned place (still very physically restless and turned around, grinning at the

other children instead of looking at the calendar). The assistant moved her back to her usual spot. Amanda explained to the assistant that she had asked Shari to sit near the calendar, but the assistant said that Shari had been "up there putting on a show." At this point Amanda started talking very quietly with the assistant, smiling and explaining, but Shari remained where the assistant had taken her.

Later I telephoned Amanda to discuss the incident. I wanted to find out what had motivated Amanda's actions and how she had perceived the assistant's actions. Amanda said that she had noticed that Shari was not paying attention to the calendar routine. Even though she had been assigned a front row spot for group time (in order to provide the least amount of distraction), the calendar was at one end of the group area and Shari's assigned spot at the other. Amanda moved her to a place right at her knee and in front of the calendar. She acknowledged in our conversation that her strategy had not been immediately successful, but she thought that a few more minutes might have given Shari a chance to calm down. The assistant had interrupted that. After first attempting to explain her action, Amanda realized that the interruption had already occurred and that she was just interrupting group time for all the children by arguing the point.

Amanda said that she perceived the whole situation as one in which the assistant was trying to be helpful (as did I), but she saw her freedom to make decisions about disciplining children to be constrained by that helpfulness. Amanda also had her confidence shaken because the assistant saw her as someone needing help. She concluded our conversation by saying that her place in the classroom was

still "weird" because she was taking a leadership position over an assistant who had been there a long time. Later I found that in her journal entry for that day, Amanda had said of the assistant, "...I knew that she was trying to help, but I also felt confused about my place in the relationship that I am building with her. I need to establish myself as a legitimate teacher in the classroom. I don't think that this experience helped."

In this incident, I saw Amanda trying to make decisions that considered the possible consequences for all those to whom she was professionally responsible. She wanted Shari to be a part of the group and gain as much as possible from the calendar routine and all the other activities. However, Amanda was having trouble considering everyone's needs at once. As she left group to argue Shari's needs, she realized that group time had been interrupted for all the other students and that they were quickly losing interest. Amanda was still cognizant that relationships with colleagues fell in her realm of responsibility as well. Considering so many possible consequences in her "widening circle" of responsibility proved to be somewhat confusing.

Also during the second week, I talked with Amanda about a group time when she had to answer a child's unexpected question. This was a topic that Amanda brought up on her own after I watched the group time when the question came up. She wanted to see what I thought about the way she had handled a question about killer whales. A child had asked, as they discussed oceans and sea animals, "Do killer whales eat people?" Amanda said that she wanted to be truthful, so she didn't answer, "Oh, no. Don't worry. Killer whales don't eat people." However, she thought about

all the trouble she might cause if the children "ran home and told their parents" that killer whales *did* eat people. So, she said, "Let's think about what we know. What do killer whales *usually* eat?" The children were able to answer that they ate just about anything smaller than themselves and named some of the things they usually ate. Amanda said, "You're right. And people are smaller than killer whales. So I guess if a person accidentally got in the water when a killer whale was hungry, he *might* eat a person."

When Amanda asked me what I thought, I turned the question around. I asked her what she thought about her response and why she had asked me about it. As Amanda explained it, she was trying to consider many different needs at once, not wanting to create a gruesome or frightening image that would anger parents and not wanting to be untruthful. Amanda thought that the way she answered the question about killer whales had been appropriate. She brought it up because she thought there might have been some possible consequence or repercussion that she had overlooked. Amanda was conscientiously trying to operate within her "widening circle" of responsibility.

Also during the second week of Amanda's student teaching, I was able to be in the classroom two consecutive days for the afternoon session. On one of these days, Ms. Harris was present at the back of the room while Amanda led group. On the other day, Ms. Harris was out of school due to illness. Ms. Morris was still at the opposite end of the room leading her group time and both assistants were there. However, Amanda was definitely less confident leading group when Ms. Harris was

not standing on the sidelines. I noticed that she stalled for a few minutes after clean-up time and even after the children assembled. She paused frequently during group as if she was unsure what to do next. She sat with her arms and legs close to her body and didn't look beyond the first couple of rows of children. I noticed these behaviors occasionally when Ms. Harris was there, but on the day she was absent they were pronounced and continual. I did not notice this kind of hesitance or retreat during the hour before group, when Amanda was interacting with individual children at their centers. In fact, I wrote in my field notes for that day that Amanda had circulated around the entire room and interacted with every group of children.

I connected Amanda's extreme hesitancy during group time with her view of the teacher as the one in charge while others take a subordinate role, "the one who knows what to do." I speculated that without Ms. Harris there to legitimate and back up her right to be in front of the group, Amanda felt less confident. However, when I asked her after school if anything was "on her mind," the subject she chose to discuss surprised me. She was concerned about a child in the morning with emotional problems and the child in the afternoon with developmental delay. She had been observing and studying them, wondering how to help them manage themselves during group time. I noticed that Amanda still left the group sitting "unattended" while she dealt with Shari. I could not determine whether Amanda would *rather* deal with a specific developmental problem with an individual child than take responsibility for leading the whole group, if she thought her group time "problems" would be solved if

she could help the disruptive children, or if she was struggling with having to consider so many responsibilities at the same time.

Whatever the cause of her hesitance, there was evidence that Amanda was not comfortable with the approach she was taking with the children during group time. During our interview that week, Amanda indicated that she felt the need to take a stronger hand during group meetings. It wasn't a simple matter of assertiveness for Amanda. During the interview, she vacillated between her concern for individual children and her consideration of the group as a whole, as she had in our informal conversations that week. However, during the interview she brought up a third concern: the need to use the brief group time effectively given the curricular demands. She said, "We only have like thirty minutes to get group done... and even though I'd like to hear what each kid has to say, when they have something to say, sometimes they just can't [contribute] because we have to move on." She said that she was having a hard time establishing firmer control and leading children quickly from one activity to the next. While viewing a tape of herself leading group, Amanda said, "I was trying to find my way with it all. It just took a little longer than I wanted it to."

Amanda told me that Mrs. Harris accomplished a lot more during group meetings, but she wasn't sure how to go about it herself. I listened to a conversation that Amanda and Ms. Harris had about group meetings. Mrs. Harris also invited children's individual responses and encouraged Amanda to keep doing so, but she suggested that sometimes Amanda could just look out and "read" her "audience." She

suggested that Amanda pick up the pace when the children began to lose interest and slow down when they were deeply involved. Still, during her group times Amanda continued to vacillate between her concerns just as she did in her interviews during her second and third weeks. She seemed to sway back and forth, one minute allowing the children an open forum and later asserting her need to lead with a firmer hand. The children were frequently restless and talkative. She was visibly struggling to find a balance between active involvement on the part of the children and her leadership as the teacher. During our interviews during the second and third week, Amanda continued to bring up various needs that had to be balanced. She was struggling with balancing the needs of the individuals in the group, the need of the individuals to function as a community of learners, and the curricular demands that had to be met in a short school day.

At the same time, Amanda was aware that the role she was constructing was affecting the behavior of the children in the classroom, putting everything into flux. She said, "... the more responsibility I take on, the more things change and ... I just kind of change and adapt to stuff. And if I'm doing that, then the kids are doing that. It's not just me and it's not just them." In my observations, I noticed that the children began responding to her hesitance during group time by taking the lead themselves. They would remind her of what should be next if she paused. They would suggest a song or say, "You forgot our letters." Usually Amanda would immediately take their suggestion and move forward, saying, "Thank you. We need to do that." Sometimes she would say, "We don't have time today."

Amanda was concentrating a lot on her function as group time leader, but she was still concerned about being seen as a professional by her colleagues. In fact, she evidently saw her professional status with colleagues and her ability to lead during group time as connected. As mentioned earlier, after the incident with Shari the second week, Amanda noted in her journal that the incident was regrettable because it did not help build the relationship with the assistant that she wanted. Other aspects of the teacher role were closely tied to collegiality as well. Some of them Amanda found confusing.

Amanda's journal for the first three weeks is full of references to collegial relationships and her role as teacher. For example, she wrote, "It is difficult to fit in with the assistant teachers. They know a lot more about what goes on, yet I am walking into the situation as a teacher not an assistant." Because Amanda connected leadership with "knowing what to do," the knowledge that the assistants had of procedures and protocol in the classroom and the school at large was threatening.

Amanda was also troubled by the temporary aspect of her role. She wrote in her journal, "...I feel that even though I am welcomed, they know that it is only temporary and that I really don't have a permanent place in the culture of the school." After her first faculty meeting, she simply wrote, "I felt out of place." She wrote in her journal during the second week of her student teaching, "...new teachers also have to develop certain social skills that are unique to teaching... Maybe this feeling of displacement at some level is part of the social development that I am going through." Being warmly treated, accepted, and included did not diminish any of the

role-related insecurity that Amanda felt during the first three weeks of her student teaching.

During the third week, immediately following the two days described above, there was a spell of icy weather that closed the schools for several days. When school resumed (Amanda's fourth week), I noticed a change in her behavior toward Shari when Shari disrupted afternoon group. The moment that Shari jumped up to stand in front of the group, begging to be "the helper," Amanda turned to her and told her kindly but firmly that it was time for her to sit down and listen. Previously, besides moving Shari to her knee, Amanda had tried to turn her attention back to the lesson by answering her questions briefly and physically directing her back to her spot, a time-consuming process.

After school, I told Amanda that I had noticed the change. She immediately began to explain her actions. She said that she was trying to find a balance, but that she felt she had to be more direct with all the children. For one thing, she realized that Shari was settling into a disruptive routine and that she was being rewarded with attention from the rest of the class. She said that some of the other children, the ones who were younger developmentally, were also likely to act on impulse and share their thoughts without considering if it was an appropriate time. She felt like it was understandable and normal behavior for small children, but she couldn't let it continue because they weren't learning to function as a part of a group. After discussing it with Ms. Harris and thinking it over, she had consciously decided to be

direct and firm with the children when they interrupted group. She said, "There's me time and there's group time."

During a supervisory conference in the fifth week, Amanda expressed more confidence in her role. She told her supervisor during a post-observation conference, "I love the kids and I feel like they're being comfortable with me now. They've gotten accustomed to the fact that I'm a teacher in the room." Amanda's supervisor commented on the wonderful cooperation between teachers and assistants, and that it was "like a team." Amanda said,

> ...when I first got here, I had to find my place in that team. I wasn't the assistant, and I'm not a teacher. I am a teacher, but not a regular classroom teacher. And I had to kind of find my place within that, but they were eager to help me find my place and be comfortable, so I'm enjoying it.

On the day that Amanda met with her supervisor, I was able to observe both the group times that she led. Her pacing was more comfortable and even than the previous week. She had a little trouble transitioning from an active song to the more sedate activity of updating the calendar during the morning group. In the afternoon, she added a quiet verse to the song, which helped the children settle down more easily. Amanda was beginning to make decisions that she felt comfortable enacting. Some of these decisions related primarily to her effectiveness as an educator rather than her moral responsibility. However, she was able to make those decisions because she was less frequently paralyzed by her confusion about the complexity of her responsibilities.

Some aspects of Amanda's role as a teacher still confused her. For example, she was invited to "march on the capitol" with her cooperating teachers to support an important piece of education legislation that was coming before the state legislature. After first hearing about it, Amanda wrote in her journal, "One thing that I am confused about is the rally that is going to take place." She described her dilemma at that point as twofold. She was not sure how visible and controversial her participation might be. She wrote, "I don't want to jeopardize my career future by making a political mistake." She also wrote that she felt "out of the loop," because the teachers she worked with had a long history of involvement in advocacy issues. They had also shared a great deal of that history with each other and spoke to each other in a kind of shorthand, referring to issues that had taken years to resolve with a single phrase. Amanda wanted details.

By the time the rally took place, Amanda's fears about participating had dissipated and she gladly joined the other teachers at the rally. However, she still was confused about some of the significant issues involved. In an interview a few days after the rally, she said that the other teachers "seemed to know all about it" and she still wasn't sure of the significance of the issues that were being debated. Again she had to rely on more experienced teachers for background information and explanations, making her feel like a novice, a follower who wasn't sure why she was doing what she was doing.

A small group of citizens had protested the teachers leaving their classrooms to take political action, so I asked Amanda if she thought it was important to be

politically active or if she thought teachers would be more responsible if they remained in their classrooms. She made it clear that she felt that advocacy and political action were an important aspect of a teacher's responsibility. However, she said that she didn't think she had the time at this stage in her career to become more informed, and consequently she had made a decision to put off that responsibility until some time in the future.

This was the one specific addition that Amanda made to her "widening circle" model of professional responsibility. She recognized that there were responsibilities beyond the immediate community, a wider child advocacy role. She explained this to me by saying that there were people in positions of authority that could make decisions about what would happen in classrooms that they had never seen. She saw it as another responsibility of teachers and other educators to inform those people in authority about the real needs of children. However, her experience in the first few weeks of her student teaching had taught her something about her own limitations. She told me that she was not ready to personally take on any more responsibility and had made a conscious decision to think about a broader child advocacy role at some point in the future.

By the end of the sixth week, Amanda reported having days that went "smoothly" and didn't require a lot of reexamination in the evening. I asked her to explain what a smooth day was and to describe her reflection process. She described a "smooth" day as one in which events unfolded in a manner similar to what she would have predicted. Of course, not all days went smoothly. She said, "...if things didn't

work out like I thought they should, then that's when I really go over it more." "Going over it more" now included conversing with her cooperating teachers and the assistants after school, as well as a kind of "mulling over" of incidents that confused or troubled her after she got home.

Although Amanda started her internship aware of the complexity of the social context of teaching, as evidenced by her "widening circle of responsibility," she still had a lot to learn about that context. By her sixth week, she was able to look back at some of the knowledge she'd gained.

> ...a lot of what's going on in learning how to be a teacher doesn't even have to do with interacting with the kids itself. I think that's one of the easier parts is being with the kids... I'm having to figure all that out. A lot of it is social, but some days I feel like I'm on top of the game and other days I'm like, 'OK. I'm not even clued into what happened.'

I observed Amanda functioning in this complicated social landscape with more confidence during her sixth week. She was less tense and physically restrained. She laughed more with the children during group time. In her interview that week, she said that she had accepted the temporary nature of her assignment and that even if she would never be *the* real teacher, she was *a* real teacher.

Finally, during Amanda's seventh week, she announced to me quite decisively, "I feel like I'm the real teacher." She explained that she felt this way because the assistants were coming to her with questions. Because Amanda was planning the curriculum at that point by herself, the assistants would ask questions

such as, "What do you want done here?" Amanda said that the first time they did that, she almost sent them to Ms. Harris or Ms. Morris and then she realized that they would not know how to answer the assistant's questions and she did! Amanda finally saw herself being "the one who knows what to do." It surprised her somewhat. As she said,

> It kind of feels like a weird role that I hadn't really realized that I had grown into. I guess it's kind of like a kid not fully realizing that they can do something until they're there and they're doing it.

In others' actions toward her, she saw herself in a new role.

During her eighth week, Amanda surprised herself even more. The minute I walked into the classroom that week, Ms. Harris said, "Guess what? Amanda told one of the kids that she was the teacher!" When I had a chance to talk to Amanda, she said, "You'll never guess what I did." According to Ms. Harris and Amanda, the event happened like this: During group time, a reluctant "helper," Macon, was leading the class through the calendar routine. Chester, one of the more outgoing children, decided to "help the helper" by instructing him on what to do step by step. Amanda reminded Chester that it wasn't his turn to be the helper. A little later, she said, "If Macon needs help, I'll help him. I think he's doing fine." When this still didn't stop Chester's relentless directions to Macon, Amanda said, "Chester, I'm the teacher in this room!" His response was to look startled and say, "Oh! OK." I asked Amanda later in our private interview how she felt about that, because she seemed a little embarrassed, especially when Ms. Harris teased her about it. She said, "Well, I

meant it when I said it." However, she was concerned that she hadn't been as tactful as she should have been, that perhaps she was trampling on Chester in order to make her own position more secure, and that apparently Macon hadn't really minded that much. She explained her actions by saying that there had to be boundaries. It was her job to see that one child didn't "take over the whole class."

During the seventh and eighth week of her student teaching, there was a change in the way that Amanda viewed her role, as stated above. She began to see herself differently when she found herself to be operating differently. When Amanda realized that she could answer the assistant's questions better than Ms. Harris or Ms. Morris, she was surprised. Up until that time, although she was functioning as a teacher in the classroom, she knew that she could defer to one of the cooperating teachers in a time of stress. She always knew that she could "delegate up" if there was a tough decision to make. Several times I saw Amanda start a song only to forget the words, or look like she was unsure about how or when to transition out of group time. I observed this regularly during the first five weeks. In those cases, Amanda could usually look to the back of the room and Ms. Harris would step in and take the lead. When Ms. Harris wasn't at the back of the room due to illness, Amanda was very hesitant and retiring. For the first few weeks of her student teaching, Amanda's "fallback" method of operation (Oser, 1994) was to delegate or avoid. When she was not under stress, Amanda constantly consulted different viewpoints. She took children's suggestions during group time. However, she did not feel entirely

comfortable in her role as "the one who knows what to do." Under pressure, she delegated her responsibility to one of her cooperating teachers.

After the day that Amanda realized that she could answer the assistant's questions and her cooperating teachers could not, she apparently stopped delegating decisions she felt unsure about. I found no evidence that she delegated another decision. Instead, during the frustrating episode with Chester, Amanda unilaterally controlled the situation by asserting her authority. Both she and Ms. Harris were surprised. It was uncharacteristic behavior for Amanda. However, she took complete responsibility for what she'd done. She didn't think it was a perfect solution, but she felt that she'd had to do something. That, in fact, was the new element. Amanda had a new "fallback" mode that she relied on when under stress, unilateral action.

As Amanda constructed a respected and more predictable professional role in the classroom community, her actual and perceived range of choice was enlarged. She made more decisions about how children would be disciplined, developed and adjusted curriculum according to children's needs, and worked directly with parents. Her hesitant attempts to engage in these activities in the first two weeks were sometimes inadvertently impeded by the helpful actions of teachers and assistants as well as her own self-doubt. As her classroom leadership style became more confident and understandable to her colleagues, she found herself able to innovate and adjust more freely. Her expanded choice and sense of agency made it possible for her to act in ways that she would later regret, but she was willing to make decisions and take

responsibility for them. With expanded choice also came expanded moral responsibility.

As Amanda grew into her role as teacher, she was able to explore options and invent solutions to problems. Until she felt capable of doing that, she was operating within a limited set of options, those already invented and endorsed by the cooperating teachers. If she did not perceive herself to have a choice, she did not have a decision to make. Without a decision to make, she did not perceive herself to have any moral responsibility. Therefore, constructing a responsible role in the classroom was an integral part of Amanda's professional moral development.

Amanda's role construction was closely tied with the way that she framed moral problems in her teaching practice. She perceived the moral landscape differently over time in that she first concentrated on individual children with "problems," and only gradually perceived the nature of her responsibility to all the children in her new educational role. Essentially Amanda came to adopt a problem framing process similar to one describe by Schön (1987) in which she cycled from involvement with particulars to detachment and "the big picture" and then back again to particulars. Sometimes the "big picture" was the community-building process during group time. Sometimes it was the annual curricular goals for kindergarten. Being able to consider the "big picture" while inventing solutions to particular problems was a capability gained over several weeks of interaction and role construction.

Preserving Relationships First A consistent theme throughout the eight-week period was Amanda's inclination to preserve relationships, even when inconvenient and sometimes at the expense of consistency or complete truthfulness. Although an important part of Amanda's method of operation, this was not a habit that she acquired during her student teaching. From the beginning, she believed that as a teacher, she would be able to do a better job, more easily, if she had positive professional relationships. For example, during our first interview, she included relationships with colleagues in her realm of responsibility. She explained this by saying, "If you don't get along with them and don't put an effort out to establish respectful, cooperative relationships, then that will make the job of teaching twice as hard."

In one situation that fell outside the context of this study, Amanda used particularly vivid language to describe her reasoning. She described a time when she stepped back from being completely honest in discussing a child's behavior problems with an angry parent. She didn't express concern for the parent's feelings or fear of the parent's anger. She said that if she alienated the parent, she would be "burning a bridge" and that she would then be "jumping a canyon" in the future to work out solutions to the child's difficulties.

In the previous section, I described how Amanda sought to negotiate relationships with colleagues that would be respectful of her professional role as well as theirs. However, whenever a relationship was in jeopardy, Amanda retreated from her stance in the "negotiations" and worked to find common ground. Amanda seemed

to be preserving relationships as a "first step" toward solving problems. Whenever Amanda compromised other values to preserve a relationship, she did not explain her actions as either altruistic or submissive, but always described herself as "losing the battle to win the war."

Also in our first interview, when I asked Amanda about a teacher's responsibilities, she said, "Telling parents how to raise their kids, that's not a teacher's responsibility." She went on to explain that some parents would seek help and that then the teacher would need to suggest options and point out multiple resources. Again this was not a course of action that Amanda considered more diplomatic or considerate of the parents feelings. She said that if teachers tried to dictate a course of action, expecting the parents to trust the teacher's expertise, and the plan did not prove to be helpful, then all hope of influencing the parents was lost. Amanda also told me in the same interview that she had learned from her experience in daycare that while truthfulness was important, it wasn't always wise to be completely frank and direct with parents. She said,

> ...you really have to stand back and think, 'OK. I need to tell them this, but maybe the most direct way is not the most appropriate.' You may have to veer off and then come back and kind of ease them into what's going on, because if you just tell them right out what's happening, they could just shut down and no communication happens.

Amanda consistently explained her retreat to preserve relationships as a strategic decision, an action taken to keep lines of communication open and increase the opportunities for future collaboration.

However, I also noticed in the first interview that Amanda had an appreciation for parents in hardship situations. Some of her reluctance to confront parents with troublesome information might have been related to an understanding of the stresses that parents had to deal with, such as poverty and overwork. She said that for some families

> the emphasis isn't on education at this point... maybe both parents working and barely making the bills and barely having a roof over their heads... So that really takes away from the kids' education, and it's not intentional. The way things are, you either do or you don't. You either have a house over your head or you live out in the street.

Amanda did seem to have empathy for parents and recognized that they might have a different, and yet reasonable, view of their child's education. However, she consistently explained her actions in terms of their influence on potential communication and cooperation.

Amanda did appear to be operating in a way that would preserve relationships. One example was the way that Amanda retreated from a confrontation with the assistant on the day that she moved Shari during group time. Another was the way that Amanda worked to keep good relationships with individual children. In her first interview, when she was describing the way that her relationships with people in each

part of her "widening circle" were interconnected, she said that even "someone over there fidgeting" required that she be careful about a relationship. She explained, "even if it doesn't concern parents or families... that kid knows what you did." She concluded by saying, "there's always repercussions." I observed that Amanda was respectful of all the children. Her supervisor commented on this after her first observation. She was particularly impressed with the way that Amanda managed to provide discipline and guidance privately, taking care not to embarrass a child in front of his or her peers.

By establishing cooperative, respectful relationships with others in her "widening circle" of responsibility, Amanda could expand her options for resolving problems and share responsibility with others. Damage to a relationship, especially to the trust in a relationship, could narrow the possibilities. Amanda's initial description of her responsibilities as a "widening circle" was socially embedded. Her habit of preserving relationships first was compatible with her view of her responsibilities as a teacher, because responsibility and relationships were inseparable. In this way, Amanda seemed to perceive the moral landscape as a social minefield. All relationships were critical. Her understanding of her responsibilities as a teacher, formed during her long history of professional preparation and her experience in childcare, led her to be careful about alienating anyone.

The Situated Nature of Problems in Practice A more complex theme that emerged after close analysis was the situated nature of the problems Amanda encountered in her professional practice. The messy circumstances in which problems

presented themselves offered challenges and possibilities that influenced her moral activity.

The disorderly way in which problems presented themselves was not a complete surprise to Amanda. She knew before she began her internship that her responsibilities as a teacher would be complex, as exemplified in her model of a "widening circle" of responsibility. During our first interview, I asked Amanda to complete the statement, "An ethical and responsible teacher is one that..." Amanda began to describe those responsibilities and then said,

> It seems overwhelming, but from the experience that I've had in these short three days, when you're actually in it, in the classroom doing something with the kids, the decisions come so fast that it's better to know what...is ethically acceptable and not just what you think is ethical. That's where things start to get messy, because you're not just thinking of yourself. There are general, broad ethical considerations, but then you get down to personal ethics and then... I don't know. It sounds overwhelmingly scary...

At that point, Amanda was obviously frightened by the prospect of making decisions that affected so many people. She also said, "I think an ethical and responsible teacher is one that can make decisions based on multiple perspectives and everyone involved, not just her, not just these kids, but the kids, the families, the teachers, the school, the community." Amanda expected social complexity and connected professional ethics with consideration of others' perspectives.

By the fourth week, the complexity of her situation was uppermost in Amanda's mind. At the end of an interview during the fourth week, I asked, "Was there anything else you wanted to talk about today?" Amanda responded, "All the different kids and all the different needs. Doing one thing, but while you're doing that one thing, you need to keep in mind [that] it needs to be 20 different ways." When I asked her what she meant by that, Amanda listed all the specific adaptations she had to think about: identified perceptual problems, cerebral palsy, cleft palate, emotional problems, the side effects of medications that some of the children were taking for chronic conditions, and academic difficulties.

However, Amanda was most surprised to find that her various realms of responsibility would so often be in conflict and that the problems themselves were sometimes difficult to discern. For example, the physical classroom setting presented problems of complexity and uncertainty. Amanda said that she experienced the school day as a confusing array of multiple scenarios in process at the same time. She knew that her awareness of problem situations was limited to what she could actually see and hear in a large classroom of nearly 40 children, two teachers, two assistants, and herself. She soon learned to pay close attention to second hand accounts from the colleagues in action all around her and to seek information from them throughout the day. For example, I observed her stop while listening to a dispute between two children and verify something. I did not think that she was expressing distrust of the child's account, because I heard her say, as she walked toward Ms. Morris, "Ms.

Morris, did you mean that...?" In the first few weeks, it seemed that Amanda was on fact-finding missions such as these during every center time that I observed.

Also, like most teachers, Amanda had to make most of her professional decisions rapidly and in the presence of other children and other members of the school community. She also realized that her decisions often involved deciding which of two or more conflicting needs would be satisfied (group vs. individual child, differing needs of individual children, parent vs. child, teachable moments vs. curricular requirements). Some of the problems that Amanda had in leading group centered around her consciousness of these competing interests. For example, she wanted individual children to share things that they considered to be related to the discussion, but she felt pressured by curricular demands to cut their comments short.

Amanda also needed to consider and reconsider her actual range of possible choices in a context that was a constantly shifting terrain of freedom and constraint. She asked, "How much time do we have?" throughout the day. Sometimes she would think she was "ahead of schedule" only to be interrupted by an unexpected event over which she had no control. One day in the middle of the morning session, the electricity went out after a loud clap of thunder. Amanda had to completely discard her plans to deal with the children's fears of severe weather and darkness. Just when her plan for group was moving smoothly one day, the child with a cleft palate broke his usual silence to share something with the class. Amanda stopped everything and took time to facilitate that contribution, making sure all the children understood what he said.

About halfway through her student teaching, Amanda said in an interview, "It's getting a little bit easier, but yet the more accustomed I get to it, the more I go home thinking, 'Well, how'd I do?'" She explained that at first she was concentrating on surviving the day herself without causing too much damage to anyone else. As she became more confident of her ability to survive, she began to notice more subtle and ongoing problems. She also became aware that many problems couldn't be "fixed" by a quick change of behavior on her part. She said, "I can have all these thoughts about stuff, but sometimes thinking about it isn't necessarily helping me find the best way to do something." But with some humor and irony she said, "And other times you just take a shot in the dark and it turns out OK."

As Amanda took more responsibility, her reflection process got more complicated. In an interview during the sixth week, Amanda said that she often got to the end of the day tired and distracted. On the way home and at various points during the evening, she would revisit certain scenarios that disturbed her for some reason that she couldn't articulate. She would usually replay the scene over and over until she found the thing that was causing her psychic discomfort. Then she would reconsider her actions, think of what she could have done, decide if there was any way to change her decision, and then either make a plan of action or "make peace with it." In an interview toward the end of the eight weeks, Amanda described the problems she had faced and the decisions she had made as "messy and personal and everything all at once" and herself as "muddling through" most decisions.

Role, Relationships, and Situation Entwined Rather than separate variables or factors, the three themes interacted with each other in Amanda's professional moral activity. In order to demonstrate how all three themes were entwined, I am going to describe the way that Amanda handled one particular ongoing dilemma. There was a child in the morning class that challenged and frustrated Amanda. During the early weeks of her student teaching, when she was working to establish herself as a "real teacher," Amanda was particularly disturbed whenever she "didn't know what to do." Often Amanda felt that she didn't know what to do about Shelly.

Shelly frequently disturbed other children by touching them (tugging at their clothes, and sometimes pinching or hitting) and she disrupted group time with emotional outbursts. Sometimes she wandered around during group time, turned away when teachers were talking to her, and was irritable with both the teachers and the other children. The established procedure in the classroom when Amanda began her student teaching was for the closest adult to tell Shelly exactly what behavior was expected and if there was no change, remove her from the group or center where the problem occurred until she gained self-control. Usually there was an assistant or teacher available to sit with Shelly in the hallway until she calmed down. The teachers kept a few construction materials and card games handy for these trips to the hallway.

During the first few weeks, Amanda was not completely aware of all the background in Shelly's case, but she was concerned about what was happening at school. During our first few interviews, she said that she was unsure what to do when

Shelly bothered the other children or became emotionally out of control during group time. She followed the cooperating teachers' plan without question at first, even though she "felt bad" about it. As she said in her journal, "I had to ask the child with behavioral problems to leave the group this morning... I felt better about removing her since Mrs. Harris does this." However, the very next day, she wrote, "I asked the same child to leave group... I feel terrible... There has to be a better way to interact with her. Everyone in the classroom (teachers/assistants) tells me that this is the only way to deal with her." At first Amanda tried to delegate her responsibility for the situation by accepting the plan that was already in place, but she continued to be unsatisfied with that solution. Amanda said in her journal and in interviews during the first few weeks that she was worried that Shelly was not learning much in kindergarten. She was also concerned that being separated from the other children so often was giving Shelly the message that she was not a part of the class.

When Amanda decided to make Shelly's disruptions the subject of her action research project (a course requirement), she understood the solution that her cooperating teachers had adopted to protect the others in the class. However, as she expressed in an interview with me, she had doubts about whether it was "the right thing for Shelly." The research question that she formulated for her project was, "How do the special needs of an individual child affect classroom management?" This question revealed her concern to be that of managing the class. After she got approval for this question from her action research professor (who was also her student teaching supervisor), Amanda began to describe it to me as a classroom

management problem and began to be a little more open about having feelings of helplessness and inadequacy when she dealt with Shelly. During an interview in the fourth week, she tried to describe the reflection process she went through during the evening after a day when she had removed Shelly from group:

> ...I just asked myself, did she get anything out of it? I kind of felt bad and guilty at the same time, going home... It was the sort of thing where...I'm not being mean to myself, but wasn't there any other way to do it? [I asked myself] 'Was that just something you were reacting to because you were getting frustrated with her?'

She said that she had decided to make her problem with Shelly her research question, because she would "run into children like her again."

Weeks later, Amanda was able to tell me that her insecurity in her new role had made her defensive in her dealings with Shelly. Amanda felt that her leadership role was tenuous and that Shelly was challenging her weakness. She said that at the time, she had not understood Shelly's behavior and saw it as a sign that she was not able to manage the class. She later wrote in her research report for her action research class that she had thought Shelly "unruly" and "difficult." She wrote, "I am not proud of the fact that I made judgments about Shelly before I had all the information..."

The first thing that Amanda tried on her own was to "keep Shelly in the group or activity no matter what." She abandoned this plan very quickly. Forcing Shelly to deal with the demands of the situation immediately only caused her to resist more

violently and become more emotional. This frightened the other children. It also convinced Amanda that Shelly was not *able* to control herself in certain situations.

As part of an ongoing evaluation and intervention that Ms. Harris had already initiated, Amanda and Ms. Harris consulted with the school's occupational therapist. After this consultation, Amanda began to see Shelly's problems as something ongoing and more related to Shelly's life situation than to her own class management strategies. She said in an interview a few days later that it was the first time that she had been able to call on an "expert" and get real help with a particular classroom problem. She said that in her childcare experiences she had occasionally had behavior problems that resulted in the child's removal from the center. This always made her feel like a failure. Now she realized that in each of those cases, she had been isolated and unsupported. The system had failed to support her as much as she had failed the child.

As Amanda gained more information about Shelly, she realized that Shelly had severe and complicated special needs. She had a seizure disorder that required a spectrum of medications. Because of a complicated and stressful family situation, she seldom came to school from a full night's sleep. There was evidence of a behavior disorder as well, although the school was still in the process of observing, evaluating, and trying adaptations in the regular classroom. The therapist suggested that when Shelly acted out, she needed some kind of structured, consistent response that would help her gain control of herself. Removing her from the classroom was helping her gain control of herself, but she wasn't learning how to handle classroom situations

any better. The therapist was not sure what the cause of the problem was: overstimulation as a result of slow processing while on medication, insecurity, life stress, or unknown factors. She suggested that it might help to restrict Shelly to two clear-cut choices most of the time. She needed a choice in order to have some control, but more than two choices were overwhelming for her.

During the fifth week of her student teaching, Amanda indicated to her supervisor in a conference that she was in continual conflict about her interactions with Shelly. She reported the suggestion from the therapist and said that she had tried it. The day before, while waiting for rides, Shelly had started playing rambunctiously with some sharp pencils. Amanda said, "I can keep the pencils for you until your ride comes or you can put them in your backpack." Shelly stopped her frenzied activity and thoughtfully put her pencils away in her backpack. Amanda was pleased about Shelly's response the day before, but had still had to remove Shelly from group while the supervisor was there to observe her.

The supervisor told Amanda that she was impressed with the way that she was able to handle Shelly's disruptions so unobtrusively and respectfully. She said that sometimes children like Shelly became further alienated from other children if the teacher displayed intolerance toward them in front of the class. I had also observed a respectful quality in Amanda's interactions with Shelly. Even though she reported being frustrated, Amanda appeared to be fairly calm and spoke to Shelly quietly and kindly. No matter what her feelings, Amanda was trying to preserve the relationship she did have with Shelly and build trust. Amanda thanked her supervisor for the

positive comment, but added, "I can talk to Ms. Harris and I can talk to Ms. Morris and I can kind of get some ideas from them, but then I have to go home and wonder about it."

Amanda's ability to consider other ways of addressing Shelley's problems was the result of weeks in which Amanda had constructed a new professional role by becoming reliable and predictable with children, parents, and colleagues. She continued to explore Shelly's situation at home and search for ways to help her and understand her. She was not successful in contacting Shelly's mother directly, but gained some insight by learning more about her situation from Shelly's childcare provider and by putting together the bits and pieces of information gathered by teachers and assistants. Amanda also continued to talk with Ms. Harris about Shelly, but didn't expect Ms. Harris to make the decision about what was best for Shelly. Amanda's research project was one way of taking responsibility for a professional moral dilemma herself, by opening a discourse about altering the plan already in place.

When Amanda first started studying Shelly, she thought that she was studying classroom management or how to educate a behavior disordered child without neglecting the rest of the class. Her problem continued to have two aspects, accommodating Shelly educationally and protecting the other children's educational experience from Shelly's aggression and disruptive behavior. When she concluded her investigation, however, she entitled her report, "Developing Together: How Shelly Changed the Way I Approach Teaching."

As Amanda studied Shelly's behavior, her perspective shifted and she began to see Shelly's situation with more empathy. She realized that Shelly was lonely and isolated, but didn't know how to make friends. As she learned more about Shelly's health problems and home situation, she understood why she came in some mornings silent and hostile. She understood why she sometimes broke down and cried as if her heart would break over minor incidents at school. Amanda slowly built a more trusting relationship with Shelly. During my last few visits, I noticed a more affectionate relationship between Amanda and Shelly. I saw Shelly approach Amanda a few times, wordlessly "get a hug," and go back to her play. According to her research report, establishing a warm and personal relationship with Shelly led Amanda to view her relationship with the other children differently.

Amanda concluded her report,

> Overall, I didn't find any permanent solutions to class management problems. What I did find is that classroom management...is something that one has to work out [in] specific situations. In Shelly's case, it seems that I found that the more I knew her as a person, the more able I was to meet her needs. I also know that I need to have an open mind and be willing to step outside of my perspective to see what is really going on.

Through her action research project, Amanda's professional moral habit of preserving relationships became more closely integrated into her ethos. She reported "learning" that she had to build a relationship with an individual child and consider other perspectives. This was actually a consistent habit for Amanda throughout her student

teaching. However, her insecurity in her role and the complicated nature of the "specific situations" had led her to be confused about how to proceed.

This example also illustrates the way that Amanda operated to solve problems. Usually a situation forced her to take action immediately, as when she removed Shelly from group. However, Amanda would reflect after the fact, turning the situation over in her mind and searching for alternatives. As part of the reflection process, she would also seek other viewpoints and more information. When presented with a similar situation, she would try another course of action, observe the result, and reflect more. The reflection process for Amanda served both as a way to "make peace with" the past and anticipate future possibilities.

Toward the end of her student teaching, Amanda described her method of operation in an interesting way. She said that her knowledge of the children, the setting, the curriculum, and so forth, as she had made sense of it in her reflection on her experience, was like a backdrop that she was painting with great care. However, when she was teaching, she was an actor in front of that backdrop and seldom looked at it. She just knew it was there. She knew that it affected her activity, but she experienced her decisions as largely intuitive and her activity as something done in the moment. More and more often, her actions and the backdrop seemed to be in harmony, but it was still sometimes a confusing position in which to be operating.

The complex and situated nature of problems was something Amanda anticipated in her original description of teacher responsibilities, but her original model seemed more orderly than the world of teaching turned out to be. In order to

operate responsibly, she had to develop of cycle of action and reflection that became tighter and tighter until she could operate in the moment with an awareness of the "backdrop" of complications and consequences. Her understanding of her responsibility and her understanding of the moral landscape came into the same metaphor: acting on a stage in front of a backdrop she was painting herself.

The Influence of Amanda's Teaching Program on her Moral Development

Amanda's teacher preparation program up to her student teaching had made her aware of potential ethical problems and moral dilemmas. In early interviews, she recalled discussions in classes about how to apply the Code of Ethics adopted by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (Feeney & Freeman, 1999). Apparently these discussions had made her aware of potential problems because she mentioned these discussions, unprompted, as she described decisions that she thought she might be called upon to make. In her very first interview, she revealed her sensitivity to several common problems that she said she had not actually experienced herself. For example, she said, "if you make a decision that you think is really good...then it may just be totally off-base with the cultural perspective or beliefs of another..."

Her teacher preparation program had sensitized her to the complexities of her job, but Amanda did not feel that she had been prepared to make decisions in the context in which she had to make them. She expressed frustration with the fact that her work pace was so harried that she was only able to reflect in hindsight. As reported earlier, she even found that she sometimes acted in ways that surprised her.

When I asked how her program had prepared her for making professional moral decisions, she said,

> ...you can read articles and you can discuss it hypothetically and plan it out in your mind what you're going to do, but until you're there and dealing with a real person in front of you expecting a response right then, I don't think really anything can prepare you.

Although her teacher preparation had prepared her to expect and look for moral and ethical problems, perhaps making her more sensitive to problems as they occurred than she otherwise would have been, it did not prepare her to make moral decisions in urgent situations. During the first few weeks, Amanda reported making most of her decisions with a sense of urgency and no time to reflect.

Even though she had participated in many different field experiences, the new role of "real teacher," the "one that knows what to do," put her in the confusing center of the decision making process. Even with the varied experiences that she had and preparation that she still perceived as helpful, she had days when she felt emotionally unprepared for the responsibilities of teaching.

For this reason, she seemed to be particularly grateful when her supervisor commented on something positive in her teaching. Although she didn't trust assurances or praise, if someone pointed out something positive that she hadn't been thinking about, she felt encouraged. For example, her supervisor pointed out after her first formal observation that she was caring and respectful of the children. She approved of the way Amanda handled disciplinary matters with Shelly and others as

privately as possible. These were things that Amanda had taken for granted. Another example of encouragement occurred in the same conference between Amanda and her supervisor. Amanda was saying that she still had not learned all the classroom routines and that the children would remind her of anything she forgot to do, especially during group time. She said that whenever that happened, she just apologized and corrected herself because she knew that the children loved their routines. Amanda's supervisor said, "By handling it the way you do, you've given them permission to make mistakes and that's important." Amanda said, "...I hadn't really thought about it, but if I can mess up... It wouldn't work out well if I [said], 'Even though I'm wrong, I'm right because I'm the teacher.'" Amanda told me after the conference that maybe she was doing all right after all. She continued to feel her responsibilities as weighty, but these comments from her supervisor in the fifth week of her student teaching encouraged Amanda to trust herself a little more. In the end, learning to trust herself, and follow her habit of building trust in her relationships with others, helped Amanda work out many of the problems that she experienced in her student teaching.

Conclusion Amanda's case demonstrates some of the difficulties that a novice can encounter as she accepts the full responsibilities of a teacher. Amanda's perceived and actual range of choice increased as she overcame her first challenge, constructing a "real teacher" role in the classroom. Her inclination to preserve relationships first as she sought to resolve problems remained intact. The situated nature of problems in practice presented challenges that only became more complex

and difficult with experience. As Amanda faced these challenges, she realized that her program had only partially prepared her for her professional moral responsibilities, but concluded that there was no way to be prepared in advance for the infinite number of conflicts and decisions that a teacher might encounter. The support she received during her internship from her supervisor and cooperating teacher encouraged her to continue to struggle.

Amanda's original sense of her responsibilities appeared to be complex enough to encompass the dilemmas that she faced during her student teaching. Her awareness of the social complexity of those dilemmas made her hesitant to assume a leadership role at first. During the first few weeks, she reverted to an ethos of delegation when she was under pressure. As she became more sure of her role in the classroom, her "fallback' ethos was to act unilaterally. Amanda also had to accept that sometimes teaching involved decisions that resulted in real needs being postponed or neglected, that all teachers were forced into these decisions, and that she could learn to "make peace with" her decisions as she mitigated their effects over time. Amanda's reflective process, which was lengthy and disjointed at first, became more integrated as she gained experience. In the end she described herself as acting on stage, conscious of "background" knowledge that she had constructed herself.

Julie

Even though the setting was essentially the same, and the participants had graduated from the same teacher preparation program, I began the second case with the expectation that there would be differences between the cases. I assumed that

Julie would navigate the setting differently, based on her own personal practical theories about learning and development, personal and professional responsibility, and interpersonal relationships (Rodgers & Dunn, 1997, 2000a, 2000b). I thought that habits of operation might play a role in Julie's case, because she had been partially responsible for a preschool class over the summer (Dewey, 1922).

As I began to collect data and listen for themes, I realized that Julie's experience did follow a very different pattern from Amanda's. In describing Julie's case, I will start with a description of her original understanding of her professional moral responsibility as she described it to me. As her experience in the setting progressed, Julie's understanding had to be modified. Although her core values appeared to remain constant, Julie's understanding of her responsibility as a teacher became complicated and problemetized by what she learned during her first few weeks of student teaching. Her original moral understanding became entangled in several closely connected themes or problems.

Julie began her internship with a relatively simple professional moral framework that she articulated clearly in the first interview. She stated it directly and with confidence. An ethical and responsible teacher was one who "puts the child first." I specifically asked about parents: "So when you are dealing with parents, you put the child first?" She said that of course, you had to communicate with parents about the child's needs, and teachers and parents should work together for the good of the child. However, she brought up a different kind of example to explain what she meant by the phrase "put the child first." She said that a teacher would not be putting

the child first if she set expectations for a child that were not developmentally appropriate for that particular child, such as trying to teach a child to write his or her name when the child was not ready. Julie was confident that a conscientious teacher could make reasonable decisions about what children needed for optimum growth and development, even if she might not always be able to meet each child's needs completely.

In order to make decisions based on the child's needs, Julie had to have a firm idea of what was "good" for children. I found over the next few weeks that Julie did have definite professional values, clear ideas about "the good" for children. Occasionally she articulated these values in interviews in order to explain her professional decisions. However, she never forcefully articulated a set of values as such. For Julie, "putting the child first" explained everything. Over the weeks that I watched her teach, she constantly sought children's perspectives and talked about the importance of them having ownership of their own learning. Perhaps because the inherent dignity and the growing autonomy of the child was a closely held value for Julie, she was able to sum up her moral responsibility with the phrase "putting the child first."

Besides valuing autonomy, Julie placed a high value on community building in the classroom, a trusting relationship between teacher and child, productive communication among the adults in a child's life, and physical safety. She named all these things as teacher responsibilities in our first interview. Over the weeks that I observed her teaching, I saw her devote a great deal of time and energy to fostering

autonomy or "ownership," building community, and building trust between herself and the children. Issues relating to these responsibilities came up in interviews and she mentioned questions and problems relating to these responsibilities in her journal. I also saw her maintaining productive communication with colleagues and parents, along with routine safety procedures, but these things did not come up in interviews or in her journal. She did not visibly struggle with those responsibilities during the time that I observed her teaching.

Even with definite values in mind, decisions regarding the needs of children proved to be a lot more complicated, difficult, and uncertain than Julie anticipated. Putting the child first became problematic as Julie recognized that she needed to accept the values of the child's family, needed to sometimes set expectations based on uncertain information about the child's developmental needs, and needed to address curricular standards set by the community and by society at large. At the beginning of her student teaching, Julie recognized that there would be problems and disagreements, but she felt that she could make professionally responsible decisions by putting the child first. At the end of her eight weeks in Springfield, she said that she still believed that responsible teachers "put the child first." However, she also added, "I think I was a little naïve when I said that before."

The limitations that Julie encountered as she tried to "put the child first" were only one part of Julie's student teaching experience. She also was able to achieve important goals that she had for herself and her students. That success culminated in a project that they did together during two weeks at the end of Julie's time in

Springfield. After describing the ways that Julie's moral understanding was modified by the limitations she encountered, I'll describe the way it was strengthened by the a project that she did with the children during her last few weeks in Springfield. I will then address Julie's perception of how her teacher preparation program prepared her for the moral decisions she faced.

Accepting the Values of the Child's Family During our first interview, when I asked her about her setting, Julie said that she was excited to find that Springfield was very diverse in terms of socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and language. She said that when she heard that she would be in a rural setting, she imagined a very small town like the one she had lived in as a young child. She remembered that town as being isolated and socially restrictive. After a few days in Springfield, Julie expressed delight with the vitality and diversity of the town. She said that she loved watching the children, different from each other in so many ways, playing together at school.

Also in our first interview, when I asked about parents, Julie said that communication between school and home was essential to the child's success and adjustment to school. As an example, she offered the case of appropriate language. Sometimes words spoken freely at home are not appropriate for school. Julie had already had the experience of correcting a child's vulgar language and hearing, "My mom lets me say it." Julie offered this story as an example of how important it was to communicate with parents when children are "trying to form some new habits." Julie's delight in cultural diversity, and her tolerant and cooperative approach to differences in what parents and school deemed appropriate behavior, suggested that

she was willing to accept and respect diverse viewpoints. However, she did not seem to anticipate that there could be conflicts between a family's basic values and a child's educational and developmental needs. When I tried to lead the conversation toward possible conflicts between schools and parents, it was unproductive. Julie could not really think of any possible conflicts except for differences in the kinds of behavior that would be acceptable in each setting. When I asked where her responsibilities as a teacher ended and those of the parents began, she said, "I think that's really such a gray area."

The very first week of her internship, Julie encountered a situation that challenged her understanding of her professional responsibility and made her aware of the difficulty of accepting the family's values while "putting the child first." During the flag salute routine, Julie and Ms. Morris were trying to help children "find" their right hands and place them over their hearts in the accepted posture for the salute. Julie met with resistance from a little girl in the class who insisted on holding her hands tightly to her side. As Julie tried to persuade her, Ms. Morris noticed what she was doing and said, "Oh, she's a Jehovah's Witness." Julie later recorded this incident in her reflective journal. Her account is full of emotional language and forceful punctuation. She wrote, "I felt terrible." Apparently, writing and thinking about it that evening only made the incident more troubling. She concluded her journal entry for the day, "As a teacher how do you deal with this, in the best interest of the child? ...this is an issue that I find extremely complicated!?!?! I need to work through this."

One of the most interesting things about the incident is that Julie found it immediately troubling, but that it appeared to become more and more complicated and entangled as she thought about it more. The incident happened on the day that we had our first interview. During that interview, the one in which Julie sat very tall and answered each question carefully, the incident did not come up at all. Julie confidently said that her responsibility as a teacher was to "put the child first." When I asked for specific examples, she did not mention the incident with the Jehovah's Witness. Her initial reaction, according to her journal and a later account during an interview, was to judge herself as thoughtless and uninformed. She thought that if she had been asking more questions about the children and known them better as individuals, she never would have inadvertently tested this child's loyalty to her family's faith and forced her into opposition with a teacher. At first, she attributed her discomfort to "being new" and not knowing the children well enough. Perhaps she saw this as a personal failure at the time of our interview. If so, she might not want to talk about it with me. At that time, we had not begun to establish a trusting relationship.

We didn't discuss this incident until two and half weeks after it happened. I brought it up during my third visit to the school, as we stood on the playground. I had read about it in Julie's journal by then and Ms. Morris mentioned it to me as something I might want to ask about. She said that Julie had discussed it with her several times. When I brought it up, Julie was relieved to talk about her misstep over the flag salute and all the questions that had flooded her since that day. She used

emotional language to describe how disturbing the flag salute incident had been. I sympathized, not offering any solutions to her dilemma. Later that day during a taped interview, I asked her to describe the incident and her conflicts about the incident. None of the emotional content faded in the retelling. She said that the more she thought about it, the more troubling it was. At first, she had wondered what else she had neglected to find out about her students that would affect their experience of school. Then she worried about how the child who was a Jehovah's Witness would suffer when the rest of the class was united in celebrating a birthday with cupcakes or learning a holiday song. It was in thinking about the implications over time in the classroom that Julie began to think about the situation as complicated. The more she thought about the child's participation and nonparticipation in various classroom rituals, the more she saw the entire situation as problematic.

Julie said that she had started thinking about it after she got home that night. The next morning the class was taking a field trip by bus. Julie said that she sat next to Ms. Morris and pestered her all the way with questions. Ms. Morris assured her that everything usually worked out pretty harmoniously for the Jehovah's Witness children she'd had in the past, but Julie told me, "I just couldn't see in my mind how it really wouldn't affect them."

The more she thought about the child's situation in the class, the more complicated the issue became for Julie. She told me that many of the community building activities and routines of their classroom would exclude this child, because she did not celebrate birthdays or holidays. She said that she had talked to her

cooperating teachers about eliminating those celebrations, but that was not a viable solution because most parents in the community expected and wanted them. Parent involvement was fostered by allowing parents to bring cupcakes on their children's birthdays, inviting them to holiday programs, and so forth. In Julie's value system, those community building activities were important for children's emotional well-being, social development, and learning. One of the first things that Julie noticed (and loved) about Springfield was that the teachers spent a lot of time on "team-building" activities and welcomed children's families into the life of the school. Over and over in her teacher education program, she had been warned of the risks of excluding a child from group activities and of the dismal prospects for rejected and neglected children. Yet to disregard the religious restrictions of the family would force the child into a test of loyalty and undermine the family's values.

Julie also began to realize that meaningful continuity between school and home would never be possible for this child, because it was important to the parents that their children experience a "separation" from the culture of the school. Yet the parents provided a safe and secure home for their children, one that was organized around religious values. Julie said that she recognized the family's right to practice a religion that was different than the religious mainstream of the community. In a situation like this, her determination to "put the child first" became problematic. Although Julie was convinced that social inclusiveness and a sense of belonging would foster healthy development and confidence at school, the family wanted their children to live separate from the school community and feel a stronger "sense of

belonging" with their church. The entire problem led Julie to reexamine her understanding of her responsibility.

At the center of Julie's problem was the fact that she was attempting to make decisions based on a convergent "end," the optimal development of the child as described in the development literature. What was "good" for children in Julie's value system was fundamentally in congruence with constructivist development theory. Because her professional values were so widely held in the early education community, Julie may not have anticipated that certain family values could be in direct opposition to hers. However, the real practice of teaching occurs in a social environment in which people do not always agree on the "ends" and problems are divergent in nature.

Often professionals use reflective processes to reframe intractable problems into problems that can be solved with professional expertise and action, sometimes disregarding the complexity of their clients' needs (Schön, 1983). In this case, Julie essentially framed a problem she could solve first, that of becoming better informed about her students. However, in reflecting more deeply on the problem, she realized that accepting the family's values meant compromising her own vision of "good" for the child but that not accepting the family's values would be harmful to the child as well. She reframed her professional problem as a dilemma that *could not* readily be solved. As she became fully aware of the dilemma, she was forced to reconsider the nature of her responsibility as a teacher.

Julie's original professional moral framework was a kind of covenant between herself and the child. She saw her responsibility as a teacher to include fostering the child's autonomy and advocating for the child's needs. Now she was forced to realize that she shared responsibility with the child's parents. With the Jehovah's Witness family, Julie could not advocate for the child's needs by explaining them to the parents. The parents saw the child's needs differently. This was not a matter of poor communication. Although Julie did not immediately understand what changes she was going to have to make, she could see that "putting the child first" meant something different for the child's family than it meant for her, based on different values. I never saw Julie completely resolve this problem. Whenever we would discuss it, she would always eventually arrive at the same impasse. She appeared to be accepting it as an ongoing problem, but was somewhat troubled by the moral implications for her as a teacher. She would have to participate in the friendly, ritual exclusion of one of her students during important community events. Her realm of responsibility was permeated by the values of others.

Setting Appropriate Expectations Julie's professional moral understanding was also complicated by problems with setting appropriate expectations for children. Although Julie had expertise in observation and continued to develop her use of other assessment tools, she found that a child's developmental needs were more difficult to determine than she had previously thought. Julie also found that understanding a child's development was only one consideration in the process of setting

expectations. In one particular case, unraveling the complex needs of a floundering student did not suggest any workable solutions.

During our first interview, when Julie described the ethical teacher as one who "put the child first," she also supplied the example of waiting until a child is developmentally ready before teaching him or her a particular skill such as name writing. She was making the point that curricular/academic expectations should be subject to the child's developmental needs. She said that actually meeting all the needs of each individual child was probably impossible, but she felt confident that she would at least be able to articulate those needs and work toward meeting them. As the weeks progressed, Julie struggled more and more with the problem of setting appropriate expectations for children. Several different things contributed to the growing uncertainty of the process, but Julie's problems in setting expectations fell into two general categories: problems with the assessment process and problems using assessments to guide practice.

First, in regard to the assessment process, Julie had difficulty explaining some of the children's behaviors in terms of development, found information about individual children to be contradictory, and encountered barriers that obscured accurate assessment. One example of the difficulty Julie had in explaining children's behavior began on Julie's first day in the classroom. The other children had been in school almost two weeks when Suzanne and then Jeremy joined the class. Suzanne's first day at school was actually Julie's first day as well. Julie wrote in her journal that evening that Suzanne had a hard time separating from her mother and playing

independently. She wrote in her journal, "I know all this is to be expected, and it made me realize how far the rest of the class has come in the first seven days." At that point, Julie did not see anything unusual in Suzanne's behavior. It matched what she knew about children's normal separation anxiety and typical responses to new settings.

When Julie met with her supervisor two weeks later, Suzanne was still not participating fully in the classroom. In the meantime, Jeremy had enrolled and he was also hanging back and engaging in a lot of onlooker behavior. During the conference with the supervisor, Julie told her supervisor that she was concerned about the two who did not participate in large group activities. (Jeremy and Suzanne did not do the hand motions of songs, sing, or speak up with contributions.) Julie said that she did not know quite what to do about Jeremy and Suzanne. She said that she thought they didn't participate because they were new. However, Julie was the one to bring up the subject and she sought her supervisor's opinion, revealing her doubts. I had seen Julie trying to involve them more by standing near them, smiling directly at them while doing exaggerated hand motions to songs, and asking for a response. None of these tactics were successful. Julie told her supervisor that she was starting to wonder if there was more to consider than the children's late enrollment.

Julie asked her supervisor if she should persist in trying to involve them during group time or if she should take a more "wait and see" approach. Her supervisor told her not to give up, but to try different approaches to gaining the children's confidence. She suggested approaching the children while they were

playing during center time and entering their play. She thought that this might make the children feel more comfortable about joining in the activities that she led during group time. Julie said, "That's an idea." She sounded open to the suggestion, but did not greet it with enthusiasm. Perhaps she was thinking of the children's reluctance to participate in centers as well. I had observed them spending a lot of their center time in onlooker behavior. Later the same day, after the supervisor had left, I noticed Jeremy doing some of the hand motions during a group song. When I talked to Julie after school, she had noticed it, too, and was very excited.

A week later, I asked Julie about the situation with Jeremy and Suzanne. I particularly asked her about the way she was going about setting expectations for them. At that point, Julie seemed to have little concern about Jeremy who had started to plunge into the activities with more regularity. He was showing more engagement during center time and had started (awkwardly) approaching other children to enter play. Julie said that this caused her to be more concerned about Suzanne. She explained, "He even came after Suzanne and I'm seeing him start this faster than she is." I asked, "So what are you doing at this point?" She replied,

> The only thing I'm trying to do is just observe her *a lot*... during recess she always wants to hold my hand or be with an adult. She has a hard time entering play... And I think that could have something to do with it... I'm just trying to observe her and see how she's progressing...

Julie saw a connection between Suzanne's dependence on adults and her passivity during group, but she was not sure of the exact connection or what it meant. Faced

with a puzzling situation, Julie decided to observe more carefully. Julie was not ready to commit to any other course of action until she understood Suzanne's needs, but she was having trouble making sense of the information she had about Suzanne's development.

In another situation, Julie found that her observations could easily lead her to make erroneous conclusions about a child's development and understanding. She had a student who learned to write his name quickly, no longer needing to even look at his name card when some of the children were still tracing from their cards. He also had detailed, grounded drawings in his journal. As Julie noticed his work in comparison to his classmates, she concluded that he had some mature print concepts and was developmentally ready for independent writing. She was confident that she would introduce the idea of invented spelling and that he would be on his way to becoming competent and independent in writing.

When Julie asked this "advanced" student what he wanted to write, he easily formulated a simple sentence: I like my house. Julie made four short lines at the bottom of his journal page and said that they would put the four words of his sentence in those blanks. As they began working on recording his sentence, Julie was surprised that he saw no connection between the spoken word "I" and the letter "I," even after she pointed to the letter on an alphabet card and said the letter aloud. She soon realized that he did not know any of the letters by name (even the ones in his name), did not hear the sounds in words, and did not realize that the letters were

representative of particular sounds. Julie recorded this incident in her journal and concluded,

> I am just trying to take note of the development going on in the classroom. I am seeing how as a teacher you have to assess so many different things... Without some individual and one-on-one attention you may miss something or have a misconception.

Julie's early experiences in her student teaching were leading her to be more careful about assessment and cautious about setting expectations.

Another ongoing problem was accurately assessing and setting expectations for children acquiring English as a Second Language (ESL). Julie first noticed the difficulties that ESL students had when they tried to enter play with native English speakers. However, she also had concerns about other developmental and learning needs. Most of the ESL children seemed to have a rudimentary receptive English vocabulary and could understand some of what was going on in school, even if they had difficulty expressing their thoughts. At least they appeared to be participating in an appropriate way. However, Julie was not sure about what their participation really meant in terms of understanding. She asked in her journal, "How do you know if they are understanding what is going on in the classroom?"

During her third week of teaching, Julie expressed an increased concern for the ESL children in the class and especially for Carlos, who had recently immigrated. Julie and Ms. Morris talked about Carlos after school one day. Carlos frequently volunteered and spoke up during group time. However, when called upon, he might

say something in Spanish or repeat a response that another child had given to a totally different question. Julie felt that there was "clearly never a connection." I had observed Julie calling on Carlos and trying to respond in a positive manner to his contributions. Ms. Morris had observed that, too, and said that she was doing the right thing. She said that it was important for Carlos to "keep trying," so they needed to be supportive of his efforts. Julie understood that, but she still did not have much information about what Carlos understood or where he was developmentally. He was having trouble learning to write his name and found few people to play with him during center time. Without knowledge of his development, how could she provide appropriate challenges and support? In her journal that week, Julie asked, "What are the responsibilities of a teacher with these students? Maybe it just takes time. I wonder what a semester will do for Carlos???"

One day during center time, Julie had a chance to be both concerned and encouraged about Carlos. Julie recorded this event in her journal and told me about it in an interview later. She had been sitting at a table with Carlos and Kathryn, talking and working on drawings of owls. Kathryn said, "Teacher, you know what he done?" Kathryn went on to say that Carlos had kicked a little girl in the back at recess "at least three or four times." Carlos said something to Julie in Spanish and pointed at something or someone, but Julie could not make sense of what he said. She wondered how much he had understood of what Kathryn said, and felt compassion for Carlos because he could not defend himself.

After Kathryn left the table, Carlos spoke to Julie in Spanish about the owl he was coloring. The day before, a state wildlife officer had come to talk with the children about owls, and Julie wondered if Carlos had understood what the officer told them about the uniqueness of owls' wings. She pointed to dark lines Carlos had made on the wings in the exact place that the officer had pointed out the unusual feathers that allowed the owl to fly quietly at night and catch its prey unaware. She asked, "What's this?" Carlos said, "It cut. It cut. When fly quietly." Julie was thrilled. She had evidence that Carlos had learned something at school. Just then, one of the teachers rang the little bell that indicated clean-up time. Carlos said in English, "We clean up." Again Julie was encouraged.

When Julie told me about Carlos at the art table, she said that now she had a new question. She wondered if she was expecting too little from Carlos. She also wondered, since Carlos could understand some of what was being said in English, how much of his difficulty with letters and name writing was actually a literacy problem he would have had in a Spanish speaking classroom. She said,

> But honestly, in his case, I think even if he spoke English, it might be the same type of struggle...I can't really say that it's just that I think these things exist about him because he speaks Spanish, because that's not true. I think those things could exist if he didn't speak Spanish. I mean, you see the same things that aren't there in other kids... So I'm trying to see both sides of it.

Then she said, obviously frustrated, that even if she was sure that Carlos needed to develop basic literacy and print concepts, she was not sure how to meet those needs with their language barrier.

At the same time that Julie was concerned about how Carlos was progressing academically, she was also trying to understand his interactions with peers. In some ways, Carlos was beginning to be a "rejected child" in their class. His classmates found some of his behaviors incomprehensible and unpredictable and so they avoided him. At first it had seemed to Julie that the children were tolerant of his language difference even though he persisted in using Spanish with English speakers, something the other ESL students had stopped doing. When she went to the library with the children the first time, Carlos had said something to the librarian in Spanish. The child sitting next to Julie whispered to her, "Oh, sometimes he just talks in Spanish." However, Kathryn's accusation at the art table, long after the playground event if it actually happened, indicated that Carlos was out of favor.

During the sixth week, Julie noted in her journal that Carlos was playing with the other children more. He had worked well with another boy in the block area during centers. However, she also noted that a pattern was developing in the way that children chose partners for math work once a week. She wrote, "I have noticed that Carlos is always the last or one of the last chosen. I have not noticed the same children are last like I have with Carlos." Julie also noticed that he was beginning to regularly push other children or hit them when frustrated. She thought it would be ridiculous to tell him what she told the other children, "Use your words."

During her last week at Springfield, Julie told me that Carlos was "having all kinds of problems." She said that she did not know if he was progressing or regressing, but he was definitely changing. Pressed for time, she handed me her journal and said, "Here. I wrote about it in here." According to Julie's journal, Carlos was still raising his hand during group time and not able to communicate anything meaningful when called on. However, his imitative behavior was getting stronger. He copied other children's behavior a great deal of the time. Some of his imitative behaviors were appropriate and some were not. When it was his turn to be the helper during calendar time, Carlos was able to go through the whole routine without assistance. Julie wrote, "I don't know if he knows the word helper, but he knows exactly what to do."

Two days later, Julie recorded another incident of Carlos imitating. The children were looking at pictures, naming them, and saying the initial consonant. The child before Carlos had a picture of a doll and said, "Doll, duh, D." Carlos looked at his picture of a swing and said, "D." This kind of response had gotten to be routine for Carlos. However, there was something Carlos was doing that was not imitative. For four recesses in a row, a child had approached Julie and said, "Carlos is hurt." Each time she found Carlos in the same position under the slide, apparently unharmed. Julie asked in her journal, "Is this a game to get attention? Does he feel that he is communicating with his peers because they come to get a teacher?" Later the same day she wrote, "I want to help Carlos understand and connect in the classroom community. I want to be able to meet his needs." Without being able to

assess Carlos's understanding and overall development, she was unsure how to meet his needs.

The next day Julie observed an incident that convinced her that Carlos was not being well served at school. All the kindergartners were being screened for vision problems. Carlos sat down at the machine confidently and appeared to listen when the optometrist gave directions. However, Julie noted, "He clearly did not understand. He was squirming and failed the vision screening." At that point the teachers sent for Maria, an employee in the school who had Spanish proficiency. Julie wrote,

> She tried to explain to Carlos and they got him back in the chair and he started to cry and say, "No doctor. No doctor." He was confused and upset. I felt like he was extremely unsafe. He was scared and did not want to go through the process again, even with Maria translating.

Julie obviously felt a lot of empathy for Carlos and his situation. He had no relationship with Maria, so he said in English to his teachers, "No doctor. No doctor." She wrote in her journal about possible courses of action that they could have taken such as calling the translator first. She wondered if he shouldn't have a translator anyway. If he did not understand the optometrist's directions, he probably did not understand much of what went on in the classroom. Finally she wrote, "As a teacher, isn't it your responsibility to make sure every child is understanding? Secondly, shouldn't you try to understand the way each individual learns best? I do not feel that Carlos's needs are being met."

Julie told me more than once and recorded in her journal that she was frustrated with the "ESL problem." She did not feel that she could provide an appropriate educational experience for a child without having an accurate way to assess his or her understanding. Especially with Carlos, observation of his behavior provided little information. For one thing, he was an expert imitator of other children. For another, she suspected problems with literacy and social development, two areas that were hard to evaluate without verbal clues. She was unwilling to abdicate her responsibility as a teacher, but she saw no solution to the language barrier.

A second complication in setting expectations was that gaining knowledge about a child did not always help Julie decide on appropriate expectations. Setting expectations implies the expectation of growth. If Julie could not see a way to foster growth, how could she set expectations and truly expect the child to meet the challenge? This became a big issue for Julie as she tried to find a way to help Suzanne adjust to school. She initially had trouble understanding Suzanne's behavior, as described above. I heard Ms. Morris and Ms. Harris talking about Suzanne after school with some regularity. Ms. Morris was especially concerned about Suzanne's lack of progress academically and her withdrawal from the activities in the classroom. Julie told me that they talked about Suzanne and her family a lot. Ms. Morris had taught several of Suzanne's uncles and they had been very unsuccessful in school. Ms. Morris didn't want that to happen to Suzanne.

Julie was concerned about Suzanne's attendance. After enrolling late, Suzanne's attendance was spotty. She was absent more often the second month that

Julie was in Springfield than she was the first month. Ms. Morris said that the uncles she had in class had the same problem. Julie and Ms. Morris were positive that poor attendance was a big part of Suzanne's problem. When Julie told me about it, she said, "You'll see her play with somebody... maybe take a step in the right direction, and then she doesn't come to school for three days... What do you do?" Julie also wondered if Suzanne's dependency behaviors and withdrawal were not a response to the school environment, but were part of a more pervasive problem.

Ms. Morris told me that Suzanne's family did not have any qualms about telling the teachers at school how little they valued education. (Ms. Morris said that they were so "good-natured" about it that it was hard to be upset with them, but they would probably never get Suzanne to school regularly.) It was also a large and disorganized family that passed Suzanne around from house to house, even after the courts had gotten involved due to a child neglect charge and assigned Suzanne a guardian. Ms. Morris said that she tried to communicate with all the adults in Suzanne's extended family and accept the actual shared custodial arrangement that existed outside the court's decision. Unfortunately, Suzanne's school attendance continued to deteriorate and her emotional insecurity was increasing.

At the time of our last interview, Julie still had not figured out how to help Suzanne. She was even less sure how to set expectations for her progress than she had been when Suzanne entered school. As she found out more about Suzanne and her life outside of school, Julie saw that Suzanne's problems were beyond her level of competence and that the possible solutions were beyond her circle of influence. She

was once again facing a family value system that seemed to be working against a child's healthy development, only this time the potential consequences were more extreme. In spite of the things that were beyond Julie's control, she still felt that she had the responsibility to provide appropriate educational experiences.

Also in our last interview, Julie reported that Suzanne was still a constant topic of discussion and concern. She said that during their lunch time conversations, some of the early childhood teachers and assistants expressed the opinion that Suzanne was "just a baby," or socially immature and dependent in general, not just at school. Julie said, "And I see that completely, but then that doesn't matter, because she's still there and ... I don't know what you do for that." How could a teacher accelerate a child's emotional maturity? If on the other hand, Suzanne's problem was insecurity in the school environment, how could the school be a stable and predictable environment in a child's life when the child did not attend regularly? She concluded,

> It makes me sad to think that if she's not coming to school and school isn't valued at home...then I guess... I mean, it's sad to say, but in first grade, it will probably be the same situation, and second grade. And I just don't think... I don't know what the solution would be. I think it's really hard...

Julie didn't seem ready to drop the subject, but did not continue her statement. I said, "So it's not very clear what you can do about it." She said, "No. It's kind of like Ms. Morris and I were talking about. Sometimes you can just see the cycle."

Again Julie was framing problems that teachers could not solve. She and the other teachers put a lot of effort into observing Suzanne, encouraging her

participation, and trying to help her feel safe at school without encouraging dependency. In this particular case, all the teachers seemed to be in agreement about the urgency and severity of the problem. The cooperating teachers, experienced advocates for children, could not see a way to involve the courts and social services in a more effective way. They all worked with Suzanne on her academic and social skills whenever she was there. They all expressed helplessness in the situation. Perhaps Suzanne was doing the best she could and was still regressing. Julie was encountering the most difficult problem with setting expectations, that some educational problems proved to be intractable, even for teachers with experience and expertise.

In order to "put the child first," Julie needed to understand what the child needed, what was "good" for a particular child. Problems with the assessment process sometimes made it hard for Julie to gain that understanding. In some cases, understanding the child's needs did not bring her any closer to meeting them. Besides finding it difficult to understand the needs of some of the children and set appropriate expectations, Julie always had to share responsibility with others that might have different ideas of the "good" for children. These two themes were not really separate, but different aspects of the same problem, that of fulfilling her covenant with each child to put his or her needs above other considerations. Another aspect of the problem was that as a teacher, Julie found that she was responsible for representing the community's expectations for its children.

The Necessity of Curricular Standards Another test of Julie's professional moral understanding was the practical and political necessity of curricular standards that applied to all children. While Julie entered her student teaching already aware that the state required mastery of certain skills in each grade, Julie's sense of responsibility to the child demanded that curricular expectations be modified for each child's developmental needs. The standard curricular requirements were a constraint that she expected to "work around." They would be a part of her planning, but she was prepared to "put the child first" instead of "putting the skill first," as she stated it in her first interview. She stated more than once, "You can't have the exact same expectations for every single child."

During Julie's first week at Springfield, she began to struggle with some aspects of the curriculum that she saw enacted there. She loved the fact that the children were usually able to spend about an hour of their short two and a half hour session in centers. She noted in her journal that it always took them a while to really become absorbed in play and that a shorter time for centers would not give them time to do anything meaningful. However, she was troubled by the fact that the children did not get to choose their first center of the day. Children were assigned to a table for a structured activity at the start of center time. When they finished the activity, they could choose any center they wanted. Julie wrote, "I wonder about this because the children have to make something to take home before they can play with play dough, play at the water table, or play with puzzles/manipulatives." In her journal and later in an informal conversation, she attributed this decision to parental pressure. She

attended a parent meeting where the teachers explained the importance of play for children's learning and development, and yet she saw them requiring children to complete "art projects" to take home. These art activities did not involve much creativity, but primarily required skill in coloring, cutting, and gluing. Julie asked in her journal, "If parents are pressuring do you disregard them? Is a balance okay?"

I wondered if the teachers were responding to parental pressure to see their children "doing work" at school. One day I had the opportunity to find out. Ms. Morris was talking about a new parent who said (on seeing the classroom), "How do they learn anything? They don't have desks!" Ms. Morris said that she had explained that young children learn best by playing, interacting with materials, singing, and hearing good stories. I asked, "Do you get a lot of questions like that? Do you feel pressure from parents to give them papers to do?" She said that was very unusual. The parents in the community were familiar with their program. Other children had been successful in school after their kindergarten program, so they assumed theirs would be, too. The papers that children took home were not for the parents.

The teachers at Springfield included coloring, cutting, and pasting activities in the curriculum, because they felt that it was the only way to develop both the small motor control and the task persistence that the children would need to write and to succeed in school. Many of the children came to kindergarten without ever having held a pencil or crayon or pair of scissors. In the past they had noticed that, left to their own devices, the children who chose the "small motor activities" were the ones who already had the needed motor control and task persistence. This came up again in

Julie's final evaluation conference with Ms. Morris and her supervisor. By then Julie understood the teachers' goals for the activities and had begun to reevaluate the issue of "choice" in the curriculum.

For evaluation conferences, the supervisor, the cooperating teacher, and the student teacher each prepare an evaluation of the student teacher's progress on eight criteria. They compare their perspectives and record the conclusions on a separate form. In response to the criterion, "Implements classroom management strategies which help students become increasingly responsible for managing their own behavior," Julie reported that she had written about herself:

> Children are given choices at center time and in most cases they can manage their own time and move freely about the room. I feel that with the freedom and routines that have been established that the children feel safe to explore and take risks within the environment.

Then she paused rather dramatically and added, "In most cases." She laughed. "Sometimes you have to say..." Ms. Morris broke in and said, "Some of them aren't ready to manage their *entire* life," and Julie assented. She immediately brought up Joshua.

Joshua was a child who tended to flit from one activity to another. He got along well with the other children, but seldom really became absorbed in play. He had trouble attending during group time although he usually did not create a disturbance. Although he appeared to have good control when running and climbing, his small motor control was very shaky. In the conference, after talking about self-

management, Julie said, "Joshua looked at me, because I had given him some jobs, because sometimes he has a hard time managing his own time, [and said in a pouty voice], 'Can I go play?'" Ms. Morris said,

> But that's your job. You wouldn't be doing your job if you just let him run around the room and not work on his fine motor and not work on sitting down and focusing...because you know that's what he needs.

Julie agreed. Ms. Morris went on,

> He can't make those choices. He's five. There are some choices he can make, not that choice. And he can have time to play. But given his druthers, he'd run around the room as wild as a March hare.

Julie agreed again. Obviously this was something that Julie and Ms. Morris had discussed at length. Although Julie's formal statement in her evaluation emphasized the abilities of most of the students to manage themselves in the structure provided, she acknowledged in her aside that not all children could function successfully in that structure. She saw a need to adjust the structure in Joshua's case, not because of distress on Joshua's part or any overall developmental need, but because he was not making choices that would help him be able to meet the expectations of the school.

During the weeks that Julie was planning the entire curriculum, I noticed that she did not include any of the activity sheets that required the children to follow directions to color, cut, and glue. She did have the children decorating tablecloths for the class restaurant and preparing signs. She also put order pads in the dramatic play area where children were acting out the roles of diner, host, server, and cook. The

children also got to use kitchen utensils to prepare snacks. These provided opportunities for children to gain small motor control and follow a task to completion. However, when Julie was telling me about the choices she offered the children, she said, "Sometimes if they weren't making choices, if they were just running everywhere in the room, I would make a choice for them for a center." Julie felt comfortable with these decisions. While designing a curriculum that offered open-ended activities and a wide variety of choices, she was willing to direct any child that was not becoming engaged in play in a meaningful way.

While Julie apparently never agreed to the necessity of "doing papers" to prepare for first grade, there were indications that she became increasingly aware of schooling as a part of children's lives and their need to acquire skills that were a part of schooling. She also began to connect the skills emphasized in kindergarten with the "survival skills" needed in everyday life. She was particularly concerned about learning to function as part of a group and literacy development.

At first Julie questioned the teacher directed activities in the classroom. She noted in her journal that the children were much more engaged and absorbed during their play than during any teacher directed activity with the exception of story time. Some of the children still needed to be redirected during story time as well. She wrote, "I find on most days the kids enjoy recess and centers the most and they are concerned about how much time they will get in each." When actually involved in recess and centers, the children would spend most of their time "on task," constructing, experimenting, cooperating, and conversing. She wrote,

> I have been observing one child who has trouble during group time, story time, and anything that is teacher directed. However, at centers he is involved either at the water table using the funnel, or making up a puppet show at the dramatic play area, painting a picture in the art area, playing with blocks and playing with other children.

Julie seemed to be advocating for a total play curriculum in her journal. On the other hand, Julie wrote that she wondered if there was a way to address curricular standards in a way that would be more meaningful for the children than the group time mini-lessons on letters and the daily name writing routine during journal time. She wrote,

> Can these group lessons involve kids the way centers do? Is play the only way kids learn? I say this because the letters in most cases have no meaning to them unless the letter we are studying [is] the first letter in their name...How do you go about this type of instruction?

Because Julie saw the curriculum as being subject to the needs of the child, she wanted to find a connection between the children's natural curiosity and engagement with play and the standard kindergarten curriculum.

Julie began to forge connections between group activities and children's understanding and interests. However, I noticed that at the same time, she wanted children to learn how to control their bodies and focus their attention in a group situation. I observed her using a variety of tactics to redirect children's attention during group. She appeared to be very skillful at regaining the children's attention. I wondered if this came easily for her or was something she could do without giving it

much thought. I found out during an interview that she did not experience it as "easy" and thought about it often.

During an interview in the fourth week of her student teaching, I was asking about her reflection process. She said that sometimes she felt she did not have time to think at all during the school day. I asked, "Do you feel pressured sometimes during the day to act without being sure...?" Julie jumped in, "Oh, all the time." When I asked for an example, she said,

> I think story time is a good example. It's like constantly an issue, 'Will I ignore that? Should I give 'em the look? Should I tap 'em on the shoulder? Should I say their name and tell them to look at the picture? Should I move them?' And that's not something you can really sit there and think about while you're reading [the story]. At least I don't have the ability... mainly what I do is try not to make too big of a deal of it. I think it really just depends on the kid, too...

She went on to describe how she was still thinking about an episode with a child with special needs that was gradually being introduced to large group meetings. On the day of the interview, she had noticed him lying down and asked him to sit up. He did, but immediately laid back down. She ignored it, but one of the children whispered, "Jake is lying down." She said, "I was wishing I could take it back, because I didn't really need to do that. It wasn't that big of a deal." She had asked him to sit up because some of the other children would begin rolling around and disturbing if allowed to lie down, but Jake was prone to lethargy and very quiet. Julie wanted the children to

learn how to manage themselves during group times, but recognized that they had unique ways of responding to the group setting and needed different expectations.

Julie was also becoming more and more interested in literacy development. She was particularly concerned about figuring out what kinds of knowledge children could construct on their own and what they needed to "be told." During my time at Springfield, I usually helped the children with their journal writing when it was journal time. One day I noticed that Julie was watching what I was doing. A child had told me what she wanted to write. I had put blanks down on her paper for the words. She knew what letter she wanted to put down for the first word, but the second had her stymied. She sat for about a minute staring at her alphabet card. I asked, "What sound do you hear?" She easily made the sound and continued to stare at her card. I asked, "Would you like me to help you?" She said, "Yes," and I pointed to the letter, said the letter name, and said the sound. She wrote it down.

Later, Julie asked me, "How did you know to just tell her?" I said that I was not actually sure *what* she was thinking. That was why I asked if she wanted help. If she could isolate a sound in the word but really did not have an idea what letter made that sound, there was not a way for her to construct that knowledge from clues. So I just asked if she wanted help. Julie was very interested in my explanation. We talked about it later that day in a recorded interview. When I asked if there was anything she wanted to talk about, Julie said, "I don't feel very confident with my knowledge of literacy development." I asked her to explain that a little bit. She said,

> It's not that I don't know what I'm supposed to be doing. I mean I see that. It's like I don't think I have the best understanding of how this literacy in their minds all works... I don't think I learned that very well or something... but I'm learning so much, just by all of this.

I asked if she was thinking about the way I worked with the little girl during journal time, and she said that was part of it. She had already been struggling with how much help to give each child. She had sometimes asked herself, "How are they ever going to know if you don't tell them?" Julie was struggling with the role of instruction in learning. In our last interview, Julie tried to express her new understanding of what it meant to "put the child first." She included "the curriculum. There are some things they just have to know, you know?"

By that last interview, Julie had begun to describe her responsibilities as a teacher as "all these layers." She said that every time she encountered a problem to be solved, it appeared to be fairly simple at first. Then she would begin to see layers of problems beneath the initial problem. Sometimes she was able to "peel one away" only to be presented with a whole new problem. One example was Carlos's problems at school. At first, Julie saw it as a problem of language differences and communication. With more reflection, the language differences began to be "transparent" and she could see that many of the behaviors she was concerned about could indicate that his literacy development and social development were lagging. Then she realized that if she was successful in distinguishing all the layers of Carlos's

problems, she would have a new problem, meeting his needs without being able to communicate verbally.

Julie first discussed this when she talked about her problem with isolating a question to research for her action research class. She said,

> I think everything kind of has layers, because [if] you think about something ...you think, 'Oh, that's so overwhelming, because there's this aspect and this aspect and this aspect.' ...Like let's say [the topic] was literacy development. Should I just choose journals? Because there are so many other things, too. [But] ...if I did [choose] journals, that's the sounds and that's all the letters, you know. It's just all of that understanding.

In using the metaphor of layers, Julie did not appear to imply a linear process. She saw all the "layers" as being a part of the problem at the same time. She also continued to see each problem as part of her desire to "put the child first."

In our last interview, Julie drew a direct connection between the layered nature of problems and her everyday decision making. I asked if she was still seeing the "layers" metaphor as a good way to describe the problems she faced in teaching. She said,

> I think a lot of things are like that...You have one big question and then you break it down and there are so many things that are involved... You might think, 'Oh, in this situation, I would do this,' but it's just not like that. There are just so many different aspects and layers and individual differences...

> Every time you come upon a situation, it's not always that you're going to make the same decision that you did last time. It's always different.

She went on to describe how she now saw a whole spectrum of alternative interpretations and possible actions in every situation she faced in the classroom. I asked her if that was making her teaching easier or harder. She paused, and then answered,

> Harder. Because I'm less naïve. It's just not really that black and white. The more you know, the harder it is... I don't think it makes it easier to realize all the layers and the hugeness of the issues.

Hard as it was, Julie did not take an easy way out. She persisted in framing problems that she could not readily solve with professional expertise. Even when faced with intractable problems like those of Carlos and Suzanne, Julie continued to ask, "What is the teacher's responsibility in a case like this?" Although she despaired of finding simple solutions, she did not believe herself to be free of responsibility or influence. Toward the end of our last interview, I said, "Well, it sounds like 'What's best for the child?' has become a bit more complicated." She said, "Yeah, but even in those little think-on-your-feet situations, that question's kind of always lurking."

Putting the Child First in a Community Project Despite the problems and limitations that Julie experienced as she attempted to fulfill her responsibilities as a teacher by "putting the child first," she also experienced some satisfying accomplishments. Julie felt proud of what she had been able to accomplish with the children as they engaged in a project, that of running a restaurant. In order to do this

restaurant project with the children, she first had to build trust. During the project, Julie was able to see the children take ownership of their learning. They lived up to her trust in them by taking appropriate responsibility. In the process Julie involved children in open and meaningful discourse about the course of the project and the ways that they would share responsibility.

As I wrote field notes and transcribed interviews during the first few weeks of my time with Julie, I noticed that the word "trust" kept appearing in her statements about the children. One day I asked her in an interview whether this was something that she consciously thought about when she was with the children or if it was just something that was always in the background. She said, "No. I tried to establish trust." I asked her if she could think of an example. She said that mostly it was in little things. For example, if she had told them something would happen and it did not, she would tell them, "I thought we really were going to do that and I'm sorry that we didn't."

She was also able to tell of a specific instance when she had acted to establish trust. The classes had a team-building routine that they did almost every day. They chanted a rhyme with the words "greet your neighbors and shake their hands." As they said the words they shook hands with children near them. Julie said that early in the year, they had worked on the protocol of handshakes which included practice in giving an appropriately "firm" handshake. One day, during the routine, Trevor squeezed Carrie's hand so hard that it made her cry. Julie explained, "I don't know if this is a sense of trust, but I felt like it was with Carrie." She said that she

immediately found herself in "one of those situations." She said that she was unsure what to do, but felt she had to do something. She told Trevor,

> Trevor, I'm sorry. I just don't think you're ready to do that song with us... And so you're going to sit down right now and we're going to do it again. And tomorrow when we do it, you're going to sit down.

She said that Trevor immediately apologized and sat down. The next day before the routine, she said that she whispered to Trevor, "Trevor, you won't do this." She summarized (with some anxious laughter),

> I mean, I don't know if it's right, but I just felt like that was a situation where I'm going to look out for people and not let people hurt each other. And the next day Carrie looked at me like she remembered. She remembered that. And still I dealt with Trevor, too... But that's another situation where trust comes in.

Julie consciously worked to be trustworthy and to make school a safe place for everyone.

Trust went the other direction as well. When I asked Julie if there was anything else she could think of related to the word "trust," she said,

> Well, I think I trusted them to run the restaurant... They knew their jobs. They knew what to do. And I just didn't do anything. I trusted them to come up with answers, too... I trusted them to work with each other and go get the food and do all that.

In fact, I observed Julie doing just that. During the time that the restaurant was actually "in business," I observed Julie walking around, greeting parents, and helping with documentation of the event. She did not offer any direction to the children. They proudly seated parents, took orders, cooked, and bussed tables. In both sessions, the cashiers assertively voided diners' bills and said, "But you can leave a tip, if you like." The kindergarten fund was almost fifty dollars richer at the end of the day and Julie had not intended the restaurant project to be a fundraiser!

I asked Julie how she had come up with the idea of a restaurant project. She said that she had to have something that would fit into the routines and schedules of the school as much as possible, even though they did not usually have a project-centered curriculum. Then she explained, "[I wanted] something that I thought the kids could relate to. Something they'd feel like they had ownership with. Something where I didn't feel like I was in charge." The children were all curious about restaurants and had been to restaurants. The parents of one of the ESL children owned a restaurant in town. Julie thought that she could provide enough prior experience for them to run a simple restaurant successfully.

The children shared their restaurant experiences and described the people they saw in restaurants. The child "in the restaurant business" was able to provide more information about what went on in the kitchen and what the different jobs were called. I asked Julie what role the children had in planning. She said,

> I listened to the things that they wanted to do. I tried my hardest to put them in that position in the restaurant. I let them name it. I let them make the food, let

them make their own stuff. So in every avenue that I could, that I felt like it was appropriate, I let them be in charge.

Together Julie and the class made plans, learned two simple recipes (peanut butter sandwiches and fruit kabobs), learned more about nutrition, prepared decorations, voted on a name for the restaurant and made signs, and practiced their jobs. When opening day arrived, parents turned out in droves. The children were very proud of their restaurant. Later they visited their classmate's restaurant and, based on the conversation when they got back, asked some very knowledgeable questions of the staff.

Julie was proud of the project as well. She felt like she had "put the child first" in doing the restaurant project and that they had been very successful together. However, that did not keep Julie from reflecting on the project with a critical eye. By the time the project was happening, Julie had experience in struggling with the limitations and challenges of putting the child first. She was aware of "layers" in everything she did. She said in our last interview,

> I don't know. To me, it seems like there are so many things you feel like you have to do as a teacher and then you plan something like that and [think], "Is this just all fun? Are they doing really valid stuff? Is it going to be OK? Are they going to know what they have to know?" ...I do think they enjoyed it. I certainly do think they had fun and I do think they learned things... I'm just saying, I think all these issues and problems make it harder. And that's better when I'm thinking about those things, but still...

It seemed that Julie had learned not to take anything for granted anymore. She wanted evidence of how the children perceived things and what they learned. Her determination to "put the child first" in everything that she did as a teacher had become problematic, but she was more determined than ever to do it. The children had trusted her and she had trusted them. They grew and learned in the process of living up to her trust.

The Influence of Julie's Teaching Program on her Moral Development There appeared to be a great deal of congruence between Julie's teacher preparation program and her values, as expressed in her moral activity as well as her interviews, journals, and supervisory conferences. However Julie did not refer to program content when justifying her decisions or explaining her way of thinking about a problem. Sometimes she did not even use the vocabulary that was commonly used in her college courses. For example, even though she spoke often of allowing children choices and respecting them and trusting them, she did not use the word "autonomy" to describe her values and goals. In her course content, the importance of autonomy as the aim of education was stressed in a number of core courses.

Because Julie did not explicitly tie her values to course content, it was impossible to determine the relationship between the preparation she had received and her professional moral understanding based on the data in this study. However, Julie did refer to course content toward the end of her eight weeks at Springfield. She said that she had learned a lot from her student teaching experience and felt more prepared. She explained, "Sometimes I think in my college classes... not to say it

can't be that way, but you can get such a romantic picture of this whole thing, and there is such reality to it all."

During the interview in which Julie made this statement, I connected it with Julie's earlier statement about being naïve at the beginning of the semester. I decided to probe a little to see what she meant. I wondered if she would contrast naivete at the beginning with disillusionment at the end. However, it seemed to be more a case of naivete vs. enlightenment than naivete vs. disillusionment. She said, "I guess what I'm saying is it's a lot more connected than I thought it would be... Maybe I just didn't realize in my head how connected it all was." She went on to describe how writing in her journal or trying to settle on an action research question, she couldn't pull anything out to examine in isolation. She had started with a picture of the world that was organized and focused. She had found herself operating in a layered reality in which everything appeared as shades of gray.

Conclusion Julie's original professional moral framework centered on a single responsibility, that of "putting the child first." She was confident that she understood what was in the child's best interest, based on her values of respect for autonomy, community building, trust, productive communication, and safety. She operated in a way that was consistent with her expressed values. In the process of operating in the classroom, however, she discovered limitations that encircled and constrained her ability to understand and meet the needs of children in the way she had envisioned: the need to accept the values of the family, difficulties with setting expectations, and the necessity of curricular standards. These three themes highlight ways in which

Julie's professional moral understanding was modified. On the other hand, Julie's aim of "putting the child first" was strengthened by the success of a restaurant project in which she and the children had worked together in a meaningful, respectful, and trusting way. Although she viewed her former world-view as "naïve," Julie was not disillusioned or discouraged. Even though she said that this knowledge made teaching harder, she felt capable of functioning effectively in the complicated landscape that she came to see as "reality."

In terms of Oser's (1994) methods of operation, Julie spent most of her time in open discourse, especially during the restaurant project. Although she was aware of the structure she was imposing, she made a conscious effort to engage the children in meaningful discussions about the project and offer as many choices as possible. She also readily engaged in open discussion with her cooperating teachers, sought their opinions and perspectives, and made her own thinking public.

Comparison of Cases

There were many contrasts and few comparisons between the cases of Amanda and Julie. They were from the same geographical region, had the same teacher preparation program, did the first eight weeks of their student teaching in the same setting (at different times), and were both females in their twenties. With these similarities in mind, it is interesting that Amanda and Julie had very different understandings of their professional responsibility. They also operated in the setting differently.

Amanda and Julie were each able to articulate a clear understanding of a teacher's moral responsibility at the beginning of student teaching. In addressing my first question (How does the student teacher understand her professional responsibility?), I first watched to see if each participant appeared to be operating according to that understanding. In each case, I found a great deal of congruence between what the participant said they were doing or trying to do and what I saw in their moral activity. Both encountered problems in fulfilling their responsibilities and I became interested in a new question: How does the student teacher's idea of her responsibility evolve into a workable ethos?

Amanda started with a notion of responsibility that was socially grounded and ecological. She described her responsibility in terms of the people to whom she was responsible. In order to function responsibly, she had to find and/or make her place in her professional social habitat. In contrast, Julie saw her ethical responsibility as a covenant with the child in which she dedicated her professional decisions to the child's "good." To function responsibly, she had to translate her covenant into the less certain world of real children and learn to share responsibility with others.

Amanda's understanding of her professional moral responsibility, a "widening circle," made her especially aware that her actions would "make waves" in the school community. This may have been part of why she was often confused and hesitant to assert herself as classroom leader. However, it also made her very sensitive to how her actions might be perceived by various others and led her to work to preserve relationships with everyone in her circle of responsibility. She saw productive,

positive relationships as being necessary for effective and responsible teaching. Therefore, she would answer a question about killer whales with both an awareness of the children's parents' concerns and the need to be truthful. In the case of Shelly, she would continue to work to develop a relationship with Shelly and the adults in her life, even when she did not understand her or feel empathy for her.

Julie acted more confidently, but she didn't act without care and sensitivity of her own. Whereas Amanda was very concerned with her role in the classroom, Julie was fairly sure of her role in the first week. However, she repeatedly asked, "What is a teacher's responsibility in this case?" and "What is in the best interest of the child?" She was observing children closely or she would not even have noticed the indeterminacy of the situation. She saw the children ever more clearly, but saw that "what's best for the child" as becoming entangled and entwined in a network of alternative interpretations and possible actions. She also found that in some cases she would not be able to make decisions that she thought best because of shared responsibility with others.

Amanda and Julie both perceived their teacher preparation programs as helpful but not sufficient. However, their perceptions of the way in which their program had failed to fully prepare them were slightly different. Amanda was unprepared for how teaching was "messy and personal and everything all at once." Her original view of her responsibility as a teacher had been an orderly array of proximal and distal relationships. The immediacy and "personal" nature of classroom life was surprising to her, even though she had many classroom and childcare

experiences. Julie did not appear to feel pressed by the "personal" nature of classroom life. She did find that she had to make decisions without deliberation. However, Julie was most surprised by the "connectedness" that she found in every decision or question. She felt that she was becoming better at seeing things as they really were, but that knowledge was complex and problems were difficult to isolate. Knowledge of the child failed to clarify; it complicated her job and made it harder.

Chapter Five

The conclusions and implications of case study research cannot be freely generalized to other individuals and settings. However, the cases reported here raise interesting questions about the nature of professional moral activity in teaching and the nature of professional moral development. By examining the ways in which two novice teachers operated in specific situations, I hoped to explore the actual lived experience of moral activity in teaching. Rather than examining intrapersonal aspects of morality in isolation, I ventured into other aspects of human experience, the interpersonal and the social/contextual. These cases illustrate that the uncertainty inherent in actual teaching situations can be a salient feature of the context for a novice teacher and that the intrapersonal aspects of professional morality may be responsive to and interactive with the situated aspects of the experience of teaching.

Reading individual cases can potentially provide vicarious experience that is useful in the personal theory building of practitioners (Schön, 1983). Teacher educators may find the cases helpful in understanding certain people and situations they encounter in teaching and supervision. Alternatively, teacher educators may find that the cases reported here open possibilities for observation and reflection on the practices of their own students. Further in-depth case studies are needed to provide more knowledge of the nature of professional moral development and how it varies across individuals and settings.

In the next two sections, I will discuss the theoretical implications of each case and draw preliminary conclusions about how teacher educators can use these

cases as they prepare students for the moral challenges of teaching. I will then discuss implications common to both cases and draw some general, tentative conclusions suggested by the cases reported here. I will conclude with suggestions for further research in the area of professional moral activity in teaching.

Implications of Amanda's Case

Amanda preferred to define herself as part of a social context rather than as an individual. From the beginning, she described her responsibilities as responsibilities *to* other people. She expected, from the beginning, to share responsibility with others in her new setting. She cared about how others viewed her and what they expected from her, because she wanted them to see her as a "real teacher." Although some teachers may cherish time alone with their children and only want to "shut the door and teach," Amanda's story suggests that at least one teacher entered her first full time teaching experience wanting close, productive relationships with children, colleagues, and parents. She was not satisfied with being welcomed into the daily life of the school. She wanted to feel like she really belonged and construct a particular kind of role in her new setting.

One of the questions raised by Amanda's case concerns the social construction of a teaching role in a particular school context. Role construction may serve a socialization function (Mead, 1934). To gain respect as a "real teacher," Amanda had to learn about the norms of classroom life and how to "act like a teacher" during group time. She had to learn how to function within the constraints of schooling (e.g., time and curriculum constraints). However, in Amanda's case,

successful role construction also served to expand her freedom to act within her particular context. By constructing a role that led to respect from colleagues and children, Amanda expanded her freedom to make and implement her own decisions about discipline, curriculum, and other everyday classroom matters. Therefore, constructing a credible teacher role is related to moral responsibility and activity, because it allows for responsible choice. Even if a novice teacher is willing to accept responsibility, if that teacher does not *appear to be capable* of accepting responsibility, other responsible people in the setting may not relinquish much of their own responsibility to the novice. In such a situation, choices made by the novice may be of little consequence.

Role construction also involves reflection. One must view oneself as object to engage in role construction, and so the process of constructing a new role can be a way of integrating and authoring the self (Mead, 1964). Amanda viewed the responsibilities of teachers as social and complex. Understanding the complexity seemed to make it hard for her to construct a leadership/teacher role, because she was constantly thinking about how different people in the setting were interpreting her actions. She even worried about what parents would think if their children knew that killer whales might eat people. Amanda's knowledge of the complexity of the social setting and her desire to be respected as a "real teacher" also made it harder for her to feel that she really belonged, which made it harder for her to construct the role. For example, she mentioned many times in interviews that she was new or that she was temporary. To break out of the cycle of insecurity and confusion, Amanda had to

begin to behave in a more predictable way and use her skill at preserving relationships to overcome challenges.

Dewey's (1922) dialectical framework of moral development is useful in explaining Amanda's situation and operation. As Amanda began to operate in her new setting, others responded to her actions in a way that implied judgment. For example, when Amanda did not handle Shari's interruptions in the customary way, the assistant interpreted that as helplessness on Amanda's part. She jumped in to help. Amanda saw that she appeared to be someone who needed help. She then had to reconsider her own actions and find a way to "take a stronger hand." When she demonstrated her competence in leading group, she was able to choose discipline and guidance strategies that were not customary without being judged to be helpless.

Dewey (1994) also pointed out that rigid or dictatorial types of social organization inhibit moral activity. If the norms of Amanda's setting had been more rigid, it might not have been possible for her to both construct a credible role and expand her actual range of professional choice. In Amanda's case, she was able to negotiate a credible role by accepting certain constraints, such as efficient use of time during group, while working to take a leadership role in other areas, such as curriculum planning and developing appropriate expectations for Shelly. In Amanda's case, role construction served to both socialize her to teaching norms and expand her professional choices. It is unclear from this single case how flexible the social organization of the setting needs to be for productive role negotiation and construction to occur.

Another implication of Amanda's case is that until a classroom leadership role can be securely established, the novice teacher may be inhibited in her ability to allow open discourse. Even though an ethos, as defined here (Oser, 1994), is a method of operation and not a stage of moral development, it appeared that Amanda was progressing from Avoidance toward more Discourse oriented activity. Avoiding or delegating decisions could occur under different kinds of circumstances and for different reasons. Rather than indicating an unwillingness to accept responsibility, a novice teacher's decision to Avoid or Delegate may indicate that she does not consider herself to be in a decision making position. In other words, a teacher who does not have a credible teacher role with children and colleagues may have doubts about her ability to follow through on unilateral action or create a climate for Discourse. In Amanda's case, this was a reasonable doubt given the situation with Shari during group time. It could also be difficult for a teacher to allow children to "share their part," when her role as teacher is insecure. Opening up a genuine discourse, when not able to provide the guidance and leadership required of an "elder collaborator" is risky. This raises the question of whether or not a teacher, novice or experienced, can choose to operate in an ethos and actually operate in that way, without regard to the social organization of the setting.

Another question raised by this case concerns the way relationships and potential relationships may influence a teacher's moral activity. Preserving relationships (even at a high cost) may be a functional aspect of professional moral decision making for some teachers. The data presented here indicate that a preference

for preserving relationships (over other values) may not always be an example of an "ethic of care" because there may or may not be "motivational displacement" (Noddings, 1992). Preserving relationships in the context of a teaching practice may be less "caring" (in the altruistic sense) and more pragmatic (in a Deweyan sense), because preserving relationships opens possibilities for resolution of complex, personal, and messy problems.

The point is not that Amanda lacked empathy, but that she preserved relationships whether she felt empathy or not. In Shelly's case, she did not feel much empathy at first and thought that Shelly was "unruly," but she worked to establish a relationship anyway. Preserving relationships is an interpersonal habit that makes other viewpoints potentially more accessible, increasing moral sensitivity and understanding. In Amanda's case, she continued to be as fair and truthful as she felt that she could be without putting Shelly on the defensive, alienating her from the group, and causing a break-down in communication. She eventually built stable and harmonious relationships with Shelly, Shari, teaching assistants, and everyone else in her setting by following this strategy. However, lack of truthfulness in order to maintain a harmonious relationship could potentially make other viewpoints *less* accessible, if people avoided facing difficult problems by covering them up. Amanda appeared to preserve relationships, not at the expense of truthfulness, but while holding truthfulness in abeyance.

The habit of preserving relationships first, which Amanda apparently formed in her field experiences and/or childcare work, remained stable throughout the eight

weeks of student teaching studied here. Even though Amanda reported that she "learned" from Shelly that there are no permanent answers to behavior problems and that forming a relationship with Shelly helped her arrive at a way to help her, Amanda was actually operating "as if" this was true all along. In Piaget's (1965) theory of moral development, individuals reach new understandings first in their everyday operations and are later able to represent their understandings and articulate them to others. At the time of representation, the individual becomes consciously aware of the new understanding. This would explain why Amanda believed that she had "learned" something that she had been using all along.

If Amanda did form her habit of preserving relationships first in her prior fieldwork as she described in interviews, then what preservice teachers practice may later emerge in new settings and be ultimately formalized in mental structures. When preservice teachers are in their field experiences, they need guidance in the moral aspects, as well as the effectiveness aspects of their work. Some teacher educators are presently experimenting with ways to integrate ethical studies with field work (e.g., Dorsey, 1999). The evidence presented here indicates that further inquiry and experimentation in this area would be fruitful.

For Amanda, the discussions of professional ethics and the hypothetical cases studied in her teacher preparation coursework may have also played a role in her moral activity. Her mention of these experiences in interviews indicated that they may have sensitized Amanda to the kinds of dilemmas that could be present in educational settings and may have promoted reflection on similar events when they

occurred. Amanda mentioned these discussions several times and referred to items in the Ethical Code of Conduct (Feeney & Freeman, 1999). She found that the actual decision making process was much different than the careful deliberation and discussion that had occurred in class, but the fact that she mentioned the Code of Conduct indicated that she associated the ethical course content of her program with real dilemmas in her professional practice. Amanda's case provides support for the efficacy of the traditional ethical instruction advocated by Strike (1996), Feeney and Freeman (1999), and other teacher educators in sensitizing some preservice teachers to moral dilemmas.

Amanda's teacher preparation program sensitized her to possible ethical dilemmas. She had developed productive habits during her fieldwork and other experiences with children and families. Still, Amanda did not feel prepared for the pace and emotional aspects of the decisions she would have to make. Amanda's method of operation also varied as she developed confidence in herself as a teacher and constructed a role for herself in her new setting. Amanda's struggles suggest that the social and emotional development of preservice teachers may be an important aspect of their preparation to teach. Teacher educators may want to consider ways to foster social and emotional growth in their preparation programs. At least one teacher educator is proposing "resiliency education" for teachers, because of the social and emotional intensity of teaching (D'Emidio-Caston, 2001).

Understanding how Amanda's operation in the classroom can be classified in Oser's (1994) taxonomy of moral methods of operation does not completely explain

how she operated or why. Essentially, Amanda learned to hold competing responsibilities in balance. For Amanda this usually meant that she held one responsibility in abeyance while she attended to another. For example, she was able to take a firmer hand during group times when she decided, "There's me time and there's group time." At least for Amanda, the process of framing and solving moral problems in practice appeared to be a complex entanglement of her prior understanding of professional responsibility, an emerging understanding and authorship of herself in a new social context, and the ability to operate in a patchwork of freedom and constraint in a real classroom. Her primary strategy for solving difficult dilemmas was to preserve relationships while "muddling through" toward greater understanding and resolution.

Implications from Julie's Case

Julie entered her student teaching with a clear mission. She was primarily concerned with her obligation to foster each child's optimum growth and development. She believed that she could discern "the good" for each child's development, even if she might not always be able to meet each child's needs. She wanted the children to be able to trust her and she wanted to trust them. Julie's clear sense of mission apparently made role construction in her new setting a minor or nonexistent issue.

I had already analyzed Amanda's case when I began Julie's case, so it intrigued me that Julie so easily stepped into a teacher role. It may have been that Julie constructed a comfortable "teacher role" in the summer program she offered

with a classmate. If so, how was it possible for her to transfer that role into a new setting so easily while Amanda's extensive experience as lead teacher in a childcare setting did not transfer? Alternatively, Julie may not have had to spend a lot of time constructing her role because she did not see the need to blend seamlessly into a complex social organization. She almost seemed to begin her student teaching with the idea that she had a job to do and she would just do it. Perhaps Julie defined her role when she defined her responsibility – to serve the child.

Although Julie did not emphasize the importance of considering and coordinating everyone's perspectives as Amanda did, Julie actually created more open discourse with children. This was especially evident in the collaborative restaurant project in the last few weeks of her time in Springfield. Very early in her experience, Julie appeared to be a confident classroom leader and her confidence may have made it easier for her to open a true discourse with children. However, many confident classroom leaders do not choose to open a discourse with students. Julie's concept of "the good" for children included fostering autonomy, building community, and building trust. Opening discourse with children was a direct way of nurturing "the good." Therefore, opening and sustaining discourse was not something that Julie thought she *should* do. It was something that she had to do to reach her goals of fostering autonomy, building community, and building trust.

A person acting with a clear sense of mission, definite values and goals, and respect for the autonomy of others, has characteristics that fit an accepted description of autonomy in the developmental psychology literature (Deci & Ryan, 1987).

Autonomy indicates an "emergence from embeddedness, whether in interpersonal relationships or external absolutes" (Rogers, Mentkowski, Hart, & Minik, 2001, p. 24). Piaget (1965) associated autonomous morality with a way of standing in relation to others, namely relations of mutual respect. When Julie described the way that she built trust in her relationships with the children, she described things that she did to earn their trust and ways in which she had trusted them. In planning the restaurant project, Julie shared responsibility with the children in every way that she could. Julie's respect for the children was demonstrated in the way that she viewed her relationship with them to be reciprocal and collaborative. Her autonomy allowed her to build a climate in which the autonomy of the children could flourish.

It is unclear why, when, and how Julie had managed to closely integrate her professional values and goals with her core beliefs. Julie appeared to operate as someone who had authored a professional role for herself before she began her student teaching, and she was able to establish her role in her new setting with little negotiation. Many aspects of her expressed values were congruent with ideas that she would have been exposed to in her teacher preparation program. However, she did not always use the words that would have been used in the readings and discussions. For instance, she repeatedly described the need to respect the autonomy of the child without mentioning the word "autonomy." From the data available, it is unclear what role her teacher preparation program had in her development of a teaching self. It is only evident that Julie's high degree of autonomy was beneficial to herself and her

students in the classroom. The importance of fostering autonomy in preservice teacher education is supported by the evidence in Julie's case.

It is also evident from Julie's case that a high degree of autonomy is compatible with a high degree of relatedness to others as many moral theorists have maintained (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Gilligan, 1982; Piaget, 1965; Rogers et al, 2001; Youniss & Damon, 1992). In Julie's case, her ability to articulate and operate according to a clearly defined and integrated set of beliefs, understandings, and values made her a predictable and understandable figure in the classroom context. The social context in which she was operating was flexible enough to accommodate Julie and her mission to put the child first. Being a predictable, accepted figure in the classroom helped Julie to stand in a mutually respectful relationship with others, open and sustain discourse, and build trust.

Of course Julie's student teaching was not free of problems. She reported at the end of her student teaching in Springfield that she had started out with a naïve understanding of her responsibilities. Julie seemed surprised to find that she would have to share responsibility with people who did not share her values. She was also confused at times by the uncertainty of actual situations in teaching. These problems were salient to Julie and were never completely resolved. However, she did grow more comfortable with uncertainty and with her own limitations. For example, in working with the Jehovah's Witness family, Julie quickly realized that their differences were not a matter of communication (or becoming better informed) as she originally thought. When she accepted that the family's religious practices were

diametrically opposed to her goals for children, Julie used the situation to isolate a value (community in the classroom) and find a way to work toward it without violating the religious restrictions of the child's family. She worked with the children to develop a restaurant project that involved a strong community building process without any rituals or holiday observances.

Julie also demonstrated her growing willingness to live with uncertainty and her own limitations in the way that she framed problems. At first Julie seemed to be confident of her ability to understand each child's needs and begin to meet them. However, as she encountered multiple layers and entangled aspects of each problem, Julie realized that the developmental needs of individual children were not always certain. She resisted the impulse to make them more certain by reframing her dilemmas into problems that could be solved with professional expertise. She preferred to work on "surfacing" problems in their entirety (Schön, 1983). For example, in attempting to understand Carlos, Julie started with his lack of knowledge of the dominant language in the classroom. However, her investigation soon included his general literacy development, his social development and peer relations, and a critical look at the response of the school to language differences. Julie kept bringing these problems into daily conversations with her colleagues at Springfield and chose to investigate them in her action research class. Concentrating on problems that can be solved with professional expertise may lead professionals to develop greater effectiveness as teachers, but they will ignore many of the most interesting moral problems in the process.

Julie's ability to operate with a high degree of autonomy, her growing willingness to share responsibility with others, and her willingness to surface and live with unresolved dilemmas occurred in a specific professional context. Even though Julie appeared to operate from her own closely integrated system of core beliefs and understandings, she did not operate in isolation. In fact, her relatedness to others was demonstrated by her willingness to surface dilemmas and open discourse with children. The context in which Julie was operating was flexible enough to allow and even encourage her autonomy. When Julie brought up issues for discussion, her cooperating teachers took time to discuss them openly. When Julie wanted to involve the children in an emergent curriculum project (a departure from the way curriculum was usually planned and implemented), the cooperating teachers offered to help. Parents greeted the restaurant project with enthusiasm.

Although there were many similarities, Julie did not find her own beliefs and values to be in perfect congruence with the beliefs and values of her cooperating teachers at Springfield. Their flexibility and appreciation for divergent views created the climate in which Julie could operate autonomously and learn from her experience. Other teacher educators have found that an open and respectful relationship between student teacher and cooperating teacher is more critical to professional growth than a match in teaching philosophy (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; Hollingsworth, 1989). Julie's case illustrates how flexibility, appreciation, and respect between the student teacher and cooperating teacher can foster the student teacher's growth by allowing

her the freedom to engage with difficult problems in a non-judgmental atmosphere and working creatively toward her own professional goals.

Implications from Both Cases

A question raised by both cases concerns the role of reflection in teachers' moral decision making. The rapid and public nature of most decisions constrained the participants' deliberation at the time they were making decisions and sometimes they could not think of an acceptable solution to a problem under duress. Julie talked about having little time to decide in any deliberate way about everyday acts such as guiding children in appropriate group time behavior. She described trying to stall, having to act without being sure, and wanting to "take it back." Amanda frequently felt uncomfortable about some of her actions at the end of the day and "replayed" troublesome scenarios, generating alternative actions she could have taken. This process expanded Amanda's understanding of what her freedom to act had been in that particular situation, even if she could not revisit the problem but had to "make peace with it." Julie engaged in a similar process, usually on her long commute home. She reported finding so many possible interpretations and alternatives to every problem that her job had become a lot harder.

If an individual does not see that a choice can be made, there is no moral component to the action (Dewey, 1922). Therefore, deliberating about choices, even after the fact, served to expand each participant's sense of her moral responsibility in particular actions. Over time, Amanda described making use of this information in a sort of oblique way. It was something she was aware of being behind her, the

background hanging behind the stage on which she acted. Faced with overwhelming complexity, she had to learn how to take action. Julie, who acted confidently at the beginning, came to see problems as layered wholes and everything as interconnected. Her reflection process made her more hesitant to act and more likely to frame problems that could not readily be solved by professional expertise.

Although some problems in teaching are ongoing and open to deliberation, teachers are frequently required to act now and reflect later. Schön (1983) found that experienced professionals often acted intuitively, revealing a kind of knowing-in-action, and that reflective processes helped them to surface that understanding to conscious awareness. Amanda engaged in that kind of action and reflection when she "learned" that putting her relationship with Shelly first helped her to resolve their conflicts. However, both Amanda and Julie reported that they spent a great deal of time reflecting on things that troubled them in their own practice. As novice teachers, they found themselves to be in situations where they could not think of an alternative they felt good about but urgently needed to act anyway. Forced to act, they later wished to "take it back" or had to "make peace with it." Urgency and uncertainty, taken together, put novice teachers in a particularly vulnerable situation. Perhaps that is why Amanda was so appreciative when her supervisor expressed her approval of the way Amanda disciplined children respectfully and privately. Perhaps that is why Julie was at first reluctant, and then relieved, to talk about the flag salute incident. Supervisors of student teachers may be able to encourage deeper reflection if they

remain aware of the "high stakes" involved in reflection on teaching for novice teachers and provide a safe forum for them to reflect on the actions they regret.

Another implication from both cases is that by the time preservice teachers begin their student teaching, they may have strong beliefs about the responsibilities of teachers and how they will fulfill them. Some of these beliefs may be intuitive or barely conscious, formed in their past experiences in and out of their teacher preparation program. However, Amanda and Julie were each able to articulate a framework that described her view of the responsibilities of teachers, and that framework was actually something each participant used as she attempted to operate in her new setting. Each participant's reflection process and professional moral development had meaning within her own professional moral framework and in the context of the challenges she faced.

Like Amanda and Julie, preservice teachers with well-developed beliefs about professional responsibility still may not realize what complications are inherent in those beliefs. The cases presented here demonstrate this to be true in the area of teaching responsibility, just as it is true for personal practical theories of teaching and learning (Rodgers & Dunn, 1997, 2000c). Teacher educators can help preservice teachers become more aware of their own beliefs about teacher responsibility and how they might be implemented both before and during the student teaching semester. One way to do this might be to provide opportunities for preservice teachers to articulate their beliefs about teacher responsibility and compare their beliefs to others'.

Conclusion

The process of framing and solving moral problems in practice appears to be a complex entanglement of the teacher's prior beliefs, his or her understanding of self and social context, and his or her ability to imagine alternative responses for specific situated problems. When I began the research reported here, I expected to find differences between cases. However, I did not expect to find such distinctively different stories. Amanda and Julie were both conscientious student teachers. They had graduated from the same teacher preparation program and were doing their student teaching in the same classroom setting. Yet they appeared to experience their student teaching in completely different ways based on their different understandings of teacher responsibility and the social world of early education.

Amanda entered a complex community of families and educators who somehow had to coordinate their efforts and viewpoints. Julie entered a classroom full of individual children who needed to be served according to their developmental needs. Amanda preserved all relationships and trusted that continued efforts to reach consensus would result in productive solutions to problems. Julie constantly thought about how she could best serve each child while she worked to build trust. Amanda had to create a place for herself in an educational community with established roles and customs while learning how to function in a confusing "jungle" of others' expectations. Julie had to face challenges in her desire to understand individual needs and had to learn to share responsibility with others.

Both Amanda and Julie found that in fulfilling their responsibilities as teachers, they had to live with uncertainty. However, for Amanda that uncertainty was more "messy and personal" than she thought it would be. For Julie, the uncertainty appeared in the layered and interconnected problems that she encountered in her attempts to understand and serve children's needs.

Only two cases were studied, and yet they yielded two very distinct stories. It is not possible from this data to know whether each individual teacher approaches professional moral decision making in a unique way or the cases here represent two "types" of professional morality. The stories of Amanda and Julie do suggest that previous frameworks and taxonomies "scratch the surface" of professional morality. What these frameworks fail to uncover is how moral activity is affected by each individual's carefully constructed theories and understandings of the social and moral world of teaching and by the ways those theories are used to navigate and operate in specific interpersonal landscapes. They do not uncover the dynamic nature of the relationship between a person's previously constructed theories and contextual realities such as others' values and needs, others' expectations, social organization, and ongoing role construction. Despite profound differences in the ways Amanda and Julie operated, each participant acted conscientiously and reasonably given her understanding of the world and her understanding of her professional responsibility. Identifying a characteristic ethos (Oser, 1994) or a Model identification (Schön, 1983) for each participant would not really explain her moral activity.

Oser and Althof (1993) found that using Oser's professional moral taxonomy to encourage teachers to reflect on their moral activity and use more open discourse in their practices achieved short-lived results. One possible explanation is suggested by the cases reported here. The participants appeared to be operating in accordance with their own moral frameworks and theories about the social world of teaching. These theories may have been built up over long periods of time and were definitely well-developed as they began their first full-time teaching. If a teacher has developed his or her understanding of teacher responsibility through years as a child in school, a participant in a social world, and a preservice teacher, then that understanding or theory is likely to be integrated with core beliefs about the world in general and be quite resilient to change.

An individual's understanding of the social world of teaching is also likely constructed in that individual's experience of specific social worlds. As human beings, we do not all occupy the same social world. Family, race, socioeconomic status, community, religion, schooling, and countless other influences enter into each individual's social experience. Individuals act in and adapt to their social worlds, actively constructing theories about their experiences. If a teacher's professional moral activity is closely tied to that teacher's theories about specific social worlds, then how can teacher educators help all preservice teachers learn "procedures that help to solve moral conflicts in a just, caring, and truthful way and... combine effectiveness with a concrete evaluation of possible negative consequences for the people concerned" (Oser, 1994, p. 111)? Can procedures be taught and learned

without regard to the preservice teacher's understanding of the social world? Do learned procedures have a consistent meaning and significance regardless of the context in which they are practiced?

I think that the cases reported here reveal the complexity inherent in the moral operations of novice teachers, and that teaching a taxonomy of methods of operation to prospective teachers would be disingenuous in light of that complexity. I see the implications of the cases reported here as an argument for a deeper and broader discourse both in preservice teacher education and between teachers and children in classrooms. For classroom discourse to be meaningful, the teacher has to be willing to articulate and question closely held theories about self and others. The teacher's students and colleagues have to be willing to engage in this process as well. The social and political context has to be supportive and flexible enough to make the environment safe for open discourse about meaningful issues. Establishing interpersonal procedures may, over time, make it possible for teachers to learn enough about the social worlds of others so that they *can* evaluate the possible negative consequences for the real people affected by their decisions, as Oser suggests (1994). However, given the implications of the cases reported here, it seems unlikely that establishing discursive interpersonal classroom procedures would be sufficient to establish a sustainable discourse, because teachers' actual moral activity in real situations is a dynamic interplay of intrapersonal, interpersonal, and social/contextual factors. Discursive procedures only address the interpersonal aspects of classroom experience. A deeper and broader discourse might be one that

supported reflection and self-disclosure while holding the broader social and political context up for critical examination.

Suggestions for Further Research

Understanding the depth and resilience of two student teachers' social world views and how those views affected each student teacher's moral activity raises more questions than it answers. The cases here have been an exploratory venture beneath the surface of professional moral activity, deliberation, and decision making. I cannot claim that the women portrayed here are representative of novice teachers in early childhood classrooms. Although I do not claim that they are "types" in any way, their stories are worth telling and worth studying. Their stories do help us better understand the relationship between teacher preparation, students' closely held theories of a teacher's role and responsibility, professional moral activity, reflection, and social context. By examining their stories, we can see clearly that early childhood classrooms are complicated moral landscapes and that the experience of negotiating that landscape will be different for different teachers. We can see some of the relationship between a novice teacher's untested moral framework and the problems that will occupy her as she tries to operate on it in a real classroom with real children.

More in-depth case studies are needed to understand the variation in individual cases. These case studies need to focus on the actual moral activity of teachers in classrooms, and the ways that teachers understand and operate in uncertain situations, in order to uncover the implicit theories that are being utilized. Longitudinal studies would be helpful as well. Each participant portrayed here had

definite ideas about what her responsibilities as a teacher would be before her student teaching began. However, it was not possible to determine in these studies how or when each came to her moral understanding of teaching. Their stories also raise questions about how each participant will respond in a new setting, and how each will develop her moral understanding over the course of her career.

These two cases together raise questions about the role of context in the moral operations of individual teachers. Amanda was greatly influenced by her social context. In some cases it appeared that social expectations and norms were the driving force in her operations. Julie's operations seemed to be less influenced by social expectations and norms, although the flexibility and respect of her cooperating teachers gave her room to operate according to her own values and goals. The influence of social context appeared to be related to the ways that each participant viewed her responsibilities. However, the ways that they viewed their responsibilities were likely influenced by other unknown factors. Are some teachers more "field sensitive?" Are some contexts more conducive to growth in professional moral responsibility? Does all change in moral activity represent growth? How do novices' moral operations compare with those of experienced teachers? Do experienced teachers respond to changes in the social organization in their schools and is that response related to their understandings of professional moral responsibility? Case studies of individual teachers and classrooms may provide answers to these questions as well.

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