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TRANSLATING THE CALL TO TEACH INTO INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE AND THE MENTORING OF STUDENT TEACHERS

by

Penny E. Oglesby

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
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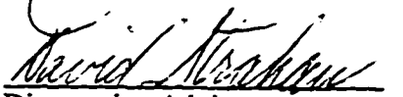

Dissertation Advisor

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This study examines the life stories of three African American teachers who believe that they were called by God to teach. This sense of calling is both religious and contextualized. The teachers' ideology acknowledges the presence and power of God, while it is at the same time grounded in their experiences as African American women. The study further explores the way that one of the teacher's call manifests itself in instructional practice and in the mentoring of two student teachers.

The study uses the narrative methodology in this investigation of teacher beliefs and practices. For purposes of intertextuality, several types of data collection methods are used, including taped open-ended interviews, taped semi-structured interviews, and field observations of the classroom dynamics.

Among the conclusions are that African American teachers who are called to teach share a discourse in discussing their life's work. Six major themes inform their stories: receiving the call, testing the call, confronting teaching challenges, employing a pedagogy that addresses the total child, persevering in the face of social opposition, and reaping rewards. A focus on one of these women reveals that this call manifests itself as ethical teaching. Further, this woman articulates her call with two student teachers through a focus on such issues as honesty, social learning for pupils, lifelong learning for teachers, and cultural diversity.

This study holds many implications for teacher education: 1) explicit preparation in ethical teaching for future teachers, 2) opportunities for preservice teachers to examine their own teaching rationales, 3) identification of preservice teachers who were called to teach, 4) placement of preservice teachers with cooperating teachers who view teaching as a calling, and 5) placement of teacher educators with teachers of different ethnic groups.

APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation has been approved with Distinction by the following committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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Finally, I am eternally indebted to my parents for not only acknowledging my call to teach, but for nourishing it through patience, care and unconditional love.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS - CONT.

TABLE OF CONTENTS - CONT.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

As one who believes that she was born to teach, I developed a research interest into other like-minded educators in a surprisingly circuitous way. It was my initial intent to gather the life stories of African American teachers whose careers spanned the tumultuous gulf between segregation and desegregation. An examination of African American teachers in educational research usually centers on issues of recruitment and retention (Irvine, 1988; Page & Page, 1991; Meier, Stewart, & England, 1989). Gathering these women's lived-through accounts of some of the most stormy periods in American society would, I thought, be historically informative, inspiring, and perhaps instructive in addressing modern day racial tensions. It did not escape me that many African American community leaders had been lifelong teachers. Was there a connection between the desire to teach and the desire to lead? After gathering some stories, I noticed the emergence of a distinctive narrative pattern. Four of the ten respondents described teaching as a calling and used a shared discourse in telling me their life stories. One of these individuals, a fifth grade teacher whom I shall call Magness Townsend, actively translates this call to teach into classroom practice, and is a major focus of this study.

Now in my third year as a supervisor of student teachers in a School/University partnership, I have become fairly well acquainted with the teaching styles of many elementary and middle level teachers. Mrs. Townsend caught my attention immediately. I noticed how this petite African American woman extended instructional activities into rich life lessons, and the earnest manner in which all students seemed to participate. I noticed

the way that other teachers looked to her as a mentor, and heard tales of parents demanding that their children be placed in her classroom. It was therefore no surprise that "Paul Riley" and "Karla Lewis," two White student interns who each completed a semester long internship with Mrs. Townsend last year, earnestly requested placement in this woman's room for this, their student teaching semester. Through the use of narrative inquiry and field observations, it is my hope to examine the ways in which Mrs. Townsend's call to teach manifests itself through instructional practice and her mentorship of Paul and Karla.

Research Rationale: The Seen and the Unseen

This study acknowledges the central role that spiritual motivation plays in the decision to teach. The women whose narratives are explored in this study believe that they were called by God to teach. This sense of calling is both religious and contextualized. The teachers' ideology acknowledges the presence and power of God, while it is at the same time grounded in their experiences as African American women. A consideration of religion in public education often stirs discomfort in a society that would rather ignore potentially fractious and confrontational issues. Many believe that an educational focus means examining 'the seen,' -- the texts, buildings, benefits, and salaries. While these issues are certainly important, they do not constitute the totality of the teaching experience. Whether they remain unacknowledged or not, issues of spirituality permeate the classroom. Indeed, spirituality compels the teaching process for many educators such as those highlighted in this study.

Teaching practice often reveals a particular ideology. The way that a teacher constructs his or her own classroom presence greatly influences instructional practice. A teacher's culture, ethnicity, personality, and life experiences help constitute teaching theories. Because learning is highly contextualized, the preparation of preservice teachers

cannot be viewed in isolation from the beliefs of on-site teacher educators. Experienced teachers can greatly influence the thinking of future teachers. In fact, the expert-novice paradigm is a common one in teacher education programs, primarily due to the glaring differences between the thinking of expert and novice teachers (Ropo, 1987). Experts exhibit more understanding of student development and thinking, as opposed to novices who tended to focus on general educational goals (Ropo, 1987). Additionally, experts' pedagogical knowledge "includes higher level conceptions, principles, and generalizations" than does that of novices which often fails to make connections between student experiences and learning principles (p. 11).

Student teachers and their on-site teacher educators interact in a classroom community that is largely defined by the belief systems and ideologies of each. It is a powerful relationship in place and time, because teaching is context specific. The stance of the classroom teacher can greatly shape the development of the beginner. Henry (1994), an African American teacher, describes the "power of pedagogy to change people's understanding about themselves, others and the world" (p. 1). Because "people are experts on their own lives," interactions with African American edcuators is an authentic way in which White students and teachers can learn about Black cultural traditions (Delpit, 1990, p. 100). Instruction can be transforming.

A teacher's motivation for entering the profession also influences the thinking of their student teachers. Serow (1994) found that for some teachers, the belief that they were called to teach was "shaped by [their] own teachers" (p. 71). Serow (1994) faults educational research for being "slow to capitalize on role modeling by experienced classroom practitioners" (p. 71). Research on teacher thinking generally agrees that teachers remain in the profession when they "perceive themselves as being instrumental in students' learning achievements" (Clay, 1984, p. 4).

Teacher As Text: Narrative Research

A narrative is a story; it is a progressive, often thematic tale of an individual's development. Narrative research is a powerful tool in educational research and allows for the exposure of both interpretation and information. As Lightfoot (1983) states, narratives permit individuals to examine their own experiences "from the inside out." I have selected the narrative methodology as the most appropriate path of investigation in this study.

Carter (1993) discusses the useful role of story in teaching and teacher education, as an alternative way of knowing. In her words, a story constitutes "a theory of something . . . what we tell and how we tell it is a revelation of what we believe" (p. 9). This "something" unfolds in the conflict, the purposeful actions of the protagonist, the causal sequence, and an ultimate resolution (Carter, 1993). Carter (1993) finds the action features of story particularly helpful because "teaching is intentional action in situations, and the core knowledge teachers have of teaching comes from their practice, i.e., from taking action as teachers in classrooms" (p. 7). Teachers' stories tell us much about the teller's identity and knowledge construction processes:

> . . . teaching events are framed within a context of a teacher's life history. As a result, the central themes are often moral and philosophical, having more to do with feelings, purposes, images, aspirations, and personal meanings than with teaching method or curriculum structures in isolation from personal experience or biography." (pp. 7-8)

In addition to being instructive, narratives can help student teachers make sense of their own developing teacher identities. Bullough (1994) employs narrative writing, sharing, and analysis to help student teachers identify their implicit and explicit teaching theories. This knowledge gives students understanding of "self as teacher that will enable them to establish a role in a school and within the community of educators that is

educationally defensible and personally satisfying" (p. 108). Bullough (1994) stresses that this goal does not ignore skill development, but contextualizes it in terms of the teacher's own professional identity.

Narrative research helps to acknowledge the existence of multiple educational perspectives in an increasingly diverse society. Claxton (1991) interviews Parker J. Palmer who faults educational programs for continuing to homogenize disparate views, the "little stories," under one shared experience, the "big story:" "We need to find more and more ways of bringing the little stories, the subcommunity stories, into creative intersection with the big story that's being told by the disciplines" (p. 25). Telling their own stories directly situates the story teller in his or her own experience. The individual can examine personal assumptions and practices. In the interview (Claxton, 1991), Palmer encourages this personal probing as a primary teaching goal: ". . . my task as a teacher is to help students learn how to live in the conversation, not how to find the final resting place in a few propositions about how things really are" (p. 33).

Bullough and Stokes (1994) fault teacher education programs for generally ignoring the identity development of student teachers. The researchers propose the use of teaching metaphors in filling this void. Metaphors are useful in narratives by lending form and structure to stories (Bullough and Stokes, 1994). Further, "a change in metaphor may indicate a change in how the world of teaching is conceived, a change in the evolving story of self" (p. 200). Bullough and Stokes (1994) find that, through constructing metaphors, student teachers are better able to understand the constructs forming their identities. Research is consistent that caring, student-centered, and engaging teachers tend to be effective practitioners (Henderson, 1992). Sharing stories and beliefs is one means of cultivating more of these "reflective teachers" (Zeichner & Liston, 1987).

Purpose of the Study

As one who has always felt called to teach, I am very interested in the relationship between teachers and teaching motives, particularly when this professional drive is spiritual. The purpose of this study is twofold in its focus on the dynamic interplay between teacher spirituality and explicit classroom practice. First, by using the narrative research methodology, I will identify themes and patterns in the discourse of three African American teachers who believe that they were called by God to become teachers. Next, I will highlight the ways in which one of these teachers makes manifest this call to teach. I will accomplish this second research goal by analyzing the narratives of this Black woman, and her two White student teachers, and by gathering multiple data sources on the classroom experiences of all three.

Research Questions

The specific areas of inquiry are as follows:

1. What constitutes the discourse of selected African American teachers who believe that they were called to teach?
2. How does one of these teachers translate her perceptions of this calling into instructional practice?
3. How does this teacher articulate the call to teach in her interactions with two student teachers?

Definition of Significant Terms

Spirituality

Teacher education's general discomfort with issues of spirituality is evident in the scarcity of relevant research in traditional journals of education. These journals contain

multiple and competing definitions of spirituality. Regardless, adherence to religious tradition embraces spirituality of some type (Groome, 1988). Groome (1988) cites Micheal Lee in defining spirituality as "the way in which one mobilizes oneself religiously in the total and actual living out of one's daily activities" (p. 10). Doyle (as cited in Groome, 1988) views spirituality similarly:

> [It is] . . . the freedom that comes from letting go of what is holding me back and getting in touch with the one who is calling me forward. My spirituality is what is taking place when I get out of the driver's seat and turn my life over to God. . . . I have found that turning my life over to God is not a way of abdicating responsibility. On the contrary, the things that I turn over are virtually always given right back on another level. (p. 30)

This spirituality is manifested in a passion and caring for people. A test of this manifestation is the degree to which educators have a "humanizing effect" on those in their charge (Groome, 1988, p. 15). Groome (1988) names three methods of achieving this humanization. According to Groome (1988), the educator must first engage learners in dialogue and allow them "to name their own reality, to tell their own stories" (p. 16). Then, religious educators must listen to what the students say explicitly and implicitly (Groome, 1988). In other words, they must possess an intuitive understanding of students. Finally, religious educators must ask critical "consciousness-raising" questions that invite learners "to imagine new possibilities beyond what they presently perceive" (p. 16).

In order for these dynamics to occur, the classroom learning environment must be one of openness and hospitality (Groome, 1988). Learners must feel safe to engage in their own spiritual awareness and to discover the presence of God in their own lives (Groome, 1988). An appropriate hospitality encourages intellectual exploration "that invites the participants to grapple with and question their faith, that enables people to come to see for themselves what their religious tradition means for their lives" (p. 17). This

personal analysis can only occur if the religious educator relinquishes control of the information and knowledge flow (Groome, 1988).

Groome (1988) further maintains that the religious educator must preserve and pass on a the religious tradition. He takes care to stress that this function does not require "asking people to repeat our past in their future" (p. 19). Instead, religious educators must give their students the mental strategies for maintaining religious faithfulness in a world of injustice- these strategies being retrieval, suspicion and creativity:

> . . . retrieval to uncover the subversive and life-giving memories that are in [religions] but not forgotten; suspicion to recognize its distortions and the ways it has been used to legitimate oppression and injustice . . . and creativity to renew and expand our present understanding and living of it because it will always have a 'surplus of meaning' . . . for us. (p. 19)

Shapiro (1987) sees spirituality as an essential human component. Shapiro (1987) cites spiritualism as an approach for developing "whole human beings." Whole human beings not are not merely cognitive, rational, and actively aware individuals, they possess "spiritual potential and intuitive-receptive modes as well" (p. 156). This belief is similar to that of Kagan (1991) who maintains that teachers who bring spirituality into the classroom create the wonderment of discovery and the goodness in life.

The Calling

As with the definition of spirituality, multiple and competing definitions exist of calling. For Serow (1994) a calling reflects "a high degree of commitment to a specific position, to which the incumbent sees herself or himself specially drawn" (p. 65). Those called to a field are "convinced that their line of work uniquely lends meaning or wholeness to their lives" (p. 65). Serow (1994) traces the origins of the term to medieval Christianity, during which time individuals entered the monastery in answer to God's call. After the

Reformation, the term expanded in meaning to address even non monastic individuals (Serow, 1994). Calvinism introduced predestination into the term by suggesting that one's good works signifies eternal salvation. Current meanings generally reflect "the experience of being summoned by an outside agency and that of being impelled by an inner necessity" (Mintz, as cited in Serow, 1994, p. 66).

In almost complete contrast to Serow (1994), Fruth (as cited in Clay, 1984) attributes a completely secular connotation to calling. Although this secular definition is not one which I embrace nor is it the meaning being explored in my own study, I have included it to reflect the relevant literature available. For Fruth (as cited in Clay, 1984), teaching is a calling when chosen in the face of little material comfort or reward:

> . . . intrinsic rewards related to a teachers' sense of personhood, professional identity, personal meanings and hopes, make teaching more of a calling than a job. If these core concerns which make teaching a 'calling' are diminished, extrinsic rewards such salaries, working conditions, hours, and control over duties emerge as much more significant issues. (p. 4)

Here, calling is neither a permanent state nor an impulse received from a spiritual source. It is described more as a satisfied state directly tied to perceptions of reward and sacrifice.

Again in this secular vein, Hall (as cited in Middleton, Pittman, Webb, Romberg, & Pittelman, 1991) lists calling as one of five attitudinal attributes of professional occupations which distinguish them from trades or crafts: 1) the use of a professional organization as a major reference, 2) a belief in service to the public, 3) belief in self-regulation, 4) a sense of calling to the field, and 5) autonomy. For Hall (as cited in Middleton et al., 1991) a calling is succinctly, the condition when one "would probably want to do the work even if fewer extrinsic rewards were available" (p. 6).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

African American Teacher Identity

The African-American teacher persona has been conceptualized in various ways. Researchers have defined an historical context and social purpose to their own mental images and personal experiences with Black teachers. The African American teacher has been legitimately viewed as mother (Casey, 1990), other-mother (Collins, 1991; James, 1993; Casey, 1993), change-agent (Foster, 1990; Collins, 1991), community leader (Foster, 1990, 1992, 1993; Collins, 1991; Hooks, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1994), one who is nurturing and authoritative (Casey, 1990; Noblitt, 1993) dedicated church worker (Collins, 1991), and community activist (Casey, 1993; Henry, 1993). These metaphorical frames hint at the enduring presence of the teacher of color. The majority culture's own crisis of pigmentation only fortified the presence of the Black teacher. Segregated times saw the Black teacher as the mother of multitudes (Casey, 1993) who had unwritten permission to love, mold, and discipline any child born to any woman. They disciplined with love and taught with rigor. Preparing Black children for a majority culture world that did not embrace them required compassionate, cautious hands. The sloppy dismantling of segregation necessitated that this mother figure also become conflict manager and counselor, much needed cheerleaders for often educationally mistreated Black minds.

In the abundance of research on teachers, relatively few studies address the experiences and pedagogy of African American educators. Foster (1990) finds it regretable that research on teachers has tended to exclude the voices of African American teachers: "Studies of teacher thinking do not consider the influence of the racial identity of teachers

on their belief systems and teaching practice; likewise, they ignore the influence of particular classroom contexts, including the social identity of students, in shaping teachers' pedagogy" (p. 123). Seeking to correct this oversight, Foster (1990) interviewed sixteen African American teachers whose teaching careers spanned segregation and desegregation. All of these teachers were deemed excellent by their communities. Common themes and shared experiences emerged from the interviews. During segregation, Black teachers were "surrogate" parents who typically lived with community members and attended church with students (Foster, 1990). This parenting role redefined itself in the early desegregated setting where the Black teacher was often the only in-school advocate and source of encouragement for students of color. While many majority culture teachers expressed hostility and maintained low expectations for the newly arrived Black student, African American teachers did not "blame parents or students for societal conditions that [were] not of their making" (p. 138). African American teachers made certain that these young learners not only well understood the realities of the racially torn America, but possessed the personal pride, knowledge base, and strategic skills needed for educational achievement and goal attainment. As Foster (1990) remarks of this hidden curriculum: "These teachers share the perspective that the effective teaching of African-American students involves more than merely imparting subject matter" (p. 133). Cummins (1990) uses the term "additive-subtractive" to describe this proactive teacher role in replenishing an incomplete curriculum.

Collins (1991) presents Black feminism as the appropriate framework for examining the African American teacher's role in society. The shared struggle against racism and gender oppression must be acknowledged in order to truly understand the pedagogy of African American teachers (Collins, 1991). Black feminism is characterized by a humanist vision, specific knowledge, and is grounded in the life experiences of all African American women (Collins, 1991). Black feminist thought recognizes the potential

for oppression and resistance at the personal, community and institutional levels (Collins, 1991). Education is viewed as a powerful tool for racial uplift and individual empowerment. Indeed, "African American women have long realized that ignorance doomed Black people to powerlessness" (p. 147). It is therefore no surprise that the African American teacher acted as change agent and nurturer in helping students to reject oppressive, self-imposed stereotypes (Collins, 1991). Teachers assumed leadership roles in order to mold young learners into future leaders. These "other mothers" were agents of knowledge and stressed an ethic of caring and accountability as central to their pedagogy. Caring was seen through an emphasis on individual uniqueness, and the "appropriateness of emotions in dialogue" (Collins, 1991). Students were encouraged to develop the ability to empathize. They were also expected to be personally accountable for their actions: "Not only must individuals develop their knowledge claims through dialogue and present them in a style proving their concern for their ideas, but people were expected to be accountable for their knowledge claims" (pp. 217-218). This pedagogical goal entailed an interdependence of thought and action in which individuals were expected to live the life of care and accountability which they espoused.

For Ladson-Billings (1994), successful teachers of African American children are coaches who share the responsibility for student learning with students and parents. They serve as scaffolds for further learning in relationships that are humanly equitable and collaborative. Like Collins (1990), Ladson-Billings (1994) believes that knowledge must be grounded in one's experiences. Only culturally relevant teaching can help students transcend social negatives and maintain personal pride (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Culturally relevant teaching "uses student culture in order to maintain it and to transcend the negative effects of the dominant culture" (p. 17). Other features of culturally relevant teaching include: 1) Teacher sees herself as an artist, teaching as an art; 2) Teacher see[s] herself as

part of the community and teaching as giving something back to the community, [and] encourages students to do the same; 3) Teacher believes all students can succeed; 4) Teacher helps students make connections between their community, national, and global identities; 5) Teacher sees teaching as 'pulling knowledge out' - like 'mining' (p. 34). Also, knowledge is considered infinite and continuously created. Ladson-Billings (1994) found that the teachers in her study "work[ed] in opposition to the system that employ[ed] them" by presenting students with learning possibilities that defied the racist institutions (p. 128). More telling, culturally relevant teaching is not the exclusive domain of certain teachers. It can be learned by those willing (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

In an ethnographic study, Noblitt (1993) examines the way that an African American teacher's unique combination of care and authority were used in meeting the needs of her students. A White male researcher, Noblitt (1993) describes the way that "Pam's" practice reframed and redefined his views of classroom authority. Noblitt (1993) noticed that "Pam came by her power naturally," and that this power extended beyond the classroom and influenced all facets of the school structure (p. 26). This mixture of power and care manifested itself in many ways. The teacher established an atmosphere of community and cooperation, and all students played an integral part in learning through the assignment of specific daily tasks. Noblitt (1993) noticed that the use of power sustained this individual connectedness: "It was her moral responsibility to keep us all together, and everyone loved her for it, myself included" (p. 33). Power is not used for reasons of crass authority, but "in the service of continuity" (p. 34). Noblitt (1993) calls Pam's actions "moral authority- an authority not only legitimated by the usual mechanisms of our society but also by reciprocal negotiation between people" (p. 37).

Casey (1990) sees the African American teacher as a "mother of multitudes," who nurtures all children regardless of kinship (p. 316). Care for these women means

protection and concern for those in the biological and community family. These teachers live the philosophy that "we... should always be there for each other" (p. 314). One teacher is described as advocating for her students "through a sensitive and benevolent assertion of her authority over them" (p. 317). This notion of teacher-as-mother connects nurture and authority, where nurture translates into community activism and authority is not punitive. Indeed the personal, professional, and political lives of the woman are interwoven with a commitment to the Black community (Casey, 1990).

In an extension of this earlier work, Casey (1993) examines the narratives of African American, Catholic nun, and Jewish teachers. Here, the African American teachers are forces of change. A powerful mentoring role emerges from these change-agents: "When they were children, these women drew strength from the [B]lack community; now, as adults, they initiate others into the same living tradition" (p. 153). For the author, studying the narrative "selves" of others is very instructive and empowering to the reader. Readers can respond emotionally and intellectually to stories that are in some sense relevant to themselves. By focusing on such ethnically diverse, yet ideologically similar women, in the stories of African American, Jewish and Catholic nun teachers, Casey (1993) heightens the likelihood that readers will relate to at least some aspect of the voices. Indeed, she quotes Gramsci in saying that "our collective wisdom is rich, complex, and vital . . ." (p. 157). For Casey (1993), politics is a life message that is manifested in action. All individuals are necessarily political. The teachers demonstrate political activism through such accessible acts as informing parents of their legal rights in school, driving individuals to the voting booth, and caring for foster children. Casey (1993) holds to an optimistic world view in her belief that all individuals can enact some social change. However, she cautions readers that change-agents lose their effectiveness when they lose touch with the subjects of their concern. Because the self is contextualized, so too, are actions of the self.

The "politically progressive educator" must always remain in contact with "those in subordinate social positions" in order to influence, to teach and learn (p. 161). The teacher and learner are in a "reciprocal" relationship, both "becom[ing] more aware and more organized" (p. 162).

Calling As Practice

While the first chapter provides definitions of calling, this review examines the ways in which this calling is put into practice. The first two studies in this section focus on principals who were called to teach. I have included them here because they represent some of the little relevant research, and because these studies situate calling in a decidedly spiritual context. Lamb and Thomas (1984) discuss those called to the principalship, as accepting a "personal initiative in directing one's life" (p. 24). This call must be constantly renewed through self-examination. Lamb and Thomas (1984) outline responsibilities of the school principal who has been called to administration. The authors point out that the word "minister" is a root of "administration." This "administrator" is expected "to counsel, to motivate, to listen, to nurture, to enhance, to criticize constructively, to sympathize, and to support in time of need" (p. 20). The ultimate ministerial goal is to strengthen relationships and motivate others to achieve (Lamb & Thomas, 1984). Ministering principals expect the best from themselves, their counterparts, and students. They endeavor to make leaders out of others, rather than to cultivate dependency. Lamb and Thomas (1984) believe that educational programs should foster the development of motivation, commitment, dedication and responsibility in future administrators.

For Hennessey and O'Brien (1983) the principalship in Catholic education involves not assuming an administerial position, but accepting a call. Living this call involves personal suffering "to convey God's message" through total reliance on God, and

dedication to community service (p. 3). Principals who accept this "covenant" then agree to live out the form of prophetic leadership in the Catholic church (Hennessey & O'Brien, 1983). This prophesy involves risk-taking and "conscience raising." Prophetic principals are ready to risk their lives and comfort in bringing God's message to others. Continued involvement in community service enhances the principals' effectiveness by increasing their ability to listen, to remain open to judgement, and to act with compassion. Love binds this prophet-community relationship (Hennessey & O'Brien, 1983).

Gordon (1993) interviewed 140 teachers of color regarding their career choices. The teacher ethnicities represented were Latino, African American, Asian, and Native American. One fourth of the teachers "expressed a strong religious conviction" and considered their profession a calling (p. 6). From the comments cited by these teachers, it was clear that they considered this calling a gift from God for which they were purposefully born. Sims (1992), an African American teacher educator, recalls childhood impressions of teacher-as-savior. She viewed herself as a potential savior who would positively impact "the social condition of the world" (p. 343).

While most of the available research on teachers who feel called to teach focuses on veterans, Serow (1994) addresses the issue of preservice teachers who were called to teach. From questionnaires and interviews of 527 teachers in teacher education programs at six public universities, Serow (1994) found a positive correlation between those who felt called to teach and the level of enthusiasm and commitment to teaching. Those who viewed teaching as a calling shared other qualities including, greater awareness of their potential impact on others, less concern with sacrifices involved in their career choice, and greater willingness to accept extra teaching duties. This view of calling also extended beyond the classroom walls to "a sense of personal destiny, social obligation, or God's will, that they believe has led them to pursue a teaching career" (p. 71).

Kagan (1991) finds it no accident that, in many languages, the same word refers to teacher and priest. Kagan (1991) considers teaching "a profoundly religious act" that manifests itself in a belief in "the divinity of nature, in the integrity of creatures smaller than ourselves, in the awesomeness of mysteries" (p. 83). While many in education and in the public sector become uncomfortable at the mention of religion and morality in the school, Kagan (1991) believes that spirituality must be reintroduced into the classroom to elevate education to the esteemed level that it once claimed and still deserves.

Parker J. Palmer (as cited in Claxton, 1991) agrees, and argues that those teachers whose personalities remain positively etched in the memories of students, are educators who shamelessly introduce spirituality into the classroom: "They teach from their hearts as a well as their minds. They teach what they care about; they teach with passion. They are identified with their subjects. There's not a gap between their teaching and their living" (p. 23). In discussing spiritual teachers, Palmer (as cited in Claxton, 1991) distinguishes between the instructional mentality and the movement mentality in teaching. While the former focuses on negotiating systems for goal achievement, the latter stresses introspection and spiritual awareness for personal empowerment and social change:

> An institutional mentality has to do with how I can rearrange the power blocks to achieve what I want. The movement mentality is different in a very interesting way. It begins with individuals deciding inwardly, 'I am no longer going to lead a divided life.' It's a very personal decision. I would say it's a spiritual decision, made on behalf of the hidden wholeness. It's like Rosa Parks sitting at the back of the bus for the last time and saying, 'I'm no longer going to lead a divided life. I'm no longer going to know in my heart that I'm a real human being and then act in public as if I weren't' (p. 23).

Palmer (as cited in Claxton, 1991) sees individual connectedness as the natural result of adopting the movement mentality. In this progression, individual's move from personal initiative, to group support of ideals, to social change. Spiritual living is first transformative and then transactive.

Noddings (1992) decries the absence of spirituality in public education, a weakness that she describes as "possibly the greatest lack in modern public schooling" (p. 81). For Noddings (1992) the self is complete only when the both the body and spirit are acknowledged and integrated. Spiritualism is a necessary component of true educational enjoyment and intellectual stimulation:

> Children may be inspired by a particular religion or, forsaking such a commitment, they may be deeply affected by the music of Bach, the art of Michelangelo, the majesty of great cathedrals, the power of religion to move armies, the intellectual challenge of theodicies, the pervasive themes of myth, biblical poetry and parable, ritual in both mainstream and pagan religions, or the treatment of women in monotheistic religions. The possibilities are unlimited. The more I think about the centrality of spirituality in our lives, the more concerned I become about its shameful neglect in the public undertaking we call 'education' (p. 84).

As a religious educator, Aikens (as cited in Groome, 1988) sees her self as a life-giver, one working "against willful destruction of life wherever it occurs" (p. 22). She uses nurturing to help others understand God's meaning. Similarly, Barnes (as cited in Groome, 1988) feels that the religious educator must be selfless and think primarily of the students' well-being. Humility is also essential, as religious educators must be able to acknowledge when they "fail miserably" (Boyarski, as cited in Groome, 1988). One key component of spirituality is the goal of social change (Doyle, as cited in Groome, 1988). Religious educators must constantly examine their own lives to make certain that personal practice reflects ideology. Social change begins with personal improvement.

Duval and Carlson (1993) use the case method to study the teaching commitment among twelve rural Vermont teachers. The researchers chose this New England setting because they believed that "what dedication and commitment looked like might be clearer or easier to observe in teachers working in rural and remote locations" (p. 4). Duval and Carlson (1993) hold that such a situation might afford "hardship, adversity, and the removal of the reward structure" (p. 4). The researchers found that themes such as

devotion, self-sacrifice, and religious overtone informed the narratives of these outstanding teachers. Although the teachers made very little money, they spent a large portion of their own on student materials and were rarely absent from work (Duval & Carlson, 1993). The teachers' primary concern was the welfare of their students.

Mentoring of Student Teachers

When discussing appopriate mentoring of student teachers, it is first important to understand the development and needs of preservice teachers. For purposes of clarity, the term "preservice teacher" refers to those undergraduate education majors involved either in student teaching or teaching internship experiences. On-site teacher educator refers to the mentor teacher under whom the preservice teacher gains classroom experience. Drawing on preservice teacher research, I will briefly discuss models of teacher development, and then focus on appropriate mentoring for preservice teachers.

Contrary to popular belief, most teachers are not born. They grow and develop. Teaching proficiency and expertise result from a combination of many factors, including situational learning and reflection. A brief description of expert teachers will help to define novices. Sternberg and Hovarth's (1995) expert prototype distinguishes expert teachers from novices in three primary areas: knowledge, efficiency, and insight. Experts possess a broader knowledge base which they can negotiate more efficiently than can novices. This knowledge is of three types: 1) content knowledge - subject area knowledge; 2) pedagogical knowledge - knowledge of how to teach, and 3) pedagogical/content knowledge - knowledge on explaining concepts, demonstrating and rationalizing procedures, and correcting student misinformation (Shulman, as cited in Sternberg & Hovarth, 1991). Additionally, experts possess experiential knowledge of their environment, or "tacit knowledge," which allows for successful adaptation (Sternberg &

Hovarth, 1995). Experts also possess metacognitive skills, allowing them to analyze their own thinking processes.

Unlike experts, novice teachers are in various stages of professional maturation. Many researchers have conceptualized the progressive growth of preservice teachers. Fuller (1969) described a three stage model of teacher development through the preservice teaching years. In the first stage, preservice teachers identify realistically with their pupils but unrealistically with their on-site teacher educators. Many feel apprehensive toward these experienced teachers. In the second stage, preservice teachers concern themselves with class control, content mastery, and self-image. Stage three preservice teachers focus on teaching performance and frustrating teaching situations. Finally, stage four preservice teachers focus on the social, academic and emotional needs of their students.

Berliner's (1988) five-stage model focuses on cognition and extends the developmental span through the stage of expertise. These stages are as follows:

1) Novice - engages in inflexible, rational teaching and "purposeful concentration";

2) Advanced beginner - recognizes similarities across content areas and develops strategic knowledge;

3) Competent - makes conscious choices about teaching decisions and classroom actions, and can determine the effectiveness of instruction based on prior experience;

4) Proficient - fifth year teachers who can rely on intuition to guide their instruction. They view classroom elements holistically. Instruction becomes effortless as teachers can make predictions about student needs and performance;

5) Expert - this stage, which is not reached by all teachers, is characterized by an intuitional understanding of teaching behaviors. Teaching performance is effortless and not deliberate.

From a review of 40 studies, Kagan (1992) extends Fuller's (1969) and Berliner's (1988) stage model of teacher development. Based on an amalgam of research findings,

Kagan (1992) defines an emergent model of professional development for the novice teacher. According to this model, growth proceeds in five domains: 1) Novices increase in metacognitive knowledge about pupils, classroom and how their own knowledge and belief systems are changing; 2) Novices acquire more knowledge about pupils, and reconstruct inaccurate images of pupils and of self-as-teacher; 3) As images of the self-as-teacher are resolved, novices shift their attention from self to instruction and pupil learning; 4) Novices develop standard procedures that integrate management and instruction. These procedures become increasingly automated; and 5) Problem solving skills increase and become more differentiated, multidimensional and context specific.

Grossman (1992) takes issue with Kagan's (1992) model for many reasons. Her primary focus of contention revolves around the absence of reflection in the model, particularly as it relates to moral and ethical issues in the classroom. Grossman (1992) suggests that a more appropriate model of teaching development addresses teacher reflection on issues such as gender, race, special education, assessment, poverty, diversity and ethics. Indeed, while the all models discussed differ in some respects, they do share similarities. All of the models highlight preservice teacher concerns with students, student learning, and their own teaching effectiveness.

Appropriate preparation for preservice teachers must, therefore, focus on these areas. Reflective practice is a recurring theme in research on teacher education. Reflective practice is central to the instructional improvement of experienced teachers. For Osterman (1990), skilled teachers are necessarily reflective practitioners in that they use "their experience as a basis for assessing and revising existing theories of action to develop more effective action strategies" (p. 133). Henderson (1992) cites three characteristics of reflective thinkers. First, reflective thinkers hold to a value orientation of caring. Operating under this ethic of caring, the reflective teacher, "is bound to understand . . .

students," and does so through confirmation, dialogue and cooperative practice" (p. 2). Secondly, reflective teachers embrace a constructive approach to teaching which is reflected in a reliance on student-centered activities. Teachers view learning as a "complex interaction" between students and subject matter. Finally, reflective teachers are artistic problem-solvers, using student experiences and interests to engage young learners.

Zeichner and Liston (1987) present reflective teaching as the appropriate orientation for teacher education programs. They cite a particular elementary student-teaching program as a successful model of reflective teacher education. All facets of the program work together towards meeting this goal of reflective practice. Knowledge in the curriculum is viewed as socially constructed and reciprocal from student to teacher. Students and professors operate from an inquiry-oriented stance, constantly re-examining their pedagogy and relationships. Supervisors help students to inquire into three different areas of their teaching: 1) general approaches at a given grade level, 2) different teaching approaches in a given content area, and 3) theories into practice in different classrooms (Zeichner & Liston, 1987). Supervision, which encompasses the typical clinical model, is reflective in the following ways. First, student intentions and beliefs are discussed and analyzed. Next, the social context of teaching is discussed, such as pupils' direct and indirect behaviors. Finally, discussions address the "hidden" curriculum - those messages, biases, and assumptions embedded in the school culture. Seminars are used to help students consider teaching rationales and to assist them in developing teaching perspectives.

Zeichner (1986) offers several strategies for cultivating reflective thinking in preservice teachers, although his ideas can just as effectively be used with veterans. I will briefly mention three of his ideas: 1) action research, 2) ethnography, and 3) writing. Action research allows preservice teachers as teacher/researchers to understand and improve on their own practices by directly involving them in problem identification and

problem solving. Similarly, ethnography situates preservice teachers in schools as observers, and allows them "to make problematic common sense, perceptions and assumptions about schooling and to . . . see and invent alternatives to current practices" (p. 569). Ethnographic studies can allow teachers to become more "ethically sensitive" and "politically conscious" of cultural others. In journal writing, preservice teachers explicitly confront their own teaching personas.

Lee, Patterson, and Ray (1987) believes that university teacher educators must accept responsibility in helping future teachers to become reflective practitioners. Preservice teachers must be assisted in developing an internal criteria for evaluating their own professional decisions, management techniques, assessment methods and attitudes. Knowledge of one's own theoretical stance leads to improved instruction. When teachers regularly evaluate their teaching/learning theories, they simultaneously evaluate their instructional strategies. Also, because theory drives practice, preservice teacher must learn to revise and improve upon current learning theories. Failure to engage in theory evaluation can cause teachers to unknowingly engage in substandard or ineffective teaching practices. When preservice teachers build explicit theories, they are forced to "consider student responses to classroom interactions" (p. 6). Explicit theory-building empowers teachers by giving them control of their classrooms and of their own professional development (Lee et al., 1987). Holt-Reynolds (1991) cautions that teacher educators must not invalidate the thoughts of future teachers. Instead, they must interact with them in cooperative and collaborative ways.

First Phase of the Study: Those Who Were Called

The first phase of the study initially began as an exploration of African American teacher histories. I interviewed ten teachers with the intent of examining the role that

segregation and desegregation assumed in their pedagogy. In deciding whom to interview, I thought of Foster (1990), who talks about community nomination as a participant selection process in narrative research. When teachers' great reputations become their legacy, that is reason enough to examine their lives. My hometown A.M.E. Zion church provided a rich repository of community and church leaders who were either active or retired teachers. When I first shared this research interest with family members, my father, enthusiastically and without my knowledge, proceeded to call almost every active or retired teacher leader in town, recruiting participants. These teachers constituted five of the ten original interviewees. I had been familiar with the teaching reputations of four other teachers either from first hand knowledge of their teaching or their through stories of their esteemed teaching reputations. The husband of one teacher called me asking to be included as well, and so I heard his story as well.

As I listened to the stories, I noticed the emergence of a distinct and shared discourse in four teachers who expressed the belief that they were called by God to teach. For purposes of space, I will discuss only two of these teachers in this section. They are Othel Williams and Denise Owens. The focal teacher in this study, Magness Townsend, will be highlighted later. I have known Miss Williams for almost twenty years as a member of my hometown church. At ninety-one years of age, she only recently underwent surgery, and now rarely ventures outside of her home. While her body is frail, Miss William's mind is sharp. Long retired after some forty-five years in the classroom, she taught Sunday school until a few years ago when ill health prevented it. Miss Williams is the only surviving member of her family. Because her parents died before she reached adolescence, Miss Williams was raised by one of her much older brothers and his wife. Her extended family includes the church membership as well as town folk. She is a proud

member of the A.M.E. Zion church: "Been a Zionite since I was fourteen." Miss Williams never married or bore children. Her life was already too full for that.

Although I have never seen Miss Willams teach, I am very familiar with her dedication to the church. When I would return to my home church on vacations, Miss Williams never failed to seek me out and share a parable of wisdom. I remember the way that she gripped my hand firmly and admonished me to "study hard and remember the Lord." She reminded me so much of my grandmother, a community pillar, now deceased, whom I just *know* was ordained to teach. For this interview, Miss Williams and I met in the living room of her duplex. Ninety pounds and looking so fragile, she sat gracefully on a blue vinyl sofa. Her left hand gripped a cane. It was not until she started to speak that I realized the inner strength inside of this delicate appearance. As with the other teachers, I turned on the tape recorder and simply asked, "Tell me the story of your life." Her narrative was a series of stories. Miss Williams spoke for two hours, longer than any other teacher.

Although I did not realize it until recently, I have been familiar with Denise Owens for almost a decade. I was a master's degree candidate when I heard it on the news - an African American had been honored as National Teacher of the Year. My teacher friends and I were ecstatic. Although we knew nothing about this now forty-seven year old women, in our memories this honor had never before been bestowed upon a woman of color. I actually met Denise during the doctoral program and just had to discover the teacher persona of one who had been so publicly heralded. Her graciousness and openness made asking easier. Now out of the public school classroom after sixteen years, she is head of the curriculum and instruction department at a women's college. We met in her office. While voices and movement were in high speed outside of her door, she turned off

the ringer, ignored the knocks, and proceeded to talk. One of two children, her father is now deceased, but his legacy is clear in her story.

Receiving the Call

Both women articulate the decision to teach as an invitation from God. At ninety-one, Othel Williams just laughs a silent knowing when asked when she first decided to become a teacher. Conscious choice was never part of the decision, for even as a little girl, Miss Williams knew that she wanted to teach: "I was about four years old. I said, 'I am going to be a teacher.' I don't know where I got the pinched nose glasses (laughing)." Those pinched nose glasses that little girl Williams modeled in front of the mirror, portended a destiny. Fully articulating this call is difficult. She just knew it felt right - an extension of the self: "See that grew up in me." And later: "I don't know just something about it." When talking at length about herself as teacher, she often shakes her head, exclaiming, " I just loved teaching. I just loved teaching."

Unlike Mrs. Williams, Denise Owens does remember making the conscious decision to become a teacher. It was a choice prompted by desegregation. Only after entering the profession did she realized that it was not her choice at all. A junior in high school, Denise was one of six Black students selected to integrate the local all White school. This was not an easy time:

> Called, being called names by students, being left out of activities in the classroom. . . . It was not uncommon for me to be in a class in my eleventh grade year raising my hand to answer a question or to be called on to make a comment and having the teacher totally ignore me, and just not call on me. Even if no one else had their hand up, she would explain away the answer or continue to teach rather than call on me. I remember having students sit all around me when we were in group discussions, lean behind me to talk to the person in the next row, leaning in front of me, but never talk to me, and I just remember feeling so isolated and almost invisible.

Denise decided during one of these moments of excruciating isolation to become a teacher. No child, Black or White, should have to endure this mistreatment. Her short stay in a Catholic school, and now this educational neglect made her realize two things - that she could survive in any situation, and that all students deserved the nurturer and care she had received in the all Black schools. There, teachers were mommas and school was a family. Denise truly believes that schools need people "who are very caring, nurturing, and who really want to pull the very best from students, and not judge students because of the color of their skin, or because of the community from which they come or because they don't have lots of money."

When articulating the call to teach, Mrs. Owens realizes that God planned her life so that she would teach. Decisions that at one time appeared to be of her own volition, were actually predetermined. She did not choose to teach after all. Teaching chose her:

> But somehow I couldn't get out of being a teacher. I think that teaching for me was a calling just like the men of the cloth receive their calling, and I think the best teachers, this is my own personal opinion, are those who feel it's a calling. I think anybody can be trained to teach because there is a skill to learning how to teach. . . . I think teaching is both an art and a science. But I think we can teach anyone the skill of how to teach. . . . I think the best teachers, those who presevere, those who really make a difference in children's lives, those who don't burn out and give up. . . . I think those are the teachers that have been called to the profession. I mean, called by a Supreme Being and know it because it's inside.

Why Me Lord?

While both Othel Williams and Denise Owens believe that teaching is an integral part of their personal composition, each struggled with outside influences that threatened the decision to teach. Each was tested in the call. Their descriptions of this time of vacillation highlights the presence of God in the ultimate decision. For Miss Williams, an older brother in medical school posed the potential threat. Realizing his own love of the field, this brother wanted her to become a nurse: "He kept saying, 'Othel's going to

become a nurse.' . . . But, I don't know whether I'd been satisfied being a nurse or not." Later, this same brother, a surgeon, again nudged Othel into nursing. At a loss to explain the call to teach, she made up some excuse about being too emotional for nursing: "I can't stand to see people suffer," she told him meekly. But it was her eventual confession to him and to herself that laid to rest the debate: "I think God meant me to be a teacher."

Although he never progressed beyond the fourth grade, Mrs. Owen's dad was an extremely bright man. He often told his daughter that, had he been given the opportunity, he would have become a medical doctor. She remembers that "he had a wonderful brain." As a little girl, Denise decided to live her father's dream. She and her father were very close. Every evening after dinner, they would watch the evening news and discuss current affairs. They never read the paper together because her father could not read. But the unpleasant school experiences during early integration, and later the encouraging words of a college professor convinced her that she had to enter teaching. Still challenges persisted. Denise was offered various opportunities in the sciences. Major medical schools and science departments extended full scholarships, and research companies were eager to recruit this Black female honor student at high salaries. At times she wavered, but the need to teach would not subside. Looking back on her life, Denise feels that she did fulfill her father's dream in a sense. In her words: "Saving the minds of students was just as important as saving the body from disease, and I chose to do that." Her husband jokingly tells Denise that, had she pursued medicine, they could have been rich. She always responds that they already are.

Going Through Samaria

In Sisters in the Wilderness, Delores Williams (1993) presents the biblical figure of Hagar as the prototypical African American women. The Hagar prototype struggles

defiantly in an environment of danger and adversity. Both Othel Williams and Denise Owens also operated in very challenging, sometimes physically threatening environments. Their teaching experiences were contextualized by the highly charged racial state of affairs that defined the segregated South.

The elder, Miss Williams, started teaching in segregated schools when teacher was nurturer and other-mother (Casey, 1993). She challenged herself to prepare students intellectually and socially for a world of discrimination and narrowed choices. Miss Williams remembers integration as a foreign force that imposed itself upon the once intact Black school family: "Then integration came." With integration, the teacher was challenged to instill self-respect and racial pride in children of color who were now often viewed as an unwelcome nuisance to many majority culture teachers and students. As Martin Luther King, Jackie Robinson and Jesus had done, Miss Williams willingly ventured into hostile territory for the greater good. The Bible is her frame of reference as she describes teaching in a society of racial hate:

> You know how Jackie Robinson was treated when he tried getting into the major leagues. And I often think about the story of Samaria. You know the Jews couldn't stand the Samaritans and so they decided to go up the Jordan River and cross in above to keep, to [avoid] going into Samaria. On this particular day, Christ was with them and he saw the need of going through Samaria. No, not evading it. [A Samarian woman], she was converted and she sent others. . . . There are so many Samaritans that need to be penetrated today. Jackie Robinson penetrated didn't he? Christ penetrated. Martin Luther King penetrated Samaritans. See somebody . . . you can't look at Samaria. You have to go into it. You might have to suffer or give up your life, but see what you've done.

Miss Williams believes that societies can most effectively be improved if one ventures inside the system to take risks. What is interesting about both she and Denise Owens is their refusal to see themselves as martyrs. Contrarily, their life's work is a legacy of pride. Personal worth is based not one's educational level, or income, but on how one gives to others. Miss Williams stresses, "You, you, you don't think about yourself, but think what

you can do for the world." In her advanced age, she tends to view her life reflectively. Her life has been a testimony to God and a legacy for future generations. Like a weary sage, she stares at her bookshelf and quotes without script, almost trance-like: "What was that saying? Life, the brevity of life is so short that you can't drill up such treasures while you're living on earth, but you can drill up something to go into eternity." And then, "Be ashamed to die unless you leave the world a better place to live in. See, we are here too short. What are you doing to help the world?" The discourse of the teacher called to teach is an extension of a spiritual and evidenciary knowing that one was born for specific work.

Denise Owens remembers riotous times during early integration. Even the schools were dangerous. Teachers had to lock their doors in order to teach, and unlock them when class had ended. The teaching environment included knifings, shootings and burning trash cans. Mrs. Owens describes herself as being "very instrumental during those days." Then when she relates a particular incident, I realize that this remark is an understatement:

> So this was after school one day and this young man came in and for some reason he liked me, I don't know why. He said to me, 'You don't have anything to worry about, 'cause the brothers are going to protect you. We like you.' I found that as an opportunity to engage him and try to get inside his head and see what was going on. . . . And we just got into a real deep conversation. Why did they find a need to separate the races and why was it the Blacks against the Whites? And what was going to happen when you cut or hurt somebody? What's going to happen to you? The important thing right here is you and your education. And so we began to talk. I mean he started out saying, 'You know I don't care about life. I don't care about this. My momma don't care about me, and I just wanna see some White skin open and the blood. . . . ' I mean he was that graphic. It almost turned my stomach, but I didn't let him know that it did. But I also knew that I had a time bomb here in this student...and that I had to do what I could to cease that. . . . I sat there talking to him until about 6:30 p.m. that afternoon, ended up having to take him home . . . But, by doing that, he gained a new respect for me, and in the process of that conversation he showed me the knife that he was going to use the next day to cut somebody. And I talked him into giving me that knife and he did.

This sacrificing of personal safety for the good of another is endemic to the call to teach. Mrs. Owens employs the Socratic method of questioning, of inducing the student to

discover his own answers. In this racially charged environment, she often facilitated relations for both Black and White students. For this reason, students of both races turned to her in crisis. Days later, a White male student warned her about an act of violence that he and his "boys" were planning against Black students. Once again, Mrs. Townsend seized the opportunity to forestall a planned act of violence that ultimately did not occur.

All Other Ground Is Sinking Sand

The pedagogy of those called to teach revolves around the social and spiritual well-being of the child. While both women excelled academically during their own schooling, neither positioned their academic subject area at the center of instruction. The commonly termed "hidden curriculum," - the unspoken, but deliberate messages that students receive about their worth- was made very explicit in their classrooms. Instruction began with an acknowledgment of each child's personality and social reality, and grew from this base. This student-centered philosophy was grounded in an awareness of a prejudicial social climate. Being called to teach translates into preparing students for a life of self-respect and success.

Much of Miss William's teaching career was in segregated schools. When schools were integrated, many White teachers did not want to teach to Black students, and conversely many Black parents did not want White teachers instructing their students. Many of her students were poor and their futures - bleak. Often society did not look kindly upon these Black youngsters. Quite often the students did not think highly of themselves. Teaching, therefore, was grounded in the lived experiences of the students and in the wisdom of the teacher. Lessons were not rooted in the unreality of a fairy tale world. Miss Williams is proud that her classroom never looked fanciful: "I never did put the Cupids [cutout designs] up you know. I never stressed that, but so many teachers put the Cupids

on the walls, something to make the walls look pretty. And it didn't correlate with anything that you were really teaching." In the climate of racial division and poverty, Miss Williams focused on teaching the basics and developing strategies to transfer learned concepts. In order to survive in a world not welcomed to them, Black students needed to have what another teacher that I know calls, "voting knowledge." Voting knowledge is knowledge structured for personal empowerment. Miss Williams characterizes this knowledge for life as a tension between abstract and concrete learning. Concrete learning is knowledge that is grounded in reality- literacy, numeracy, and transference. Abstract knowledge is, at least in her mind, superficial information.

> Well, I don't know about today, but in the past it was abstract. Now you take Social Studies. . . . I didn't get anything out of that method at the time because more or less it was reading a topic, memorizing and I never could see any sense in that. You know, unless he was one of the smart students that could rattle it off, but did he understand what he was talking about?

Though Miss Williams feels that masterful teaching is not the exclusive domain of African American teachers, she does believe that these teachers have more of a vested interest in instructing their 'own.' She recalls that, shortly after integration, many White teachers regarded silent, nondisruptive Black children as 'good' students. The Jim Crow society indifferent to the Black child was content with the appearance of learning rather than with true cognitive development. Miss Williams saw the need to "draw out" Black students. When a Black child with marked learning disabilities enrolled in the school, she requested that the child be placed in her classroom. Miss Williams believed that other teachers would just "let him sit there." The teacher called to teach considers it her duty to reach every student:

> Now some of these teachers are not going to bother [nonachieving Black students], as long as they don't stay there and raise a lot of hell. They sit all slumped over and the teachers, some of these White teachers are not going to bother with them. Just

> give them a passing grade and pass them on out of there. When they get out they can't read. I subbed for a teacher . . . I have drawn children out that couldn't add and subtract, and [I taught] them how to do that. I had these three divisions in my math class. Those that couldn't add, subtract, and multiply. And they'll work like anything to get into the fraction class and the first day I said, 'How many divisions in math do you have?' And [the teacher] said, 'One.' She had those little children working with fractions and they couldn't add or subtract!

This focus on learning the basics is extended to all subjects. Miss Williams distinguishes between those who can read aloud well, "word recallers," from those who can comprehend the material. Again, the basics must be mastered before true understanding can occur. It is the teacher's responsibility to impart these basics, and to "draw out students" for learning's sake:

> Now I don't know whether you've noticed it or not. It's a difference. You have to watch children. Some of them are word recallers. Oh, they read beautiful orally, but can they comprehend? See, if you can't comprehend it, you're not reading are you? I used to have, there was a teacher, when she got ready to read something she just [demonstrates by moving her head from side to side]. And I told my children don't move your head. Use your eye muscles. You don't move your head, but some teachers do that. It's a difference between word calling. . . . See you ought to be able to transfer your knowledge. Transfer your knowledge.

At the core of every enriched lesson, is a well disciplined classroom. Indeed, both Miss Williams and Denise Owens were staunch disciplinarians, for whom class control was essential. As Miss Williams mentions repeatedly: "If you can't keep order, I don't care how academically prepared you are, you can't teach." This notion of class control is not the same as dictatorial control over students. Rather control meant priority setting and 'taking care of business' in preparation of a world that would not take care of you. Indeed, Miss Williams obsessed over her students and their well being. For her, the ability to control a class was God given and therefore God inspired:

> I think that's a gift that God gave me. . . . Many a morning on Sunday morning on the call to alter prayer, I went up there asking God to show me how to control a child that [was] giving me trouble. That's right. I prayed on my children. If a

> child was giving me trouble, I prayer over [him] and next morning, without going to the alter, I had the problem solved. Now that's one thing. I could control a classroom.

But skill mastery is only one facet of grounded teaching. Teaching the whole child often meant attending to the child who was unclean and inadequately dressed. It involved meeting the physical needs of the child so that the child could reach his or her personal and social potential:

> Willis Wilson . . . that boy when he came in, he looked like he slept in a coal, coal, bin. Oh he was dirty, dirty as he could be! And I happened to have a little screen down in my room, and I put that screen up and honey, [I'd] wash his clothes and sometimes have him take a bath. And sometimes he'd be looking to see if the other students were watching. And I'd say 'Willis, go on and keep washing. Nobody's paying attention to you.' And you'd be surprised. I saw him about three years ago. He's a grown man now. And I was standing there out at the curb you know, getting ready to take a bus. And so he came up and I didn't pay any attention. So he came to me. He said, 'What's your name?' I said, 'Williams.' He didn't move. He just stood there and looked at me, you know. And I had to say something. I said, 'What is your name?' 'Willis Wilson.' Just as clean as he could be [laughing]. Just as clean as he could be! He was living in Atlanta. Just as clean as he could be!

The image of teacher protector and provider is pervasive throughout Miss William's narrative. As she describes her very structured yet humor filled classes, I imagine rambunctious, sometimes mischievous personalities encased in the warmth and the knowing wisdom of their teacher.

> Then I had another boy, Forrest Slade. And he was a little hellion of Holmstead Street. And he tried me, you know, and . . . his father was a drunkard and so I asked Miss Little to let him have a job in the cafeteria helping in the kitchen and he gave them a little trouble. . . . So that boy, and this is the pitiful thing though, his feet were out in the winter time. And I kept noticing, noticing one day. So I said, 'If you would come to my house, up to my house, we'll see if we can find you some shoes.' I took him to Sears, Sears Roebuck was on Cole Street at that time. His feet were wet and I told the man I wanted to buy him, get him a pair of shoes. . . . Lot of times I would just go in my pocket, you know, and just give [my students] something. And so, he said, 'I can't let him put on those shoes because his feet are wet, unless you get some new socks for him.' I did. I gave him, got

> him a pair of shoes for school and a pair for church. And don't you know, he said his father took the smaller one of the shoes for himself [laughing].

Clearly, concern for students is not confined to the classroom walls. In Miss William's class children were not grouped into convenient packages of "poor and disadvantaged" or "gifted and talented." Each child was an individual with talents, sometimes hidden, often unchanneled. Patience and guidance drew out these strengths. As she stresses, "You just have to take time. Take interest in them . . . cause each child is different."

The pedagogy of Denise Owens is similar. She, too, firmly believes that teaching strategies must be directed toward meeting the child's true needs. For her, words of encouragement are one of the most powerful weapons that teachers possess. Recalling her own encounter with a caring college professor, Denise does not underestimate the strength of teacher remarks. As she says, "I live by the philosophy that if I reach this child, I can teach the child. That's a real common slogan today, you know, 'Reach 'em teach 'em,' as they say." In her view, reaching students means positioning oneself, not as a superior but as "a coach, a guide, not someone who was superior and who had gone to college and 'Now I'm better than you and I've got mine and you've got yours to get.' Never presented myself that way because I had teachers who didn't present themselves that way to me." For some students, Denise served an unstated maternal role: "I wouldn't verbally say, 'I am your momma,' but many of them saw me as that. . . . It was an inner thing that came with me."

As mentioned earlier, much of Mrs. Owen's early teaching occurred amidst the violent attempts to integrate during the 1970's. This climate did not change the nature of her goals for students. While Denise's care addressed the students' need for emotional security, her high instructional expectations helped to secure for them a future of freedom and choices:

> I didn't care that we were having racial tensions. I told them if they became educated they would learn how to solve these racial problems in an intelligent way which would not be with fists and knives and guns. . . . I'd tell them each day before I started biology, 'Here's the gospel for the day.' And I would preach my text. And they'd say, 'Oh here comes another text.' And I would take maybe three minutes. But I did that everyday because I also felt that they needed lessons in life, and biology was the study of life and that's how I would tie it in. . . . It's understanding that total organism and how that organism functions in the total environment. Which is, you know, all of these symbiotic relationships and how you get along with each together. And you all are not doing that very *well*! So maybe we need to start with the big picture and work inside!

This juxtaposition of preaching and teaching uses the subject area as a springboard for life lessons. Denise's biology curriculum expands far beyond the text. The double meaning of the word "text" as book and "text" as sermon is also telling. The textbook becomes scripture when used to advance the life choices of students. Subject area knowledge is a natural transition for lessons in living.

Later, Mrs. Owens discusses an award winning biology curriculum that she developed. The goal of this innovation was to engage nonachieving students in science, by giving them choice in instruction and evaluation. Denise recalls the great educational achievements made by many previously failing students who now received A's for the first time ever. She remembers the many parents who marveled at their child's new found motivation and interest in learning. Again, subject matter was used to address the total child. Mrs. Owen's commitment to teaching was grounded in the belief that she was accountable to her students:

> I felt I had to hook students. It's not their fault that they can't read. Somebody messed up along the way, and I can't go back blaming them. I've got one year with them and after that, they have got two years and they're out of here. Somebody has got to stop passing the buck which means a lot of my students failed because they didn't make the grade that was necessary to be moving to the eleventh grade. But based on where they were when they came to me, they did *make the grade!*

This realistic appraisal of students' progress is key to meeting their needs. Mrs. Owens tailored the task to the child. When some students entered her high school classroom reading at the fourth grade level, she merely ripped the covers off of fourth grade books, inserted them in colored folders and dispersed them to her students. Denise Owens considered it her responsibility to help students achieve:

> We've got to let student know, 'No you're not gonna fail in my class.' Uh-Uh. I tell that to my students the first day: 'There will be no failures in this class. . . . 'cause if you come you are going to do my work. You will not put your head down and go to sleep. You will not do math in biology 'cause I have eyes in the back of my head and sonic ears . . . for hearing.'

Mrs. Owens did not mind modifying her curriculum or taking instructional risks to help her students. Although her career has been full of accolades, she has never forgotten the alienation she experienced as the only Black child in a newly integrated classroom. She remembers vividly "what is was like to be lost in the subject matter, and nobody cares or tries to pull you out of the depths from that being lost, and so you just go through the motions and you get further and further behind." Students will never endure such neglect in her room.

Hold Your Hand Up Anyway

Racial pride and contentment greatly inform the language of those called to teach. However, it is a relaxed speech undergirded by a philosophy that assumes ethnic and personal pride. Both teachers clearly adhere to a teaching philosophy that is culturally relevant, spiritually uplifting and provocative. For the women, cultural pride is a vital part of the call to teach. Miss Williams abhorred the tendency for some Blacks during segregation to internalize society's negative views of themselves. Not surprisingly, she sees her race as part of her call. For Othel Williams, being "Negro" is part of God's plan:

> I remember a friend of mine said, we were at a party one night. That was long before they thought about integration. [He] said, 'I wish I was a White man.' I said, 'Why?' I said, 'Uh-Uh, Uh-Uh.' I said, 'Uh-Uh, God made me a Negro because he wanted me to be a Negro.' I said, 'Uh-Uh. I'm not interfering with God's business now.'

This elderly woman embraces her identity rather than question it. Regardless of the larger societal problems, Miss Williams holds to a belief in God and self-love. This perspective allows her to view all students in a positive light. While she and Denise believe that Black students need certain survival knowledge to help them negotiate the frustrations of racism, both teachers hold high standards for all of their students regardless of ethnicity.

The social construction of race figures importantly in both of their stories. Both women view discrimination of any kind as abhorrent and unnatural. Miss Williams, at ninety-one, is particularly vociferous in recalling these memories. She remembers her father, an independent man and a sharecropper, who demanded respect and treated others fairly in return. His youngest child and only daughter was reared in this philosophy:

> I played with little White children and in those days you didn't hear the word 'nigger' or 'redneck,' you know, or something like that. And my father was very independent . . . and I used to hear the older children say that Papa doesn't call anybody 'Mister.' He wouldn't call a White man 'Mister' for anything. And they respected him and, therefore, I wasn't born in a family where there [was] prejudice. That wasn't taught. I imagine if I had said something about a 'redneck' I would have got a whipping. Uh-uh. He was very independent and that has grown up in me. I used to tell kids, well, you'd be surprised in your teaching how some Black children will call one another 'black' and I would lay my textbook down and preach.

Clearly, Miss Williams sees a connection between positive self-affect and positive treatment of others. This story also points to the notion of intraracial prejudice and the irony that "Black" can be an insulting word to people of color. In a society that places a premium on European looks and presence, some Blacks have internalized feelings of ugliness and inferiority. Williams shakes her head to stress that individuals are "not to feel

inferior because they [are] Black. I can't stand that. That just gets all over me." It is her belief that racism can only be conquered through nonracist and self-loving attitudes. By having respect for oneself and for others, individuals can avoid the descent into self-hatred and bigotry. And one day when a White boy continuously hit a Black child, it was Williams who "broke that thing up. I said, 'I dare you to hit him again.' And Lindsey knew."

Passive self-defeat was not to be tolerated and was indeed berated. When one Black girl who was from a poverty-stricken family tried to buy the friendships of her more prosperous Black classmates, Miss Williams again intervened:

> And I had a little girl. . . . Her dresses weren't what they should have been and the other little girls would look at her, you know, as being inferior. And she would buy big packs of paper and give it out to the children. I kept watching that, you know, and I can't stand that. No I can't stand that. So one day I said, 'Priscilla,' I said, 'Why are you bringing paper in this room to these old girls.' I said, 'You don't have to buy people to like you. I said, 'And let this be the last day you bring paper in here.' I broke that up. So you have to watch children. You have to watch them.

All children regardless of race and economic background were held to the same standards of dignity. While some of her colleagues excused students for mediocre classwork and rowdy behavior as an unavoidable result of their "deprived" backgrounds, Miss Williams did not. She remarks bluntly: "I don't care where they came from. . . . They can come up from hell and the devil's their daddy, but they're not doing that in my room." So what was the proper response to unsatisfactory student performance? Othel Williams believes that the answers lie in expectations of respect and perseverance. Neither student nor teacher should be allowed to concede defeat in the learning process. To highlight this point, Miss Williams relates a story in which her grandniece was forced to deal with an uncaring teacher:

> The White teacher had the White students on one side and the Black students on the other side. It was still segregated you know. And [my niece would] go home, her mother said, crying. She said, 'Momma he won't call on me.' Said, 'He won't call on me.' And she said, 'Hold your hand up anyway. Hold it up til' it rots.' And so one day they had an example in math and the White children couldn't work it. Said, Effie said, she kept holding her hand up for him to call on her, and he asked her and said, 'Do you think you can work that problem?' [exaggerated male voice]. Said, 'I think I can.' He learned she could work it. After that he started recognizing her.

This theme of overcoming adversity through perseverance and knowledge is continuous across both teachers' stories.

Similarly, Denise Owens focuses on the affective as well, believing that respect for oneself is the key to educational success. She tried to nurture this respect in her students. She remembers that she "respected all of [my students], and I made all of them know that I genuinely believed that they were important, that they were valuable, and they were special and I was just there to help them bring to the front all that that they had within them." Denise recalls the relative calm in her room that contrasted to the disturbing race-related violence in the school hallways. She attributes this classroom peace to the mutual respect between she and her students. As she explains, "I gave students the respect that they deserved at the high school level. I treated them with respect. I treated them with dignity and worth."

All Good Gifts

For both teachers, being faithful to the call to teach means reaping many rewards. Both believe that they have received far more than they have given. These rewards are often intangible and unexpected. Many of the gifts are teacher legacies manifested as student successes. Some church members testify, giving open declaration and professions of faith. The students of Othel Williams and Denise Owens have similarly given public and verbal expressions of gratitude for the efforts of their teachers. When telling me their life

stories, both women became visibly emotional when talking about these teaching gifts. Miss Williams recalls with embarrassment the hyperbolic praise students have given her:

> And I get students now tell me what I meant to them in their lives. And some of them make me cry. I tell you . . . [the city of] Quincy is very proud of having the smallest daily newspaper in the world. They don't want any large paper, and one of my students wrote something about her life [for] Negro History Week. And this is a statement Minnie Sue Ranney made. Well, she talked about her experiences and how they had to break down [desegregate] the laundry mat and things in Quincy. I was there when they wouldn't let us vote. But after I left she wrote about her life and said one striking statement. She said, 'Teachers like Miss Othel Williams, people in the community and my family helped me mold my life.' I mean that was, I have so many letters that are so complimentary like that. I didn't, didn't, know that one day. . . .

The unexpectedness of this incident so long ago still causes Miss Williams emotional speechlessness. She never expected to reap such praise. Perhaps the ultimate compliment was her fourth graders' request one year to have Miss Williams teach them again in the next grade level:

> Somebody did something in the room, and I said, 'I wish to gracious I had you all another year. I'd break you of this.' One little boy who had given me so much trouble, said 'Miss Williams, take us again.' Honey, I was so shocked I didn't know what I wanted to do! I said, I said, 'You don't want ol' mean Miss Williams teaching you another year.' 'Yes we do Miss Williams.' I said, 'Well if you want me to teach you another year . . . .'

Again, Miss Williams is moved emotionally, unable to complete her final thought. The contrast between her own self-mocking image as "ol' mean," and the surprising student request highlights the great impact that this woman of high expectations had on her students' lives.

Although Mrs. Owens was both State and National Teacher of the Year, she does not mention either of these honors as gifts. Her rewards are in student survival and success. She again mentions the student from whom she had taken the knife:

> That young man today is married, has two children, everything, has been in the service. Every time he comes home he finds me. He calls me and he tells me, 'You saved my life because had I done what I had planned to do, I would have been jailed. I would have had a record.'

The positive rapport with students was also reward. One class in which she taught her own daughter, asked, "Can we all just call you Mrs. Mom?" They did. This desire for teacher as beloved family member was articulated on a daily basis. Other classes, too, had pet names for Mrs. Owens. Once class called her "Mrs. Biology." She admits that in teaching, "You get a lot of gifts. You don't even expect [them], but they come." Denise believes that another wonderful benefit of following one's calling is that "ways are always made." Since becoming a teacher, Mrs. Owens has never wanted for anything materially or emotionally. She even acknowledges that employers have always sought her out. She has never had to apply for a job. She explains this as God's doing: "[This is] God's way of ordering my steps, of pointing me where he wants me to be at that given time. And when I've done whatever it is that he's wanted me to do at that particular place and time, he moves me to the next place, and I don't have to make that decision."

Summarizing the Discourse

The language of Othel Williams and Denise Owens highlights many threads of a shared discourse. Both women see themselves as called by God to teach. They wrestle briefly with this decision before accepting this profession as an invitation from God. The teaching landscape is full of educational and social challenges which both women face as part of their mission. Their pedagogy centers on addressing the emotional, physical and educational needs of the child. Both Othel Williams and Denise Owens encourage students to persevere in the face of social and educational opposition. They see personal pride and self-respect as essential to learning. Because these teachers honored their calling, they reap

many rewards in the form of student success and the comfort in knowing that God has provided the blueprint for their lives.

This initial phase of the study provides the foundation for the core study in which the call of one woman, Magness Townsend, is examined more closely. Here, classroom translations of the call to teach provide insights into the connection between teaching motivation and teaching practice.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The core study, like the initial phase of the study in Chapter two, uses narrative research as the most appropriate means of examining teacher beliefs and practices. Gudmundsdottir (1995) remarks that: "Teachers live in stories. . . . It is through this narrative dialogue of reflection and interpretation that experience is transformed into pedagogical content knowledge" (p. 30). This study examines the discourse, instruction, and mentor practices of one teacher who was called by God to teach.

Selection of Narrative Methodology

Reissman (1993) maintains that researchers are in the business of interpreting their firsthand experiences. The essence of the authentic experience can never again be captured. Because of this, narratives can never express truths; they can only strive to represent them. Researchers interpret what they hear, but the power always rests with the participants, as only the story-livers can be the true authorities on their experiences. When the legitimacy of narrative research is questioned, it typically centers on issues of validity. While no research is entirely objective, qualitative studies seem to invite much scrutiny regarding this issue. I agree with Lather's (1986) assertion that there is no "neutral research." She does suggest certain practices to address issues of validity and rigor. First, Lather (1986) stresses that reciprocity is needed between researchers and their participants. This can be accomplished through repeated interviews, which promote deeper reflection on the part of both parties. Also, the researcher should allow the participant to review and elaborate on his/her responses (Lather, 1986). Next, Lather (1986) proposes dialectical theory-building

instead of theoretical imposition. Here, the theory "grows out of the context-embedded data," not from preconceived notion of the researcher (p. 267). In fact, the researcher must be aware of his/her possible preconceptions before beginning the research. Critical inquiry should be employed if dialectical theory-building is to result.

Howe and Eisenhart (1990) acknowledge inherent features of qualitative research in their attempt to define research validity. Educational research must necessarily be abstract, because education itself encompasses many disciplines. The research must also be educationally valuable and rooted in a nonpositivist perspective (Howe & Eisenhart, 1990). In this view, data collection and analysis methods must adhere to certain criteria if these methods are to be valid. First, data collection and analysis techniques should be appropriate to, and, in fact, driven by the research questions. These techniques must also be "competently applied" so that "rather immediate low inference conclusions are rendered credible" (p. 7). Evidence of this competence lies in the researcher's clearly stated guidelines for collection and analysis. Next, researchers must remain "alert to" their own subjectivity. Peshkin (1988) suggests that the narrative researcher explore her various subjective selves. This researcher self-awareness helps to 'tame' the intrusion of personal biases and belief systems that may cloud the research process. Peshkin (1988) divides the self into six different subjective 'compartments': the Ethnic-Maintenance I, the Community-Maintenance I, the E Pluribus-Unum I, the Justice-seeking I, the Pedagogical-Meliorist I, and the Nonresearch-Human I. For Peshkin (1988) all researchers consciously or not, assume different identity modes based on the research setting, participants involved, and the researcher's feelings about the observations.

While acknowledging this subjectivity, Howe and Eisenhart (1990) hold that researchers must be capable of employing techniques from other perspectives when necessitated by the research questions, and "to apply general principles for evaluating

arguments" (p. 7). They describe as "overall warrant" this encompassing of the inherent features of qualitative research and the appropriateness of data collection and analysis methods. Research methods must also have external and internal value constraints (Howe and Eisenhart, 1990). Researchers must articulate the value and worth of their research in an easy to understand and defensible manner. These issues attesting to external validity must be easily identifiable by those involved in educational research. Regarding internal validity, research must be conducted in an ethical manner, observing standards of "confidentiality, privacy, and truth-telling" (p. 8).

The Participants

It is through the teaching practice of Magness Townsend that I explore the translation of the call to teach. I knew Mrs. Townsend's teaching before I knew the woman. As a graduate assistant, I supervise student teachers. For the past three years, the University has placed teaching interns and student teachers in her fifth grade classroom. This year she has two student teachers, whom I call Paul Riley and Karla Lewis. At age forty-nine, this woman is a teaching master. From my perspective, her blend of critical thinking activities, hands-on experiences and integrated instructional strategies creatively engage students of all ability levels. I have noticed, too, how she connects life lessons with instructional activities. She always informs students of the rationale behind particular concepts.

One particular day, while visiting Mrs. Townsend's room to observe student teachers, I noticed that she was sternly lecturing one African American student. I had noticed during my other visits that this child seemed academically more advanced than any of the other students. His comments at times appeared to be on the high school level. Later, when I asked Mrs. Townsend about this child, she told me that he was a bright

African American boy, and that is "dangerous" in this society. The world would seek to destroy his talents and cripple his mind. She did not want this to happen, but was concerned because he did not take kindly to class rules or to listening. She shared her concerns with this child and informed him that, regardless of his aptitude, he would always be held accountable for his actions. She would be watching him closely. I requested an interview.

As stated previously, Paul and Karla are completing their student teaching practicum under the auspices of Magness Townsend. Both had interned with her last year, and both desperately wanted to return to her class this year. Thankfully, she eagerly agreed. This is the second year that I have worked with Paul and Karla in the capacity of University Supervisor. Paul Riley is thirty-three years old and married. He returned to college to pursue a second career in teaching after extensive stateside travels, and stints in the business and construction fields. With a warm, inviting personality and a purposeful gaze, Paul interacts easily with students and teachers. One of only two men on our team of twenty-eight student teachers, he has acquired the role of counselor and father figure for many of the younger preservice teachers who regularly confide in him and seek counsel regarding their teaching difficulties. In the classroom, Paul is an engaging teacher whose deep and animated voice easily holds students' attention and invites their interaction. He is deeply involved with the social as well as academic well-being of his students, and has an intuitive sense of their often unspoken concerns.

Karla Lewis, too, interacts easily with the students and teachers at her school. Twenty-two and engaged to be married this summer, she has followed the more traditional path from high school to college. Standing about five feet eight inches and large-boned, this former athlete is almost eye level with Paul. When I first met Karla, two years ago, she openly shared with me her personal struggles with spelling, desiring whatever tutelage

the University provided. This personal language battle has made her responsive to students with similar weaknesses. Karla's small town southern upbringing often reveals itself in colloquialisms that pepper her easygoing speaking style. I have great respect for both Karla and Paul as future teachers deeply committed to the welfare of students. When a child's father died, they with Mrs. Townsend, attended the wake, visited the child's home and collected class money for the family. I would characterize my relationship with both Karla and Paul as a friendly, open, and based on trust.

Data Collection Methods

For purposes of intertexuality, several types of data collection methods are used in this study: 1) taped open-ended interviews of three veteran teachers who were called to teach, conducted by the researcher, 2) taped semi-structured interviews of the two student teachers, conducted by the researcher, 3) field observations of the classroom dynamics, taken by the researcher, 4) informal observations of the focal teacher's classroom practice, conducted by the researcher, 5) formal and informal observations of the two students teachers, conducted by the researcher, University supervisor, and focal teacher, 6) peer observations conducted by the student teachers, and 7) a focus group involving the focal teacher and the two student teachers.

Taped Open-Ended Interviews

The self is an evolving entity, which changes constantly through social forces, and more significantly, through the individual's self-reflection and self-examination. Casey (1993) holds that the self is contextualized in so far as an individual's identity is tied to community, family, economic and social consideration. This belief in the socially constructed self explains the one interview prompt that Casey (1993) asked her teacher

participants: "Tell me the story of your life" (p. 17). Reissman (1993) also suggests that the researcher use open-ended questions so that the listener will be able to "construct answers" without unnecessary prodding (p. 54). The lack of a researcher-structured agenda also creates a relaxed, conversational atmosphere, one that facilitates a second interview if needed.

In affirming a belief in this socially constructed identity, I also asked the three veteran teachers to "tell me the story of your life." Two of the taped interviews were conducted individually in the participants' homes. I interviewed the focal teacher in her classroom. During the interviews, I took probe notes to remind myself of points that I wished the participants to later elaborate or clarify. The notes allowed me to remember specific points to revisit without interrupting the participants' "association pattern" (Gorden, 1975). Each interview lasted approximately ninety minutes.

Taped Semi-Structured Interviews

With the two student teachers, Karla and Paul, I used taped semi-structured interviews. The two were interviewed on separate occasions at their teaching site, each interview lasting approximately one hour. I began each interview with the general prompt: "Tell me about your student teaching experience." This statement was later followed by probes (Appendix A). I felt it necessary to use the probes because I wanted to insure that certain aspects of their teaching experience and mentorship relationship were addressed. The sequence proceeded from more general to more pointed questions.

In both the semi-structured and open-ended interviews, the tape recorder was very useful in allowing for full and uninterrupted exploration of ideas. I placed the small, hand-sized recorder on a table near the participants. For Gorden (1975) tape recording is particularly useful when the relevant information is complex and fast flowing, and when

the interviewer wishes to explore for unanticipated types of responses. I also wanted to devote full attention to the participants, something that verbatim note-taking would have prevented.

Field Observations

There are many aspects of classroom action that provide a context for instruction. Teaching and learning do not occur in a vacuum. The looks on students' faces, and the manner in which they engage in learning tell a great deal about the teacher's presence (Noblitt, 1993). In addition to completing formal and informal lesson evaluations, I visited Mrs. Townsend's class on a regular basis to take written observations of the classroom dynamics. These visits provided a situational context for the formal and informal lesson objectives. My notes were usually in the form of detached, open-ended narratives. Often, Mrs. Townsend, Karla, or Paul would venture over and elaborate on some of the day's events. In these instances I suppose I became a passive participant in the learning environment. I often recorded such things as: 1) classroom atmosphere and disposition of students and teachers, 2) interactions between pupils, student-teachers, and on-site teacher educator, and 3) stories related to me by the student teachers or on-site teacher educator. Because of my role as a supervisor of student teachers, the pupils had seen me on a weekly basis since the start of the school year and did not appear to give much notice to my appearance.

Formal and Informal Observations

As part of my normal supervisory responsibilities, I completed weekly informal observations of the student teachers. I also completed one formal observation of each student teacher per semester. These observations were used as a data source in this study.

Formal and informal observations of the two student teachers were completed by the primary University supervisor, focal teacher, and me. The primary University supervisor and I each gathered approximately three informal observations of the student teachers. We used either open-ended narratives, or a more structured observation form (Appendix B). The University supervisor and I each completed one formal observation of the student teachers (Appendix C). Additionally, the focal teacher completed one formal observation of each student-teacher, and the students themselves conducted peer observations of each other (Appendix D).

EVALUATION TYPE	KARLA	PAUL
FORMAL	4	4
Completed by: Supervisor - 1, Researcher - 1, Mrs. Townsend (on-site teacher) - 2		
INFORMAL	6	6
Completed by: University Supervisor - approx. 3, Researcher - approx. 3		
PEER OBSERVATIONS	1	1
Completed by: Karla and Paul		

I also completed approximately five informal, narrative observations of Mrs. Townsend's teaching practices.

Focus Group

The focal teacher, Mrs. Townsend, and the two student teachers participated in a taped focus group. I served as facilitator of the discussion, with the intention of gaining

supplementary information on the mentoring relationship. Krueger (1994) defines a focus group as a planned discussion intended to obtain perceptions on a defined interest area in a permissive and nonthreatening environment. Focus groups involve the use of explicit group interaction to produce insights and information otherwise not accessible (Morgan, 1993). The focus group in this study was semi-structured (Appendix E), but allowed for probes and unintended questions for clarity and elaboration.

Data Analysis

In all aspects of this study I strove for "overall warrant" in which the data collection and analysis techniques were appropriate to the research questions (Howe & Eisenhart, 1990). The use of multiple data sources provided intertextuality and credible conclusions. The focal teacher, Mrs. Townsend, and the two student teachers, Paul and Karla, had access to their respective transcriptions and my interpretations of them to check for accuracy of their accounts. This member checking prevented my own subjectivity from clouding the essence of their stories. Reissman (1993) suggests that the researcher "retranscribe" the rough draft to focus on "selected portions for detailed analysis" (p. 56). Reissman (1993) also suggests that the researcher study the narratives for organizational and conversational development, as well as "underlying propositions that make the talk sensible" (p. 61). I employed these techniques as well. All participants have been insured confidentiality, as their real names and identifiable information have been omitted, in observation of ethical standards needed for internal validity (Howe & Eisenhart, 1990). This study is also externally valid in the invaluable contributions that it makes to research on explicit theory-building and mentoring in teacher education. In conducting this study, I capitalized on the very comfortable and mutually respectful friendships that I developed with these educators. My stance was that of a learner seeking to gain an understanding into

another's perspective and ideological stance. Just as I have great respect the teachers who allowed me to listen to their stories, I marvel at the power of narrative research in affording readers the opportunity to live vicariously through another's rich and transforming experiences. It is my hope that this study taps into that power and gives justice to the words of those who were called to teach.

Research Timeline

Question One:	What constitutes the discourse of selected African American teachers who believe that they were called to teach?
Data Sources:	Interviews of three African American teachers who believed that they were called to teach
Dates:	November, 1994- March, 1996 (Narratives Collected) November, 1994- March, 1996 (Narratives Transcribed) November, 1994- March, 1996 (Narratives Analyzed)
Question Two:	How does one of these teachers translate her perceptions of this calling into instructional practice?
Data Sources:	Teacher open-ended interview (from above) Taped semi-structured interviews of the two student teachers Field observations of the classroom dynamics Informal observation of the teacher's practice Focus group involving the focal teacher and the two student teachers
Dates:	February - March, 1996 (Preservice Narratives Collected) March, 1996 (Preservice Narratives Transcribed) April, 1996 (Preservice Narratives Analyzed) May, 1996 (Field Observations Collected) April - May, 1996 (Informal Observations of Teacher's Practice) May, 1996 (Focus Group)
Question Three:	How does this teacher articulate the call to teach in her interactions with two student teachers?

RESEARCH TIMELINE - continued

Data Sources:	Field observations of the classroom dynamics
	Formal and informal observations of the two student teachers
	Peer observations conducted by the student teachers
	Focus group (above)
	Reflective journal writings of the two student teachers
Dates:	January - April, 1996 (Observations of student teachers)
	April, 1996 (Peer Observations by student teachers)
	April, 1996 (Analysis of reflective journal writing)
	May, 1996 (Focus group)

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF NARRATIVES

Magness Townsend: Called To Teach

The reasons that individuals have for entering the teaching profession can greatly shape their views of students, subject matter, and their professional identities. What follows is the story of one woman who felt called by God to teach. It is this call that lays the foundation for her entire life, both inside of the classroom and out.

Born To Teach

Fifty-three year old Magness Townsend describes herself as predestined to teach. Teaching for her is a profession for which she was specifically created. Her language reflects this belief.

> And the reason I became a teacher - I think it's the most natural thing for me to be. Teaching is the, I would say, it's, it's the final equation, of the equivalent of what I'm supposed to be. It's just as natural as eye blinking. And this is the time in which I see myself grow, as long as I know I'm helping others. There are other things I probably could have done. No there [aren't], because that's not my equation. My equation was, 'Magness, [you're] molded to teach.' And I am very happy that this gives me purpose. That's my fulfillment, my purpose. I am just as happy as I can be. . . . I guess when I was molded and created [God] was saying, 'This is to be a teacher.' I feel so good about what I'm doing and feel happy at what I'm doing. I'm so fortunate to know that I am in the right thing I'm supposed to do. . . . This is my natural environment.

Clearly, Mrs. Townsend views teaching as an integral part of her personal composition. She does not pinpoint a time when teaching was objectified as a choice. It was a profession chosen for her.

Testing the Call

Like the two women in the initial study, Magness Townsend's desire to teach was strongly tested by the will of others. She attended historically Black Brison Smith State University on a full academic scholarship. There, the science faculty noticed her very high scores and desperately wanted Magness to transfer to the science program at another prestigious university. She tells the story of a young, vulnerable girl, in a room full of timeworn professors who had been educated in a society that ignored or questioned their intellect. They desperately wanted Magness to grab hold of the educational opportunities that were never offered to them. Predominately White universities were beginning to offer science scholarships to Blacks, particularly women. Educational and employment opportunities, once unheard of, were now appearing on the horizon:

> And the science department came together and called me in for a meeting and asked me if I would get transferred to another school and go into the field of science because at that time, and this is early this is the early 60's, they were looking for African American women. [Opportunities were] beginning to open up [for Blacks in] science and research, and they wanted me to transfer to another school. And I said, 'I don't think so.' I said I really wanted to be an elementary teacher. Well, they were telling me, 'Well there are other opportunities now opening.' But I said, 'This is not for me.' [They insisted], 'Oh yes it is. Your scores indicate it. You're just too bright go be in this area.'....You know and they tried to encourage me. And I said, 'Well let me think about it, because I understood where they were coming from. It was opening up. And they said that I had a high interest and a high achievement level in sciences. And, being female, a lot of times you didn't see that. And I said, 'Let me think about it.'

Interestingly, Mrs. Townsend refers to the majority culture establishment in the distant third person: "They" were looking, and "it" was opening up. This verbal distancing of a majority culture that had been so oppressive hints to an independence and self-possessiveness in Magness. Her identity is not defined by cultural others, even if those 'others' could keep her and those who looked like her out of public restrooms and certain theatres.

The tension between the call of society and the call of God, is torturously clear when a young Magness describes her search for an answer. Her mother reminds Magness that she must do "what God intends for you to do. And that's the only thing that I can tell you. . . . This is your choice with God ahead." Three days of obsessing over the decision, of talking to her roommate and to her boyfriend, finally led the college student to her knees: "I just fell on my knees and I just said, 'Lord, let me be your instrument in the way in which you want me to be.' And I got up and it was like everything got off my shoulders." Magness Townsend found resolve from talking to God. The experience was a catharsis in which the weight of earthly concerns- making the right choice, pleasing professors and friends - was removed. Praying to God, the source of this want to be in the classroom, confirmed that teaching was indeed a calling. The emotional aftermath reflected itself physically. Mrs. Townsend recalls that she was smiling broadly as she entered the committee meeting three days later. The professors smiled broadly in return, knowing that a transfer was underway. And then they listened: "And I said, 'Thank you very much.' And it came *out*! 'I want to be an elementary school teacher.'" In reliving this scene, Mrs. Townsend never mentions the reactions of the committee members or any possible feelings of disappointment they may have felt. These things did not matter. For her, adhering to a calling requires submitting only to God. Mrs. Townsend has never once regretted this decision to pursue teaching: "I know the Lord has given me evidence that I am doing his will. I'm doing his will."

Weathering Storms

Heeding the call to teach often meant entering hostile and potentially dangerous environments. A child of the sixties, Mrs. Townsend characterizes the social landscape during her college years as a war zone of protests, prison and physical danger. While in

school she was a full participant in the civil right's protest movement. That she was on a full scholarship at the University had no bearing. In her recollections, she gives voice to the secondary players in the fight for equality. All those involved, not just the male leaders highlighted in texts, figured importantly in the shaping of history. Magness Townsend stresses that the male ministers were not the only heroes. She sets the record straight:

> I was part of the 60's movement. I was part of the protest for equal rights. I was very fortunate to have heard speeches. Dr. King came to [the University]. I got to go listen to him. He was definitely a leader, but he definitely had a lot of people supporting, you know, what all of us wanted. Someone had to lead and he was the one chosen. But there were so many more people in the background. Even I felt like I had a big part just by marching and standing up for what was right.

Mrs. Townsend subtly proposes a paradigm that views the masses of civil rights supporters as chosen for a mission as well. She credits the success of leaders such as Dr. King to the numerous persevering background activists. She believes that history should not spotlight Dr. King the man, but the call that the man honored. The terrain in this social landscape was full of impending violence and the fragility of life. This time of nonviolent passive resistance meant that death might be the acknowledged price of protest:

> Of course we were fearful. We didn't know what the people would do. But if you don't believe in what you are doing and you don't stand up for it, it has no purpose. So we didn't know whether we could get hurt or shot or killed. Course those things could happen. But we were ready to put our lives on the line to believe in what we believe in, to make it better. You had to make it better.

Again, the narrative speaks of present sacrifice for future freedom. This life of service informs every aspect of Mrs. Townsend's life. She characterizes her teaching as "my missionary work. This is what I'm supposed to do." This missionary work, upon graduating college, involved entering schools and changing the educational philosophies and practices for the good of students.

During the early days of integration, this missionary view placed her in very hostile classroom territory. At the directive of the school superintendent, she was one of the few African American teachers selected to integrate White schools. Predominately Black schools often became the dumping grounds for marginal White teachers. As she recalls it, the only Black adults at the school were she and the janitor. One White parent, displeased that her child was placed with a Black teacher, decided to make a statement. This parent sent her child to school, only to barrel into Mrs. Townsend's room later that day. In front of students and the dozen or so White parents who lined the classroom walls to scrutinize Magness Townsend's teaching, the mother demanded her child: "I need to get my son!" Taken aback, Mrs. Townsend asked if there was a problem. The parent replied: "Yeah, I don't want any nigger teaching my child." Magness Townsend replied: "I don't blame you. I wouldn't want one of them teaching my child either. You go on son. Go with your mother."

And to the daily throng of scrutinizing parents, she decided that if they stayed in my room "I'm going to put them to work." If they felt qualified to evaluate her teaching, then they should be able to help their own children: "So I told the parents, 'Look, your child doesn't understand this. You need to help them with this. You need to help them with that.'" The parents stopped coming. In assessing this situation, Mrs. Townsend believes that the Lord sent her to that school to counter this racism. By the end of that year, she had been voted "Teacher of the Year" by her White colleagues, a testament to her belief that the Lord "used her as an instrument" in helping to bridge the racial divide. One of her initially hostile colleagues, now a dear friend, admitted to Magness that the Black woman's presence forced her to face her own latent bigotry: "She said, 'I was going to church everyday, and I was going straight to hell 'til I met you.'"

Though no longer working amidst such racial strife, Mrs. Townsend does battle the fatigue that results from her life's dedication to teaching. At the insistence of her present school system, Magness Townsend has traveled extensively throughout the States sharing her enriching instructional practices. Now, at the end of the school day, she is often so tired that she cannot stand. She rarely sits during the instructional day. The former superintendent repeatedly offered her high paying curriculum positions "downtown" all of which she declined. Her calling is her offering.

Does She Still Preach?

The slogan, "All children can learn" is so widely repeated that it is easy to ignore its implications. But this belief that all children can learn forms the crux of Mrs. Townsend's pedagogy. Her teaching is comprised of higher order and critical thinking activities. Mrs. Townsend integrates different subject areas whenever possible. She is both a teacher and a learner. I wondered what motivated her creativity and she said the following: "I keep trying to find out . . . new ideas and new techniques to help me so I can help others. I try to get along with people, try to stay professional and in the meantime just try to be me. I like me very much." Her classroom practice is an extension of her self. It is her hope that the students' work reflects their identities as well. Mrs. Townsend insists on valuing the uniqueness in all children. She believes that students need to be judged and assessed based on these personal offerings. All of her students are held to the same high learning standards. Her class is a springboard to goal attainment. Teaching is grooming a child for a life of dream attainment.

As Mrs. Townsend spoke, I noticed the intricately patterned necklace around her neck. It's earth tone colors reminded me of fall leaves. I asked her about the jewelry. She said that a student had made the necklace out of corn kernels. The student wants to be an

artist. Mrs. Townsend uses the student's natural artistic talent to help address his learning needs:

> He cannot read. 'I can't read, Mrs. Townsend.' Who told you you couldn't read? 'Well all them teachers say I can't read.' I said, 'Yes, you can read.' 'No I can't read.' I said, 'Don't you use can't in my room.' You know I don't like that word.' . . . He's an artist. . . . In all of my years of teaching, he is one of the best artists that's . . . come through me. So, you use your natural strength and what you were born to be. This child was born to be an artist, like the Lord made me to be a teacher. And through his art, he's reading and he's beginning to feel so much better about himself. He's doing things. His math [scores] are up. And his reading is coming. . . . Look at it. See the artistic work, see the, we talked about the repeated pattern. This is math skills and the naturalness of science. And look at that. Repeated, isn't it beautiful? And it goes right with this earring. This is part of my jewelry now. So I always have this child next to me.

Clearly, Magness Townsend believes that instructional practice must encompass the personality and talents of the student. She believes that these talents originate from God, and, therefore, they must not be ignored. Speaking of the student-artist she explains, "It's just, he has the eye. To me I used to say artists are made with the right hand of God. They have that special eye that no one has. That's the Creator's eye. . . . You have to know how to approach these people." I learned that, eventually, this child did learn to read.

When former students visit Mrs. Townsend's class, the first question they usually ask of current pupils is, "Does she still preach?" The teacher-as-preacher persona relates life lessons, and teaches to the spirit and the social reality of the child. Tired of hearing excuses for under achievement, Mrs. Townsend bristles at the idea that single parents cannot adequately raise children. Using a collective, "we," she feels that she and other African Americans have the responsibility to raise healthy and educated African American children. Only this commitment can hault what she believes to be an extremely high attrition rate among African American students. To reach students, she believes that teachers must make learning student-centered and relevant to student lives. To raise children, she believes that parents need to stop making excuses:

> I've had parents who've said, 'Well I'm the only parent.' It doesn't matter. If you're the only parent, you just need to be a parent. Set some standards. We need some backbone. We need discipline and we need a lot of love for our children. Our children are at risk and we are losing. They are blending into a culture which as a whole is not naturally their own. [We've]...lost the roots and our roots were strong. If they hadn't been strong, African Americans wouldn't have survived, and it goes back to strong roots and family ties. Families helped families and we need to do that again. . . . Not only for African American children, but for any child. Some children are starving for, 'Tell me what to do. Tell me how to do it. Tell me why I should do it.'

Mrs. Townsend offers a community view of family rather than a biological one. She suggests a traditional African way of community concern for children, as opposed to a Western notion of nuclear, self-contained caring. Often current socially constructed views of 'family' do not address African American families, many of which are headed by single mothers. Mrs. Townsend sees the return to a more global concern for each other as the salvation for the Black community.

A teacher with excellent classroom management skills, Mrs. Townsend believes that behavioral consequences do not have to be negative to be effective. In fact, she decries negative messages in any form, because they conjure larger ideas of hostility: "That negativeness is one thing I grew up with. It's, 'Don't drink from this fountain. You can't come in the building,' and I said, 'Never.'" Memories of her own encounters with discrimination, urge this teacher to create a more positive environment for her students. Students need the opportunity to set their own standards and experience choice and autonomy. Mrs. Townsend further believes that schools fail students by ignoring their spiritual sides. By this, she does not mean formal religious training, but activities that address the child's emotional needs and values. It is her view that many students are "tormented inside." They will not learn because they are not at peace: "You can call it religion, foot, dog or cat, but there is a spiritual side of us, the deeper inner part of us. Psychologist may want to call it conscious or whatever, but that is the true you. . . . And

that is the part of the child that gets tormented." Mrs. Townsend's pedagogy seeks to connect classroom instruction with this spiritual side.

Making connections is a central theme is Mrs. Townsend's discourse. In meeting students' educational needs, she first makes a connection between she and the students. Only then, does she connect the student to the subject matter. Teaching is an extension of her self. When Mrs. Townsend uplifts students, she uplifts herself as well. As she explains, "I try to build them up 'cause Lord knows I wanna keep on building myself [laughing]." She describes the process:

> It's not so much . . . teaching speaking, teaching reading, teaching math and all these other . . . things. But if I teach that human being, that human being will get that reading. They'll get that math. They'll get that science and that social studies. They'll get those if they find out first who they are. And that's my biggest thing there. Who are you? And be proud. As they say, 'What you see is what you get.'

Receiving is Wonderful

Reflecting on her teaching career, Magness Townsend is convinced that she has received far more from students than they have received from her. She believes students do not usually realize the extent to which they give to teachers. It is this receiving that is her reward:

> Giving and receiving, Oh Lord! Receiving is wonderful. When you give, oh, you receive so much back. People don't understand how much you can receive in teaching. It's not so much, just, I don't know dogmatic or philosophy, but that you have to have humility, and receive. And when I give sometimes just a little bit to the children, they don't know how much I receive so much from them. They have no idea [laughing]. You know, it's, it's, sometimes I think it might be unfair and it might look a little unbalanced. I say maybe it's unbalanced because a lot of times you know children may think you're just teaching, you're teaching, and . . . they don't know how much they have balanced out by giving, by giving, by what I'm receiving. And it's just beautiful. It's a beautiful process.

It is clear that Magness Townsend views teaching as her life's work. Teaching, in large part, defines who she is. However, this calling does not only constitute a discourse. It translates into very explicit classroom practices as well.

The Call to Teach In Instructional Practice

Cherryhill Elementary School is composed mainly of African American and poor White students. Before integration, Cherryhill was one of the all Black schools in this city. Of the twenty-six students in Mrs. Townsend's fifth grade class, eleven are African American and sixteen are White, fifteen are boys and eleven are girls. Desks are clustered together to form five tables. At each table is a heterogeneous mix of Black and White, male and female students. Situated near the tables are the three desks of students who work better alone. They are close enough to their peers to engage in easy conversation, though, and each has a second available seat at one of the neighboring tables. There are no isolated rows of desks. In this room, students sit so that they can face each other. The room arrangement symbolizes Mrs. Townsend's belief that "the point of life is to get along."

Student writing covers a large bulletin board, and social studies projects sit atop the book case. The classroom expectations are displayed on a wall poster in the slightly off-centered and purposeful hand of a fifth grader. Mrs. Townsend believes that student input in rule making is crucial to their developing sense of responsibility and ethics. She also believes that students will be more inclined to follow rules of their own making. Consensus, however, does not arise out of a vacuum, so rules are devised only after the first two to three weeks of school, when students are better acquainted with each other and with their teacher. This time of getting to know each other sets the tone for the rest of the school year. Mrs. Townsend views herself as the facilitator in the creation of an environment of care in the room. Once trust and familiarity have been established, rule

making proceeds. Magness Townsend says that the first rule is always hers: "Students will respect each other." She explains that in her room, "love and hate are choices, but you have to have respect." Later students, working in groups, devise specific classroom rules to address the larger schoolwide behavioral expectations. Groups then share their ideas with the class for the final selection process. Once the rules are finalized, they are displayed on a poster. Each student in the class then signs the document, indicating ownership and endorsement. Mrs. Townsend views these student-composed guidelines as the class "Constitution."

Know Your Own House First

Central to Magness Townsend's pedagogy is the belief that students must possess knowledge for their owned informed decision-making and empowerment. She views ignorance as enslaving. Today she leads a lesson on Canada in preparation for school's annual Heritage Day. Mrs. Townsend questions students as she walks, a petite frame of continuous motion: "How many territories are in Canada?" Several hands shoot up, followed by the spontaneity of student guesses: "Sixteen?" "Ten!" "Three?" Looking simultaneously bemused and disappointed, their teacher exclaims, "This is not Wheel of Fortune. I'm not going to tell you, because tonight you will find out." Students smile at the game show allusion, but eagerly write reminders to themselves to find out what they do not know. Here, students are not scolded for not knowing. They are held accountable for discovering answers.

It is not enough that answers be correct. Mrs. Townsend expects that they be presented with the meticulous accuracy that accompanies the confidence in knowing. This is evident when she asks, "What are the two most commonly spoken languages in Canada?" An easy question, one student offers, "English and French?" Mrs. Townsend

repeats, "English and French? You say it like it's a question not an answer." Another proclaims with haughty confidence, "English and French." Still this correct answer is far from accurate. Mrs. Townsend replies, "English and French *what*?" Another hand shoots up, "English and French languages." In mock exasperation, Magness Townsend pleads, "English and French languages what? If you walked into this class and said that, we'd put you in a straight jacket." Teacher and student laugh. Mrs. Townsend uses humor often in offering instructive feedback. It softens the effect for both the giver and receiver. Soon, students produce the sounds of enlightenment as "oohs" and "aahs" fill the room and hands wave wildly towards the ceiling begging for a chance to answer. Mrs. Townsend studies the room of extended arms carefully before calling on one student who has not previously spoken. Others slap their desks in disappointment. The girl carefully enunciates: "English and French are the languages most commonly spoken in Canada." Mrs. Townsend sighs in comic relief and the students smile, too, recognizing an acceptable answer. She reminds them why the girl's answer is acceptable by asking, "That is what class?" The entire class answers with her: "A clear thought." The use of call and response interaction is used to groom students for accuracy and thoughtfulness in answering.

In another lesson, Mrs. Townsend works with a small math group, helping them to review for tomorrow's test. Soon she circulates to other tables as well. Ever alert, Mrs. Townsend overhears a boy across the room describing a fraction as "ten to one." Approaching his desk, she admonishes him not to say that: "That's like saying, 'Ten-four good buddy!' We're in the real world. Say ten over one." The student smiles in obvious surprise at his teacher's trucker lingo.

In this room, all students are encouraged to make their presence known by contributing to the class discussions. Trying is central to the learning process. Mrs. Townsend asks, "Who is the head of our government? If you don't know, your hand still

should be raised, if you don't know, so you won't be embarrassed." Having a voice is considered vital. At the chalkboard, Mrs. Townsend draws a comparison chart for the discussion of Canada and the United States. She tells students to recall the various government buildings that they visited during the class field trip to Washington D.C. the previous week. Commenting on the democratic system, one student remarks nonspecifically that "people vote for it." Mrs. Townsend presses, "What people? Me?" Many hands shoot skyward to offer what everyone by now knows constitutes a complete answer. Excited, Mrs. Townsend declares, "Listen for the right answer. It's coming up!" More hands shoot up, and then fall downward when a complete answer is soon rendered. The teacher's momentum keeps the lessons briskly paced and engaging.

An occasionally theatrical person, Magness Townsend uses exaggeration and pause to draw students into the learning process. Filling in the comparison chart with student answers, Mrs. Townsend looks at the board and then back at the faces staring at her. She tells them in a dramatic whisper, "You'd better write this down. The law making body in Canada is a little different." Her voice is lowered further, creating suspense and emphasis: "So you'd better write that down because here comes a contrast right here." A few minutes later, Mrs. Townsend asks students to name the United States capital. Obviously anticipating that their teacher will ask for the capital of their southern state, many shout an incorrect response. Clearly stunned by this unanimous and wrong answer, Mrs. Townsend stares in comic disbelief, as the students laugh and correct themselves. She then sighs in relief: "Please don't make me disappear up here." Many chuckle. Laughter is common in this room. While Mrs. Townsend's humor softens the delivery of her corrective feedback, student laughter accepts these comments as helpful.

Social learning is never brushed aside for academic learning. As the teacher reminds students to review their notes for tomorrow's test, student voices can be heard

chattering softly to their neighbors. Mrs. Townsend uses this opportunity to remind them of social skills: "Listen up. I do not talk when other people are talking. It's very rude. It's rude for you to talk when I'm talking, and it's rude for me to talk when you're talking." All cease their talking immediately. Then providing thematic closure to the overall lesson, Mrs. Townsend uses both hands to emphasize: "Please children, if you don't learn anything about anyone else's government, learn your own. . . . That gives you pride and dignity." She elaborates: "If I come to visit you in your house and ask for the bathroom, and you don't know where the bathroom is, that's embarrassing. Know your own house before you know anything else. Know your own culture first. That's important." Such vivid analogies make learning concepts accessible to students.

I've Given You The Skills

In a mastery-oriented classroom, students use new skills to achieve subject mastery based on their own learning needs (Ames, 1992). Mrs. Townsend's pedagogy focuses on skill mastery with the goal of concept understanding and transference. This focus is clearly seen in the math instruction. After directing the student assistants to hand out worksheets, Mrs. Townsend writes a problem on the board for students to solve independently. They are reminded to raise their hands when finished. One conscientious assistant hands me a sheet, asking if I would like "to try." I accept his offer. This small gesture speaks to a seeming philosophy that there are no spectators in the learning process. Mrs. Townsend very quickly recites and solves the next problem (10 x 10 x 10 =): "All you do is one, two, three [counting the zeros aloud] one, two, three and that is it. There you go." Her pacing is very forward moving and charismatic like that of an auctioneer. She focuses on the next problem (800 x 30) "Let's go! One line only. I want one line only. You've got to have a computer mind and computer hands today." Heads lowered and pencils moving swiftly,

the students seem motivated by their teacher's energy. What may appear to be traditional drill-and-practice instruction is actually a focus on concept attainment. Magness Townsend realizes that many of her students come to her class lacking the basic skills that will allow them to master larger concepts. She incorporates this focus on skills in her overall instruction. Introducing the next problem, Mrs. Townsend tells her class: "Sideways, sideways - If I stand on my head I can still multiply. You should be able to cross your hands, lean sideways and still multiply." Mrs. Townsend models and rationalizes each type of problem through verbal protocol (Pressley & McCormick, 1995). In doing this, she provides students with metacognitive knowledge to encourage their future strategy use.

With most lessons, Mrs. Townsend interjects short sayings of wisdom and life learning. Before the close of this math lesson, she tells the students: "Skills are to be mastered, not memorized. Memorize lines for plays if you want to." In math as in other subjects, students are expected to use accurate terminology. In subtraction, she tells them, "You do not borrow. What do you do?" The students shout, "Regroup." Again connecting a life lesson to this math lesson, Mrs. Townsend continues: "A good citizen carries back what they borrow." The slightest instructional concept can spark a proverb.

Magness Townsend is teacher-centered only in terms of being the facilitator of student learning. She declares, "Alright cabooses look up here, because the engine is ahead." She refocuses students on the remainder of the lesson. Reviewing an answer, she encourages students to be truthful in their responses: "How many of you got that? Be true to yourself." A division problem is written on the board (846 divided by 20): "Ok," she commands, "Let's go. What is the first thing you do?" Students and teacher recite in unison, "Find out what can be divided!" One student has an early answer. He offers, "Four?" His classmates laugh. Mrs. Townsend encourages him: "Oh really? Try again, Stevie." Others wave their hands, wanting to answer, but this is Stevie's problem. Stevie

solves the problem aloud with verbal support from his teacher: "Let's watch the miracle," and Stevie answers correctly. Believing that they are capable can be extremely motivating to students (Pressley & McCormick, 1995). Mrs. Townsend's patience and encouragement affirm her belief in student achievement.

Later revisiting the need for accuracy in language, Mrs. Townsend dramatizes about division: "Don't say, 'Go into' in Mrs. Townsend's room because the first time a number goes into another number I'm packing my bags and leaving. We can make money off of that with numbers jumping into other numbers." The students laugh in delight, and Mrs. Townsend joins them. This focus on mastery learning leads to the insistence on the automation of strategy use. When students have a repertoire of strategies at their disposal, they are better able to meet their own learning goals (Pressley & McCormick, 1995). As Mrs. Townsend writes a problem on the board involving the addition of fractions, she tells students that they may not use pencil and paper. This is what she calls "mental math." A girl solves the problem almost immediately and is praised: "I have to ask Katie because her hand went right up because she did it in her head, and that's what I want to see."

While Mrs. Townsend's persona largely moves this lesson, the lessons are tailored to student learning preferences. Students are given a repertoire of strategies from which to choose. When working with fractions, Mrs. Townsend tells the class: "Reduce please . . . I've taught you several ways. So do whichever best fits your style of learning." Later, she rallies the class to attention using one of her many cadence calls: "Some of you remember that it's not time to remember, its time to do what?" The class shouts in obvious enjoyment: "Learn." They then proceed to learn about inverse operations. Mrs. Townsend asks, "What does inverse mean? Do you remember when I turned my sleeve inside-out!" They remember, "Yes!" She continues, "It means opposite." One student asks, "So what's the opposite of division?" Mrs. Townsend then leads the questioner through the

problem so that he can understand the answer. At the end of the lesson, she gives her class a homework assignment. It is a "self assignment" in which students must solve seven long division problems of their own making. In this class, teacher presence does not lead to student dependence. While the atmosphere is warm and friendly, it is serious and purposeful as well. Mrs. Townsend makes certain that her students understand the seriousness of learning. Regarding their homework, she tells the students, "Don't come in this door without it." Instruction combines a focus on student-centered learning with clear-cut teacher expectations and boundaries. The teacher's nurture and authority are ever present.

Magness Townsend believes that teachers must "get to know their students well" before they can meet their learning needs. Looking directly at me, she makes this remark slowly and emphatically because it lies at the core of her pedagogy. She possesses what she calls an "intuitive sense" of the students in her room. She understands their needs, pains and personal gifts. She tells me that she recently told Paul, her student teacher, that in one lesson he was "just teaching himself." Magness Townsend believes that effective teachers must teach to the learning needs of students, not to their own teaching comforts. High learning expectations are never ignored in this effort to address student needs. Peeking over students' shoulders to view their work, Mrs. Townsend stops at one desk to remark, "That looks like an S. That's not a five. We are not playing hopscotch." She smiles as she says this and touches the student on the shoulder. The child looks at her, smiles also, and rewrites the number. Students receive instructive feedback in the nurturing light in which it is given. Briefly stealing away from the class activities to greet me at my location near the back of the room, Mrs. Townsend updates me on the progress of a student who had been suspended for fighting. She informs me that David's behavior has deteriorated since his return from suspension. Just this morning he was put off of the

bus for fighting. It is her belief that only long-term counseling can help David deal with his internalized anger. In this classroom, concern for students is not limited to their academic well-being.

This concern for student well-being does not excuse students from trying. Our brief exchange is interrupted by a group's beckon. On hearing their request, Mrs. Townsend tells them, "I'm not going to tell you. You figure it out. I've given you all the skills." To another group she explains, "I'm not going to repeat it. You repeat it to yourself. It's time for you to learn." She then helps another group recognize patterns through the use of deliberate strategies: "I want you to do this right. You learn the pattern. You learn those rap songs. You're going to learn this pattern. Put that equal sign there. . . ." One student blurts out, "Oh I get it!" Mrs. Townsend affirms a student: "There you go!" She continues to circulate around the room, observing her students. She put her hands atop one girl's head and says warmly, "It's not enough that your eyes see it. This organ in your head has to see it too."

Life Lessons - School Lessons

For Mrs. Towsend, to focus on subjects such as math and reading, the academic curriculum, is not enough. She believes that students must receive social learning as well as an understanding of an unofficial or "hidden" curriculum. Social learning highlights appropriate ways of interacting with others. The hidden curriculum can focus on those unspoken, but strong messages about self-worth and ability that students receive from the school culture. Mrs. Townsend feels that teachers must address those larger life issues which greatly impact student success in life. Being called to teach means extending school lessons so that they embrace larger life issues. Mrs. Townsend makes her hidden curriculum very explicit. She offers honest commentary on views about which she feels

students should know. She feels justified in being honest with students about their achievement because, "I do not ask them to go above and beyond what they cannot do." So when students complain that their homework is incomplete due to the lack of parental assistance, Magness Townsend is unmoved: "The things I give my children, they don't need their parents to help them." Her two student teachers are also expected to uphold the high standards that she sets for her class. She reminds her mentees, Paul and Karla, "Be firm. Be courteous. Be truthful. If not, you are messing up the value system of the students."

It is Mrs. Townsend's belief that being ignorant of the hidden motivations of others leads to manipulation. One incident highlights this point. All teachers in the school have been directed to read a book to their classes in anticipation of a visit by the author. The author will address the entire student body and sell autographed copies of his texts. Mrs. Townsend does not hide from the class her disgust at what she considers an obvious marketing technique. One student asks if the author will sign student notebooks. Mrs. Townsend responds bluntly: "The only thing he'll sign is his name on one of his books. If you buy his book he'll sign his name on it."

However, in compliance with the school's request, Mrs. Townsend does read the story to the students. As she reads, she pauses to engage students in the book's themes of individual responsibility and endurance. A sense of warmth and safety permeates the room. When Mrs. Townsend reads of the adventures of a wise old animal named Paul, the students turn to sneak a mischievous glance at their student teacher, Paul, who is seated at the back. Later, Mrs. Townsend pauses in her very dramatic reading to expand on the work ethic of a main character. She reads and then rereads, for emphasis, a sentence in the book: "[The character] knew how important it was for him to try things for himself." Mrs. Townsend explains that teachers expect this same independence from students.

While this teacher encourages students to form their own opinions, she refuses to let their utterances wander into what she believes to be the ridiculous. When one student remarks that the dog in the story is smiling, Mrs. Townsend informs him that dogs do not smile, as they have no emotions: "Only human beings have emotions. Dogs don't smile. They appear to." She continues, saying that, as emotion-filled human beings, we often assign human feelings to lower animals. This woman's pedagogy, while embracing humor and imagination, draws the line at the illogical. Later she pauses to focus on the book's theme of jealousy. Mrs. Townsend cautions the students to remember that "sometimes those who you think are your friends will give you all the discouragement they can when they are jealous." She wants the young learners to rely on their own sense of efficacy, and not measure their worth by the opinions of others. Throughout the lesson, students remain eager and attentive, and seem to thrive on their teacher's reading performance and preaching.

Classroom Family

Much of this student zeal can be attributed to the creation of family in this room. Mrs. Townsend's pedagogy centers on the belief that the classroom is, indeed, a family. When describing the role that she and her two student teachers, Paul and Karla, assume in the classroom, Mrs. Townsend describes caretakers: "I'm old mother. I'm the mother image. . . . He's [Paul's] the daddy that some of these kids never had. She [Karla] is the big sister or the teacher-friend or the young mother that they never had, or that they have with a different point of view." This family feeling permeates all class activities, and Mrs. Townsend knows that the students feel this security and care. She believes that this care is the key to reaching students:

> They see people who truly care about them. That's what I tried to tell [Karla and Paul]. You don't have to say a whole lot. . . . You just care. [The students] feel it. They feel it and they genuinely, my children genuinely love these two young people. They love these people and that's wonderful. And they know they love them back. These two love these kids, and the kids love them and that's why there's so much harmony in this room. You can feel it when you walk in. 'Cause it's there. It's there.

Much of this family feeling is evidenced in the playful banter between students and teacher.

Sustaining this family atmosphere means keeping abreast of the social, emotional and academic well-being of all family members. Lunch time is a time for this type of processing. After escorting the class to the cafeteria, Mrs. Townsend, and her student teachers, Karla and Paul, eat lunch in the classroom. Here the sharing of student histories and concerns begins with prayer and proceeds in an almost therapeutic manner. On this day, the conversation focuses on one student, David. Apparently, students in other classes pick on David because of his very slim physique and his mercurial home life that includes a younger sister, father, father's girlfriend and her baby. The boys that instigated the confrontation with David have been suspended as well. Mrs. Townsend informs me of the events, as her student teachers offer input. Paul adds that David has only recently begun to talk positively about his future. When Paul told David that the child could pursue any field that he wanted such as a medicine or space flight, the child look amazed, asking: "Really, can I be a lawyer?" Paul wonders aloud whether he can take David his homework during the suspension period. The family does not have a phone. Mrs. Townsend suggests that Paul discuss this idea with the principal. Instead of dismissing her mentee's idea, she hints to the possibility that there are things he does not understand. This lunch time sharing of student issues helps to preserve the family feeling by keeping all the classroom adults, the 'parents,' informed of the progress of all students, 'the children.'

As head of the classroom family, Mrs. Townsend's role also moves into that of protector. It is her additional responsibility to preserve the best interest of all of her

students. At times, this role of protector involves jeopardizing her own safety. She tells a story that illustrates this. It is a story in which Mrs. Townsend, the classroom mother, challenges the biological mother to protect a student. Mrs. Townsend knew on sight that the new girl in her class had recently given birth. Although the girl denied it, her milk-full breast and stomach, a swollen hollow, betrayed her protestations. One day the girl showed Mrs. Townsend the raised, red welts on her body. The mother, on discovering that her own boyfriend had impregnated her daughter, beat the daughter mercilessly. Immediately, Mrs. Townsend led the child to the principal's office. She described to the principal the scars that were hidden beneath the child's clothes: "I asked the principal, 'Do you want to see it?" And he said, 'No I believe you. I don't want to see it." The nurse was summoned as were the authorities. Shortly thereafter, the sheriff escorted the child's mother to the school. Mrs. Townsend says that the mother became enraged and attempted to strike the daughter right there in the principal's office. Magness Townsend added that she then became angry and positioned herself between the child and the mother's fists. She told the mother, "If you're gonna hit somebody, you're going to hit me."

These parable-like recollections contain the ethical language that informs Magness Townsend's classroom instruction. There are definite notions of right and wrong and of morality and immorality. The teacher must uphold the right and the moral. For Mrs. Townsend, teaching involves working to ensure the safety and well-being of all students, whatever the cost.

No Hiding Place

In the safety and comfort of this classroom family, students are allowed to experience self-actualization. Much of Mrs. Townsend's pedagogy involves empowering students with the confidence to believe in their own abilities. While individual differences

are praised and student hardships acknowledged, no child is treated as a victim or excused from trying. Students may not rest complacently behind gender, monetary, or racial stereotype. There are no hiding places from achievement. Today the weather is warm and the class will go outdoors for physical education. They will play kickball and all will participate. Using her arms and shoulders, Mrs. Townsend demonstrates the acceptable way of throwing and catching the ball. At first, the demonstration seems superfluous. She then imitates the way that some students, especially the girls, gingerly grab the ball as if threatened by some dangerous object, and release it into the air as if it were a bird. Are they listening to the seriousness of her tone? She pulls a silver object from her desk, declaring, "It's my whistle time." The students straighten in their seats in mock obedience, obviously enjoying the scene. Blowing her whistle once, Mrs. Townsend demands, "Girls don't wait for the boys to catch the ball. There will be no cheerleaders! This ain't a beauty pageant." I notice that the girls sit especially erect and smile at their teacher's directive. This woman models the demeanor that they must address outdoors. Mrs. Townsend asks if there are any questions about her expectations. There are none. It is time to act: "This is P.E. Line 'em up!"

Empowering students means instilling them with pride. Students must not be made to feel inferior to others. Mrs. Townsend feels that teachers "[must] keep the dignity between the [themselves] and the child." She desires for all students to have feelings of positive self-worth. This rationale explains another of Mrs. Townsend's practices. While she buys many of David's school clothes, these items are delivered through the school secretary. In David's mind, the occasional shirts, slacks and jacket are gifts from his buddy in the office. Mrs. Townsend insists on this arrangement. She wants David to have good, clean clothes like his classmates. However, she does not want him to feel

embarrassed, ashamed or humiliated on knowing that his teacher buys his clothes. In this room, the teacher is a caretaker and protector, not a source of charity.

In this room, students may not hide from each other. Mrs. Townsend provides connections between different student groups and encourages community building in the classroom. An example of this is the classroom partnership between Mrs. Townsend's room and a class of students from Hope School. Hope School is a local school for mentally handicapped students. The two classes combine regularly each month, alternating between schools. Only last week, Mrs. Townsend's class cheered their Hope friends at the local Special Olympics. According to Magness Townsend, teachers at Hope School have experienced difficulty establishing partnerships with other 'regular' classrooms. Apparently, many teachers of non-disabled students feel that such a collaboration would prove too demanding. Mrs. Townsend eagerly embraced the opportunity. She believes that, regardless of the child, good teaching is good teaching: "There's really no difference." Additionally, she wants to give her class the opportunity to appreciate the gifts of others.

On this particular day, nine students and three teachers from the Hope School visit Mrs. Townsend's room. The student visitors sit at tables with their host partners. I notice that Mrs. Townsend's students easily assume roles as cheerleader, tutor and friend to their visitors. A familial atmosphere fills the room. The lesson centers on pattern recognition. Mrs. Townsend circulates around the room, checking on the students' progress. She stops and gently rubs the cheeks of one aloof Hope student, saying, "Come back, baby." At the end of the lesson all students applaud the multicolored patterns that lay on the desks in front of them. Mrs. Townsend's students praise their visitors, hugging them, giving high-fives, and shaking hands. This is the last collaboration of the school year. At the end of the lesson, the Hope students utter, "Thank-you" to their hosts, before presenting them with a large handmade card decorated with brightly colored handprints and names. To Mrs.

Townsend they present a gift bag containing bath soaps and a picture frame. Everyone claps. One Hope School teacher takes a group photo of both classes. In the front row, two boys, one from each school, hug each other's necks.

Celebration of Appreciation

This type of affirmation is endemic to Mrs. Townsend's calling. Teaching involves giving and receiving. Predictably, her pedagogy focuses heavily on appreciating the actions of others. She draws students into this tradition of celebrating. Mrs. Townsend helps the class plan a surprise party for the student teachers. She explains to the students that the message of gratitude is what matters, and suggests that they purchase gifts from the local Dollar Store. Gratitude does not have to cost a lot. Mrs. Townsend interjects a bit of her own life when talking about giving. As if she has had a brainstorm, Mrs. Townsend declares that the festival of thanks will be called, "Celebration of Appreciation."

As with other aspects of Magness Townsend's pedagogy, the seemingly opposing forces of nurture and authority unite in the theme of giving. One incident illustrates this juxtaposition. For three weeks, Mrs. Townsend and her student teachers reminded David to bring a permission slip to school. The schoolwide party was nearing, and no student could attend without written permission from a guardian. On the festival day, David still had not brought his slip. Assuming that he could just call his father from the office, he seemed unbothered by his own forgetfulness. Then he encountered Magness Townsend. Mrs. Townsend decided that David could not attend the festival, nor could he telephone home for verbal permission. Despite the protestations of the school secretary, and one of the student teachers, Paul, Mrs. Townsend remained firm in her convictions.

For Magness Townsend, her refusal was David's gift. She explained this to her student teacher and to the secretary, who were convinced that the child's feelings would be irreparably hurt by this decision:

> He's not being responsible. . . . We can't keep picking up the pieces. . . . I am the supervisor in this room and . . . somebody's got to teach David a lesson . . . because we'll still keep picking up the pieces . . . Then [he'll end up in] prison. . . . He needs to feel bad; so bad that it hurts. This is tough love. You've been giving him pity love. He needs tough love. That's true love. He wants it easy. David will *remember* that he didn't go to this.

To David, who begged his teacher to reconsider, she offered: "Didn't I say I didn't tell lies. I told you, 'I'm Magness Townsend, if nothing else, she's fair and she's honest.'"

To Summarize This Call

To summarize the call to teach of Magness Townsend requires combining ways of thinking that do not ordinarily coexist. First, her pedagogy stresses a focus on the detail to create a better grasp of the global. Correctness and accuracy are stressed so that students can be informed and empowered decision-makers. Secondly, skill and strategy-use are viewed as instrumental to mastery learning. Because many students in Mrs. Townsend's class come to school without proficient learning skills, 'the basics,' she feels the need to lay the foundation for further learning. Thirdly, the hidden curriculum and social learning are addressed alongside of academic learning. Students are informed of those unspoken social biases that inform school and society so that they will not be entrapped by the misguided thinking of others. Students are also taught how to interact positively with their peers. A fourth feature central to Mrs. Townsend's pedagogy is the view of classroom as family. However, in this family the teacher faces possible risks so that students may feel safe. This family laughs and plays, but their intentions are purely serious regarding

learning. Fifth, Mrs. Townsend maintains the dignity of students by providing them with the freedom and encouragement to explore their own talents. While she is a safety net, Magness Townsend does not avail herself so much that students become powerless victims or are weakened by her presence. Finally, her pedagogy stresses social learning that focuses on cooperation and appreciation of others. Reward and recognition are not given if they are undeserved. The withdrawal of opportunity may actually be the gift of something unseen, as in David's case. Honesty informs all aspect of Mrs. Townsend's call. It is an honesty that requires knowing oneself and one's students very well.

The Call to Teach In the Mentoring of Student Teachers

Unlike other teachers in the School/University partnership, Magness Townsend mentors not one, but two student teachers. Paul Riley and Karla Lewis, each interned with Mrs. Townsend last year, and both requested her to guide their student teaching experiences this year. According to Karla, Mrs. Townsend vowed, "I'll tell them, well, give me both of you or I'll take no one!" Both student teachers were placed in her classroom. Paul taught the first six weeks, with Karla serving as his assistant, and the roles were switched the next six weeks. Additionally, all three adults assumed charge of a reading and math group. The dynamic between the three personalities works very well. For Karla, it is "natural" and wonderful." Paul calls it "perfect." Karla says that they all have "eyes in the back of our heads now" whenever students try to pit one adult against the other. They are a united front.

Paul

At age thirty-five Paul Riley entered teaching through a very nontraditional route. After working in construction and as a restaurateur, he decided to fulfill a lifelong desire to

teach. He had always instructed in an informal sense such as on the construction crew. Paul was the one others looked to to say, "Well this is how you do this. This is how you do this." Though he and his wife are childless, Paul has always been "fascinated" by young minds and by adults who could tap into those youthful imaginations. Paul says that the beginning of his teaching study marked the end of career dabbling: "It all happened. . . . I've know that for so long that I [wanted] to teach." Not a religious person, Paul resists describing teaching as a calling. Instead he struggles for a more pragmatic way of describing this satisfactory fit of personality to profession:

> I definitely think that, that's just the type of person I am. . . . [That] . . . what I should do is to teach people in some was shape or form. . . . All throughout my life, I've always done that with everybody I've been around. . . . I've never been somebody who said, 'No, you should do things this way.' I've got a lot more interest in finding out why [people] do things the way they do.

Honesty in Mentoring. Paul first became acquainted with Mrs. Townsend during his junior year. He briefly interned with her and with other grade level teachers. He says, "For a long time I thought I wanted to see as many teaching styles as I possibly could." It was this sampling of teaching styles that led him to request Mrs. Townsend for his student teaching assignment. Paul describes his relationship with Mrs. Townsend as a slow, purposeful evolution from boundary-laden mentoring into trusting friendship:

> But it took a lot to develop that relationship. . . . I think she played it right. And it's kind of what she does with her students. I guess in a way, it's, it's, she sets the boundaries first and I think she does this with most people. She makes it clear where she stands before she's willing to open up a whole lot about any *personal* things or anything like that. You know with me she wanted to get to know me first and see if she'd *like* me before she wanted to start telling me all these things.

This friendship now often means staying after school "until at least 4:00 o'clock" to talk about school related issues as well as "things that are going on in our lives."

For Paul, it is Mrs. Townsend's mixture of nurture and authority that is her most compelling quality. This combination uniquely manifests itself in the woman's honesty. And it is this honesty that has facilitated Paul's growth as a beginning teacher: "If she doesn't like something she'll tell you. If she likes something she'll tell you. She's . . . not one of those people who says, 'Oh yeah, you're doing fine' if you're not doing fine.' And it's helped me tremendously." This verbal feedback from his mentor may occur at any point in Paul's lesson. While these comments point to Paul's instruction, they are intended to insure that the pupils' learning experiences do not decline under the guidance of a novice:

> She's *always* watching and she'll say right in the middle of a lesson, 'You need to write that on the board so they can see that. Is there some other way you can present information?' or 'You need to do this or you need to do that.' She's always willing to tell me what's going on. If I'm making a mistake or if I'm doing something right, she'll tell me either way. And I *need* to know that. I mean there's no way to know.

Paul welcomes these occasional mid-lesson interruptions, regarding them as vital to his instructional growth and to student learning. He rationalizes: "I would a whole lot rather have a lesson interrupted for a couple of seconds or...feel a little bit uncomfortable for a couple of seconds and have it right and know how to do it next time." Knowing that he is being watched has helped Paul to curtail his once presumptuous approach to lesson planning: "I felt like I could just walk in and wing it." While this spontaneous teaching has been valuable during unexpected schedule changes, Paul has come to value his mentor's insistence on purposeful planning and attention to detail. While he once "just plowed over my lesson[s]," now, "I come in and I know exactly what I'm going to do. And things flow a lot better. My time management is a lot better. I just . . . understand the logistics of the day a lot better."

Although Mrs. Townsend takes a very proactive role in Paul's student teaching; her presence does not thwart his freedom to grow as a teacher. When he first started, they

reviewed all of his lesson plans together. Now he has the creative license and autonomy to plan on his own, either with the other fifth grade teachers or independently. Now Mrs. Townsend only gives Paul a time line of instructional objectives to help guide his planning. He is proud that "she hasn't changed anything yet other than ask me to be more detailed, and me being more detailed is really what's helped me so much."

Paul talked about his initial fears of mentoring under a teacher who has been so widely heralded as a master teacher. He admits to being "terrified" at first: "'Cause I thought, you know, this is going to be really bad if Mrs. Townsend's end-of-grade test scores go down this year because of me." He has been relieved to discover that much of what he has learned from his mentor has become a natural part of his own instructional style: "I'll go, 'Well that's what she told me six months ago, and I've just filed [it] away somewhere, somehow.'"

Meeting Student Needs. By observing Mrs. Townsend, Paul has also learned to meet the learning needs of his students. He notices that she does not expect students to adjust to her teaching style. She adjusts to their learning styles:

> That's one thing about Mrs. Townsend that I love . . . in general . . . she makes adjustments for kids who need something different, but her whole idea of teaching hits so many kids. Because when she teaches a lesson...she, nine times out of ten, she hits the kinesthetic, she hits . . . the auditory. I mean every possible learning style I can thing of, in general, in some way, she touches on it. And that's . . . so incredibly important.

Paul was surprised to learn that student-centered teaching was, at first, "incredibly difficult." This difficulty lie in trying to imagine the different ways that students process information. Paul once had a very unrealistic assembly-line understanding of student learning: "You know I just thought, twenty-five kids, they're all going to sit there like computers, take in information and spit it back out at the end. And it's just, it's just, not,

it's just not like that. . . . I never would have gotten it if it wasn't for Mrs. Townsend." His frustration comes when he notices a child's "eyes glaze over and he has no idea what's going on when I'm up there lecturing." He has learned that giving that same child manipulatives or "let[ting] him write things as he goes or giv[ing] him something beforehand to explain things" can facilitate the learning process. Teaching to students' learning styles has increased Paul's insights into student personalities and strengths. As he says, "The more I do it, the more I see things." Under his mentor's direction, Paul is constantly on his feet. Although he gets tired at times, he considers this constant motion to be necessary: "*Maybe* for a total of thirty minutes I'm sitting down." Paul has no complaints and rationalizes that "it's more actual work . . . but the payoffs are incredible." By circulating around the room, he is able to reach more students.

Under Mrs. Townsend's tutelage, Paul has also grown to see the value of cooperative learning among students. In fact he says that over eighty percent of the class work is done in groups. He has seen the benefits: "For one thing, [students] learn responsibility if they are in a group . . . and they learn how to work together. . . . They learn so much more." Students also study with partners for tests, and thus far, performance has been very good.

Often Karla and Mrs. Townsend work with individual groups of four or five students. Their assistance has allowed Paul to experiment with different types of group activities. Generally, the groups represent a heterogeneous mix of academic and leadership levels. Students take turns serving as group captain so that all have the opportunity to understand the leadership role. Class discussions have centered on leadership and the consequences of abusing authority. One day, three students told Paul that their captain was yelling at them during the break period. Paul confronted the student captain, who fervently

denied the accusations. Paul used this opportunity to engage the child in a discussion about the role of public perception on leadership effectiveness.

Rapport With Students. Paul considers Mrs. Townsend's rapport with the students to be "incredible." He believes that the same honesty that defines his relationship with her also contributes to her wonderful interaction with the fifth graders. According to Paul, Mrs. Townsend is very honest in her discussions with students. She refuses to ignore or excuse their academic weaknesses by "saying 'Well that's ok,' or . . . sending them along with a grade that they didn't deserve . . . She won't do that. She absolutely refuses to do that." Paul also finds it truly "incredible" that Mrs. Townsend is able to sternly admonish the students "at 9:00 a.m. . . . and at 10:30 a.m. . . . the kids and her are smiling and giggling and laughing." He talks more of this rapport:

> I think that's one thing she does really well. She jumps all over them, but she'll also, when she smiles and tells them they've done a good job, then you just see 'em just light up. I mean it's incredible the difference. I wish I could explain exactly what it was. There should be a class at [the University] if there were some way to explain it exactly. There definitely should because it's, it's amazing to me. It really is.

Paul finds it difficult to describe these dynamics that he feels, but cannot rationalize. He cannot yet define this particular discourse that mixes nurture and authority. It is a style not naturally his own. Paul has modeled his own relationship with the students after Mrs. Townsend's practice. He admits to being "very comfortable" in his teacher role. Whereas at the beginning of the year he excused inappropriate behaviors, he now holds students accountable for their actions: "I have gotten to that point where if somebody is not doing something like they should . . . I'll demand a reason why this was going on." Of course these demands are always couched in an environment of warmth and caring. Paul views this trust and openness with students as being crucial to their learning and improvement.

Tests to this friendly rapport arise when he must discipline students. Paul admits that classroom management is his "biggest weakness." Paul found it difficult at first to negotiate that "fine line" between joking with students and loosing total class control. Again he looked to Mrs. Townsend as a guide for establishing the boundaries of expectations and acceptability:

> Mrs. Townsend has helped me with this so much, establishing discipline first and then moving from there. Because you get so much more done if [students], if everybody knows the rules and the boundaries. And then you know what you can and cannot do and if [students] break those rules or go over those boundaries, they know the consequences. Things happen so much better. . . . I can be funny and . . . make fun of myself or make fun of somebody else and . . . just have a good time. And everybody laughs and everybody has fun, but they're also paying attention.

When talking about his goals for the students, Paul is mentally sidetracked by the thought of surrendering the class to Karla. He has grown close to the students, particularly the boys, many for whom is a father figure. His goals for the students are nonacademic, focusing instead on the social curriculum. Paul hopes that, foremost, his students develop confidence in themselves and in their abilities. He uses his own life to illustrate these goals:

> The biggest thing I want them to do, the most important thing to me in *any* sort of learning is confidence. . . . I've always been a fairly confident person, and because of that confidence . . . there [are] things that I shouldn't be able to do that I can do. And there [are] times when I don't really know what's going on, but [I] feel like I've developed confidence over the years where I feel like I can learn how to do just about anything.

Paul believes that all students, regardless of achievement level, must feel successful in some area. Students must realize the "incredible the difference" that results from confident actions. Paul sees student confidence as the key to student success, explaining that "everything else will filter down and come from that."

Perhaps based on his own years of career searching, Paul does not want students to become linear in their thinking about success. He wants them to realize that occasional failures are part of the human condition. He does not want students to be too hard on themselves:

> I just want them to learn to do the best they can, but I also wanna temper that a little bit because . . . I don't truly believe that there's anybody in the world that can continuously . . . do the *very* best they can. And I don't want these kids to feel bad if they come home, and [they're] feeling like crap, like I have plenty of times and . . . don't feel like doing anything. That's ok. If that happens every once in a while, that's fine. You're a fine human being. . . . So I think there's that fine line between driving [students] too much and making them feel like dirt if they are not trying their very hardest at every second.

The use of "my kids" shows Paul's teacher-as-father thinking regarding his students. His concern for their well-being is not limited to the classroom. As surrogate father, he wants his children to feel good about themselves and lead balanced lives. Paul describes the students as extensions of himself. He wants them to lead a life that he too would hope to lead.

Developing a Teacher Persona. Ideological differences with one's mentor teacher are natural and perhaps a healthy requisite for the novice's development of a teaching philosophy. For Paul, moments of cognitive dissonance center on getting used to Mrs. Townsend's discourse which blends nurture and authority. In his view, these two stances are not naturally compatible. Wanting to explore his own developing teaching persona, Paul often discusses teacher attitude and actions with Mrs. Townsend. He feels comfortable expressing his differing views. In fact, dialogue is a staple of their friendship. He says, "We've had plenty of discussions about the teacher as her own person, and there's always going to be things that you would do differently from somebody else. . . . That's . . . part of those boundaries we set a long time ago."

The two have talked considerably about Mrs. Townsend's decision to exclude David from the school wide festival. Paul felt sorry for the child, was tormented by the decision, and desperately wanted his mentor to reconsider. In one of their many conversations about teacher rationale, Mrs. Townsend explained to Paul that David had learned the art of manipulation, and if given the opportunity, he would continue through life in this vein. In her view, allowing the child to attend an event that he did not earn was tantamount to neglect. She felt that it was also important for Paul to learn that caring for students sometimes means making seemingly unfair decisions. Her point soon became clear. In reaction to his exclusion from the festivities, David began completing all of his school work and acting appropriately in class.

Some teachers have student favorites and perhaps overlook the seemingly minor transgressions of usually attentive students. This phenomena does not occur in Mrs. Townsend's room. As a novice teacher, Paul wrestles with the need to always hold students accountable. He cites one of the "best student in the class" who made a seventy percent on his science test. According to Paul, "Everyone else did well, and he made a [grade of] seventy-nine. Well, [Mrs. Townsend] called his parents last night. He's got straight A's, but she called his parents last night and told them that she would not stand for that." While Paul initially wondered if the call was necessary, he resolves the issue by pointing to his mentor's fair and consistently dispersed high standards. Paul does admit, "I like that aspect of it." Paul acknowledges that his mentor's consistency in expectations pays off regularly: "She gets results. It's hard to argue with those results. Year after year, parents are begging, calling the [principal], writing letters to the county office to put their kids in her classroom because [the kids] are always going to . . . come out a lot better. So it's hard to argue with those results."

Paul's guidance from Mrs. Townsend also focuses on the social aspects of learning. I wondered if he was familiar with the phrase, "hidden curriculum." He was and remarked that the first word that came to his mind on hearing this phrase was "discrimination:"

> I've seen that with some people and that bothers me. Some, not overt, but definitely some, well, hidden [laughing] discrimination where just those expectations are made for certain students who are going to do certain things and you teach 'em that way. And if you teach 'em that way, well hell yes, they're going to be like that if you've geared them towards that, towards what your preconceived notions are.

For Paul these preconceptions may be based on negative racial, monetary or some other stereotype. He is at a loss for the motivation, remarking, "Who knows the reasons that people come up with for doing that? I have not yet figured that out." Paul cites a White teacher with whom he was acquainted. She was as a practitioner of discriminatory teaching practices. He describes her class:

> I saw so many things that I would never, ever, ever do in my classroom or if I do, I'll just, it's time to retire . . . [At the beginning of the school year] she gave me the lowdown on every student and what their abilities were and what they were capable of. . . . I mean how can you possible know within even a couple of months what your kids are capable of doing? I mean, when you make that decision . . . then that's all they're ever going to do. They're not going to do anything more. . . . I tend to feel like [the teacher] looked at them and said, 'Well this is a White successful kid from a successful family. This kid's going to be brilliant.' And that puts pressure on kids, too, if you don't wait and see what they're like. . . . That was a prime example of the hidden curriculum to me, of making up your mind, saying that these kids are this way because they look like this or their parents are like this, or whatever. I mean it was a learning experience.

Next to his mentorship with Magness Townsend, Paul considers his encounter with this particular teacher as very instructive. He saw first hand the power that a teacher heralded in determining student success. It has served as a reminder and a cautionary tale for him.

Paul talks of the impact that racial differences have played in his relationship with Mrs. Townsend. It is clear in his response that Paul interprets my question as a search for negatives:

> That's one thing . . . diversity is definitely a hot term and all that, but I mean I . . . walk in there and sure I see color. I mean cause . . . people are different colors. I also see different color hair, different color eyes and I mean it's not like I'm saying I'm totally color blind. But when I get in there . . . there's not one child there that I . . . [would] do anything different with them because of [their color]. And I think maybe because Mrs. Townsend and I are both that way, that's, that's just never been that much of an issue.

Paul sees racial differences as merely physical differences. He feels that other than lacking his teacher's knowledge of "different famous people from the African American community," he and his mentor are essentially the same. Paul considers knowledge of African American issues not easily accessible to him because of his White skin. He describes it as "information hard to come by."

What Paul lacks in information, he supplants with observation and conversation. He describes the nervousness that some of his White peers display when discussing racial matters. For Paul, much of this anxiety is indicative of concealed racism. He speaks of peers who, when mentioning Blacks, "there's some whispering. . . . It's funny to me to see." He contrasts these whispers and suppression of thought to the very open and honest racial discussions that he has with Mrs. Townsend, exchanges that he has come to value: It's, it's a real close relationship. I feel like anyway. I can't imagine not being in touch with [Mrs. Townsend] again. I figure I'll have questions forever [laughing], and I'll be calling her until she's one hundred probably. And she'll probably live to be one hundred, too, Mrs. Townsend.

Karla

Called to Teach. Karla's choice of words is as practiced and serious as Paul's are casual and free-flowing. I am surprised to hear, during the course of our interview, that she, like Mrs. Townsend, feels called by God to teach. Like the other teachers who were called, Karla tested this life's destiny by sampling another field, criminal justice, only to find herself, "miserable." She talks further about being called to teach:

> I don't believe that unless I'm working with children in some way that I will be happy. I mean I have a special bond with all my students. There are certain children that I really feel that I have a connection with, and I was placed where I was placed for a reason. I was always taught by my grandmother that God calls you to do certain things and he places you in certain situations, and he opens doors. And he has. And I've always had a connection with children from a very early age, and so I couldn't see myself doing anything else.

Karla even views her placement with Mrs. Townsend as part of this calling. She believes: "God put me in Mrs. Townsend's classroom." Although Karla is White and Magness Townsend is Black, the two share a religious discourse. Both were raised in the rural south in close-knit Christian households. Once, when Karla had a disturbing dream about a student, Mrs. Townsend helped her to interpret it's meaning as part of God's overall plan:

> I had a dream that somebody had died and [Lionel] was crying and I was comforting him. That's what I was doing. And the next day, I came in. It was a Monday. I came, I said,'Mrs. Townsend,' I said, 'I had a dream about Lionel.' I said, I said, 'I don't know what . . . he was crying. Someone had died.' I said, 'And all his friends from the class were around him and they were comforting him.' Well, that morning, he came in and he was just as sad. And he told me his grandfather had died that weekend. And Mrs. Townsend said, 'Well Karla, God knew that Lionel needed you at least to pray for him or to be there for him on Monday.' And . . . ever since then, I really know that education and being a teacher [are] where I should be.

Karla describes her relationship with Mrs. Townsend as both personal and professional. It is a friendship based on the younger's trust in her mentor's guidance. This friendship also allows Mrs. Townsend to gauge when Karla is "having good days and not so good days and it could have nothing to do with the kids." As I thought of the metaphor of teacher-as-mother, Karla announced: "She's very much like my mother to me in a lot of ways, outside of the classroom. Because we can talk about a lot of different personal things as far as our religion and what have you, but at the same time, professionally, I have the greatest respect for her."

Karla describes Mrs. Townsend as one who prizes honesty in mentoring. Karla describes this honesty as beneficial. Speaking of her mentor she says, "She can tell me, 'Karla you need to do this next time. This was a little, you know, rough. It didn't get across the way you wanted it to.' And I'll say, 'Ok.' I'll say, 'How can I fix it?' We have that kind of relationship. It's never you know, '*I'm the teacher.*'" Karla was surprised to learn that Mrs. Townsend learns from her as well: "And she'll . . . tell me, 'Karla, I am learning from you just like you learn from me.'" According to Karla, Mrs. Townsend teaches her many things that are "beyond the instructional." In addition to lesson planning, and management issues, Karla receives guidance in human relations, or "people skills" as she calls them. She learns the importance of practicing ethical teaching. Mrs. Townsend tells her:

> 'Karla, be honest...always be honest with your [students'] parents. Be straightforward. Document things,' what have you. She teaches me the things that we don't get in college....It's common sense stuff. It's how to be a professional and how to watch your P's and Q's. That sort of thing.

This common sense is not to be downplayed, as Mrs. Townsend reminds Karla, "God gave it to you."

LifeLong Learning. According to Karla, Mrs. Townsend is adamant that a teacher's own life experiences be used in the classroom. Karla is encouraged to use her life as an example to the students. In the telling, Karla does not focus on details, but on "the... moral of the story to help [students] see that you're human." This sharing of one's life requires that the teacher remain honest and remember that students are individuals with their own unique histories. Karla stresses, "That's very important. That's very important in our classroom."

Karla views Mrs. Townsend as the embodiment of a lifelong learner who continuously renews her store of information. Mrs. Townsend encourages lifelong learning in her mentee as well. She often suggests to Karla novel ways of bridging different subject areas. This instructional advice is offered graciously without demands, to be accepted or declined. As Karla describes: "She just pulls [from files] and gives us [information] and what we use is our choice." Karla has also benefited from Mrs. Townsend's wealth of knowledge on African American history, a subject area ignored in her own schooling. Karla admits: "When I was in school, Black History was not taught, period. And during Black History Month we were lucky if we got Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth or Martin Luther King. People like Supreme Court Judge Marshall, I didn't know who he was until I got into college." In fact, Mrs. Townsend has stressed that Karla's European heritage or incomplete schooling not be used as an excuse for ignorance of cultural others. She tells Karla, "You can't teach unless you know." To ensure that she knows, Mrs. Townsend exposes Karla to a wealth of resources, fully expecting the novice to re-educate herself. As Karla describes: "She [has] got a box full of stuff and [says], 'Copy this and copy that.'"

Karla hopes to integrate the histories of different cultural groups across the curriculum just as her mentor does. She is clear about what is she does not want: "I do not

want it to be just Black History Month. I want it to be, day one, this American was important. I want my children to see that everyone's important and it's just not an isolated thing." Karla discusses the role of history in providing models of academic success for young students. She learned this from Mrs. Townsend. Karla believes that "kids need role models. . . . They need a role model that they can see through their academics. . . . You know regardless of how great a basketball player I am, if I'm smart in science, I can do this one day. And she's taught me that. She's taught me that." Karla freely describes herself as "learning with my children."

She laughs remembering the Friday afternoon when Mrs. Townsend asked her to update a bulletin board on African Americans. A large box in the closet stored numerous articles and pictures from which to choose. Karla grew anxious as she searched through the resources, looking for a familiar name or face. Finally, forced to face her knowledge gap, she resigned herself to become teacher-as-learner: "And I picked and I chose and I went through and I said, 'I don't know who she is. I'm going to put her up. . . . I want to learn.'" And the following day, when Karla led a discussion of the new African American heroes and heroines, she felt anxious. She remembers, "We were going over different people, and I was so scared because I wasn't sure what they all did, and when they did it, and do I have her mixed up with so and so? And I was scared. . . . I did not want to tell them something wrong." Karla did not give misinformation as she had feared. Her confirmation came from Mrs. Townsend who assured her, "You did fine."

Individual Differences. And if students are to be acknowledged as individuals, learning strategies must be individualized. Mrs. Townsend has helped Karla tremendously in this area. Like Paul, Karla admits that differentiating her teaching style has been a challenge, but "rewarding" nonetheless:

> Because I catch myself for instance, last week I was explaining a word problem to a child and he could not see it the way I saw it. I said, 'Well, skip that one and go to the next one, and I'll be back in a minute.' And I had to go and I had to rethink, 'Ok, how does so and so think about math? What does he see? Is he global? Does he see parts?' And that *really* [helped]. And I went back and I explained it the way *he* learned and that really helped him. He got the problem right away. He said, 'Oh, I see Miss Lewis. I see.' And he got it and it was good.

When I first met Karla two years ago as her University supervisor, she informed me of her lifelong struggles with reading and writing. She was very accepting of whatever tutelage the University could provide. I wondered if she was as open with Mrs. Townsend about her language challenges. She said that she was:

> I told her right away. . . . I told her about my experience[s] growing up, having my first two years of school, being in a school that was private that did not use phonics at all. And that, I really felt, has some bearing on the way I write. Because . . . I was never taught sounds and I'm a lot better now as far as in front of the kids. I'll sit there and even though they don't see me, I'll sound it out in my head. . . . I can spell a lot better and my writing is [better] because I can spell words now. I can use bigger words [laughing].

Karla admits to once relying on the same familiar words and phrases in her writing to camouflage her poor spelling. Mrs. Townsend removed that writing crutch by insisting that Karla write in different styles for different occasions. Karla shakes her head, recalling, "She made me write letters and letters and letters to parents." Karla has also done extensive writing in preparation for the school's accreditation visit. Mrs. Townsend has seen to that. Because Karla is a visual and kinesthetic learner, Mrs. Townsend suggested typing as an appropriate way to visualize sounds. Reading with precision and expression in front of the students poses another weakness that Karla is determined to overcome. Mrs. Townsend has taken the instructive lead here as well. According to Karla, "She makes me read aloud *all* the time. And speak. Well, speaking was never a problem, but reading out loud was difficult. . . . She's been a real model for me, a model. I find myself sounding more and more and more like Mrs. Townsend."

Social Goals. Like Paul, Karla's primary goals for students are social ones. She, too, hopes that they build confidence. Karla feels that confidence building must occur when students are young if students are to have successful futures:

> A lot of my children do not have any self-confidence. And I want them to realize that . . . not all people are alike, that we have different strengths; we have different weaknesses. But as long as we try our best, that's important. And I want them to know that they have to work hard, and that people are not going to give them cake on the platter so to speak. They are going to have to work for what they get. There are still different stereotypes about people and sometimes people do not have expectations for [certain students] . . . but we have to have expectations for ourselves. And academically they have worked so hard. I just want them to continue to work hard, and grow and get ready for sixth grade. But, most important, get ready for life because I think, I feel for a few of my students this is a real critical point, and the way they finish the fifth grade is going to determine their middle school and whether they stay in high school or not. I really feel that.

I could not help but notice how much Karla sounded like Mrs. Townsend. Even more so when she spoke of David, the child who was suspended three days for fighting. Karla finds the situation heartbreaking because David has made such gains since the start of the year. Karla describes this progress:

> At the beginning of the year, for a little background so you'll understand, he lashed out at everybody, Mrs. Townsend, myself, [Paul], any other kids who touched him, looked at him wrong; he lashed out. And that's just, that's the way he's been taught to deal with his feelings. Well, not really taught, but conditioned I guess you can say.

Only yesterday David walked away from a provocateur. Karla was so proud that he came willingly when she called him. Someone had "called him a name or pushed him or something," and he was ready to fight. He came, though he sort of swaggered towards her, hands in pockets, like he did not want to come. Karla calmed him and he walked away. She continues, "He walked away yesterday. I was very proud of him, and he was being antagonized by other students. But he still walked away." However, today in the cafeteria, the same antagonists ridiculed David's family, and the child fought back. When

Karla discusses her conversation with the child, she displays the same blend of nurture and authority modeled by Mrs. Townsend. Karla nurtured the child professing her continued care and fondness for him. In this since, Karla sounds like a mother. She used her authority in telling David that he must improve:

> He said, 'Miss Lewis, I'm sorry.' I said, 'Well, David" I said, 'I was proud of you yesterday and I'm still proud of you 'cause I know they antagonized you.' I said, 'We have to keep working on our temper and how to control it and how to deal with our feelings.' He said, 'I know.' He said, 'I know, and they were messing with my cousin.' That's all he said. He sort of let it just drop and I let it drop because I didn't want to make . . . him feel that . . . my approval still wasn't on him. I wanted him to still think I was positive with him, and even though he knew I disapproved of his actions, he knows that it wasn't him personally. He really needs a lot of love. He's one of the children, I told Mrs. Townsend, I wish I could take home with me.

Karla tells me that, excluding this incident, David has made improvements in both academics as well as behavior. Karla talks of the time that the child raised a failing grade to an A. The significance of teacher opinion on student behavior is clear in her description:

> We got report cards. [He said], 'Miss Lewis, I made an A. I made and A!' I said, 'Well you can make another A.' He said, "Can I Miss Lewis?' I said, 'Yes you can.' I said,'You're smart.' He said, 'I never made an A before.' I said, 'Well how about you make two A's next time?' So he's really working really hard.

Karla realizes that David looks to his teachers for approval. She takes her role as confidence builder very seriously. Because Mrs. Townsend, Paul and Karla have established a trusting rapport with David, he listens to their suggestions about needed improvements. The results have been positive. Karla says that David's confidence level, and his desire to learn and to participate in class have all increased. She describes: "He's participating, raising his hand and he'll ask questions. Where before, at the beginning of the year, he just sat there. And he's just really improving. . . . I think he felt in the past that [his former teachers] thought he was always the troublemaker." Karla fears that three

days away from school might "throw him off track" academically and behaviorally. This focus on the social dimension of instruction increases with Karla's development as a teacher.

Finding a Voice. Karla's development as a teacher has centered on finding a personal voice that will encourage students to share their voices. Karla's understanding of the "hidden curriculum" reflects a knowledge of the African American experience, an experience that she has deliberately tried to understand. From an early age she has worked, played and interacted with African Americans. Her grandfather owned a small store that serviced much of the rural community that she calls home. Karla wanted me to understand that this store was no thriving business, only a small kiosk that served as a meeting place for Black and White farmers. So that I will not get the impression that her grandfather was a wealthy man, Karla remarks: "I hate to say this, but my grandfather was poor as dirt." Her understanding of the hidden curriculum centers on her life experiences:

> Well, [the] hidden curriculum is a lot of different things to me - social skills, life skills, which I think are two different things, because you teach [students] how to socialize and interact with each other, but you also teach them how to survive in the real world. That's part of the hidden curriculum. . . . Morals and values are a part of hidden curriculum. 'Cause some children do not get simple things like manners or right and wrong, [and] how to deal with their emotions, things that . . . as educators there's a fine line [regarding] what we're supposed to teach. I'm still trying to figure it out, the hidden curriculum.

Mrs. Townsend has encouraged Karla to address certain elements of the hidden curriculum with particular students. Earlier in the semester four boys, all friends, were causing much disruption in the class. Mrs. Townsend and Karla shared their concerns with each other. The boys, all African American, would be treated very harshly if they transferred their classroom behavior into the larger society. Mrs. Townsend asked Karla to speak with the boys. Tapping into her own well of experiences, Karla shared with the students her own

battles against stereotypes. She, a poor, White girl from the rural south, encountered much hostility from some teachers and others who stereotyped her as incapable. Karla also told the four students of her language difficulties. She explained how continuous hard work and belief in her abilities have helped her to become a teacher.

Karla credits Mrs. Townsend for helping her better understand the social needs of students. She considers Mrs. Townsend very adept at addressing the hidden curriculum. By observing her mentee, Karla has learned how best to incorporate ethical teaching in classroom instruction. As an example, she cites a conversation that Mrs. Townsend had with the class on the importance of giving. Mrs. Townsend used her own life to make the point. Karla tells me what happened:

> She told them a story of when she was little. . . . Her mother was pregnant with her younger sister. And she was two or three, maybe four. . . . And she wanted a tricycle and there were like eight other kids in the family besides her, and she wanted the tricycle. And [her parents] weren't going to be able to get it for her. They [had] another mouth on the way to feed. Money was tight. . . . She didn't care about having a sister. She wanted a tricycle. You know, a three year old. And that morning, everyone else went without Christmas[presents], and they got her a red tricycle. . . . So with that [story], she taught that lesson about how they sacrificed to give.

By giving examples of her own youthful selfishness, Mrs. Townsend helps students to better recognize their own.

Karla believes that the racial differences between she and Mrs. Townsend have definitely impacted their relationship. She views this impact as very positive. Despite differences in ethnicity, the two women's lives intersect in certain ways. Foremost are the rural upbringing and Christian faith. Both have also been victims of stereotype, Magness Townsend because she is African American and Karla because of her language issues. Karla feels these similarities have contributed to her bond with Mrs. Townsend. Karla also uses her background and personal struggles to assist her in relating to students. She says

that while some African American students initially assumed, "Well, she doesn't understand me," they changed their minds after interacting with her. According to Karla. these same students now remark, "She does understand. She does know. 'How do you know that Miss Lewis?'" It is Mrs. Townsend who has helped Karla view life's intersections as bridges to understanding students.

Like Paul, Karla considers classroom management her biggest challenge as a student teacher. And while Paul struggles to walk the fine line between congeniality and loss of control, Karla wrestles with being serious and being too mean. From Mrs. Townsend, she has learned the value of establishing rules and regulations at the outset, and remaining fair and consistent. Karla recognizes a resiliency in fifth graders' disposition and does not want to take this for granted: "If you are hard on them, they get over it in ten minutes and they're fine . . . and that's . . . taken me a while to get used to." Karla credits Mrs. Townsend with allowing her to find a behavioral management style with which she is comfortable, as long as this style is grounded in honesty and acknowledges student individuality. Karla says, "I knew coming in the limitations, what I could do and not do and basically there's not much she does not let me do. She lets me discipline freely. That area's one of the biggest areas I think she's helped me with. In general I see a lot of growth in myself."

Karla also sees much of Mrs. Townsend in herself. She'll often make a remark to the students only to catch herself mid-sentence, thinking, "Mrs. Townsend, I sound just like Mrs. Townsend!" This echo has not gone unnoticed by Mrs. Townsend, who tells her mentee, "Karla, you sound just like me." Karla takes pride in modeling her mentor's insistence on establishing discipline at the outset. She cites a school assembly during which the students did not participate in the unruliness of other classes. However, Karla admits that challenges still remain. As she laughingly admits: "We still have our

moments." For everything she has learned from Mrs. Townsend, Karla is very grateful, exclaiming, "I *do not* feel that there's a better teacher *anywhere* in the world. She gets me for saying things like that, but I brag on her a lot."

Learning A New Discourse

I meet the three of them in the classroom for lunch. Mrs. Townsend, Karla, and Paul seem especially pensive, as they begin processing their year together. At different points in the conversation, Mrs. Townsend clasps Karla's arm, seeming not wanting to let go. At other moments, Karla's eyes brim with tears. The edges of Paul's eyes redden at times and his eyes also swell with tears.

Teaching A Philosophy

Reflecting on the year that three of them have spent together, Mrs. Townsend believes that she and her two student teachers share a teaching philosophy that "all children can succeed," and that it is their duty as teachers to facilitate this success. It is this shared philosophy, she believes, that explains the compatibility that they have enjoyed. Interestingly, while Mrs. Townsend assumes that all three began the year with this belief in the success of every child, Karla and Paul acknowledge that it was their interactions with Mrs. Townsend that helped shape their teaching philosophies. Paul explains to his mentor:

> Something that you told me a long time ago that really stuck with me, and it's part or the main part of my philosophy. If a child's not learning, it's not the child's fault. It's not the child's job to adjust to our teaching style. We adjust to their learning style, and you don't sit there and say, 'I'm gonna give you this information. When you get it, you get it. If you don't then you're dumb.' You find out ways to get that information across where they do get it, cause there's always a way. You just have to find it. And you told me that a year ago probably, and I, I mean, I think about that every single day when I get frustrated. . . . You can do something. You just have to find it, and that's a teacher's job.

This focus on the teacher's role in student success is also articulated by Karla. She has learned that the social needs cannot be ignored:

> Another thing I've learned from Mrs. Townsend that probably has stuck with me is a lot of our children haven't had expectations placed for them- goals set for them, and so... their confidence levels or their belief in themselves [are] just not what [they] should be. And so they're scared to learn 'cause they're scared of failing, and you have to have that confidence for 'em for a while, and eventually most of them pick it up. They strive and they want to do their best.

Beginning Teachers and Student Success

The degree to which Mrs. Townsend and her student teachers now share a common philosophy becomes clearer when they discuss preparation for beginning teachers. All three believe that beginning teachers must understand the importance of teaching the social curriculum. For Mrs. Townsend, novices must have self-knowledge and knowledge of their students: "Know yourself quite well. It's very, very important. Then you will know how to deal with others." This personal knowledge centers on exploring the rationale for becoming a teacher. In Mrs. Townsend's view, if the motive is not student-centered, then the teacher will not benefit students. Indeed, as one who has been called to teach, she believes that others are designed for life's assignments as well. Listening to the sound of one's call is crucial in deciding whether or not to enter teaching. She explains, "If it's not what [they] need to do, this is no place for [them]. They need to put their strengths somewhere else where it can be beneficial. I think every person has a purpose. If this is truly their purpose and once they know that, everything else just falls right in line."

Mrs. Townsend also believes that knowledge of students is vital to student-centered instruction. Again, this instruction focuses on the social issues of high expectations, cooperation, and self-esteem. For Mrs. Townsend, this social curriculum always takes precedence over the academic:

> And that means you may not turn to the number one page in math and science the first two days of school, but get to know your students and let your students get to know you first. And set the tone in that classroom of expectations for you and expectations from those students. Those students have expectations from the teacher, and the teacher should have expectations from each individual child . . . work together . . . build self-esteem.

Paul addresses student self-esteem by speaking of confidence. He has seen the positive impact that confidence has on student learning:

> It's become so clear that if they have that confidence, then they're willing to go the extra mile to look at things a little bit differently. . . . We have so many kids in here, that at the beginning of the year, wouldn't even ask a question. They didn't know, and they were terrified 'cause they didn't know. . . . [Now], Terry over there is the prime example. He'll just drive you nuts with questions. . . . He's made incredible strides, and he's gonna keep making 'em. He knows that ignorance comes from not asking. Not from not knowing.

Focusing on Paul's mention of knowing, Karla believes that beginning teachers must humanize themselves to students and let young learners know that they, too, are lifelong learners. She feels that rather than having an attitude of, "I'm so up here," teachers must not camouflage their own errors from students. Mistakes should be embraced as a natural part of the learning process:

> Let them know that you're human and that you make mistakes, and you don't always spell everything correctly. And you get the words mixed up and numbers backwards. . . . That's important....I know when I was in school, I was scared of some of my teachers. . . . I was scared to ask some questions or I was scared of making a mistake . . . because they acted like they never did. [The teacher] should be the one person, I feel, that [students] should be able to turn to no matter what, no matter what's going on at home or . . . at school or with their peers. They should be able to turn to their teachers.

Clearly, Karla embraces Mrs. Townsend's belief that the class should be a safe haven.

Sharing a Culture

Perhaps the most insightful part of the conversation centered on ethnicity. Magness Townsend is Black. Paul and Karla are White, and I wondered if this made any difference.

Listening to each other's responses provides a more complex and positive view of race, for everyone, particularly Paul. As he had done earlier, Paul mentions the racial differences between he and Mrs. Townsend as a merely incidental occurrence of time and place. He remarks, "Mrs. Townsend knows some things [about African American history], and she was a big part of the Civil Rights movement and I've never had that experience with somebody like that before. I mean I don't know, it, it's, I couldn't even say it's race. It's just somebody that's had a different experience." While Paul's view of diversity centers on the transmission of new information, Mrs. Townsend adds her more transactional and global view of diversity. For her, the racial, generational and gender differences among the three have been an "asset." By viewing the interaction between Paul, Karla and herself, the pupils have learned how to maintain healthy relationships with cultural others. They have also benefited from a diversity of perspectives:

> The children, our children, I think, I feel, I *know*, have a great resource, because they had a male's point of view. They had an older woman's point of view. They had a younger woman's point of view. They had cultures, backgrounds that were different, with me being African American, with her being Caucasian American, and his being Caucasian American, male and female. You bring to the class a lot more, based on experiences and cultures and interactions. It gives more to the students. I feel our children have been enriched. I have been enriched. . . . And we can put it together. Although it's a common thread, it was done a little differently in some ways and sometimes it was the same. That's a lot to give to each other, and so our children have more perspectives than just one.

On hearing Mrs. Townsend speak, Paul's eyes become moist with the realization of just how much exchange has occurred in this room, transactions that he had not previously thought to articulate: "It's really funny, I didn't even think about it until you said that."

Karla cites her natural connection with certain students as a very positive experience. During the field trip to Washington, Karla chaperoned four students. They were the same four boys with whom she had spoken about behavioral issues. She told them that she would be their mother on this trip. She recalls that, while on the streets of

Washington, many passers-by stared strangely at the four students and her. One of the students finally questioned this odd behavior. Karla explained, "They're staring because you all are Black, and I am White and they wonder why we are together." Karla and the boys burst out laughing at what, to them, seemed to be an absurd reason for staring. Like Mrs. Townsend, Karla believes that having had teachers of different races, genders and ages has benefited her students. She says, "Our school experiences are a little different and that helps us relate to the children a lot." Mrs. Townsend adds that the three are models of cultural acceptance:

> It's rich. My culture is very rich. Their culture is very rich and when you put those two riches together, you can't help but get something very positive out of it. And when they see us interacting positively and [treating] each other as human beings . . . working together, and thinking nothing of it, that boils down to acceptance of cultural differences.

Paul notes that some deskmates in the class, individuals who would not ordinarily choose to sit together, have learned to iron out their differences. They must learn to work cooperatively, because, in this class, they are not going to change groups. Paul notes, "And the kids really do [work cooperatively]. I really do think they pick up on [our interactions], and they see that differences are ok. . . . They still pick on each other all the time, but they are dealing with each other and they handle it."

Karla also feels that students have benefited from seeing the great similarities between African Americans and Caucasians, something often downplayed in the larger society. Karla points to the shared histories between she and Mrs. Townsend: "We were brought up in the same religious homes, and the cultures were similar . . . and the kids can tell our similarities. They can tell." Karla also believes that all three have successfully modeled the basic idea of respect for self and for others. Listening to this sharing of thoughts, I notice the repetition of ideas such as "trust," "support," and "caring friends."

Mrs. Townsend, Karla and Paul are proud that they have successfully modeled these components of positive human interaction.

A Family

Towards the end of their conversation, I notice that the theme turns to and settles on family. Saddened by the thought of leaving her mentor, Karla has been on the verge of tears throughout much of the conversation and has spoken the least of the three. She cheers at the thought of a lifelong friendship with Mrs. Townsend. Karla promises that her mentor's "phone's gonna be ringing pretty regularly, that's what I know." Mrs. Townsend speaks of her own emotional adjustment: "Check me out in a week or two, because I have grown to depend on them and they depended on me. We depend on each other and it's been wonderful."

All three cite a death as pivotal in the development of family among the students. One of the student's father died, and his classmates took on the pain as their own. Paul describes the scene of consolation:

> That was them most unbelievable thing I've ever seen. . . . People that don't like each other . . . hugging, holding each other, telling, each other it's gonna be alright. . . . Certain people just taking the lead and just being helpful . . . just taking charge of . . . whole groups of people who were just bawling. And they were just saying, 'Everything's gonna be alright.' And explaining things in ways that were a lot more mature than . . . I could have come up with right off the top of my head.

Karla mentions one student who seemed to take the lead in consoling others. He is a student now called "Reverend Fulman." All three agree that this child provided much needed counsel and leadership for his peers. Other students surprised them also, such as one boy now known as "Deacon Carson." Once a source of disruption in the room, he provided inspiration to his classmates during the grieving period. Mrs. Townsend believes

that this positive student behavior results from the presence of caring teachers. When students receive care from their teachers, they can become care-givers for each other.

Participants' Final Thoughts on Validity

I gave Paul and Karla a copy of their own transcriptions to examine for accuracy and reflection. A week later, I talked with them separately. I met Paul in Mrs. Townsend's Cherryhill classroom. He felt very comfortable with his transcriptions and did not desire to make any changes, elaborations or deletions. The same was true of Karla, who called me while visiting her parents. She, too, was satisfied with her remarks.

I gave Mrs. Townsend a copy of Chapter IV for examination. Because I was exploring her persona, I wanted to make certain that my analysis was accurate. We talked a week later in her home. We had gone to Karla's wedding earlier that day, and our attention now turned to the study. Below are Mrs. Townsend's comments on my analysis of her call to teach and the translation of this calling into instructional practice and the mentoring of student teachers:

> All of that is what I believe in and what I have tried to do. The examples you used were an equation. You could read the example and read the philosophy. This is the first time I actually sat down and could see me. Because when you're in the process, you don't mirror yourself. The only way I can tell sometimes is by the product, student feedback. So you told me in your writing well. (Magness Townsend, 6/15/96)

CHAPTER V

WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED

This study has offered many insights into the connection between teacher thinking and teaching practice. Through an analysis of teacher stories, I have been able to give conceptual and classroom manifestations of a teaching philosophy. African American women who believe that they were called by God to teach characterize their profession in a distinctive way. The way that one teacher, Magness Townsend, translates her call into instructional practice and in the mentoring of student teachers provides evidence that, at least in her teaching, ideology precedes action. The manner in which the two student teachers learn this woman's discourse, an emergent finding in this study, attests to the transactive nature of this ideology.

In all of these examinations, narrative methodology was chosen as the most appropriate means of exploration. Witherell, Tran, and Othus (1995) speak best in saying that "narrative[s] . . . serve as an interpretive lens for reflecting the storied nature of human lives, for understanding the moral complexities of the human condition, and for enabling classrooms to expand their borders as interpretive communities" (p. 40). Individual teacher stories, when made accessible to others, are rich texts for instruction and contemplation.

Summary

In this study the rich texts that can now be shared beyond classroom walls highlight the discourse, instruction and mentoring practices of those who were called to teach.

The Discourse of the Call

Magness Townsend articulated her call to teach in a way that mirrored the language patterns of the two teachers in the initial phase of the study. I identified six sequential moments that informed the discourse of these African American teachers who believed that they were called by God to teach:

1) Receiving the Call - The decision to teach was believed not to be a conscious choice, but a decision preordained by God.

2) Why Me Lord? - The women were tested in their call to teach. External impositions included the need to fulfill the wishes of others. Ultimate resolve was found in a contemplation of God.

3) Going Through Samaria - The teaching landscape was filled with educational challenges and social dangers. Those called to teach were willing to confront these difficulties through a reliance on faith and a belief in the legacy of their work.

4) All Other Ground Is Sinking Sand - The pedagogy of those called to teach centered on the total child. The teachers called to teach groomed students for futures of choices and ethical living.

5) Hold Your Hand Up Anyway - Students were expected to have personal pride and self-respect in spite of social opposition.

6) All Good Gifts - Those who heeded the call to teach reaped many rewards in the form of student successes and feelings of personal fulfillment. These teachers had the assuring knowledge that God had planned their lives. The gifts they received were more plentiful then those they had given.

All three women remembered the decision to teach as a very natural choice. In her own way, each saw herself as born to teach. The women were forced to seriously consider this life's choice, especially in the face of other more financially lucrative opportunities. In

fact, all three women were encouraged by family members or college professors to pursue the sciences. The women had to choose between fulfilling their call from God or fulfilling the dreams of others. Once the decision to follow the call to teach was made, the women encountered the residues of society's racism in their classrooms. While the eldest, Othel Williams, had to deal primarily with the poverty endemic to her segregated all Black school, Denise Owens and Magness Townsend steeled themselves against the virulent bigotry in their newly integrated schools. Education was considered empowering, and the women conveyed this to their students.

Their nurture and authority was transformative. These women who were called by God to teach encouraged their students to 'stand up and be counted' even in times of adversity. In the end, rewards came and still come, continuously, in the form student testimonials and personal feelings of fulfillment. Because they were doing the work of God, they felt richly blessed.

The Call to Teach In Instructional Practice

Magness Townsend's call to teach manifested itself in very distinct and ethical classroom practices. Her mix of nurture and authority was obvious in all dimensions of instruction, from the physical arrangement of the room to the manner in which class rules were decided. Students were prized as unique individuals who were expected to work cooperatively with their peers. They were encouraged to respect others as well as themselves. Students were also expected to possess accurate knowledge for informed decision-making, personal empowerment, and social success. Instruction involved skill mastery for the purposes of mastery learning and true understanding. Student-centered instruction informed all learning experiences. Instructional material was tailored to the unique learning needs of students.

In Mrs. Townsend's room, larger life issues served as the banner for the academic curriculum. Classroom instruction involved instilling students with personal pride and dignity. Instructional presentation mixed parables of wisdom with the subject material. Mrs. Townsend modeled values such as honesty and patience as deliberately and purposefully as she modeled basic math and writing skills. She made clear the power of education to all of her students. She made certain that students also possessed certain social skills which she deemed critical for their healthy interactions with others. The "spiritual side" of the student was acknowledged as well. Mrs. Townsend viewed all students as special creations of God who had latent callings of their own. She viewed it her job to nurture this potential.

In covering all dimensions of learning, Mrs. Townsend established herself as the nurturing, attentive and demanding parent in the classroom family. Her teaching style mixed nurture and authority where authority was confident wisdom, and nurture was compassion. She was the protector of students, insuring them safety and comfort sometimes at her own physical and emotional expense. In this safety, no youngster was permitted to hide behind personal or social perceptions of inadequacy. In the end, they were taught to celebrate their own successes and appreciate those of others.

Articulating the Call to Teach In Mentoring

Magness Townsend clearly and continuously articulated her call to teach in her interactions with her two student teachers, Paul and Karla. Both novices highlighted similar themes regarding their mentorship relationship. Articulation of this call is categorized below:

- Honesty informed the mentoring relationship. Mrs. Townsend was honest and direct in all of her dealings with students and student teachers.

- The mentoring relationship began as a professional relationship with clearly defined roles and expectations for both mentee and mentor. After the seriousness of teaching was established, the relationship was allowed to flower into an emotional one. With Paul, the relationship grew into a close friendship. With Karla, the mentorship became a mother-daughter relationship.

- The only appropriate teaching was ethical teaching. The teacher and student teacher were to model such values as honesty, perseverance and respect.

- Teachers were expected to teach to the individual learning styles of students, rather than to their own teaching comforts.

- Student teachers were given freedom to grow and experiment in their teaching as long as instruction was student-centered and addressed individual student needs.

- Regardless of experience level, all teachers were expected to engage in lifelong learning. As Magness Townsend told Karla, "You can't teach if you don't know." Karla's learning centered on familiarizing herself with African American history. She was also committed to the continued improvement of her language difficulties. Paul worked to improve his learning styles teaching. Mrs. Townsend facilitated growth in all of these areas.

- The student teachers modeled the rapport that Mrs. Townsend had with her students. This rapport communicated the seriousness of learning with care and support.

- Paul and Karla were expected to maintain the same high expectations for all students. They were not permitted to excuse students' inappropriate behavior or view students as victims to be pitied. Students must be groomed to succeed in a world that held many challenges.

- Mrs. Townsend valued dialogue in helping student teachers express and analyze their own teaching beliefs. Her conversations with Paul centered on teacher reactions to student inappropriateness. Mrs. Townsend's refusal to let David attend the school festival

provided one opportunity for the veteran teacher and her mentee to confront areas of dissonance in their pedagogy. Mrs. Townsend's dialogues with Karla encouraged the mentee to express her own call to teach. Mrs. Townsend validated Karla's invitation from God as serious and real. Other dialogues centered on the cultural intersections between the two women, and the value of making cultural connections in teaching.

- Student teachers were expected to value social learning as essential to the academic success of students. Through such practices as cooperative learning, they were to impart to students the importance of getting along. Karla and Paul were also expected to nurture student confidence and student efficacy. Karla was encouraged to capitalize on her understanding of social stereotypes. Mrs. Townsend told her to use her life experiences as a basis for interacting with students.

An emergent finding in the research was the manner in which the student teachers responded to Mrs. Townsend's mentoring. They absorbed, practiced and embraced much of her teaching philosophy as their own. Karla and Paul were active learners of a new discourse.

Conclusions

Several conclusions can be made from this study. By converging inquiry and teaching I was able to gain great insights into teacher thinking and teaching practice. I advanced research practice into praxis through my role as a consistently present and inquiring observer. Lather (1986) says of praxis in research: "...the research process enables people to change by encouraging self-reflection and deeper understanding of their particular situations" (p. 263). By meeting regularly with the participants and asking open-ended questions, I helped them to uncover and analyze the articulation. Other conclusions center on discourse, instruction and articulation.

Discourse

In analyzing the teachers' stories, I used Casey's (1993) definition of discourse as "a consistent system of controlling metaphors, notions, categories, and norms which develops and delimits its speakers' conceptions of personal, work, and social relations" (p. 31). It is clear that the storytelling patterns of the African American women in this study constitute a distinct discourse. As was explored previously, the three use shared language and shared categories when speaking of their call and its implications for their lives. Their teaching profession is a gift from God. The women in my study also share a history as women of color who were raised in, educated in, and had taught in a society that is historically racist and sexist. Here, I borrow from Bakhtin (as cited in Beach, 1993) who holds that the meaning of every utterance is contextualized. The call of the women is contextualized by their life experiences as well as their faith. Their spiritual call should not be confused with the secular call described by Duval and Carlson (1993), whose Vermont teachers defined calling as teaching in spite of physical and economic hardship. The teachers in my study often worked under conditions of adversity, as well. However, physical hardship did not define their motivation to teach. Their call was so defined because it was an invitation extended by God.

Instruction

The student-centered, life-relevant instructional style of Magness Townsend echoes the teaching practices of effective African American teachers, who make explicit a "hidden curriculum" which "encourages students to understand the personal value, the collective power and the political consequences of choosing academic achievement" (Foster, 1994, p. 233). Mrs. Townsend's focus on skill mastery as crucial to mastery learning and empowerment also reflects Foster's (1994) research findings that "effective Black teachers accept responsibility for nurturing their students' prerequisite skills and knowledge needed

for success in school" (p. 233). And like Ladson-Billing's (1994) teachers, Magness Townsend focuses on establishing genuine connections among students, and between students and teacher.

Mentoring

The way that Magness Townsend articulates her call through the mentoring of student teachers addresses major findings in research on teacher preparation. Mrs. Townsend's teaching practices define her as an effective teacher and teacher educator when juxtaposed with the writings of several researchers. Henderson (1992) sees effective teachers as reflective practitioners who hold to a value orientation of caring, rely on student-centered learning, and actively engage students in the learning process. Magness Townsend's pedagogy is certainly grounded on these premises. The very attributes that she possesses make her an ideal model for future teachers (Zeichner & Liston, 1987; Ropo, 1987). Under her mentoring, student teachers learn to engage in ethical teaching and to acknowledge student differences.

Implications For Teacher Education

Implications for teacher education based on the findings in this study include:

- Teacher educators must address explicit preparation in ethical teaching, and in the teacher's role as conveyer of values. Future teacher must be allowed to explore the effective combination of nurture and authority in teacher-student interactions.

- Opportunities must be provided for preservice teachers to examine their own teaching rationales. Narrative research can assist in this exploration. Teacher educators must be aware that preservice teachers, like Paul, may use a different language to articulate a lifelong desire to teach.

- Teacher educators must help identify and nurture the teaching motivation of preservice teachers who are called to teach. Serow (1994) found a positive correlation between preservice teachers called to teach and the level of teaching commitment.

- Teacher educators must consider placing preservice teachers with cooperating teachers who view teaching as a calling. It is possible for novices to learn the discourse and practice of experienced teachers (Casey, 1993; Ladson-Billing, 1994). Karla and Paul learned their mentor's discourse. Mrs. Townsend told me that she learned her discourse through "absorption" from her mother, college teachers and University supervisor. The two teachers in the initial phase of the study had models of ethical teaching as well.

- Teacher educators should consider placement of student teachers with teachers of different ethnic groups. This cultural exchange can provide pupils with positive models of human interaction. Having teachers of different ethnic groups in the class also exposes students to a rich knowledge base of information. Mrs. Townsend, Paul and Karla all felt that their students benefited from seeing three adults of differing backgrounds interact so harmoniously.

Implications for Further Research

Implications for further research based on the finding of this study can include:

- Investigations must be made into the role of various narrative techniques in advancing practice as praxis.

- Investigations must be made into role of inquiry in nurturing teaching practice and voice.

- Investigations into which research strategies are most helpful in fully exploring teacher philosophy and practice can greatly advance the work of teacher educators and of future teachers.

Concluding Thoughts

This study highlights the central role that spirituality can assume in teacher ideology and practice. The African American women in this study believe that they were called by God to teach. This calling is contextualized by their experiences and by their belief in the presence and power of God. Spirituality informs their views of students as learners in an unjust world, and of themselves as teachers to nurture them.

It is my hope that this focus on the intangible leads others to acknowledge the defining role of spirituality in teaching. Having read their stories, others may recognize a similar call. Acknowledging this call can be a legacy for others.

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APPENDIX A

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STUDENT TEACHERS

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Student Teachers

1. Tell me about your student teaching experience?
2. What goals do you have for your students during the student teaching experience?
3. What are your personal goals during your student teaching experience?
4. In what ways has Mrs. Townsend helped you to meet these goals?
5. How did you first become acquainted with Mrs. Townsend?
6. How did you come to be placed in Mrs. Townsend's class for your student teaching experience?
7. How do you, the other student teacher, and Mrs. Townsend negotiate your duties in the classroom?
8. How would you characterize your relationship with Mrs. Townsend?
9. Are you familiar with the phrase "hidden curriculum?" If so, what does this term mean to you?
10. What would you describe as some of the most important things that you have gained during your tenure with Mrs. Townsend?
11. In what ways, if any, does the difference in your ethnic identity impact your relationship with Mrs. Townsend?
12. On what issues do you and Mrs. Townsend disagree?
13. Discuss Mrs. Townsend as an on-site teacher educator.

APPENDIX B

INFORMAL OBSERVATION FORM

Informal Observation Form

INTERN NAME:_____ DATE/TIME:_____

SETTING: Individual OSTE-_____
Small group
Whole group

PRESERVICE TEACHER'S RESPONSIBILITY: teach a lesson
preparing teaching materials
guide seat work
classroom management
classroom control in teacher's absence
other

ELABORATION OF OBSERVED ACTIVITIES:_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

OBSERVED STRENGTHS:_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER GROWTH:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Signature of evaluator:_____

APPENDIX C

FORMAL OBSERVATION FORM

Formal Observation Form

Number of Student in Class_____ **Time Observation Ended**_____

Time Observation Began_____ **Date**_____

Preservice Teacher_____

CATEGORIES **EVIDENCE/COMMENTS**

TIME MANAGEMENT (MANAGEMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL TIME)

---Teacher has materials, supplies, equipment, for each lesson ready at the start of the lesson or instructional activity

---Teacher gets the class started quickly

---Teacher gets students on-task quickly at the beginning of each lesson or instructional activity

---Teacher maintains a high level of students time-on-task

STUDENT INTERACTION (MANAGEMENT OF STUDENT BEHAVIOR)

---Teacher has established as set of (clearly communicates) rules and procedures that govern the handling of routine administrative matters (for classroom behavior)

---Teacher has established a set of rules and procedures that govern student verbal participation and talk during different types of activities -- whole class instruction, small group instruction, and so forth

---Teacher has established as set of rules and procedures that govern students movement in the classroom during different types of instructional and non-instructional activities

---Teacher frequently monitors the behavior of all students during whole-class, small group and seat work activities and during transitions between instructional activities

---Teacher stops inappropriate behavior promptly and consistently, yet maintains the dignity of the student

INSTRUCTIONAL PRESENTATION

---Teacher begins lesson or instructional activity with a review of previous material

---Teacher introduces the lesson or instructional activity, and specifies learning objectives when appropriate

---Teacher speaks fluently and precisely

---Teacher presents the lesson or instructional activity using concepts and language understandable to the students

---Teacher provides relevant examples and demonstrates to illustrate concepts and skills

---Teacher assigns tasks that students handle with a (reasonable) high rate of success

---Teachers asks appropriate levels of questions which students handle with a (reasonable) high rate of success

---Teacher conducts lesson (or instructional activity) at (an appropriate) brisk pace, slowing presentation when necessary for student understanding but avoiding unnecessary slow downs

CATEGORIES	EVIDENCE/COMMENTS

INSTRUCTIONAL PRESENTATION (CONT.)

---Teacher makes transitions between lesson and between instructional activities within lesson efficiently and smoothly

---Teacher makes sure that assignments is clear

---Teacher summarizes the main point (s) of the lesson at the end of the lesson or instructional activity

INSTRUCTIONAL MONITOR ING (OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE)

---Teacher maintains clear, firm and reasonable work standards and due dates

---Teacher circulates during classwork to check all students' performance

---Teacher routinely uses oral, written, and other work products to check student progress

---Teacher poses questions clearly and one at a time

INSTRUCTIONAL FEEDBACK

---Teacher provides (supportive) feedback on the correctness or incorrectness (quality) of in-class work to encourage student growth

---Student teacher regularly provides prompt feedback on assignments out-of-class work

---Teacher affirms a correct oral answer appropriately and moves on

---Teacher provides sustaining feedback after an incorrect response or no response by probing, repeating the question, giving a clue or simply allowing more time

INSTRUCTIONAL PREPARATION (FACILITATING INSTRUCTION)

---Teacher has an instructional plan which is compatible with the school and system-wide curricular goals

---Teacher has instructional plan that matches/aligns objectives, learning strategies, assessment and students' needs at the appropriate level of difficulty

---Teacher maintains accurate records to document students performance

---Teachers uses diagnostic information obtained from tests and other assessment procedures to develop and revise objectives and/or tasks

---Teacher uses available human and material resources to support the instructional program

SOCIAL INTERACTION (COMMUNICATING WITH THE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT)

---Teacher treats all students in a fair equitable manner

---Teacher interacts effectively with students, co-workers, parents (school) and community

WORK-RELATED ACTIVITIES (PERFORMING PROFESSIONAL DUTIES)

---Teacher carries out non-instructional duties as assigned and/or as need is perceived (job related responsibilities)

---Teacher adheres to established laws, policies, rules, and regulations (observes professional standards and policies)

---Teacher follows a (agreed upon) plan for professional development and demonstrates evidence of growth

APPENDIX D

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION FEEDBACK FORM

Classroom Observation Feedback Form

Preservice Teacher: **Date:**

PDS: **Time:**

Observer: **Grade Level:**

To be completed by the preservice teacher prior to observation

1. **What are your goals and objectives for this lesson?**

2. **What are some specific things you would like observed?**

To be completed by the Observer and the Preservice Teacher

3. **Strengths to continue to build on:**

4. **Suggestions for future lessons:**

APPENDIX E
FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Focus Group Questions

1. **Do you all think that you share a teaching philosophy?**

2. **What do you all think are the most important things for beginning teachers to know?**

3. **What role, if any, do you all think that race has played in your relationship?**